LANDARB SOLUTIONS



Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

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REVISIONS:

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23/03/26	-	First Issue	SW
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute.

1.2 This landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) is prepared in support of an outline planning application at Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire ('the site').

1.3 The 'proposed development' is summarised as an:

"Outline planning application for the change of use of land for the sitting of up to 38 holiday lodges, including creation of new vehicular access off Spine Road West, extension of existing shared footway and cycleway along the B4696 Spine Road East and associated landscape planting and infrastructure with all matters reserved except access."

1.4 In line with the guidelines of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) GLVIA 3, this landscape appraisal takes a 'proportionate' approach, taking into consideration the scale, extent and nature of the proposals and the anticipated sphere of influence and effect the proposals are considered to have upon the surroundings.

1.5 The objective of the LVA is to assess the baseline landscape and visual character of the site and study area, and the potential landscape and visual effects that would arise from the proposals, including the proposed access and landscaping.

1.6 The LVA considers the potential effects of the proposals on:

- Landscape elements and features such as vegetation, topography and water bodies etc.,
- Visual amenity; and
- Landscape character.

1.7 The primary objectives of the LVA are as follows:

- To identify, describe and evaluate the current landscape character of the site and its surrounding area;

- To identify, describe and evaluate any notable individual landscape elements and/or features within the site;
- To determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed;
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to view the proposed development) and to evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed; and
- To identify and describe any effects of the proposals in so far as they affect the landscape and/or views and to evaluate the magnitude of change owing to those effects.

Site Visit

1.8 The visual assessment was undertaken in June 2025 when foliage was present and visibility at a minimum. Consideration has also been given to the effect on visibility in winter months due to an absence of foliage and visibility at a maximum.

Caveats

1.9 It is acknowledged that when carrying out the site visit and taking photos from the chosen viewpoint locations (from publicly accessible areas and vantage points), the report's author is actively and deliberately 'looking' for the 'site' within the local landscape.

1.10 In reality, visual receptors such as users of the public rights of way network and motorists alike will not 'actively' be 'looking' for the site whilst traversing the public rights of way and road network. Whilst each visual receptor will have a varying degree of appreciation for their surroundings, depending on what they are doing (playing sport, walking, driving), their efforts will typically not be concerned with 'actively' and 'deliberately' looking for any given 'site' or 'proposed development'.

1.11 The photoviews were accurate at the time they were taken. Site conditions can be subject to change, for example garden and field boundary hedgerows can be cut/trimmed by landowners/farmers, trees can be felled by landowners or blown over by adverse weather, and new trees can be planted. Therefore, the extent of visibility can potentially increase or decrease since the photoviews were taken. Such

eventualities are not within the control of the report's author. The assessment of visibility within photoviews is accurate at the time of writing.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) – Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA);
- TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals - Landscape Institute/Institute 2019

2.2 As recommended within the published guidance, landscape (elements and character) and visual effects are assessed separately (see **Appendix 1 – Methodology**).

2.3 For the purposes of this assessment, unless otherwise stated, changes to landscape and visual amenity as a result of the proposed development are considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

Format of Report

2.4 After the first section of the report sets out the baseline scenario and incudes a policy review, the second part (the assessment part) of the report will focus on two key elements of landscape and visual assessment.

2.5 There are two important ways any development proposals can affect the landscape.

- Visually, or
- Physically.

Visual Assessment

2.6 Of the two ways, how the proposals are perceived visually in the landscape is perhaps the most important consideration and has a bearing upon mitigation by design, such

as any proposed planting recommendations, the siting of the proposals, the scale and materials used.

Landscape Character and Quality of the Proposals/Design

2.7 Once the visual amenity of the site is understood, the focus then lies with the character, the physical being and quality of the design of the proposals. A site not widely visible with the surroundings is no excuse for bad design and proposals that do not emulate local character and anchor themselves to their setting.

2.8 The section focusing on landscape character will include detailing the different elements of the proposals (such as planting, height and massing, materials, access and parking, and lighting), and setting out how the design team have designed the proposals to accord with local policy and design guidance recommendations.

2.9 When the design proposals and policy compliance table has been completed, and the proposals detailed, an assessment will be undertaken of how the proposals affect the local character.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework NPPF (published in December 2024 and revised in February 2025) sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for good design, promoting healthy communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for open countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives are to protect valued landscapes and, where possible, provide net gains in biodiversity.

3.3 The NPPF has been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the site and its setting, and the proposals shall take on board the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

Local Plan

3.4 The site is within the administrative area of Wiltshire Council. The Local Plan for Wiltshire comprises the adopted 'Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document'. The latter contains the following policies relevant to landscape and visual matters.

3.5 Core Policy 51 states in full:

"Core Policy 51 Landscape Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals should be informed by

and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies. In particular, 268 proposals will need to demonstrate that the following aspects of landscape character have been conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures:

I. The locally distinctive pattern and species composition of natural features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, watercourses and waterbodies.

ii The locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings.

iii The separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe.

iv Visually sensitive skylines, soils, geological and topographical features. Landscape features of cultural, historic and heritage value. vi. Important views and visual amenity. vii. Tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion.

viii. Landscape functions including places to live, work, relax and recreate.

ix. Special qualities of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the New Forest National Park, where great weight will be afforded to conserving and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty.

Proposals for development within or affecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), New Forest National Park (NFNP) or Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) shall demonstrate that they have taken account of the objectives, policies and actions set out in the relevant Management Plans for these areas. Proposals for development outside of an AONB that is sufficiently prominent (in terms of its siting or scale) to have an impact on the area's special qualities (as set out in the

relevant management plan), must also demonstrate that it would not adversely affect its setting."

3.6 Core Policy 52 states in full:

"Core Policy 52 Green infrastructure Development shall make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's green infrastructure network, and shall ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained. Where development is permitted developers will be required to:

i retain and enhance existing on-site green infrastructure

ii make provision for accessible open spaces in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Wiltshire Open Space Standards

iii. put measures in place to ensure appropriate long-term management of any green infrastructure directly related to the development

iv. provide appropriate contributions towards the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

v. identify and provide opportunities to enhance and improve linkages between the natural and historic landscapes of Wiltshire. If damage or loss of existing green infrastructure is unavoidable, the creation of new or replacement green infrastructure

equal to or above its current value and quality, that maintains the integrity and functionality of the green infrastructure network, will be required.

Proposals for major development should be accompanied by an audit of the existing green infrastructure within and around the site and a statement demonstrating how this will be retained and enhanced through the development process.

Development will not adversely affect the integrity and value of the green infrastructure network, prejudice the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, or provide inadequate green infrastructure mitigation.

Green infrastructure projects and initiatives that contribute to the delivery of a high quality and highly valued multi-functional green infrastructure network in accordance with the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy will be supported. Contributions (financial or other) to support such projects and initiatives will be required where appropriate from developers."

3.7 Core Policy 54 states in full:

"Core Policy 54 Cotswold Water Park In the Cotswold Water Park, proposals for outdoor or water-based sports, leisure and recreation based development will be supported where they help transform the area to an informal recreation and leisure resource for Wiltshire residents and visitors in line with the key objectives of the

Cotswold Water Park Vision and Implementation Plan. Proposals for any such development must meet the following criteria:

i. Increase or enhance public accessibility and enjoyment of the lakes and countryside.

ii. Contribute towards the local economy in the Cotswold Water Park.

iii. Strengthen the local landscape character and engender a sense of place.

iv. Contribute towards enhancement of biodiversity within the Cotswold Water Park.

v. Retain the character of individual settlements including the tranquillity of their settings.

vi. Protect the Cotswold Water Park's built heritage, and enhance accessibility and interpretation of such features where possible.

vii. Demonstrate high levels of sustainability, particularly including sustainable building design, accessibility by sustainable transport modes and sustainable drainage systems."

3.8 Core Policy 57 states in full:

"Core Policy 57 Ensuring high quality design and place shaping A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on the local context and being complementary to the locality. Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will 285 make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through:

i. enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape

setting and the existing pattern of development and responding to local topography by ensuring that important views into, within and out of the site are to be retained and enhanced

ii. *the retention and enhancement of existing important landscaping and natural features, (e.g. trees, hedges, banks and watercourses), in order to take opportunities to enhance biodiversity, create wildlife and recreational corridors, effectively integrate the development into its setting and to justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development*

iii. *responding positively to the existing townscape and landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines to effectively integrate the building into its setting*

iv. *being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and historic landscapes*

v. *the maximisation of opportunities for sustainable construction techniques, use of renewable energy sources and ensuring buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, in accordance with Core Policy 41 (Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy)*

vi. *making efficient use of land whilst taking account of the characteristics of the site and the local context to deliver an appropriate development which relates effectively to the immediate setting and to the wider character of the area*

vii. *having regard to the compatibility of adjoining buildings and uses, the impact on the amenities of existing occupants, and ensuring that appropriate levels of amenity are achievable within the development*

itself, including the consideration of privacy, overshadowing, vibration, and pollution (e.g. light intrusion, noise, smoke, fumes, effluent, waste or litter)

viii. *incorporating measures to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour on the site and in the surrounding area through the creation of visually attractive frontages that have windows and doors located to assist in the informal surveillance of public and shared areas by occupants of the site*

ix. *ensuring that the public realm, including new roads and other rights of way, are designed to create places of character which are legible, safe and accessible in accordance with Core Policy 66 (Strategic Transport Network)*

x. *the sensitive design of advertisements and signage, which are appropriate and sympathetic to their local setting by means of scale, design, lighting and materials*

xi. *taking account of the needs of potential occupants, through planning for diversity and adaptability, and considering how buildings and space will be used in the immediate and long term future*

xii. *the use of high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping, including the provision of street furniture and the integration of art and design in the public realm*

xiii. *the case of major developments, ensuring they are accompanied by a detailed design statement and masterplan, which is based on an analysis of the local context and assessment of constraints and opportunities of the site and is informed by a development concept, including clearly stated design principles, which will underpin the*

character of the new place xiv. meeting the requirements of Core Policy 61 (Transport and New Development)."

Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2026

3.9 The made Ashton Keynes Neighbourhood Plan 2015 – 2026 contains the following policies relevant to landscape and visual matters.

3.10 Policy ENP2 states in full:

"Policy ENP2 Environmental infrastructure and accessibility

a. Proposals to add to the existing public rights of way network in the area will be supported.

b. Proposals to provide additional cycleways will be supported. Where possible, these should connect with existing cycleways, the Sustrans national cycleway network and/or the Wiltshire Cycleway project.

c. Proposals for development on any former minerals extraction site should seek to make provision for strips of land for additional footpaths, bridle paths and cycleways, and assign such strips of land as public rights of way where possible and appropriate."

3.11 Policy ENP3 states in full:

"Policy ENP3 Enhancing the landscape character of the Parish and retaining the character of the village including the tranquillity of its setting

a. Developments in the Parish should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character. Developments should also retain the character of the settlement including the tranquillity of its setting and its sense of place.

b. Additionally, proposals for outdoor or water based sports, leisure and recreation based development will be expected to: increase or enhance public accessibility."

3.12 Policy ECP3 states in full:

"Policy ECP3 Recreation and Tourism Development proposals for recreation and tourism purposes will be supported providing that the siting, design, layout and scale of the proposal respects the quality and tranquillity of the parish's built and natural environments, including its character and surrounding countryside."

Response to Policies

3.13 This LVA has taken the above national and local plan policies into consideration when making an assessment on landscape and visual amenity.

4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

4.1 This report takes a considered and 'proportionate' approach to the assessment of likely landscape and visual effects associated with the proposals.

Site Location

4.2 The site comprises Lake 62 of the Cotswold Lakes (formerly the Cotswold Water Park) and its surrounding banks. Lake 62 is located approximately 875 metres north of the settlement of Ashton Keynes (see **Appendix 2 – Site Location Plan**).

4.3 By the nature of the site's location, and considering the scale and extent of the proposals, the anticipated influence of the proposals will be extremely localised and well contained. By virtue of the sites enclosed nature, visual amenity is likely to be limited and confined to the immediate areas enclosing the site.

