

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

M4 Junction 17 Lorry Depot
D K Barnsley & Son Ltd



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.01 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared by NVB and contains an assessment of the potential Landscape and Visual environmental effects of the proposed development. Where necessary, mitigation measures in accordance with the relevant planning policy framework and guidance will be provided.
- 1.02 The lead author at NVB is Peter Baker.
- 1.03 Peter Baker is a chartered member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) with post-graduate qualification in landscape architecture. He has practiced as a landscape architect since 2002 with experience of both landscape design and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA).

2.0 Planning Context

- 2.01 The planning policy context is presented and reviewed within the accompanying Planning Statement by Poulsom Architectural Design and Planning Services:
- 2.02 "Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, in order to assess the acceptability of this proposal, it is necessary to assess it against the adopted development plan. It is also necessary to consider any material considerations relevant to the development proposal such as national planning policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and national planning guidance contained within Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). "
- 2.03 "In the case of the proposed development, the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) is the development plan. The relevant development plan policies engaged in determining this planning application are:
- CP1
 - CP2
 - CP34
 - CP55
 - CP60"
- 2.04 "The key paragraphs of the NPPF are 8, 85, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115 and 135."

3.0 Consultation

- 3.01 A formal request for pre-planning advice was submitted 6th June 2024 and a response received 29th July 2024. This response included the following reference to landscape and visual impacts:
- 3.02 "In addition, given its open rural nature of the site, a detailed landscape visual impact assessment will be required, and some key viewpoints from the adjacent public rights of way need to be included as part of the assessment."
- 3.03 Responses were received during the planning determination period from the local planning authority, via the planning officer, which resulted in a number of changes to the submission that are relevant to the landscape and visual impact. These are outlined within paragraphs 7.08 onwards, under "Mitigation Measures & Monitoring". The simplistic proposed views within the figures document, written impact assessments and the conclusion have also been updated to take account of these changes.

4.0	Assessment Methodology
4.01	The landscape and visual assessment will be carried out in accordance with the IEMA/Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (Published April 2013).
4.02	The document structure will be divided into landscape and visual sections and each will comprise 4 sub-sections; a. Identification of the potential direct and indirect landscape and visual impacts and consideration of cumulative effects. b. A combined Landscape Baseline Study and Impact Assessment c. A combined Visual Baseline Study and Impact Assessment d. Identification and assessment of any residual significant impacts.
4.03	Mitigation of landscape and visual impacts has been a cyclical process during the design development and Environmental Impact Assessment process. Changes have been made to the development proposals to reduce impacts that have been highlighted throughout the proposal. The effects that these have had on the specific landscape and visual receptors is assessed within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments on each receptor. It is therefore not repeated as a separate section. Study Area
4.04	A study area with a radius of 2km was adopted for the baseline assessment (figure 1). Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) were produced for the development (figures 8-12) which were tested with field-work. This established that the likely visibility will be within an area of approximately 2.5km radius.
4.05	The study area was adopted as it includes all of the direct impacts of the proposals, its associated construction and likely indirect effects on the wider landscape which includes sensitive receptors such as the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Conservation Areas and Public Rights of Way (PRoW).
4.06	The 2km study area was adopted for the landscape assessment as it is likely that all of the direct impacts of the proposals will be contained within this area.
4.07	A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study for the proposed development (see figures 8 & 9) is used to help identify areas sensitive to visual impacts based on a basic 3D computer model of the proposed building and fencing.
4.08	The baseline computer generated ZTV study (figures 8 & 9) is undertaken using a bare earth landform to give the worst-case scenario. In reality any built structures (settlements, walls etc.) or areas of vegetation (woodland, scrub and hedgerows) will reduce the actual visibility of the target area. A ZTV with "Visual Buffers" has been produced for a more limited area to a radius of 2.5km (see figure 10 & 11). It is necessary to carry out fieldwork to validate the results of the ZTVs.
4.09	Based on the preceding ZTV analysis and field work, a series of viewpoints have been selected from which views to the site are possible. The number is relatively low compared with other LVIA's as the actual zone of visibility is limited. The selected viewpoints are all within publicly accessible areas of PROWs and the entrance drive to the school. The distance of viewpoints from the proposals is

identified. Viewpoints have been selected to represent views from a variety of directions towards the proposals as far as is possible within the actual zone of visibility.

Landscape Assessment Methodology

- 4.10 The assessment of landscape effects considers the potential impact of the development on the landscape resource within the study area, with particular reference to landscape character types and areas. Landscape effects relate to the changes in the physical composition of the land or built form and its sensitivity or capacity to accommodate change.
- 4.11 The physical landscape effects will be considered in terms of sensitivity and magnitude. Sensitivity will be determined as a judgement combining the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific change arising from the proposal and the value attached to the receptor. The likely magnitude of the effect will be assessed as a combination of the size and scale of the effect, the duration of the effect, and the reversibility of the effect.
- 4.12 Sensitivity will be considered in terms of High, Medium and Low.
- 4.13 Magnitude will be considered using the criteria set out in Table 1.

