

## APPENDIX 2: LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

The sensitivity of the host landscape character area is assessed below. Landscape sensitivity is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its location. To assess the sensitivity of a particular landscape it is good practice to consider the value attached to the landscape and its susceptibility to the particular form of change likely to result from a proposed development. Assessment text relates to sensitivity of the landscape receptor as a whole, to the proposed development, with additional comments regarding the Site and study area where relevant. In the main this has been taken from the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (quotes shown in *italics*) as well as from local sources and Site assessment. The factors which indicate sensitivity may not be weighted equally when determining value and susceptibility as some may be more influential than others. The table below regarding value attached to landscapes is based on guidance provided within LI TGN 02/21 Assessing Landscape Value Outside of National Designations - specifically Table 1 within that document and identifies the factors which indicate value.

### Host Landscape: LCA 8A: Swindon to Lyneham Limestone Ridge

| Factors indicating sensitivity      | Lower Sensitivity to Residential Development                         | Higher Sensitivity to Residential Development                         | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Judgement |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Value attached to Landscapes</b> |                                                                      |                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |           |
| Designated scenic quality           | No specific designation.                                             | National or regional designation.                                     | There are no national or local landscape designations present within this LCA or the study area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Community |
| Natural Heritage                    | Low presence of ecological or geological/ geomorphological interest. | High presence of ecological or geological/ geomorphological interest. | Landcover within the Site and study area is predominantly pastoral with pockets of arable and horse pasture. Woodland cover is limited. Ecological interest increases to the east of the Site along the brook corridor with riparian vegetation that extends throughout the eastern part of the study area. There is a strong hedgerow network with frequent hedgerow trees that provide some ecological interest. | Community |
| Cultural Heritage                   | Low presence of archaeology or historical interests.                 | High presence of archaeology or historical interests.                 | There are limited features of historical interest within the study area. Lyneham itself has a number of listed buildings, most of which are Grade II Listed. There is a scheduled monument approximately 1km east of the Site which is a Medieval settlement. Other than this, features of historical interest are limited.                                                                                        | Community |

| Factors indicating sensitivity         | Lower Sensitivity to Residential Development                                                                              | Higher Sensitivity to Residential Development                                                                                                                                                               | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Judgement |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Landscape condition/ quality           | Landscape in a poor state of repair with incongruous elements.                                                            | Landscape fully intact in good condition with limited incongruous elements.                                                                                                                                 | The Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (online version) notes that the landscape condition is assessed as 'declining' while the 2005 report notes it as 'moderate'. Built form within the MOD site could be considered incongruous in certain locations on the settlement edge.           | Community |
| Cultural associations                  | No strong associations with notable people, events or the arts, which contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.        | Strong cultural associations with notable people, events or the arts, which contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.                                                                                    | There are no known cultural associations with LCA 8A: Swindon – Calne Limestone Ridge.                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Community |
| Distinctiveness                        | Commonplace elements and features, or commonplace landscape itself. Lacking distinctive and strongly expressed character. | Presence of rare elements or features or rarity of the landscape itself. Landscape with a distinctive and clearly expressed character.                                                                      | The landscape is in predominantly agricultural use and the features within it are typical of such a landscape.                                                                                                                                                                                  | Community |
| Amenity and recreation                 | Limited access and/ or amenity/ recreational function where experience of the landscape is important.                     | Well used for recreation where experience of the landscape is important; or forms part of a view that is important to a recreational experience. May contain National Trails or other long distance routes. | There is a good PRoW network within the study area comprising mainly footpaths and bridleways, considered to be of local importance only. There are no long distance routes or national trails present within the study area.                                                                   | Community |
| Perceptual (Scenic)                    | Landscape with no particular scenic/ visual appeal.                                                                       | Landscape with strong appeal to the senses, particular visual.                                                                                                                                              | The area is generally attractive, particularly to the east towards the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Lyneham itself is an attractive village but is strongly influenced by the MOD site, which is often prominent in views and limits the scenic qualities in the context of the Site. | Community |
| Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity) | Busy with evidence of human activity, well-lit.                                                                           | Remote, peaceful or with a sense of wildness. Dark skies.                                                                                                                                                   | Lyneham presents a well-lit settlement within the study area, as does the MOD site which reduces the perception of dark skies and sense of remoteness in this location.                                                                                                                         | Community |