4.4 Effects upon character will be limited to the immediate environs as this appraisal will confirm.

Scale of the site

4.5 It is useful to identify the scale of the site area, to better understand how this relates to its surroundings, and what the potential scale of the proposals could be in relation to the site. The site is considered to be medium in size. The site comprises a mix of water and vegetated banks. The vegetation on the banks is a mixture of grassland, scrub and trees. A series of Context Views show the present nature of the site (see **Appendix 3 – Context Views**)

Scale of the proposals

4.6 It is useful to identify the scale of the proposals in relation to the site, to better understand how the proposals relate to the site itself, how much of the site is being developed, and what the potential visual sphere of influence is anticipated to be, in respect of the proposals.

4.7 The majority of the site is being developed to include residential units, access and parking and open space for landscaping, and in this regard most of the site is being physically changed as part of the proposals.

Scale of visual influence upon surroundings

4.8 The site is considered a medium site, and the proposed development is large in relation to the existing site. The site visit and visual assessment confirm and support the authors view that the sphere of influence of the proposals upon its surroundings is very localised owing to the enclosing vegetation around the lake and intervening vegetation between potential observers and the site, as shown in the viewpoints taken as part of the visual appraisal.

4.9 Having identified the anticipated sphere of influence the scale of the proposals are likely to have on its surroundings, the focus of this appraisal can be narrowed to an area of study 'proportionate' to the scale, extent and nature of the proposals.

4.10 Visual amenity and landscape character a will be assessed as part of this appraisal. It is prudent to note, however, that the scale of the proposals is not considered likely to have any effect greater than negligible upon the character of the national and local character areas in their entirety, given these are large geographic areas by comparison.

4.11 Given the enclosed nature of the site, any effects identified within this appraisal are likely to be in relation to the site and its immediate environs, to the extent shown on the photoview location plan given at Appendix 4 (see **Appendix 4 – Photopoint Location Plan**), as this appraisal will demonstrate.

4.12 The following section describes the individual elements, attributes, and key characteristics of the existing site and local landscape, which together contribute to an understanding of the landscape character.

4.13 The following physical landscape attributes will be described;

- Topography and Landform

- Hydrology and Water Features
- Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover
- Public Rights of Way
- Public Highways and Transport Corridors
- Settlement Pattern and Built Form
- Landscape Designations
- Landscape Character

Topography/Landform

4.14 The water surface of the lake is at approximately 84 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The enclosing bankside varies in height between approximately 84 metres AOD and 86 metres AOD.

4.15 The topography of the local area surrounding the site is similar to the site. The local area is generally level with comparatively minor undulations.

Hydrology and Water Features

4.16 The majority of the site area comprises of Lake 62, an open body of water. The surrounding landscape contains numerous other lakes and water bodies, with their origins in the aggregate extractive industry.

Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover

4.17 The site is well vegetated. Trees and scrub largely encircle the lake shore.

4.18 An informal access track passes around the lake and separates the tree and shrub belt from typical substantial boundary hedgerow and scrub. The eastern bank of the lake is more open with grassland and some structures.

Public rights of way

4.19 The site is entirely private with no public rights of way.

4.20 There are very few rights of way located within the immediate context of the site.

Public Highways and Transport Corridors

4.21 The site is located immediately north of Spine Road. This is the closest road to the site.

Settlement Pattern and Built Form

4.22 There is little residential settlement in close proximity to the site. However, the North End area of Ashton Keynes (to the south) comes within approximately 90 metres of the site boundary at its closest point. A large, industrial, aggregate workings with numerous structures and buildings is located adjacent to the north-east of the site.

Landscape Designations

4.23 The site is not located within any nationally designated landscape. The site does not contain nor is it covered by any landscape protection designation.

Landscape Character

4.24 Landscape character assessments are documented at national, regional and local levels, and vary greatly in their level of detail, dependant on the scale and complexity of the landscape to which each assessment relates.

4.25 Landscape character assessments at national level for example provide more high level and generic descriptions for much wider geographic areas, compared to more local level assessments which provide more detailed descriptions and recommendations for much smaller local areas.

4.26 To provide a robust assessment in respect of landscape character in relation to any proposal/development, it is important to carry out a bespoke character assessment of any given project site and the local 'receiving' landscape within which the site is located and has the potential to affect as a result of the proposals being implemented.

4.27 The following have therefore been carried out to better understand the landscape character of the site and local landscape (see **Appendix 5 – Landscape Character Assessment Sheet**);

- Review of relevant national, regional, local landscape character assessments and identify characteristics of the site and local landscape;
- Complete a character field survey sheet, undertaken at the time of the site visit; and photographic record.

Review of National, Regional and Local Landscape Character Assessments

4.28 The site and the surrounding landscape have previously been assessed as part of a number of published landscape character assessments. These published landscape character assessments form a hierarchy from the national level to the district/local level.

National Landscape Character

4.29 England is divided in to 159 National [Landscape] Character Areas (NCAs). The site is located within NCA 108 'Upper Thames Clays. NCAs are managed by Natural England and are online resource. In the summary of the CA it is noted:

"…The area is dominated by watercourses, including the Thames and its tributaries, and there are also lakes associated with mineral extraction areas, such as the Cotswold Water Park. Watercourses and lakes provide important areas for wildlife and recreation…"

4.30 The key characteristics of NCA108 'Upper Thames Clays' are given as:

- *"Low-lying clay-based flood plains encircle the Midvale Ridge. Superficial deposits, including alluvium and gravel terraces, spread over 40 per cent of the area, creating gently undulating topography. The Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous clays and the wet valley bottoms give rise to enclosed pasture, contrasting with the more settled, open, arable lands of the gravel.*
- *The large river system of the River Thames drains the Vales, their headwaters flowing off the Cotswolds to the north or emitting from the springline along the Chilterns and Downs escarpments. Where mineral extraction takes place, pits naturally fill with water, and limestone gravels from the Cotswolds give rise to marl formation. There are a high number of nationally important geological sites.*

- ***Woodland cover is low at only about 3 per cent, but hedges, hedgerow trees and field trees are frequent. Watercourses are often marked by lines of willows and, particularly in the*** *Aylesbury Vale and* ***Cotswold Water Park, native black poplar****.*
- *Wet ground conditions and heavy clay soils discourage cultivation in many places, giving rise to livestock farming. Fields are regular and hedged, except near the Cotswolds, where there can be stone walls. The Vale of White Horse is made distinct by large arable fields, and there are relict orchards on the Greensand.*
- *In the river corridors, grazed pasture dominates, with limited areas of historic wetland habitats including wet woodland, fen, reedbed and flood meadow. There are two areas of flood meadow designated for their importance at a European level as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). There are also rich and extensive ditch systems.*
- *Gravel extraction has left a legacy of geological exposures, numerous waterbodies and, at the Cotswold Water Park, a nationally important complex of marl lakes.*
- *Wetland habitat attracts regionally important numbers of birds including snipe, redshank, curlew and lapwing and wintering wildfowl such as pochard. Snake's head fritillary thrives in the internationally important meadows. The area also supports typical farmland wildlife such as brown hare, bats, barn owl, tree sparrow and skylark.*
- *Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site, including its Capability Brown landscape, is the finest of many examples of historic parkland in this NCA. There are many heritage features, including nationally important survivals of ridge and furrow, Roman roads, deserted medieval villages and historic bridges.*
- *Brick and tile from local clays, timber and thatch are traditional building materials across the area, combined with limestone near the Cotswolds and occasional clunch and wichert near the Chilterns.*
- *Settlement is sparse on flood plains, apart from at river crossings, where there can be large towns, such as Abingdon. Aylesbury and Bicester are major urban centres, and the outer suburbs of Oxford and Swindon spread into this NCA. Market towns and villages are strung along the springlines of the Chilterns and Downs. Major routes include mainline rail, canals, a network of roads including the M40 and M4 and The Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails."*

NB emboldened text in above paragraphs is the author's emphasis and is considered particularly relevant to the site and the local area.

4.31 The NCA refers to the Cotswold Water Park (now the Cotswold Lakes) on several occasions. Within Landscape Attributes under "Superficial deposits create undulating topography across much of the area. Better drained land on higher ground is often settled and cultivated. A legacy of mineral extraction gives rise to geological exposures, numerous waterbodies supporting wildfowl and a nationally important

complex of marl lakes," it is noted "…there are over 100 lakes comprising the Cotswold Water Park, creating a distinctive landscape and popular with bird-watchers. Limestone gravels from the Cotswolds give rise to marl formation…"

4.32 Under 'Landscape Opportunities' there is a specific reference to maintaining characteristic Black Poplars in the Cotswold Water Park.

Local and County Landscape Character

4.33 At the local and county level the Cotswold Water Park Landscape Character Assessment (May 2007) places the site within the River Basin Vale landscape character type (LCT) (see **Appendix 6 – River Basin Vale**). The key characteristics of the LCT are given as:

- *"Low lying, flat to very gently undulating floodplain landscape underlain by extensive deposits of alluvial clay and silt, and sand and gravel that mask the solid geology;*
- *Isolated hillocks associated with exposures of the Oxford Clay form locally significant features;*
- ***Strong presence of water reflected in rivers, streams, ditches and extensive network of restored sand and gravel extraction sites;***
- *Lush wet meadows and wide floodplain pastures, with watercourses often lined with riparian vegetation, including frequent lines of pollarded willows;*
- ***Mosaic of wetland and riparian habitats, together with water based recreational uses associated with lakes created through the restoration of gravel extraction sites;***
- *Combination of pastoral land, often in smaller scale fields and closely associated with watercourses and larger scale fields under arable cultivation;*
- *Pattern of nucleated and linear settlements dispersed throughout the landscape, including occasional small towns and large villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads and dwellings, with vernacular buildings constructed in stone and brick;*
- ***Modern waterside developments comprising holiday or second homes with distinctive architectural style and often located in association with restored lake areas;***
- *Scattered pattern of woodland plantations and copses together with vegetation closely associated with river courses and standing areas of water, which in places results in a sense of enclosure and more intimate landscape; and*
- *Limited major roads and a wider network of minor roads providing access to the floodplain landscape."*

NB emboldened text in above paragraphs is the author's emphasis and is considered particularly relevant to the site and the local area.

4.34 Under the title 'Buildings and Settlement' (page 36 section 5.3.7) the following is noted:

"…A number of new residential holiday developments have established within the heart of the Water Park some of which present contrasting architectural styles…"

4.35 Specifically, the site is located in the 3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Westlands LCA. The description of the LCA is quite extensive. However the following aspects are note and considered of particular relevance:

"…The mosaic of lakes comprises part of a complex of water bodies that form the western section of the Cotswold Water Park. Despite the number of lakes, the visual influence of these water bodies within the wider landscape context of the area is often limited as the development of regenerating scrub vegetation and areas of woodland adjacent to many of the lakes restricts views towards the water bodies from neighbouring settlements and local roads. This has resulted in a small to medium scale landscape which feels enclosed, despite the sequence of wetlands and lakes…

…Numerous clusters of recently constructed lakeside holiday and second homes and chalets have developed around many of the lakes and these new developments are particularly prominent around the water bodies to the south-east of South Cerney. Although vegetation filters views towards many of these developments, the buildings tend to draw the eye as their architectural style is in contrast with the local vernacular of the surrounding villages; also, the individual developments do not share a consistent character with one another…"

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

5.1 This section describes the key components of the proposals, and the nature of the anticipated effects that are likely to occur. It then draws upon the landscape and visual baseline information and summarises key constraints and opportunities that need to be considered and incorporated within the proposals.

5.2 A 'mitigation by design' approach has been taken as part of the project, meaning that during the course of design evolution, landscape, visual and character considerations were considered as an integral part of the design process.

5.3 In summary, the proposed development comprises:

- *The siting of up to 38 holiday lodges;*
- *The creation of a new vehicular access off Spine Road West;*
- *An extension of existing shared footway and cycleway along the B4696 Spine Road East; and*
- *associated landscape planting and infrastructure.*

5.4 The architect's, Leap Architects, have prepared a 'Proposed Site Plan' (see **Appendix 7 – Proposed Site Plan**).

5.5 The holiday lodges are intended to be mobile, single storey, ones and contemporary in design, with aluminium and/or timber cladding and glazed end elevations. The Proposed Site Plan indicates the lodges would be arranged in four clusters around the lake.

5.6 The main cluster of lodges would be along the eastern shore line of the lake using the existing site entrance. A second sub cluster would be focused on the existing promontory south of the main cluster.

5.7 A third cluster would be located on the southern shore of the lake and accessed from the proposed new entrance off Spine Road West. A fourth sub cluster would be located on the existing promontory on the western side of the lake.