Magnitude of Effect	Typical Descriptors
Major	Major benefit to/loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; major improvement/damage to key characteristics, features or elements.
Moderate	Moderate benefits to/loss of resource, key characteristics, features or elements; improvements/degradation of attributes' quality.
Minor	Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor benefit/loss of, or positive/detrimental alteration to, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements.
Negligible	Very minor benefit/loss of or positive/detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements.
No Change	No loss of alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact in either direction

Table 1- Criteria for the assessment of magnitude of landscape change

- 4.14 The effects will be considered under direct, indirect, and cumulative headings.
- Significance Criteria
- 4.15 The assessment results are presented as impacts of major, moderate, minor or negligible significance using the criteria described in Volume 1, Chapter 2: Scope and Methodology.
- 4.16 The determination of the significance of an effect on the landscape is a qualitative assessment and requires the application of professional judgement to weight the findings of the sensitivity of receptor and magnitude of change experienced by the receptor.
- 4.17 Sensitivity and magnitude are combined to assess the significance of each effect. The assessment criteria for the determination of the significance of landscape effects are set out in Table 2. These assessment criteria are based on criteria outlined in the GLVIA and other best practice guidance.

Criteria	The Development would result in effects that potentially
Major Adverse	Would be at considerable variance with the existing landscape character, degrading its integrity; Would permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued characteristics' features, elements and/or their setting; and/or cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a major adverse effect.
Moderate Adverse	Would be at noticeable variance with the existing landscape character; and/or cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a moderate adverse effect.
Minor Adverse	Would be at slight variance with the existing landscape character; and/or cannot fully mitigated with only small residual adverse effect.
Negligible	Would be compatible with the existing landscape character.
Minor Beneficial	Would improve and enhance the existing landscape character; and/or would restore valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses.
Moderate Beneficial	Would markedly improve and enhance the existing landscape character; and/or would restore valued characteristic features largely lost through other land uses.
Major Beneficial	Would substantially improve and enhance the existing landscape character; and/or would restore or reinstate valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses. Generally, development projects would be unlikely to merit this score.

Table 2– Significance criteria for landscape effect

- 4.18 Effects identified as Moderate – Major and above are considered to be significant.
- 4.19 The assessment of changes in landscape character and its aesthetic and perceptual aspects have been assessed in respect to existing character assessments and qualities such as:
- Scale and complexity.
 - Openness and tranquility.
 - Distinctiveness.
 - Intactness

Visual Assessment Methodology

- 4.20 The assessment of visual effects considers the potential impact of the Development on the visual resource within the study area, with particular reference to groups of defined receptors. Visual effects relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, the responses of people to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual resource.
- 4.21 The visual effects will be considered in terms of sensitivity and magnitude. Sensitivity will be determined as a judgement combining the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific change arising from the proposal and the value attached to the receptor. The likely magnitude of the effect will be assessed as a combination of the size and scale of the effect, the duration of the effect, and the reversibility of the effect.
- 4.22 Sensitivity will be considered in terms of Low, Medium and High.
- 4.23 Low sensitivity receptors are considered to have a passing or momentary interest in the view or where their interest is focussed on their activity rather than the landscape e.g. motorists and office or shop workers. Moderate sensitivity receptors are considered to have a momentary interest in the view, but are outdoors for reasons of recreation or leisure, such as those engaged in outdoor sports. High sensitivity receptors are considered to have a keen interest in the view or where the view is a key reason for the activity e.g. residential receptors or recreational users of a Public Right of Way.
- 4.24 Magnitude will be considered using the criteria set out in Table 3 which sets out the criteria that have been used to guide the assessment of the magnitude of change which may be experienced by visual receptors as a result of the proposed Development.

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Descriptors
Major	A change that would completely alter the overall perception and key characteristics of the view.
Moderate	Changes to a view that would be readily noticeable and would alter the general perception or key characteristics of the view.
Minor	Some measurable, small scale visual changes to the overall perception and key characteristics of the view.
Negligible	Very minor changes to the overall perception and key characteristics of the view that would be barely noticeable with the naked eye.
No Change	No loss or alteration to the overall perception or key characteristics of the view.

Table 3 – Magnitude Criteria

- 4.25 Viewpoint photographs have been taken with a Canon EOS 400D DIGITAL SLR with a Canon EF 35mm lens 1:2. This is the equivalent of a field of view of 54.4mm close to the previous standard for field of view, prior to digital SLR cameras, which was 50mm.