| Factors indicating sensitivity                | Lower Sensitivity to Residential Development                                                                    | Higher Sensitivity to Residential Development                                                                                              | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Judgement            |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Function                                      | No important blue/ green infrastructure function or important relationship with national landscape designation. | Landscape with important blue/ green infrastructure function or strong relationship that is important to a national landscape designation. | The network of hedgerows and riparian vegetation corridors provide an important green and blue infrastructure function within the study area, including containing views towards the settlement from the surrounding countryside.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Regional / Community |
| <b>Overall Judgement of Value</b>             |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Community</b>     |
| <b>Susceptibility</b>                         |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                      |
| Scale                                         | Landscapes where scale of development is similar to or smaller than scale of receiving landscape.               | Landscapes where scale of development is larger than scale of receiving landscape.                                                         | This is a medium sized landscape and the scale of the proposed development is considerably smaller than that of LCA 8A.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Low                  |
| Openness/enclosure                            | Enclosed and sheltered landscapes.                                                                              | Open and exposed landscapes.                                                                                                               | There is a good degree of enclosure in the landscape provided by the settlement edge, built form within the MOD site and the vegetation along the brook corridors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Low                  |
| Land cover, landform, complexity and patterns | Extensive areas of simple or regular landcover or simple and sweeping lines, linear feature and patterns.       | Complex, intimate or mosaic cover or complex or irregular patterns.                                                                        | Landcover typically comprises regularly shaped agricultural fields. A more varied land cover exists along the lower lying landscape to the east, which comprises watercourses and riparian vegetation. Overall, complex or irregular patterns are limited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Low                  |
| Built Environment                             | Within the urban area or urban fringe.                                                                          | Area with historic built character, or open countryside.                                                                                   | The Site lies on the settlement edge of Lyneham and is considered to be a settlement edge landscape. As outlined within the published landscape character assessment, <i>"Settlement has a considerable influence over the area: the Swindon-Lyneham Limestone Ridge is divided into two sections by the large urban mass of Swindon and other large settlements also have a visual influence such as Highworth and Purton, which are highly visible from surrounding lower areas. The RAF airfield at</i> | Low                  |

| Factors indicating sensitivity                                   | Lower Sensitivity to Residential Development                                                            | Higher Sensitivity to Residential Development                                                                                                                    | Explanation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Judgement  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|                                                                  |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                  | <i>Lyneham, dominates the southern central part of the area."</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |            |
| Views and intervisibility                                        | Visually contained and have limited inward or outward views.                                            | Extensive views within or of the area from key views, when the area is not within or directly adjacent to an existing residential area.                          | <p><i>"Within the area views are intermittent, but from the peripheral slopes there are panoramic views. Around Swindon the town dominates but further south and in the very north of the area the views out across the rural clay vales create a more remote feel."</i></p> <p>Views within the context of the Site and study area are often well contained by the surrounding built form within Lyneham and the established vegetation that characterised the landscape to the east.</p> | Low        |
| Landscapes that form settings, skylines, backdrops, focal points | Generally low lying landscapes without a strong visual relationship or association with adjacent areas. | Areas with strong features, focal points that define the skyline; or that form the landscape setting to historic towns or other valued townscapes or landscapes. | Within the context of the Site, features that form skylines or focal points are limited. The wooded ridge line associated with the North Wessex Downs National Landscape forms a backdrop to longer distance views to the east.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Medium     |
| <b>Overall Judgement of Susceptibility</b>                       |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Low</b> |
| <b>Overall Judgement of Sensitivity</b>                          |                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Low</b> |