5.8 Parking areas would be associated with each cluster of lodges.

Landscaping Proposals

5.9 As part of the proposals, a Landscape Proposals plan (see **Appendix 8 – Landscape Proposals**) has been prepared which illustrates the both the proposed mitigation measure and the landscape enhancements brought about by the proposals.

5.10 The Landscape Proposals plan is to accord with the overall site masterplan and seeks to place the development as a whole within a naturalistic setting. Approximately half the site and the shoreline of the lake would remain substantially unaltered by the proposed development.

5.11 Off-site boundary vegetation would be retained and where necessary protected. New on-site boundary planting is proposed along the site's southern edge that would take the form of scattered trees and scrub. This new planting would provide screening and would help to break up the proposed parking area in the southern part of the site.

5.12 Space has been made available for tree and scrub planting between the proposed lodges so as to, create privacy, break up the massing of the lodges, mitigate for any loss of existing vegetation and to provide additional screening.

5.13 The native planting will contain a mixture of species that are appropriate for the site and area, and include species known for wildlife benefit, and include species that are known to thrive in the locality and therefore be in character with plantings already evident on the sites boundaries and in the wider area.

5.14 To enhance the landscape of the site, the Landscape Proposals includes marginal planting to the lake edge in the vicinity of the proposed lodges. Areas of grassland will be oversown and managed as a species rich wetland mix. Such enhancements would provide visual interest but will also increase biodiversity and wildlife habitat opportunities on the site.

Planting

5.15 When the visual assessment of the photo views describes any screening or filtering of any assessed views, there are assumptions made in respect of proposed planting and the anticipated heights that proposed planting can be hoped to achieve.

5.16 Any tree planting will be supplied at extra heavy standard size at 14-16cm with a height at year 1 of 4-4.5m. In year 8 these trees, subject to species and external factors considerations affecting tree growth rates, be expected to reach around 6-6.5m in height and be around 8.5m high by year 15.

5.17 Any native hedge/scrub planting areas would be planted at 40-60cm at year 1, and be expected to be around 3.5m in year 8, and 5-7m in year 15, unless managed at a lesser height.

Lighting

5.18 There is no lighting information available at the time of writing. However several assumptions can be made as to the nature of the lighting required and typical for such a setting.

5.19 The residential units will be fitted with external lighting commensurate with their proposed use, such as downward facing security lighting and porch lights etc.

5.20 The levels of lighting perceived at night will be comparable to other similar existing developments within the Cotswold Lakes. The site is well enclosed and outward visibility of new lighting would be contained to the site only. The majority of lighting within the site will be downward facing and minimal, so as to not create an aurora around the site.

6 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 A visual assessment of the proposals has been undertaken to determine how the proposals would likely have a bearing on the visual amenity of the immediate vicinity of the site and the surrounding landscape/countryside. This assessment was undertaken in June 2025 when foliage was present and potential visibility at a minimum. Consideration has also been given to winter months when visibility is at a maximum due to the absence of foliage.

6.2 A number of representative viewpoints have been identified on which to base a visual assessment (see **Appendix 4 - Photoview Location Plan**).

6.3 The detailed assessment of these representative viewpoints (see **Appendix 9 – Representative Viewpoints**) sets out how the baseline view will be affected visually by the proposals.

Effects Upon Visual Amenity

6.4 As illustrated within the visual assessment, the lack of public rights of way and the well enclosed nature of the site greatly reduces the potential visual effects arising from the proposals.

6.5 There are several features that limit the outward visibility of the site.

- The site is not located in a prominent location relative to its surroundings, with no higher land looking back down towards the site
- Intervening vegetation and level topography in the surrounding countryside largely prevents views back towards the site from rights of way

Viewpoints

6.6 The viewpoints that were taken as part of the visual assessment have been assessed at:

Year 1 - when the proposed development has been constructed and the lodges, parking, access and landscaping has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow the planting to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any softening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

6.7 The photoviews are formatted on A3, such that if you were to hold them up at arm's length, they would be a 100% representation of the view you would see.

6.8 Visual assessment is subjective, and what one person might consider is a beneficial change, another could be of the opposite view and consider the same thing negative.

Viewpoint 1

Description of View

6.9 This view is taken from Ashton Road at its junction with public right of way AKEY33. The view looks south directly towards the site. The site is not readily distinguishable and views into the site screened by existing intervening vegetation between the observer and the site. The view is representative of users of the public highway and the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.10 Users of the public highway on rural lanes are assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. In this instance, the users of the public right of way are not able to focus on the landscape and are also considered to have a medium susceptibility to change.

6.11 The value of the view is judged to be medium. Overall the sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged to be medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.12 With the proposed development in place on the site, it is judged that there would be no change to the view. The vegetation along the northern edge of the site would be retained as part of the proposals. This vegetation together with other existing

intervening off-site vegetation would screen the proposed development both in summer and winter.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.13 With no change, there would be no effect at year 1 or year 15.

Viewpoint 2

Description of View

6.14 This view is taken from Spine Road West and looks east along the road and the site's southern boundary. There is no footway along the road at this point so pedestrian use is not encouraged.

6.15 Views into the site are screened by roadside vegetation. The view is representative of users of the public highway.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.16 Users of the public highway on rural lanes are assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. The view is assessed as medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.17 With the proposed development in place on the site there would be some limited change to the view. The proposed new access onto the site would be evident in the far distance through the loss of a small section of roadside vegetation. There would also be some loss on site vegetation.

6.18 However, the off-site vegetation except for the entrance would be retained. There would be some filtered views of the proposed development at year 1 in winter with no leaves on the roadside vegetation. The magnitude of change at year 1 is assessed as low.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.19 With a medium sensitivity and a low magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as minor adverse.

6.20 At year 15, proposed tree and scrub planting on the site would have filled out sufficiently so as to provide further screening of the propose development. It is judged that the scale of effect at year 15 would diminish to negligible neutral.

Viewpoint 3

Description of View

6.21 This view is taken from close to the recent Kings Water development and looks east in the direction of the site. The view looks across arable farmland. The site is seen as a row of vegetation on the skyline. The same vegetation screens views into the site.

6.22 The view is a proxy one for occupiers of residential properties.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.23 Occupiers of residential properties are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The view is assessed as of medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor is assessed as high.

Magnitude of Change

6.24 With the proposed development in place on the site there would be a noticeable change to the view. Lower-level boundary vegetation would be retained (providing some screening to the proposed lodges) but some internal trees would be removed from the skyline to the right of the view. The magnitude of change is assessed as low.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.25 With a high sensitivity and a low magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as moderate adverse. New tree and scrub planting on the site would be comparatively immature.

6.26 At year 15, proposed tree and scrub planting on the site would have filled out sufficiently so as to provide further screening of the propose development. It is judged that the scale of effect at year 15 would diminish to minor adverse. The scale and nature of the effect would continue to alter, becoming less as the trees implemented as part of the proposals continue to grow over time.

Viewpoint 4

Description of View

6.27 This view is taken from Whitefriars Lane looking west directly towards the site, part of which is framed in the centre of the view by roadside vegetation. Views into the site are screened by the boundary vegetation around the site. Trees form the skyline.

6.28 Whitefriars Lane is a public right of way and the view is representative of users of the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.29 In this instance users of the public right of way are not able to focus on the wider landscape in their approach to Ashton Road and are also considered to have a medium susceptibility to change.

6.30 The value of the view is judged to be medium. Overall the sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged to be medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.31 With the proposed development in place on the site, the view would be largely unaltered. Some loss of vegetation may be apparent on site to the right of the view but would not be conspicuous. The proposed development would be screened from view, by the retained vegetation on and adjacent to the site, in both winter and summer. The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible at year 1.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.32 With a medium sensitivity and a negligible magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as negligible adverse. New tree and scrub planting on the site would be comparatively immature.

6.33 At year 15, proposed tree and scrub planting on the site would have filled out sufficiently so as to provide further screening to the proposed development. It is judged that the scale of effect at year 15 would alter to negligible neutral.

Viewpoint 5

Description of View

6.34 This view is taken from public right of way AKEY1A and looks west towards the site. The view is partially restricted by existing vegetation along the edge of the right of way. Only a small portion of the site's eastern boundary is visible and views into the site are entirely screened by existing boundary vegetation.

6.35 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.36 Users of the public right of way are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change.

6.37 The value of the view is judged to be low. Although not unpleasant, the view has little aesthetic merit or interest. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged to be medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.38 With the proposed development in place on the site, the view would be largely unaltered. Some loss of vegetation may be apparent on site but would not be conspicuous. The proposed development would be screened from view, by the retained vegetation on and adjacent to the site, in both winter and summer. The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible at year 1.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.39 With a high sensitivity and a negligible magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as negligible adverse. New tree and scrub planting on the site would be comparatively immature.

6.40 At year 15, proposed tree and scrub planting on the site would have filled out sufficiently so as to provide further screening to the proposed development. It is judged that the scale of effect at year 15 would alter to one of negligible neutral.

Viewpoint 6

Description of View

6.41 This view is taken from AKEY1A and looks north-west in the direction of the site. Views of and into the site are screened by existing vegetation between the observer and the site boundary. The view is representative of users of the public right of way network.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.42 Users of the public right of way are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change.

6.43 The value of the view is judged to be low. Although not unpleasant, the view has little aesthetic merit or interest. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged to be medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.44 With the proposed development in place on the site, the view would be unaltered. The proposed development would be screened by existing vegetation in the landscape between the observer and the site boundary. The proposals would bring about no change.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.45 With a high sensitivity and no change, there would be no effect at year 1 or year 15.

Viewpoint 7

Description of View

6.46 This view is taken from public right of way AKEY4. The view looks south across fields and field boundaries. The site is distinguishable as a tree belt on the skyline. Views into the site are screened by on-site vegetation and by vegetation in the intervening landscape between the observer and the site.

6.47 The view is representative of users of the public right of way.

Sensitivity of Receptor

6.48 Users of the public right of way are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change.

6.49 The value of the view is judged to be medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor is judged to be high.

Magnitude of Change

6.50 With the proposed development in place on the site, the view would be unaltered. The proposed development would be screened by existing vegetation in the landscape between the observer and the site boundary. The proposals would bring about no change.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.51 With a high sensitivity and no change, there would be no effect at year 1 or year 15.

Planting Assumptions

6.52 The following assumptions for tree and scrub planting are made when assessing the visual effects upon the identified views.

6.53 Year 1 – This is the stock size at the time of planting.

6.54 Year 15 – This is a timescale used in visual assessment, when planting is widely accepted to have established and grown to a sufficient height to provide a good level of filtering/screening for proposals.

6.55 Year 8 – This is a halfway point of measurement that illustrates incremental growth for proposed planting.

Type of planting	Year 1	Year 8	Year 15
Extra Heavy Standard Trees	4-4.5m	6-6.5m	8.5m
Scrub Planting/Native Transplants	40-60 cm	3.5m	5-7m

Effects Upon Residential Properties

6.56 There are few residential properties in close proximity to the site boundary. The generally well enclosed nature of the site and the low-lying topography would combine to greatly restrict any potential views of the proposed development from residential properties. Viewpoint 3 identifies one moderate adverse effect from residential properties to the east of the site at year 1 but mitigation measures in the form new tree and scrub planting on the site, would help reduce this effect to minor adverse by year 15.

Effects Upon Public Highways

6.57 The closest highways to the site are Ashton Road and Spine Road West It is considered that once the new boundary planting, and planting within the site has established, it will provide a green buffer and screen the proposed development from view, helping maintain the green and leafy character of the two roads in proximity to the site boundary.

Effects Upon Summer and Winter Views

6.58 Given the nature of the site and how well it is contained, there will be little difference between summer and winter views. In winter the dense tracery of branches within the retained hedgerows/boundary vegetation and trees will still provide a good amount of winter screening.

6.59 Removal of trees and scrub will primarily occur on-site rather than along the site boundary. The proposed tree and scrub planting once established and filled out at year 15 will provide further screening both in summer and winter.

Summary

6.60 A summary of the visual effects is tabulated in **Appendix 10**.

7 EFFECTS UPON LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS AND CHARACTER

7.1 In the context of the proposed development described within the previous section. This section sets out an assessment of the likely physical landscape effects upon the site and the anticipated landscape effects upon the character of the relevant landscape character area of the site and its immediate context.