- 4.26 The majority of photographs were taken at a horizontal angle on a panoramic head and at a height of 1.6m on a tripod. A small number of photographs have been taken at angles other than horizontal and are stated as such. This is to take account of views that cannot be demonstrated at a horizontal angle such as a number of views within the Gorge where the elevation of the cliffs is too great to be included in the field of view of the lenses described above.
- 4.27 Photographs have all been taken as panoramic with portrait orientation frames with 1/3 overlap to minimise lens distortion and with a panoramic head with built-in spirit level to ensure consistent overlaps and angle and to remove parallax error. Single frames have been placed together to form panoramic views with Adobe Photoshop's "Photomerge" tool and the Cylindrical setting to create consistent results from all viewpoints.
- 4.28 The viewpoints have been presented with the following information:
- a. Location plan
 - b. Coordinates, height, date, distance from proposal and description;
 - c. A photo of the camera in position;
 - d. A panoramic photo to show the full extent of the view available and an extract of the full panoramic.
- 4.29 The viewpoint photograph placed with the following method for the 35mm lens photos and photomontages are scaled to 193mm to be viewed at 300mm and then cropped to 144mm height to fit on the page. This size is calculated using the sensor dimensions of 22.5mm x 15mm for this camera and specifically the long dimension as the frames from which the panoramic photos are constructed are portrait orientation. The equation is as follows $((300/35=8.57) \times 22.2\text{mm}=193\text{mm})$.

Methodology for Production of Zones of Theoretical Visibility

- 4.30 The ZTVs have been generated using GIS ZTV calculation software. A terrain map has been formed using OS Terrain 5 surface data, centred on the proposed development. Target points for the proposed sports hall have been added with an overall target height of 169mAOD. The first calculation covers a 5km study area and is known as a 'bare earth' calculation and is based on a viewer height 1.6m above ground level. The calculation uses a 10m grid cell for calculation purposes. This calculation purely uses the surface topography and includes the effects of earth's curvature and light refraction.
- 4.31 The second calculation is known as a visual buffers ZTV and includes surface features. The surface features are added by digitizing features from high resolution aerial photography. These features are called visual buffers and given a height. Typical heights used:
- a. Building: 9m
 - b. Managed Hedgerow: 2m
 - c. Unmanaged Hedgerows: 5m
 - d. Woodland: 12m

4.32 These surface features enable a more likely visual scenario to be illustrated and the results calculated out to 2km radius, within which any likely significant effects of the development will be found.

4.33 The ZTV is a useful technique for identifying and agreeing viewpoints prior to any site work.

Significance Criteria

4.34 Sensitivity and magnitude are combined to assess the significance of each effect. The assessment criteria for the determination of the significance of visual effects are set out in Table 4. The determination of the significance of an effect on the visual resource is a qualitative assessment and requires the application of professional judgement to weigh the findings of sensitivity of the receptor and magnitude of change.

Criteria	The Development would result in:
Major Adverse	A significant deterioration in the existing view.
Moderate Adverse	A noticeable deterioration in the existing view.
Minor Adverse	A small deterioration in the existing view.
Negligible	No perceptible deterioration or improvement in the existing view.
Minor Beneficial	A small improvement in the existing view.
Moderate Beneficial	A noticeable improvement in the existing view.
Major Beneficial	A significant improvement in the existing view. Generally, development projects would be unlikely to merit this score.

Table 4 – Significance criteria for visual effects

4.35 Effects identified as Moderate–Major and above are considered to be significant.

Assumptions and Limitations

4.36 Viewpoint photos have been taken as ‘Summer’ views, when deciduous trees are in-leaf. Views in ‘Winter’ when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves will increase the visibility of the development where trees screen/ interrupt the view between site and viewpoint. Reference has been made to this issue within the assessment.

5.0 Landscape Baseline Assessment

National Character Area 117 Avon Vales

- 5.01 This national character area (figure 3) includes references such as: “an undulating, low-lying landscape of mixed, predominantly pastoral agriculture and small limestone-built towns” and “woodlands lie on the steeper slopes and by watercourses, and in a few other areas within a structured farmland or medium to large fields and now straggly hedgerows” within its introduction.
- 5.02 The key data includes distribution and size of woodland and trees in the landscape, on page 18–19: “Woodland ... is also present on former commons and steeper slopes around places like Lyneham. Some areas are very open, affected by the clearance of hedgerows and loss of trees to Dutch elm diseases, such as the land just north of the M4.” “Hedgerow trees are common in pastoral areas but rare in arable areas.”
- 5.03 Boundary features on page 19: “The extent of hedgerows on the arable land is often poor; however, in the pasture areas, especially the lower lying meadows around the many small streams, hedgerows are frequent and often overgrown.” “Agricultural intensification has led to hedgerow loss and neglect.”
- 5.04 “Landscape Opportunities” include: “Maintaining and extending species-rich grassland on limestone hills and river valleys to enhance biodiversity and landscape character.” “Restoring and managing traditional hedgerows to reinforce local landscape patterns.” “Creating grassland buffer strips across slopes and alongside watercourses to reduce soil erosion while enhancing visual character.” “Protecting and restoring historic landscape features through targeted arable reversion and management of ridge and furrow archaeology.” “Maintaining and extending ancient woodland networks to strengthen wildlife corridors, particularly for significant bat communities.” “Ensuring development respects rural character through appropriate scale and use of traditional materials such as limestone ashlar.” “Developing strategic green corridors along waterways to connect fragmented natural landscapes while enhancing flood resilience.”

Sensitivity Assessment

- 5.05 This receptor has been ascribed a **High** sensitivity to the type and scale of development proposed due to its undulating, open character with fragmented hedgerows and woodland patterns. The arable landscape with limestone features is particularly vulnerable to change that could disrupt traditional field patterns and visual connectivity between key landscape elements. Development should be carefully integrated to preserve the distinct limestone character of settlements and maintain the integrity of existing woodland corridors along watercourses and steeper slopes, which are defining features of the Avon Vales landscape.

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- 5.06 The character area within the study area is 16A Limestone Lowland. (figure 4)
- 5.07 The Malmesbury–Corsham Limestone Lowland extends across northwest Wiltshire, from Bradford-on-Avon in the south to Kemble Airfield in the far north. The application site falls within this landscape type. It features “gently undulating lowland farmland” “over mudstone and limestone, characterized by a mix of pasture and arable fields enclosed by “strong network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees”. Large geometric fields from the 18th–19th centuries dominate, with some medieval patterns near settlements.
- 5.08 The “peaceful and rural landscape” varies between open panoramic views on higher ground to the west and enclosed areas with woodland blocks and copses elsewhere. Historic market towns,

villages, and farmsteads with distinctive limestone buildings are connected by rural roads, complemented by traditional parklands with stone walls and tree avenues.

Sensitivity Assessment

- 5.09 This character area has been ascribed a **High** sensitivity to the type and scale of development proposed due to its peaceful rural character, distinctive limestone vernacular, and traditional field patterns. The undulating topography with both enclosed and open viewsheds makes the landscape particularly vulnerable to visual intrusion from non-traditional development forms.

North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- 5.10 The character area within the study area is 8 Hullavington Rolling Lowland (figure 5).
- 5.11 The lowland includes the application site itself, situated along the boarder between Malmesbury's southern boundary and Chippenham's northern edge. It features a "rural area of gently rolling hills and shallow valleys" (60–120m AOD) over diverse geology including "Forest Marble limestone, Oxford Clay and Cornbrash." This varied terrain supports mixed agriculture with "predominantly pasture on the clay, to arable on the better soils of the Cornbrash."
- 5.12 Field patterns are "a mix of medium to large sizes, with a pattern of irregular medieval boundary shapes to more regular shapes from later enclosures," all connected by "generally intact hedgerows with mature trees" that "contribute to the patchwork of fields in this gentle landscape." The area is characterized by scattered villages and dispersed farms with "fine stone villages with muted colours," typically constructed with "undressed stone to walls, ashlar quoins, lintels and mullions, and stone slates." Medium-sized woodlands and deciduous copses punctuate the agricultural patchwork, while historic features include Corsham Park.
- 5.13 Despite some modern elements like the "Detractors of the M4, the edge of Chippenham and Hullavington airfield" creating notable interruptions, the landscape character assessment identifies this as an area with a predominantly peaceful and rural quality. The assessment concludes that only modest, thoughtfully designed developments that complement existing structures could be integrated without negatively impacting the landscape character.

Sensitivity Assessment

- 5.14 This character area has been ascribed a **High** sensitivity due to its predominantly intact rural character with traditional field patterns, fine stone villages, and distinctive architectural vernacular. Despite the M4 motorway's presence, the landscape maintains its essential agricultural patchwork with mature hedgerows and woodlands that create visual cohesion. The rolling topography offers extended viewsheds across this historic landscape, increasing its susceptibility to change. The scattered settlement pattern and historic features contribute to a landscape with limited capacity to accommodate development without compromising its fundamental character and sense of place.

Stanton St. Quintin Quarry and Motorway Cutting SSSI

- 5.15 This SSSI is located approximately 370m from the application site boundary within the study area (figure 2). It was designated for its geological interest, providing “one of the country’s few complete exposures of the cornbrash, yielded ammonites of biostratigraphic importance”.
- 5.16 The landscape character is defined by vertical rock exposures within both the former quarry and the M4 motorway cutting, creating a distinctive geological feature amidst the surrounding agricultural landscape. The site contains biostratigraphically important fossils and likely features patchy vegetation requiring periodic management. Its landscape value derives primarily from scientific and educational importance rather than scenic qualities, with the adjacent motorway introducing significant disturbance while also providing public visibility of the geological features.

Sensitivity Assessment

- 5.17 The Stanton St. Quintin Quarry and Motorway Cutting SSSI is considered to have high value due to its national designation status and scientific importance as a rare geological resource. However, its susceptibility to the proposed development is low to medium, as the site’s geological interest is not particularly vulnerable to surrounding landscape changes, its setting is already altered by the M4 motorway, and management priorities focus on maintaining rock exposures rather than wider landscape qualities. Overall sensitivity is therefore assessed as **medium**, balancing high inherent value against limited vulnerability to external changes.

LVIA Site Character Assessment

- 5.18 The application site is an agricultural land situated within the southern portion of an open field south of the B4122. The site is bounded by a combination of sparse hedgerows and mature trees, with an industrial business park with 3 vast industrial units to the West. A woodland area is located adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the site, while a watercourse runs further to the south. The immediate context includes existing commercial and industrial uses, namely the Stanton St. Quintin Recycling Centre and maintenance depot to the north, and Chippenham Pit Stop, a service area for HGVs and other vehicles, to the east.