Likely causes of effects

7.2 Although any landscape has some intrinsic sensitivity, different landscapes contain a range of components which will respond differently to change, subject to the type and nature of the proposals. Therefore, in order to inform the analysis of effects, judgements should be made with reference to the specific changes which arise from the type and nature of proposals being considered.

7.3 The following section sets out the likely causes of effects which would occur in relation to the proposals for the site.

Causes of temporary effects during construction

7.4 The temporary construction work which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows:

- Site clearance and setting out;
- Movement and presence of associated construction vehicles;
- Presence of materials storage and machinery storage on site during construction;
- Installation of tree protection barriers to protect boundary vegetation;
- Minor reprofiling internally for parking areas and access;
- Installation of the proposed lodges and structures together with access/parking;
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping.

7.5 Tree protection measures (Heras barriers) will be erected prior to site construction works. These measures will be temporary in nature.

Causes of effects at completion

7.6 The permanent components of the proposed development which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows;

- Installation of the proposed lodges, structures, access and parking areas;
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping integrated into the proposals (i.e. trees, scrub, and grassland planting).

7.7 Effects at completion are concerned with the long-term alteration in the landscape from the current site context, to the future scenario with the proposals in place. The new lodges, access, and parking area together with associated planting will have been completed and will be a permanent component in the landscape.

7.8 In the long term, effects will be associated with the influence of mitigation measures upon landscape character. This establishes the changes to landscape character as a result of proposed mitigation measures/planting fully established and performing their intended function. The effects are considered to be long term and not reversible.

7.9 In terms of physical landscape resources, the direct changes will be restricted to the site only.

7.10 Overall, the physical landscape effects are considered to be direct and will be limited to the extent of the site. There will be no additional direct effects on the wider areas around the site or to the wider landscape context of the local character area.

Effects Upon Landscape Elements

7.11 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the elements and features that currently characterise the site.

7.12 In the following paragraphs effects will be assessed at;

Year 1 - when built form has been completed, and any earthworks and landscape has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow the structural elements to have weathered, and for any landscaping interventions such as trees, shrubs and grassland

to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any screening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

Topography

7.13 Topographically, the proposals will not alter the grain of the existing topography. The proposals do not require large cut and fill exercises that would fundamentally alter the key character of the topography.

7.14 There will be localised areas of re-profiling in respect to the foundations for the proposed lodges, and for access roads and parking areas. These would not bring about fundamental alterations to the grain of the generally level or gently undulating site wide topography. The boundary vegetation is to be retained and thus the levels would not change in accordance with a requirement to maintain levels as part of BS: 5837:2012.

Value and Sensitivity

7.15 The topography of the site is assessed as having a low susceptibility to the type of development proposed together with a low value (it is neither rare nor unusual). The sensitivity is therefore low.

Magnitude of Change

7.16 The magnitude of change to the fundamental character of the sites topography is assessed as being negligible. Despite localised areas of re-profiling, which would be permanent, these would not bring about a notable change to the existing perceived landform of the site.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.17 With a negligible magnitude of change, and a low sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to negligible neutral at year 1 and year 15l.

Trees and Vegetation

Value and Sensitivity

7.18 Trees are considered highly susceptible to development if they are not protected as part of any site works.

7.19 The site is presently well treed. The trees have been subject to a BS5837:2012 tree survey. The tree survey identifies 35 arboricultural items on the site including individual tree specimens, groups of trees and hedgerows.

7.20 The majority of trees on site are being retained. However, a tree retention/loss plan has been prepared (see **Appendix 11 – Tree Retention and Loss Plan**) that indicates the loss of internal vegetation in those areas of the site where the lodges are proposed i.e. along the eastern and southern shores and on the two promontories. A small amount of boundary vegetation would be removed at the proposed access points onto the site.

7.21 The proposed development includes for new tree and scrub planting around the proposed lodges once in place. The new planting would help to mitigate for the loss of the existing tree vegetation. New species rich grassland and marginal planting is proposed as an enhancement to the site's existing vegetation resource.

7.22 In landscape terms, the existing vegetation resource on the site is assessed as medium value. With a high susceptibility, the overall sensitivity of the vegetation resource is high.

Magnitude of Change

7.23 The magnitude of change to the site's existing vegetation (tree and scrub) resource at year 1 is assessed as medium. New tree and scrub planting will be comparatively immature.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.24 With a high sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as major adverse. At year 15, the proposed new tree and scrub panting together with species rich grassland and waterside marginals will be fully established and would have filled out. The scale of effect would diminish to minor adverse.

Public rights of way (PRoW)

7.25 There are no rights of way running through the site, and the proposals do not directly require the alteration of any rights of way. There would therefore be no direct effect to any public rights of way.

7.26 Any potential effects on users of the local PRoW network are considered under section 6 'Effects on Visual Amenity'.

Watercourses and waterbodies

Value and Sensitivity

7.27 Lake 62 is the main and most dominant landscape feature of the site. Though manmade, the lake is judged to be of high susceptibility and high value, giving an overall high sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change

7.28 The proposed development is focused on the lake. The proposed loges are intended to project from the lake shore into the water but avoiding damage or alteration to the banks. A slipway is proposed that would bring about a modification to a short section of bankside but the lake would be substantially physically unaltered with the proposed development in place.

7.29 The magnitude of change is assessed as low.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.30 With a high sensitivity and a low magnitude of change, the scale of effect at year 1 is assessed as moderate adverse.

7.31 At year 15, the proposed lodges would appear amongst lake side vegetation including trees and scrub together with marginal planting. The scale of effect would diminish to negligible neutral.

Effects Upon Landscape Character

Effect on the landscape character of the site and its immediate environs

Value and Sensitivity

7.32 The site is a comparatively recent manmade landscape but its combination of woody vegetation and waterscape in combination give rise to an aesthetically pleasing but not unique landscape in the context of the wider local area. The ability to perceive the site is limited owing to its enclosed nature and private status.

7.33 Beyond belonging to the Cotswold Lakes designated area, the site is not nor does it contain a landscape protection designation. Its individual landscape features are not rare or unusual and are not protected in their own right. The landscape of the site is judged to have a medium value.

7.34 Having undertaken an assessment of the effects of the proposed development on the individual landscape features (section above) that comprise the site's landscape, it is assessed that topography of the site will be substantially unaltered, as will the form of the site's lake. The effects on the existing vegetation resource can be mitigated to a large degree. Taken together, these aspects lead to a judgement that the landscape of the site has a medium susceptibility to the type of development being proposed.

7.35 Overall, the sensitivity of the landscape character of the site and its immediate environs is assessed as medium.

Magnitude of Change

7.36 With the proposed development in place on the site, it is assessed that there would be a medium magnitude of change to the landscape character of the site and its immediate environs. The proposals would introduce new built form and structures onto

the site where they are presently absent. The proposed development would also introduce parking and a level of noise and activity that is not currently present.

7.37 However, the physical elements of the proposals would not occupy all the site. Approximately half the site would be substantially unaffected.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and Year 15

7.38 With a medium sensitivity and a medium magnitude of change, the scale of effect on the landscape character of the site and its immediate environs at year 1 would be moderate adverse.

7.39 At year 15, the built form, access and parking would have mellowed and appear less 'raw' than it would at year 1. The proposed mitigation tree and scrub planting would have filled out sufficiently so that the built and structural elements of the proposed development would be set within a strong and attractive landscape setting. The scale of effect would diminish to minor adverse.

Effect on the published character assessments

7.40 The baseline section of this report identifies which national character area and which local character area the site sites within. The sensitivities and characteristics of the local character area are identified and are useful in terms of setting out key elements of landscape and visual character.

7.41 There are several ways any proposals can affect a character area, either physically by building on it, or visually, by being highly visible to large parts of a character area and thus eroding it visually.

Effect on National character area

7.42 The proposals are judged not to be physically large enough nor visually prominent enough to have any meaningful, above a negligible, effect on the national character area.

Effect on the local area as expressed in the 3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Westlands LCA

Value and Sensitivity

7.43 At the local area level, the site is located in the 3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Westlands LCA. There would be no modification to the physical elements and features of the local area, as expressed in the published landscape character assessment, outside the site boundary with the proposed development in place.

7.44 Development of the type proposed is already a noted feature and key characteristic of the local area. As such the landscape character of the local area within the 3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Westlands is judged to have a low susceptibility to the type of development being proposed. The local area as a whole is recognised for its attractiveness, and is judged to have a medium value.

Magnitude of Change

7.45 The proposed development would not introduce a completely new or incongruous form of development into the local landscape. The proposals would retain the lake on the site substantially unaltered and the proposed medium to long term mitigation measures would help ensure that the site would maintain its verdant and strong landscape structure.

7.46 The retention of the site's existing boundary vegetation, strengthened and enhanced with the proposed tree and scrub planting, means that the site is, and would continue to be, visually well enclosed. The character of the local landscape through its visual appearance would be substantively unchanged with the proposals in place on the site.

7.47 The magnitude of change at year 1 is judged to be low.

Scale of Effect at Year 1 and Year 15

7.48 With a medium sensitivity and a low magnitude of change, the scale of effect on the local landscape of the 3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Westlands LCA would be minor adverse. At year 15 with mitigation and enhancement measures the scale of effect would reduce to negligible adverse.

Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan Policies relevant to landscape and character

Local Plan Policies

7.49 Core Policy 51: The proposed development is based upon the maintenance of the lake and its well treed setting that comprises the site's landscape. The proposals have been designed to be sympathetic to the site's existing landscape features. Approximately half the site including the lake shore would be unaffected by the proposed development. The proposals would retain the majority of the existing boundary vegetation and maintain the site's visual enclosure. Mitigation measures in the form of new tree and scrub planting would help conserve the well treed character of the site and would provide a strong and robust landscape setting to the proposals.

7.50 Core Policy 52: The green infrastructure of the site would be maintained with the proposed development in place. Trees and scrub would function to provide screening, enclosure and shelter and, together with water marginals and species rich grassland, would provide opportunities for wild life and an increase in biodiversity. The proposed development is designed to ensure that the site acts as a multi-functional landscape.

7.51 Core Policy 54: The proposed development would maintain a sense of place on the site. The proposed layout would be a bespoke design to the site. The proposals have the potential to increase public accessibility onto the site so that the lake and its environs can be enjoyed.

7.52 Core Policy 57: The proposed development would respond positively to the site's existing features. The proposed lodges would be low profile and would be set part from one another sufficiently so as to allow trees and scrub to develop between each

lodge so reducing the perceived massing on the site. The layout and new planting would help to enable the proposals to sit comfortably into their landscape setting and maintaining the existing landscape character of the site, of water and trees. The proposed new trees and scrub would in the medium/long term mitigate for any initial loss and would integrate the proposed lodges and associated parking/access into the retained unaltered parts of the site.

7.53 Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENP2: The proposals would provide connections into the local cycleway/public right of way network.

7.54 Neighbourhood Plan Policy ENP3: The proposed development would be located away from the main areas of settlement and would not adversely affect its perceived level of tranquillity or its physical setting or sense of place.

7.55 Neighbourhood Plan Policy ECP3: the proposals would maintain the visual enclosure of the site and the separation between the site and the wider countryside. The activity on the site would be contained so as to conserve the character of the wider local landscape of the parish.

7.56 In summary, the proposals accord with the objectives and policies of the Local and Neighbourhood Plans in respect of landscape and visual matters. In this regard, the proposals will retain important features of character, and include new measures that will enhance the character of the site and how it is perceived from the wider area.

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has assessed the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development and its associated landscaping. The proposals include sufficient mitigation measures to ensure that there would be no major adverse effects arising from the proposed development in the medium to long term.

8.2 The site is contained by established trees and hedges which form the boundaries of the site with the wider countryside. The wider landscape comprises the Cotswold Lakes which comprises of recreational lakes and holiday accommodation, covering the broad area of former gravel extraction sites.

8.3 Other than the established, trees, scrub and hedges there are no identified landscape features or elements of great rarity or value. The site is located in a landscape whose wider context comprises a large number of recreational lakes and their associated activities and accommodation. Therefore a proposed development of this nature will not be incongruous in this context.

8.4 It is evident from this assessment that the visual envelope associated with the proposed development would be extremely localised. The majority of the surrounding landscape would be completely unaffected visually should the proposals for the site take place.

8.5 The surrounding and intervening vegetation would limit the outward effect the proposed development would have on the surrounding landscape. There is opportunity across the entire site to introduce and implement a green infrastructure strategy that utilises existing landscape structure introducing new tree and hedge planting which would soften and integrate the proposed development.