Sensitivity Assessment

- 5.19 This character area has been described for the purpose of this LVIA to give a greater understanding of the application site itself. It has a low-medium value as an agricultural field lacking any formal landscape designations or notable scenic qualities. Its ordinary character is representative of the wider agricultural landscape but contains no rare or distinctive features. The field’s susceptibility to change is medium, as while it currently maintains a rural character, its context is already influenced by adjacent commercial developments including the recycling centre and HGV pit stop, creating a transitional landscape between agricultural and commercial uses. The existing hedgerows and tree boundaries provide some containment that could help accommodate change. Taking these factors into account, the overall landscape sensitivity of the application site is assessed as **medium-low**, suggesting the site has some capacity to accommodate the proposed development without fundamental change to the wider landscape character.

6.0 Visual Baseline Assessment

- 6.01 The 2km study area includes a large potential number of receptors. Moderately sensitive receptors include users of neighbouring roads, council recycling centre, those undertaking outdoor sports and walking. Sensitive receptors include Conservation Area, residential properties and users of road and Public Rights of Way. The Bare Earth ZTVs (figure 9) indicates that the potential number of visual receptors is limited.
- 6.02 The ZTV with Visual Buffers (figure 11) indicates that this number is even more limited, the proposed development is visible from the area beyond south of M4 and east of A350 only. Fieldwork, walking the public rights of way, within these areas confirmed that the visibility of the development is likely to be more limited than the ZTV with Visual Buffers:
- a. Public Rights of Way: KLAN29, KLAN30, SBEN14, SEAG32 and KLAN 16
 - b. The site entrance on the B4122
 - c. The Council Recycling Centre
- 6.03 The receptors that are considered to be sensitive despite the ZTV with Visual Buffers indicating that the proposed development would not be visible from those locations, these potentially sensitive receptors have been assessed with single frame photographic evidence collected from the relevant viewpoints (figure 14):
- Viewpoint A – Stanton St Quintin Conservation Area (figure 16)
 - Viewpoint B – Hullavington Airbase Conservation Area (figure 16)
 - Viewpoint C – PRoW SBEN34 (figure 17)
 - Viewpoint D – PRoW SEAG32 (figure 17)
 - Viewpoint E – PRoW SBEN32 (figure 18)

Visual Impact

- 6.04 The receptors identified as sensitive and confirmed by the desktop study of ZTV with Visual Buffers to have potential views of the proposed development are therefore to be assessed in detail with comprehensive panoramic photographic documentation collected from the corresponding viewpoints are (figure 15):
- Viewpoint 1 – Site Entrance on the B4122 and PRoW KLAN29
 - Viewpoint 2 – PRoW KLAN29
 - Viewpoint 3 – B4122 Opposite Council Recycling Centre
 - Viewpoint 4 – PRoW SBEN14 on B4122
 - Viewpoint 5 – Agricultural Field in Clanville
 - Viewpoint 6 – PRoW KLAN26
 - Viewpoint 7 – PRoW KLAN26 (Southern End)

- 6.05 The considerations for potential effects are covered within section 7 and mitigation, during construction and operation, are covered within section 8. These are considered in single sections to avoid repetition which is likely due to the scale of the development and options available for mitigation.

Viewpoint 1 – Site Entrance on the B4122 and PRoW KLAN29 (figure 19)

- 6.06 The location of the viewpoint a field gate to the PRoW KLAN29 as well as the proposed site entrance on the B4122.
- 6.07 The existing view is looking at the open field and route of PRoW KLAN29 that pass through the application site. On the right side is the existing hedgerows with trees segregating the field and the large warehouse building with horizontal cladding with brown, cream grey and green hues. The existing woodland outside the northern boundary of the site is visible in the background. This viewpoint captures the interface between agricultural land use and commercial development. The contrast between the rural open field and the large-scale building creates a noticeable visual divide in the landscape.
- 6.08 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **High** due to the leisure use of the PRoW.
- 6.09 The predicted view illustrates how the diverted Public Right of Way KLAN29 will offer users a route between retained hedgerows and new tree planting. From this diverted path, users will experience substantial new tree planting (indicated by the green circles) that will create a significant vegetative buffer connecting with the existing mature oak tree in the distance, effectively reinstating the historical character of continuous hedgerow with hedgerow trees. The new vehicle access from B4122 will be located to the left of this new tree planting. The proposed office block and service depot building (shown by the outlined structures) will be partially visible beyond this vegetative buffer, with the service depot building partially screening the existing woodland beyond the site's northern boundary. This landscape strategy aims to maintain key landscape characteristics while accommodating the new development.
- 6.10 The design development that has been undertaken during the determination period included a number of changes that would be visible in this view:
- Moving the buildings south to create a 4m wide planting area to allow for a hedge and narrow-canopy trees to be added to the proposal. This will create a sub-division in the field in a character that is appropriate to the local landscape character.
 - Changing the colour of the building from replicating the colour banding from the neighbouring site with all four colours to only using the colour in the lowest part of the building. This colour is brown. The viewpoint photos show how this colour is visible in the landscape with elevations in both shade and sun. This colour is of a recessive nature in this landscape.
 - The removal of 2.4m green palisade fencing from this area and replacement with 1-1.2m high timber post and rail fence
- 6.11 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **moderate**.
- 6.12 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **moderate adverse** for the following reasons:
- The transformation of landscape character from agriculture field to commercial development

- b. The readily noticeable scale and visibility of the proposed buildings within the viewpoint, although the mitigation that took place during determination has reduced this impact it remains “readily noticeable”
- c. The partial obstruction of existing woodland views by the proposed structures.