8.6 The proposals are of good quality design. The proposed development includes landscape planting, and would adopt a built form character for the proposed lodges that emulates other similar developments that are already present and a key characteristic of the wider local landscape.

8.7 This appraisal did not find any notable or important concerns regarding the anticipated landscape and visual effects arising from the proposals.

8.8 Provided that the landscape enhancements proposed are implemented, the proposals will deliver a high-quality development that is anchored to its setting and sensitive to its context.

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

1. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken with reference to best practice, as outlined in the following published guidance:

    - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) - Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)

    - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) Natural England

Professional Judgement

2. LVIAs differ from other specialist studies because they are generally undertaken by professionals who are also involved in the design of the landscape and the preparation of subsequent management proposals. This allows the landscape assessment to proceed as an integral part of the overall scheme design rather than a discrete study carried out once the proposals have been finalised.

3. Professional judgement is a very important part of the LVIA process. Whilst there is scope for quantitative measurement of some interrelating elements (e.g. the loss of trees), much of the landscape assessment will rely on qualitative judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion (e.g. the assessment of landscape values or what effect proposals will have on visual amenity).

4. Professional judgements are therefore based on both training/qualification and experience and are supported by clear evidence and a reasoned judgement. Accordingly, it is recommended that suitably qualified and experienced professionals carry out the LVIAs.

5. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the professional judgement of a chartered landscape architect with over 13+ years' experience of undertaking landscape and visual impact assessments for projects at varying scales at complexities.

Landscape Baseline

6. The initial step in the landscape assessment is to establish the baseline landscape conditions, to determine the current elements and character of the landscape within and surrounding the site. This involved an initial desktop study of but not necessarily limited to:

    - The review of published Landscape Character Assessments;
    - The review of planning policies relevant to landscape;
    - Use of Ordnance survey maps at 1:50,000, 1:25,000 scales;
    - Use of Aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area;
    - Review of and use of datasets for rural designations from the MAGIC website (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside);
    - Describing the existing landscape elements that contribute to landscape character, such as trees and vegetation, topography, settlement pattern, public rights of way, land use, waterbodies; and
    - Visual observations in the field – completing a character sheet during the site visit to note any visual detractors or visual qualities, the unity, level of activity, key characteristics, sense of enclosure, tranquillity etc.

Identification of Receptors

7. Once the landscape and visual baseline information about the receiving landscape has been collated this can be understood and described with an understanding of the details of the proposed change or development that is to be introduced into the receiving landscape to identify and describe the landscape effects.

8. The first step is to identify the elements and components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposals referred to as landscape receptors. Potentially sensitive landscape receptors may include:

    - Physical influences on the constituent elements of the landscape (e.g. landform, topography and waterbodies);
    - Land cover of the landscape (e.g. the different types of trees and vegetation and patterns/types of tree cover);

- Influences of human activity on the landscape (e.g. the land use and its management, the character of settings and buildings and the patterns and types of fields and enclosures);

- Aesthetic or perceptual qualities of the landscape (e.g. its scale, its complexity, its openness, its tranquillity or its wildness); and

- The character of the landscape (i.e. any distinctive landscape character types or areas that can be identified), which may include published character assessment reports and / or defined character areas identified as part of the assessment process.

Identification of likely landscape effects

9. The second step is to identify interactions between the landscape receptors and the different elements/components of the development at the different stages, such as construction and operational stages.

10. Potential landscape effects that could occur during the construction and operational periods may include, but are not restricted to, the following;

    - Changes to landscape elements: the addition of new elements or the removal of existing landscape elements;

    - Changes to landscape qualities: degradation or erosion of landscape elements and patterns and perceptual characteristics, particularly those that form key characteristic elements of defined landscape character types or areas, or contribute to the landscape value; and

    - Changes to landscape character: landscape character may be affected through the incremental effect on characteristic elements, landscape patterns and qualities and the cumulative addition of new features, the magnitude of which is sufficient to alter the overall landscape character of a particular area.

Sensitivity of the receptor likely to be affected

11. For each of the landscape and visual effects identified the susceptibility of the landscape receptor to a specific change is to be judged as to is the value attached to the landscape and visual receptor. These two judgements are combined to determine the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor. The sensitivity and the judgements on susceptibility and value will be fully described for each of the receptors.

Landscape Effects

Landscape Susceptibility

12. Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/ condition of a particular area, or individual element and/ or feature) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and / or the achievement of the landscape planning policies and strategies.

13. In this context, the term landscape receptors can be expanded to cover character areas, particular landscape character types or an individual landscape element (such as trees/vegetation and topography) or feature. Landscape susceptibility will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered and to the nature or type of change that may occur.

14. Judgements about the susceptibility of a landscape receptor to change will be recorded as being high, medium or low.

Trees/vegetation

15. Trees are considered **highly susceptible** to development if they aren't protected as part of any site works.

Topography

Table 1: Topography Susceptibility –

Low	Flat land/ slightly undulating topography Many references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can easily accommodate the type of development proposed
Medium	Gently undulating/undulating land Some references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can accommodate the type of development proposed with minor regrading or localised cut and fill exercises

High	Steep/very steep topography in a hilly/mountainous area Few or no references to the type of topography within the local area Topography cannot easily accommodate the type of development proposed with major cut and fill exercises

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining overall landscape susceptibility.

Table 2: Landscape Susceptibility –

Low	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is small scale and / or has a high level of containment, resulting in only a slight degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with few / no landscape characteristics / elements / features of value are present or, where they are present, they can easily be replaced / substituted and / or loss could be satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and the influence of these on the landscape is dominant. Several detractors present which have a negative influence on the character and / or experience of the landscape. Very good opportunities for mitigation and enhancement.
Medium	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a medium scale and / or there is a moderate level of containment, resulting in a moderate degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of limited value and could potentially be replaced / substituted, and / or loss satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – Some detracting features and / or major infrastructure are present in the area, and these have a noticeable influence on the character and experience of the landscape. Good potential for mitigation and enhancement.

High	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a large scale and / or there is a low level of containment, resulting in a high degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or very little existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Many of the existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of value would not be easy to replace or substitute, and it is unlikely that loss could be compensated for. Nature of existing features – Few detracting features in the area and where present, these have little influence on the character and experience of the landscape Some potential for mitigation and enhancement.

Landscape Value

16. Landscape value is the relative value attached to a potentially affected landscape. Landscape value will vary in relation to the different stakeholders and different parts of society that use or experience a landscape.

17. Landscape value is not solely indicated by the presence of formal designations and a range of factors influence landscape value. Factors that have been considered in making judgements on landscape value include designations (both national and local), local planning documents, status of features (e.g. TPO's or Conservation Areas) and local community and interests (for example local green spaces, village greens or allotments).

18. Landscape value will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered in relation to its condition, sense of seclusion or isolation, the presence or absence of detracting features and the presence or absence of rare or distinctive elements and features and to what degree these form key characteristics.

19. Judgements about the value of a landscape receptor will be recorded as being High, Medium, or Low based on the information gathered in the landscape baseline (such as landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining landscape value.

Table 3: Landscape Value –

Low	Ones that have no or little rarity make no and/or make only a limited contribution to the character and local visual and amenity value and/or be of such poor condition that it has lost its ability to contribute effectively to the character of the landscape. Fair to poor representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and common. No formal designations but a landscape of local relevance (including, but not limited to, public or semi-public open spaces, village greens or allotments) and also green infrastructure and open paces within residential areas likely to be visited and valued by the local community. Landscape condition is poor and components are generally poorly maintained or damaged. Several detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be a reason for visiting. Little or no contribution to public amenity, access and recreation. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not a notable component that contribute to the character of the area.
Medium	Designated areas at a Regional or County level (including, but not limited to, green belt, regional scale parks, designated as open space or a Conservation Area in local planning documents) and also considered a distinctive component or the region/county character experienced by a large proportion of its population. Good to fair representation of landscape area / type / characteristics but common. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally relatively well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has moderate levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a notable component that contribute to the character of the area. Some detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be one of the main reasons for the visit, but make a positive contribution to the experience. Important contribution to local public amenity, access and recreation e.g. well-used public rights of way, green open spaces, common land. Ones that are notable in the landscape, with some visual and/or amenity interest but that do not make a particularly strong or important contribution to the character of the landscape or ones that are an intrinsic element of landscape but in poor condition.

High	Designated areas at an International or National level (including, but not limited to, World Heritage Site, National Parks, AONB's) and also considered an important component of the country's character, experienced by high numbers of tourists. Very good representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and / or uncommon. Landscape condition is good and components are generally regularly maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a key component that contribute to the character of the area. Negligible / few detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are likely to be one of the main reasons for the visit. Important contribution to wider public amenity, access and recreation e.g. long-distance / themed trails, well-used public rights of way, Heritage Coast, Public Open Space / Local Green Space. May be protected by / subject of planning policy.

Table 4: Value of Topography –

Low	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography Topography that doesn't have any historic or cultural associations Topography that doesn't feature any associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that isn't noted as being a prominent or notable feature within the published character area
Medium	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with some references to the same type of topography Topography that does have some historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature some/localised associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that has several notable features within the published character area
High	Topography which is not typical of the immediate and wider area with few references to the same type of topography Topography which is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography and does have additional attributes and associations

	Topography that does have many historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature many associated features such as depressions, undulations, steep terrain, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that is noted as being prominent or key features within the published character area

Note: the presence of ridge and furrow is considered high value, but will be assessed separately from overall landform of a site.

Table 5: Value of Trees and areas of vegetation –

Low	Trees and vegetation are either all or **mostly** categorized as **Low quality** (Category C and U) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **very few Medium** quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation **not designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO – no planning or ecological designations
Medium	Trees and vegetation are **either all or mostly** categorized as **Medium** quality (Category B) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **some Low Quality** (Category C) trees/vegetation and **very few High** quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation are **partly or wholly designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO
High	Trees and vegetation are **either all or mostly** categorized as **High quality** (Category A) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **some Low Quality** (Category C) trees/vegetation and **some Medium quality** (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation **are designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO

Sensitivity

20. The sensitivity attributed to a landscape element, a view, or character is determined by a combination of;

    - the value that is attached to a particular landscape element feature; and

- and the susceptibility of the landscape element/feature to changes that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 88-90 of GLVIA3.

21. Therefore, landscape sensitivity is assessed combining judgements on the value attached to a landscape and the susceptibility to the type of change and nature of the development proposed.

Landscape Sensitivity

22. Landscape sensitivity is a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor. Receptors can include specific elements or features or may be judged at a wider scale and include landscape character parcels, types or areas.

23. Having considered in detail the contributing factors to landscape value and the susceptibility of the site and surrounding area to the type of the development proposed, conclusions on landscape sensitivity can be drawn by balancing the judgements on value and susceptibility.

Table 6: Sensitivity of Topography -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 7: Sensitivity of Trees and Vegetation -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 8: Sensitivity of Landscape Character

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change

24. The magnitude of change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each effect receptor and effect. In line with the GLVIA, the main attributes considered are:

Size/Scale of Change

The considerations set out in GLVIA 3 are summarised as follows:

- The extent to which the removal or addition of landscape features alters the existing landscape character;
- The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by removal of features e.g. hedgerows and/or the introduction of new features e.g. buildings; and

- Consideration of whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape which are critical to its distinctive character.

Geographical Extent

25. This is distinct from the size or scale of effect and a range of scales that typically apply are listed below:

    - Large scale effects influencing several landscape types or character areas;
    - Effects at the scale of the landscape type or character areas within which the proposal lies;
    - Effects within the immediate landscape setting of the site;
    - Effects at the site level (within the development site itself); and
    - Effects only experienced on parts of the site at a very localised level.

Duration and reversibility

26. These are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out in below. Reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

Duration:

- Long term (20 years+)
- Medium to long term (10 to 20 years)
- Medium term (5 to 10 years)
- Short term (1 year to 5 years)
- Temporary (less than 12 months)

Reversibility:

- Permanent with unlikely restoration to original state e.g. major road corridor, power station, urban extension etc;

- Permanent with possible conversion to original state e.g. agricultural buildings, retail units;
- Partially reversible to a different state e.g. mineral workings;
- Reversible after decommissioning to a similar original state e.g. wind energy development; and
- Quickly reversible e.g. temporary structures.