Viewpoint 2 – PRow KLAN29 (figure 20)

- 6.13 The location of the viewpoint is on a public right of way within the application site.
- 6.14 This existing winter view captures an open, gently undulating field. The application site occupies the central portion of the image as an expansive grassy area. In the background, a line of deciduous trees forms a distinct boundary. To the left, there’s partial visibility of the same industrial building assessed in the previous viewpoint, but now seen from the opposite direction. The distant background reveals glimpses of existing buildings associated with the depot area and council recycling centre, visible through gaps in the winter tree line near the B122 road.
- 6.15 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **High** due to the leisure use of the PRow.
- 6.16 The predicted view will include new 2.4m high green palisade fencing around the perimeter of the site, enclosing the articulated lorry parking area. The office block and service depot building will be visible in the middle distance, as indicated by the proposed building outlines shown in the visualization. The development will be partially softened by substantial proposed tree planting, shown as green circles in the visualization, which will create a vegetative buffer along portions of the site boundary. Visible landscape features will include wildflower meadow areas and proposed drainage swales alongside retained existing trees
- 6.17 The design development that has been undertaken during the determination period included a number of changes that would be visible in this view:
 - a. Changing the colour of the building from replicating the colour banding from the neighbouring site with all four colours to only using the colour in the lowest part of the building. This colour is brown. The viewpoint photos show how this colour is visible in the landscape with elevations in both shade and sun. This colour is of a recessive nature in this landscape.
 - b. New hedge and tree planting along the eastern boundary and near the office building
- 6.18 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **moderate**.
- 6.19 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **moderate adverse** for the following reasons:
 - a. The transformation of landscape character from agriculture field to commercial development
 - b. The readily noticeable scale and visibility of the proposed buildings within the viewpoint, although the mitigation that took place during determination has reduced this impact it remains “readily noticeable”

Viewpoint 3 –B4122 Opposite Council Recycling Centre (figure 21)

- 6.20 The viewpoint location is on the existing access gate to the track within the neighboring agricultural field, directly opposite to the Council Recycle Centre.
- 6.21 This view displays the open grassy field with dormant brownish-yellow vegetation adjacent to the application site in distance. The horizon features two large industrial warehouse with flat roofs and neutral horizontal cladding as described above. The left building was visible in previous viewpoints, while an additional warehouse appears from this new perspective. The expansive field creates a sense of openness contrasting with the built forms.
- 6.22 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **Moderate** due to the community use of council recycling facilities.
- 6.23 The predicted view shows the proposed development within the context of the existing landscape. The foreground maintains the open grassy field with dormant vegetation. Proposed building outlines are clearly visible in the middle distance, appearing as white rectangular forms that are noticeably smaller in scale compared to the predominant warehouse structures. New tree planting, indicated by green circles, is strategically positioned around the development to create a partial vegetative buffer. The more modest scale of the proposed buildings helps them integrate more sensitively with the landscape while the new planting will further soften the development's visual impact. The overall layout respects the site's open character while introducing built elements at an appropriate scale relative to existing building forms on the horizon.
- 6.24 The design development that has been undertaken during the determination period included a number of changes that would be visible in this view:
- a. Moving the buildings south to create a 4m wide planting area to allow for a hedge and narrow-canopy trees to be added to the proposal. This will create a sub-division in the field in a character that is appropriate to the local landscape character.
 - b. Changing the colour of the building from replicating the colour banding from the neighbouring site with all four colours to only using the colour in the lowest part of the building. This colour is brown. The viewpoint photos show how this colour is visible in the landscape with elevations in both shade and sun. This colour is of a recessive nature in this landscape.
 - c. The removal of 2.4m green palisade fencing from this area and replacement with 1-1.2m high timber post and rail fence
 - d. New hedge and tree planting along the eastern boundary and near the office building
- 6.25 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **Moderate**.
- 6.26 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **moderate adverse** for the following reasons:
- a. The transformation of landscape character from agriculture field to commercial development
 - b. The readily noticeable scale and visibility of the proposed buildings within the viewpoint, although the mitigation that took place during determination has reduced this impact it remains "readily noticeable"

Viewpoint 4 – PROW SBEN14 on B4122 (figure 22)

- 6.27 The location of the viewpoint is at the end of the public right of way SBEN14 on the B4122 approximately 0.6km from the application site.
- 6.28 This existing winter view captures an open, gently undulating agricultural landscape. The view is contained by the valley with the stream at the base of the valley highlighted with a line of planted trees that follows it. Westbrook Farm is visible with the St Modwen buildings being the most visible buildings as they break the horizon in three places.
- 6.29 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **High** due to the leisure use of the PRoW and being representative of the view from nearby houses.
- 6.30 The predicted view is unlikely to include the proposed buildings as the intervening woodland to the South East of the site which screen the site itself in this view.
- 6.31 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **negligible**.
- 6.32 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **negligible** for the following reasons:
- a. The screening by woodland

Viewpoint 5 – Agricultural Field in Clanville (figure 23)

- 6.33 The location of the viewpoint is at a field gate on a B road approximately 0.5km from the application site.
- 6.34 This existing winter view captures relatively flat fields with the St Modwen buildings visible above the woodland in the view.
- 6.35 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **Moderate** as due to the relatively limited number of people that would turn from the road as leisure users. Other receptors would be those working the fields whose attention would be less focused on the view.
- 6.36 The predicted view is unlikely to include the proposed buildings as the intervening trees screen the site.
- 6.37 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **negligible**.
- 6.38 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **negligible** for the following reasons:
- a. The screening by woodland

Viewpoint 6 – PRoW KLAN26 (figure 24)

- 6.39 The location of the viewpoint is on a public right of way approximately **0.5km** from the application site at the junction of two rights of way.
- 6.40 This existing winter view captures a relatively flat field with the St Modwen buildings prominent in the view.
- 6.41 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **High** due to the leisure use of the PRoW.
- 6.42 The predicted view is unlikely to include the proposed buildings as the intervening trees screen the site and intervening St Modwen building (15m tall) which is approximately twice the height of the taller of the two proposed buildings (7.5m).
- 6.43 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **negligible**.
- 6.44 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **negligible** for the following reasons:
- a. The screening by woodland
 - b. The intervening building

Viewpoint 7 – PRoW KLAN29 (figure 25)

- 6.45 The location of the viewpoint is on a public right of way approximately 1.35km from the application site at the junction of three rights of way.
- 6.46 This existing winter view captures an open, gently undulating agricultural landscape. The view is contained by the valley with the stream at the base of the valley highlighted with the ribbon of trees that follows it. South Sea Farm is visible to a small extent, with Whitelands Farm more noticeable behind and the St Modwen buildings being the most visible buildings as they break the horizon in three places.
- 6.47 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this viewpoint to the site is considered be **High** due to the leisure use of the PRoW.
- 6.48 The predicted view is unlikely to include the proposed buildings as the intervening trees screen the site. The distance to the proposal mean that it would be unlikely that it would be readily noticeable. The scale of the building in the landscape would be comparable to the smaller agricultural buildings.
- 6.49 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to be **negligible**.
- 6.50 The **significance of the effect** is considered to be **negligible** for the following reasons:
- a. The screening by woodland
 - b. The distance to the proposal
 - c. The scale in the landscape

National Character Area 117 Avon Vales

- 6.51 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this receptor is considered be **High**.
- 6.52 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to have **minor**.
This is due to the limited visual impact demonstrated by the ZTVs and fieldwork confirming a lack of visibility.
- 6.53 The **significance** of the effect is considered to be **Minor Adverse** for the following reasons:
- a. The building type is incongruous to the character area descriptions.
 - b. The extent, layout and planting species proposed has been designed to reinforce the character of this receptor.

Wiltshire Landscape Character Area 16A Limestone Lowland

- 6.54 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this receptor is considered be **High**.
- 6.55 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to have **minor**.
This is due to the limited visual impact demonstrated by the ZTVs and fieldwork confirming a lack of visibility.
- 6.56 The **significance** of the effect is considered to be **Minor Adverse** for the following reasons:
- c. The building type is incongruous to the character area descriptions.
 - d. The extent, layout and planting species proposed has been designed to reinforce the character of this receptor.

North Wiltshire Landscape Area 8 Hullavington Rolling Lowland

- 6.57 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this receptor is considered be **High**.
- 6.58 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to have **minor**.
- 6.59 This is due to the limited visual impact demonstrated by the ZTVs and fieldwork confirming a lack of visibility.
- 6.60 The **significance** of the effect is considered to be **Minor Adverse** for the following reasons:
- a. The building type is incongruous to the character area descriptions.
 - b. The extent, layout and planting species proposed has been designed to reinforce the character of this receptor.

Stanton St. Quintin Quarry and Motorway Cutting SSSI

- 6.61 The **sensitivity** (susceptibility and value) for this receptor is considered be **High**.
- 6.62 The **magnitude** of effect (size, scale, duration and reversibility) is considered to have **minor**.
- 6.63 The **significance** of the effect is considered to be **Negligible** for the following reasons:
- The development would cause no physical alteration to the SSSI's geological features
 - The building is unlikely to be visible from this character area as demonstrated by the ZTVs with visual buffer calculations.

7.0 Potential Effects

- 7.01 This section considers the potential impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed development.