27. With regard to Reversibility, GLVIA 3 explains that where developments have a limited life and could eventually be removed and/or the land reinstated the effects could be considered reversible. The reversibility and consideration of temporary effects is however linked to the duration of that effect such as short term (0-5yrs), medium term (5-10 yrs) and long term (20yrs).

28. For the purpose of this assessment impacts that would be considered permanent are those typically occurring over the long term, such as the construction of buildings and reprofiling of land as these cannot practicably be reversed. Vegetation removal is also considered to be permanent where it cannot be planted in the same location and reach maturity over the short or medium term. Mitigation planting has the potential to compensate for the loss of existing vegetation if similar types and species are planted and could provide similar benefits over the medium to long term. There are instances where mitigation planting could not compensate for the loss of existing vegetation such as the removal of Ancient Woodland or instances where there are rare species which form a unique habitat.

29. Temporary effects would typically occur over a short to medium term duration and would mainly occur during the construction period. Development that may result in temporary effects would typically include the introduction of temporary site security fencing, temporary hard standing areas, construction machinery, temporary buildings and compounds, haul roads, earthmoving and stockpiles, lighting etc.

30. The characteristics of the proposals and the nature of landscape and visual effects arising will vary throughout the different phases of the lifecycle of the project. LVIA undertaken as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to include an assessment of effects at different stages of the life-cycle of the development, and commonly includes:

- Construction effects; and

- Operational Effects (often including Year 1 and Year 15 effects such that mitigation is considered).

31. Year 1 considers the effects of the development upon completion of the construction phase. The assessment of landscape and visual effects at Year 15 takes into account any proposed mitigation measures, including planting. The assessment undertaken at Year 15 assumes that planting proposals have established and grown sufficiently to become effective. For the purposes of LVIAs Year 15 effects are also considered to be the 'residual effects' of the proposals.

32. Judgements about the magnitude of impact on landscape receptors will identify whether the impact will be negative (adverse) or positive (beneficial) and will be recorded as being large, medium, small, negligible or no change, based on the criteria set out in Table 3.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements and Features

33. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of direct physical impacts on individual existing landscape elements and features as follows:

Table 9: Criteria for magnitude of change for topography and landform

No change	No change to existing topography of the site
Negligible	**Very small** change to existing site topography across a small part of the site **Very small** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **very small** part of the site on the whole **Very few small/no** SuDS basins/ very few/no swales **No cut and fill exercises** **Unnoticeable change** to baseline topography
Low	**Small** change to existing site topography across a small part of the site **Small** change to existing site topography across the entire site **Multiple** small sized SuDS basins/ few swales **No cut and fill exercises** Development within a **small part** of the site on the whole **Small change** to baseline topography

Medium	**Medium** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **half of** the site on the whole **Multiple** medium sized SuDS basins/ multiple swales **Localized cut and fill exercises** **Medium change** to baseline topography
High	**Large** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **majority** the site on the whole **Multiple** large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales **Major cut and fill exercises** **Major change** to baseline topography
Very high	**Very large** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **vast majority** of the site on the whole **Lots of** large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales **Major cut and fill exercises** **Major change** to baseline topography

Table 10: Criteria for magnitude of change for existing trees and vegetation

No change	**No** trees removed **All** existing trees/areas of vegetation retained and protected
Negligible	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **very low** **Very small loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would substantially influence the landscape of the site only The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very small A very small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Low	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered l**ow** **Small loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape in the immediate setting of the site, i.e. limited to the influence of part of a single landscape character area/type The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered small A small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Medium	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **moderate** **Moderate loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape at a local scale, i.e. a single landscape character area/type (or potentially multiple areas/types where a site is located on the boundary between areas) The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered moderate A medium amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
High	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **high** **Majority loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered large A large amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Very high	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **very high** **Total loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall

	Geographical extent of removals would have a substantial influence on the landscape at a regional scale, i.e. across several landscape character areas/types The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very large Significant new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Table 11: Criteria for magnitude of change for landscape character

High	Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very large due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very large scale, influencing several character areas or types Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of highly uncharacteristic, conspicuous elements, features and / activities, would result in major alteration to, or complete loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Medium	Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered medium due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a moderate scale, influencing the character type within which the change is proposed but at a local level within the immediate setting of the site Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are not uncharacteristic in the area, would result in partial alteration to, or loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Low	Minor alteration to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a small scale, influencing the landscape within which the change is proposed at the site level (within the site itself) and localized within the immediate setting

	Minor alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are characteristic in the area, would result in minor alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Negligible	Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very small scale, experience on parts of the site with no influence beyond the site on the landscape within which the change is proposed Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are entirely characteristic in the area, would result in barely discernible alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Neutral	No change to the baseline condition

Table 12: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

34. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist.

35. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in

assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 13: Nature of landscape/character effects

Major adverse	Be at considerable variance with the character of the receiving landscape. Degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic elements or features. Damage the sense of place. Such effects would be incapable of full mitigation and would degrade the integrity of the landscape.
Moderate Adverse	Show some variance or inconsistency with the character of the receiving landscape. Have an adverse impact on characteristic elements or features. Detract from the sense of place. Proposals are likely to be out of scale with the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape.
Minor Adverse	Not quite fit in with the character of the receiving landscape. Be at variance with characteristic elements or features. Have a limited influence on the sense of place. Proposals may not logically complement the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape and constitute an unsympathetic outcome.
Neutral/Negligible	Maintain the character of the receiving landscape. Blend in with the characteristic elements or features. Very minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be retained.
Minor Beneficial	Complement the character of the receiving landscape. Maintain or enhance characteristic elements or features. Minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable some sense of place to be restored.
Moderate Beneficial	Improve the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from the absence of or inappropriate management or development.

	Moderate levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be restored.
Major Beneficial	Enhance the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features lost as a result of changes from absence of or inappropriate management or development. Major levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be enhanced.

Visual Assessment Methodology

36. The visual assessment considers the potential effect of the proposals on visual amenity; as experienced by people within the study area. They relate to changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.

37. The effects on visual amenity will be assessed through the consideration of potential effects on receptors. Visual receptors include people in their homes, at work, undertaking recreational activities or when travelling through and area i.e. using roads, footpaths etc, where they would be likely to experience a change in the existing view as a result of the construction and operation of the proposals.

38. The visual effects may include a change to an existing view, sequential views, or wider visual amenity as a result of development or the loss of particular elements or features already present in the view. Cumulative visual effects may result when receptors gain views of similar types of development, which combine to have a cumulative visual effect.

39. It is generally accepted that the two criteria that combine to determine the scale of visual effect are the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact.

40. The assessment of the visual baseline within the study area will take into consideration the following:

    - The area within which the proposals may be visible;
    - The different groups of people within the study area who may experience views of the proposals;
    - The identification of specific viewpoints; and

- The nature of views at the viewpoints.

Viewpoints

41. The selection of viewpoints will be based on the following criteria:

    - The requirement to provide an even spread of representative viewpoints within the visual envelope, and around all sides of the Proposed Development;
    - From locations which represent a range of near, middle- and long-distance views;
    - Whilst private views are relevant, public viewpoints i.e. from roads and public rights of way and other area of open public access, will be selected since they are the most significant in term of the number of receptors affected;
    - Views from sensitive receptors within designated landscapes

42. In accordance with the GLVIA3, the viewpoints that will be selected take account of:

    - The potential number and sensitivity of viewers who may be affected;
    - The viewing direction, distance (i.e. short, medium and long-distance views) and elevation;
    - The nature of the viewing experience (for example static views, views from settlements and views from sequential points along routes);
    - The view type (for example panoramas, vistas, glimpses); and
    - The potential for cumulative views of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.

43. The findings and conclusion of this assessment assume that all existing vegetation located outside the site would be retained unless otherwise identified for removal.

44. The assessment of visual effects was undertaken on the basis of viewpoint analysis as recommended in best practice guidelines. The viewpoints which are in different directions from the site and are at varying distances and locations were selected to represent a range of views and visual receptor types.

45. The viewpoints are representational and not exhaustive. They are taken from publicly accessible land and not from any third party, private, land.

46. The viewpoints were used as the basis for determining the effects of visual receptors within the entire study area. The viewpoints were photographed at 1.6 metres above ground level.

47. The photos were taken using a Canon EOS 5d Mark IV full frame camera using a fixed 50mm lens.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

48. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed as high, medium or low.

49. GLVIA3 says a judgement should be made as to the value of a particular view being experienced. In making a professional judgement as to the value attached to a view, the following criteria have helped guide the process. Not all the criteria have to apply to a particular view and the criteria are not in a hierarchy.

Table 14: Criteria for judging levels of visual value

Low	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of site-wide importance View is of low scenic beauty View makes a very limited contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from landscapes / viewpoints which are not particularly popular or recognised as being destinations in their own right, including infrequently used rights of way Views with no social / cultural / historic associations
Medium	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of local importance View is of moderate scenic beauty View makes a moderate contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from locally-popular recreation areas / green open spaces / public rights of way, but not used by many visitors Views with social / cultural / historic associations of local importance

High	Views from within, or towards, designated landscapes and / or features of regional or countywide importance e.g. Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Country Parks, Conservation Areas, Grade II listed buildings, National Trust land etc., especially where contributing to the significance of an asset / feature View is of high scenic beauty View makes an important contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from well-used and popular visitor attractions / tourist destinations, including long-distance / themed trails, Heritage Coasts, Public Open Spaces / Local Green Spaces, used by relatively large numbers of people Views with social / cultural / historic associations of countywide importance

Table 15: Visual Receptors Susceptibility to Change

Low	Receptors in commercial and industrial premises, schools, playing fields etc. where the view is not central to the use People using main roads, rail corridors, infrequently used / inaccessible public rights of way and likely to be travelling for a purpose other than to enjoy the view People moving past the view often at high speed (e.g. on motorways and main line railways) and with little or no focus on or interest in the landscape through which they are travelling Motorists and passengers on main roads People working in premises where the views are not likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life People engaged in outdoor sport and recreation which does not involve or depend on appreciation of views of the landscape Communities where views do not contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
Medium	Receptors within, or looking towards, undesignated landscapes, areas and features of local importance, and in places where the landscape / feature is not necessarily part of the reason for the visit People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is unlikely to be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is not necessarily a factor in the enjoyment of the activity Users of public rights of way where attention is not focused on the landscape/and/or views (for example in densely vegetated or built up areas) People staying in hotels and healthcare institutions who are likely to appreciate and / or benefit from views of their surroundings

	People working in premises where the views are likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life Motorists and passengers on rural lanes Residential properties (upper stories/less use in daylight hours) Communities where views partly contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
High	Receptors (tourists / visitors) within, or looking towards, internationally- or nationally-designated landscapes, areas and features such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and other places where the landscape / feature is the main reason for the visit People using national trails and other designated routes where the view is likely to be the focus of attention Residents at home, although thus will depend on the rooms occupied during waking hours People, whether residents or visitors, engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, e.g. walkers, riders, cyclists, boat users, motorists, whose attention may be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is a factor in the enjoyment of the activity People travelling through the landscape on roads, rail or other routes on recognised scenic routes or where there is a distinct awareness of views of their surroundings and their visual amenity Residential properties (lower stories and gardens) Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area

Table 16: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change on Visual Impact

50. The Magnitude of Visual Impact experienced by visual receptors as a result of the development proposals will be described by reference to the:

- Scale of change in the view in respect of the loss or addition of features and changes in the visual composition, including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development;
- Geographical extent – This is likely to reflect the orientation/ angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the main development and the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible;
- Duration of the effect - (short 0-5yrs/ medium 5-10yrs/ long term 20yrs, temporary, permanent, intermittent/ continuous and whether the views will be full, partial or glimpses.)
- Reversibility - the ability of the proposed development to be reversed.

51. The criteria which will be used to guide the assessment of the magnitude of impact that would be experience by visual receptors as a result of the proposals are outlined below;

Table 17: Criteria for magnitude of change for visual receptors

High	The proposals will be clearly noticeable and the view would be fundamentally changed by its presence. Direct or oblique views with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent.
Medium	The proposals will form a new element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Direct or oblique views with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
Low	The proposals will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. The proposals will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
Negligible	The proposals will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly changed would be similar to the baseline situation.
No Change	No change to the existing view.

Scale of Effects

52. The scale of the landscape and visual effects is determined by;

    - cross referencing the sensitivity of the landscape feature, landscape character or view with;

    - the magnitude of change. The scale of effects is described as major, moderate, minor, negligible, neutral or no change.

Table 18: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

53. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral.

54. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 19: Nature of visual effects

Major adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause major deterioration to the view and constitute a major discordant element in the view.
Moderate Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause obvious deterioration to the view.
Minor Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause limited deterioration to the view.
Negligible Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that be barely perceptible in the view.
Neutral	The change to the view would be barely perceptible to the point it is not apparent if the changes are positive or negative.
No Change	No change to the view. Proposals are not visible.
Negligible Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to a barely perceptible improvement in the view.
Minor Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to a limited improvement to the view.
Moderate Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to an obvious improvement to the view.
Major Beneficial	The proposals would lead to a major improvement in the view.

Mitigation

55. The purpose of the mitigation is to prevent/ avoid, reduce and where possible remedy or offset any negative (adverse) effect on the environment arising from the proposals. Mitigation is not solely concerned with 'damage limitation' but may also consider measures that could compensate for unavoidable residual effects.

56. Mitigation measures are generally considered to fall into three categories:

- Primary measures, developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded in to the project design;

- Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects;

- Secondary measures designed to address any residual adverse remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme.

57. Strategies to address likely negative (adverse) effects include:

- Avoid impact by changing the proposal;

- Reduce the impact by changing the proposals;

- Remediation of the impact by screen planting for example;

- Compensation for the impact, for example replacement of removed trees with new tree planting; and

- Enhancement, for example creation of a new landscape or habitat.

<u>Guidelines for mitigation</u>

- Landscape mitigation measures should be designed to suit the existing landscape character and needs of the locality, respecting and building on local landscape distinctiveness and helping to address any relevant existing issues in the landscape.

- It must be recognised than many mitigation measures, especially planting, are not immediately effective. Where planting is intended to provide a visual screen for the development, it may also be appropriate to assess the effects for different seasons and periods of time, such as day of opening and Year 15 and potentially other periods in line with phasing. In such projections the assumptions made about growth rates should be clearly stated on the proposed landscape plans;

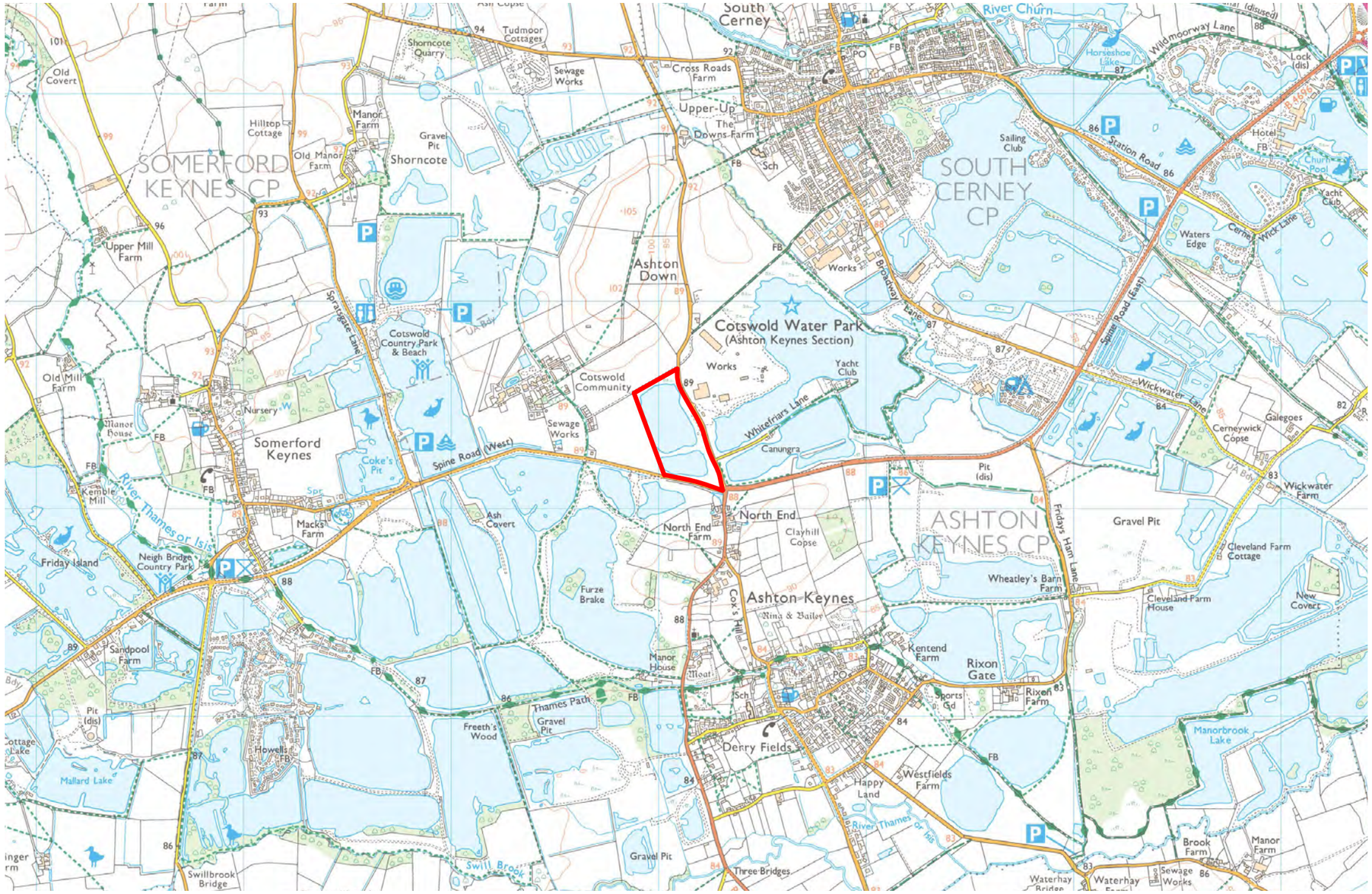
- Use of appropriate form, material and design of buildings. It is not always practical or desirable to screen buildings and associated development. In these cases, the scale, design, colour and texture of buildings/ structures should be carefully considered to aid integration with the surroundings;

- Alterations to landforms (including creation of bunds or mounds) together with structure planting and/ or off-site planting;

- Minimising light pollution and avoiding or reducing obtrusive light; and

- Planting: Structural planting can help to integrate and ‘soften’ development as well as being of potential value as a wildlife habitat. Offsite planting should also be considered where it could be of benefit to screen the proposed development from sensitive landscape and visual receptors.

APPENDIX 2: SITE LOCATION



KEY

Site

N

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	3/3/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

Description:
Site Location Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked		Date:
1:NTS @A3	**DP**	**MP**	**03/03/2026**

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 938	**05**	**-**

APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT VIEWS

































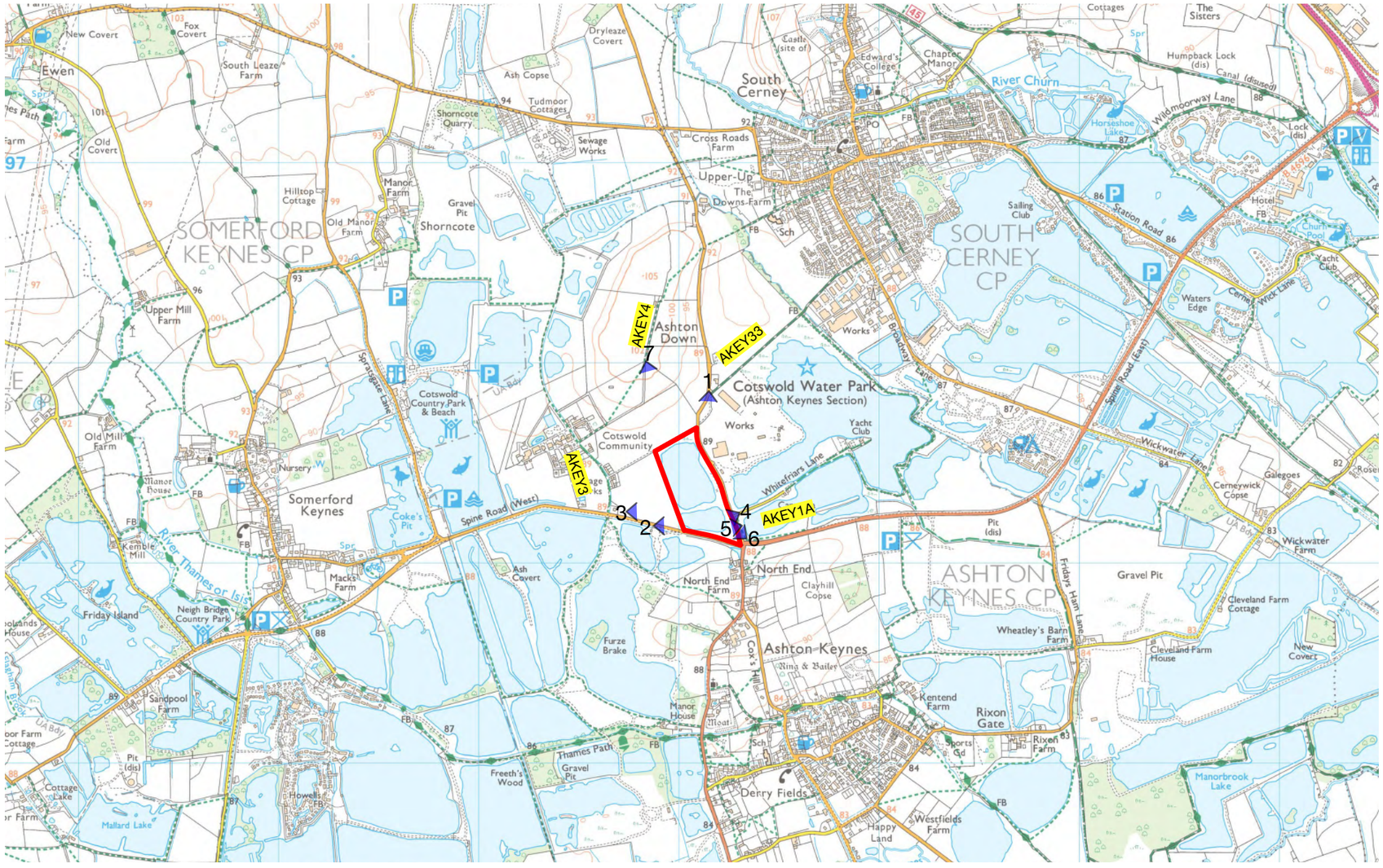


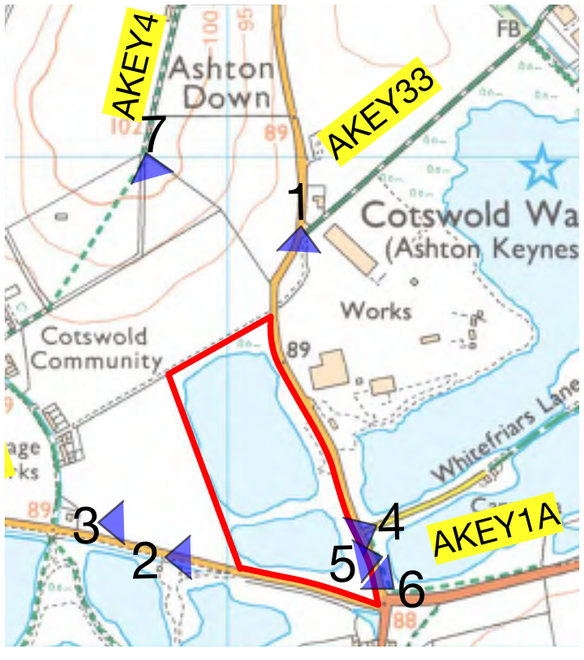






APPENDIX 4: PHOTOVIEW LOCATION PLAN





KEY

Site



Viewpoint Location

N

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	3/3/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

Description:
Viewpoint Location Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
1:NTS @A3	**DP MP**	**03/03/2026**