During Construction

- 7.02 The diversion to the right of way would need to take place as a first operation for its safe and commodious use. This will be possible with a new stile and the proposed fencing alone as the diversion is already accessible.
- 7.03 The construction site will be largely contained within the application. Cranes, site cabins and site fencing will likely be the most visible elements. Noise will be controlled through the planning process with a Construction Site Management Plan Condition.
- 7.04 This is likely to detract, for the duration of construction, from the character of the:
- Wiltshire Landscape Character Area 16A Limestone Lowland
 - North Wiltshire Landscape Area 8 Hullavington Rolling Lowland
 - Viewpoints 1-3

During Operation

- 7.05 The scale of built-form would increase and appear to be an extension of the St Modwen development creating a cohesive landscape character.
- 7.06 The use of the site by HGVs is unlikely to be perceived as an increase on the road due to the St Modwen use and "Truck Stop" to the east of the site.
- 7.07 The access from and into the site will be readily noticeable as a change from agricultural use.

Mitigation Measures & Monitoring

Measures at Planning Submission

- 7.08 The massing and form of the buildings have been designed to:
- Main Building
 - Grading from dark at the foundation to light at the roof for the same reasons as the St Modwen buildings as this reduces the visibility or how readily noticeable a building is from longer-range views, e.g. Viewpoints 4-7.

2. Matching the St Modwen appearance will make the proposal appear as an extension of the St Modwen development which will act as a cohesive character.
 - b. Office Building
 1. Designed as a traditional form typical of the area with a pitched roof and brick walls
 2. Scale appropriate to the agricultural character of the landscape
 - 7.09 The planting that is proposed:
 - a. Is maximised within the available space
 - b. Includes a variety of native tree species in informal groups to respond to the local landscape character as well as to allow for climate change by using varied
 - c. Retains the two mature Oak trees
 - d. Includes a meadow grass mix appropriate for the site and wider area with a wetland mix for the drainage swales
 - 7.10 Tree, shrub and hedge are all utilised for their many benefits, including the screening or integrating of built-form or other features, such as fencing. A boundary of tree, hedge and structure planting has been incorporated from the start of the design process from the West around to the North East.
- Measures Integrated During Determination Period and Now Proposed**
- 7.11 The massing and form of the buildings have been updated as follows:
 - a. Main Building
 1. Grading of colours removed and simplified to one single colour from the lowest part of the neighbouring St Modwen buildings, which is brown.
 2. This will increase the cohesion with the St Modwen buildings by relating colour-use to actual height of the bands, the lowest of which is taller than the proposed building.
 - b. Office Building – No change to above:
 1. Designed as a traditional form typical of the area with a pitched roof and brick walls
 2. Scale appropriate to the agricultural character of the landscape
 - c. Building locations
 1. Both buildings have been moved south by 2m to allow sufficient space for additional planting as outlined below
 - d. Fencing – All fencing to the north of the main application site, alongside the proposed driveway and northern boundary is now proposed to be 1–1.2m high timber post and rail fence from the previously proposed 2.4m green palisade fencing throughout.
 - 7.12 The planting that is proposed:
 - a. Now includes a 4m wide area to the north of the buildings, widened from 2m, and 1.5m to the east of the eastern staff parking area for the planting of a boundary hedge with

trees to enhance the local landscape character and visually integrate, or “ground” the buildings in the landscape.

- b. Now includes additional area alongside the B4122 road to allow for a new hedge and trees to be planted, outside of visibility splays from the proposed access driveway
- c. A combination of tree planting, swale and sculpted earthwork at the entrance to the driveway to enhance the sense of arrival

7.13 Increased number of trees and new hedges have been added for their many benefits, including the screening or integrating of built-form or other features, such as fencing. A boundary of tree, hedge and structure planting has been incorporated from the start of the design process from the West around to the Northeast.

8.0 Residual Effects

During Construction

- 8.01 The following are considered to be residual effects that cannot be entirely avoided:
- a. Construction noise
 - b. Visibility of construction activity, in particular a crane.
 - c. Increased traffic for construction vehicles.

During Operation

- 8.02 The following are considered to be residual effects that cannot be entirely avoided:
- a. Visibility of the building in the landscape.

9.0 Summary & Conclusion

- 9.01 The design and location of the development has been considered in relation to the context.
- 9.02 The number of viewpoints is small due to the topography of the landscape and screening effects of woodlands across the area.
- 9.03 There are no sensitive landscape designations covering the site. Landscape character assessments encourage development with stone clad buildings to respond to local village vernaculars, which is not a design language suitable for a development such as this. The approach of creating a cohesive character with the St Modwen development is viewed as positive as it therefore does not introduce an unusual building form and appearance in the landscape.
- 9.04 The design has been developed with further mitigation during the determination period which have materially reduced the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal. These reductions have not been sufficient to move residual impacts between categories of impact. Therefore the conclusion below remains as issued with the planning submission.
- 9.05 This assessment has identified potential impacts on external receptors, that range **from negligible to moderate adverse**. The rights of way are viewed as the most sensitive receptors that have been ascribed a moderate adverse impacts as well as the landscape character assessment.
- 9.06 No effects have been ascribed Major Adverse.