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 938	**06**	**-**

APPENDIX 5: LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT SHEET

Landscape Elements							
Built Form							
Farm Buildings	Urban	Brownfield	Camping	Wind Turbines	Masts	Tourism	Village
Settlement	Spite Walls	Quarry/Extraction	Golf Course	Power Stations	Industry	Pylons/OH Power Line	Scattered Farms
Urban Fringe	Military	Ecclesiastic	Country Houses	Estates	Hamlet	Isolated House	Brick
Sandstone	Slate	Concrete	Render	Granite	Metal	Timber	Stone
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	
Land Cover							
Parkland	Informal Open Space	Golf Course	Restored Land	Mudflats	Active Quarry	Horticulture	Forestry
Amenity/Recreation	Wetland Meadow	Caravan Park	Derelict Land	Saltmarsh	Coast	Horsiculture	Woodland
Scrub	Marsh	Bog	Moor/Heath	Meadow	Agriculture	Rough Grassland	Bare Ground
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	

Farming								
Type	Arable	Pasture	Mixed	Rough Grazing	Set Aside		Single Species Woodland	
Field Pattern	Rectangular fields	Irregular Fields	No discernible pattern	Ridge and Furrow	Large	Medium	Small	
Boundary Enclosure	Metal fences	Hedgerow with trees	Hedgerow without trees	Timber fences	Walls		Ditches	Watercourse
Boundary Condition	Good - well managed	Moderate - occasional management	Poor - Irregular management	No management				
Tree/hedge Species	Willow, alder, brich, ash, hazel, sycamore, field maple, dogwood, aspen, elm, blackthornn, apple							
Prominent		Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character			

Woodland/Trees									
Deciduous	Coppice	Shelterbelt	Wet Woodland	Isolated Trees	Scrub	Wind Sculpted	Avenue	Regenerating Scrub	Linear Strips
Coniferous	Pollarded	Plantation	Tree Clumps	Orchard	Alder/Willow Carr	Hedgerow Trees	Parkland	Mixed	Copse
Ages of Trees		Veteran	Over Mature	Mature	Semi mature	Young	Newly Planted	Dead	
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character			

Hydrology						
Drainage ditch/dyke	River-Engineered	Open Water	Natural Pond	Lake	Estuary	Fishing Lakes
Stream	Reservoir	Coastal	Artificial Pond	Tidal	Raised Mires	River -natural
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character

Corridor							
Access Track	Canal	Green Lane	Footpath	CROW Access Land	Motorway	A-Road	B-Road
Railway	Lane	Bridleway	Cycle Route	Overhead Cables	Dis-used Railway	Telegraph Poles	Masts
Prominent		Insignificant	Frequent	Infrequent	Strong influence on landscape character	Localised influence on landscape character	

Landscape Visual Characteristics - Aesthetic and Perceptual									
Pattern	Scale	Texture	Color	Complexity	Unity	Movement	Enclosure	Form	Tranquility
Random	Intimate	Smooth	Monochrome	Uniform	Unified	Dead	Tight	Straight	Inaccessible
Organised	Small	Textured	Muted	Simple	Interrupted	Still	Enclosed	Angular	Remote
Regular	Medium	Rough	Colorful	Diverse	Fragmented	Calm	Open	Curved	Vacant
Formal	Large	Rugged	Garish	Complexity	Chaotic	Busy	Exposed	Sinuous	Peaceful
	Vast								Not Tranquil

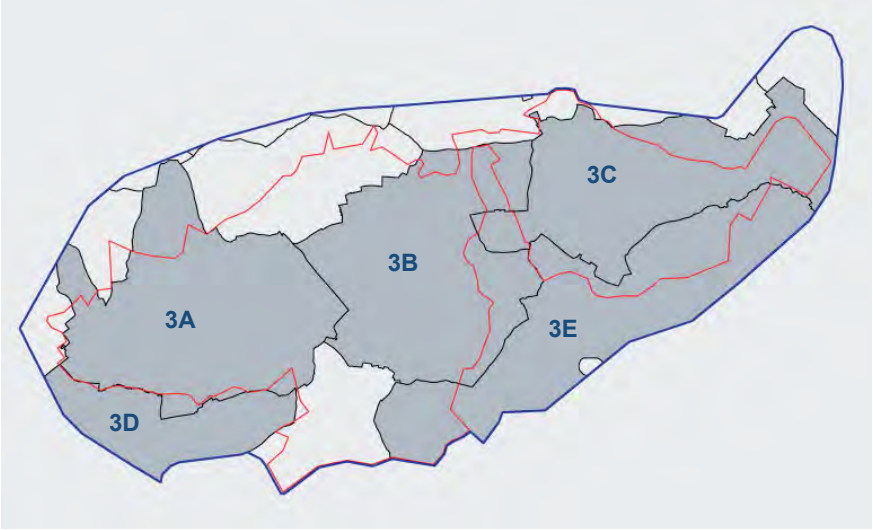
Visual Landmarks			
Landmark Views within character area	Landmark views outside character area	Landmark buildings	Landmark natural features
Detracting features within view:	Aggregate industries		

Extent of view:	Open	Enclosed	Short Distance Views	Long Distance Views	Expansive
Landscape Condition	Poor	Moderate	Strong		
Strength of Character	Weak	Moderate	Strong		

APPENDIX 6: RIVER BASIN VALE

The Character Types and Areas of the Cotswold Water Park
RIVER BASIN CLAY VALE

5.3



CHARACTER AREAS

3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Wetland

3B Down Ampney and Meysey Clay Vale Lowland

3C Fairford and Lechlade Settled Wetlands

3D Swill and Derry Brooks Clay Vale Farmland

3E Castle Eaton and Inglesham Clay Vale Farmland

5.3.1 Key Characteristics

- Low lying, flat to very gently undulating floodplain landscape underlain by extensive deposits of alluvial clay and silt, and sand and gravel that mask the solid geology;
- Isolated hillocks associated with exposures of the Oxford Clay form locally significant features;
- Strong presence of water reflected in rivers, streams, ditches and extensive network of restored sand and gravel extraction sites;
- Lush wet meadows and wide floodplain pastures, with watercourses often lined with riparian vegetation, including frequent lines of pollarded willows;
- Mosaic of wetland and riparian habitats, together with water based recreational uses associated with lakes created through the restoration of gravel extraction sites;
- Combination of pastoral land, often in smaller scale fields and closely associated with watercourses and larger scale fields under arable cultivation;
- Pattern of nucleated and linear settlements dispersed throughout the landscape, including occasional small towns and large villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads and dwellings, with vernacular buildings constructed in stone and brick;
- Modern waterside developments comprising holiday or second homes with distinctive architectural style and often located in association with restored lake areas;
- Scattered pattern of woodland plantations and copses together with vegetation closely associated with river courses and standing areas of water, which in places results in a sense of enclosure and more intimate landscape; and



- Limited major roads and a wider network of minor roads providing access to the floodplain landscape.

5.3.2 River Basin Clay Vale within the Cotswold Water Park Study Area

The River Basin Clay Vale extends across a broad area encompassing the floodplain and flat, low lying river basin of the Upper Thames. The study area broadly coincides with this landscape type encompassing all of the lowland that defines this broad river basin. The area extends from Pool Keynes in the west to Lechlade and north of Buscot in the east and includes land within the counties of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.

5.3.3 Landscape Character

The River Basin Clay Vale Character Type comprises a broad low lying area of pastoral land interspersed with an extensive wetland environment of rivers, streams and ditches and numerous areas of open water associated with restored gravel extraction areas. This latter activity has been particularly notable through the progressive land use changes that have resulted from the widespread extraction of sand and gravel throughout the area and the subsequent restoration to extensive lakes. Since its formal designation in 1967, the Cotswold Water Park has developed as a distinctive area supporting a diversity of rich wetland habitats of important ecological

5.3 The Character Types and Areas of the Cotswold Water Park
RIVER BASIN CLAY VALE

value as well as a range of water based leisure uses. It is now an area of regional and indeed national importance, and through progressive land use and management change has significantly altered the character of this part of the Upper Thames Valley.

The settlement pattern varies from generally sparsely settled areas with intermittent dispersed farms, to large nucleated villages and the small town of Cricklade. These settlements are principally focused either on the River Thames or other principal tributary rivers. To the west, Somerford Keynes, Ashton Keynes and Cricklade are all located adjacent to the River Thames, while South Cerney is located adjacent to the River Churn. Smaller villages, such as Kempsford and Castle Eaton are also located adjacent to the Thames. Fairford, on the northern perimeter of the study area and landscape type, is adjacent to the River Coln, and Lechlade to the east has developed adjacent to the River Thames. Beyond the rivers, the presence of water is also a common feature in the wider landscape with ditches and small watercourses commonly aligning field boundaries and running adjacent to local roads.

5.3.4 Physical Influences

The area is underlain by the youngest rock formations of the Jurassic period, comprising the Kellaways Beds and Oxford Clay Formations. These impervious clays are overlain by extensive superficial deposits of alluvium and River Terrace sands and gravels. The pattern and depth of these drift deposits have had a significant effect on local character through their varying influence on agricultural activity and the potential for mineral extraction.

In broad terms this low lying area is characterised by very shallow slopes, and in many areas is perceived as flat particularly where the extensive floodplain borders the river channel. The area varies in height averaging from 90m to 70m AOD with the land sloping very gently towards the River Thames. There are some notable variations to this pattern, however, with intermittent areas of Oxford Clay rising above the general levels of the low lying floodplain to form locally distinctive hillocks. These generally reach accordant summits of around 100 -105 m AOD, and include Ashton Down, to the north of Ashton Keynes; Hailstone Hill, west of Cricklade; and Horcott Hill to the south of Fairford. West of Kempsford, the low hillocks of Brazen Church Hill and the adjacent larger hillock to the north, are also notable local features, their prominence strengthened by the woodland cover on the rising slopes.

Although woodland cover is not extensive within the type, intermittent and often geometric form woodlands are present, principally associated with the farmland that extends across the study area. The large, principally deciduous Water Eaton Copse to the south of Castle Eaton is a particularly notable example. In addition, new plantations, semi-mature copses and naturally regenerating vegetation is developing in association with the former sand and gravel workings, and views to the watercourses and lakes are often obscured by this developing vegetation cover. Lines of poplars and pollarded white willows also define the course of rivers and streams in many areas.

5.3.5 Human Influences

There is evidence of continuity of settlement on the gravel areas of the River Basin Clay Vale from the Iron Age through the Saxon and Roman periods and beyond. Place names of the Saxon period indicate that much of the land had been cleared. Development during the Romano-British period included the major communication route of the Ermine Way built on a raised embankment above the floodplain of the Thames.

The long history of water meadows in the River Basin Clay Vale landscape type is shown by the inclusion of grazed meadows at Cricklade in the Domesday Book. Ancient field systems are evident as crop marks on gravel areas. Ridge and furrow is evident for instance at Haydon Meadow SSSI where it has been protected from damage by ploughing. Field patterns vary with the topography and geology, with small scale irregular water meadows and pasture on alluvial areas, and large regular arable fields on free draining gravels.

Prior to the commencement of the extraction of sand and gravel within the Upper Thames Valley in the 1920s, the traditional land use within the River Basin Clay Vale was that of a pastoral landscape of rich water meadows. Pastures are still evident within the farmland that remains between the restored lake areas, but in more recent times there has been a move away from a traditional mix of dairy and livestock towards more intensive grassland and arable production as improvements in land drainage and flood protection have occurred.

The greatest human influence on the character type has been the extensive extraction of sand and gravel from the terraces adjacent to the River Thames within the River Basin Clay Vale. Quarrying continues to form a significant visual and audible feature within the type with many extraction sites still active on the remaining gravel terraces. This has resulted in a paucity of indicators of earlier human activity that were likely to have occurred along the Upper Thames Clay Vale.



The common restoration treatment for the sand and gravel extraction has been the creation of a complex mosaic of lakes, which provide both recreational and wildlife habitats. Many of the lakes are used for a great variety of watersports whilst others form local country parks and provide quiet enjoyment. These lakes are collectively managed as the Cotswold Water Park, which was formally designated in 1967.

The interests of the Water Park are now managed by the Cotswold Water Park Joint Committee, encompassing Gloucestershire and Wiltshire County Councils, and Cotswold and North Wiltshire District Councils. (refer to Section 3.0)

Human reliance on the River Thames has been a strong influence on the communications infrastructure and settlement pattern within the type with the river providing a major highway for the transportation of goods over many centuries until the end of the 19th century. The significance of the River Thames's influence on the landscape is evident through the numerous mills, locks, weirs, wharves and bridges that form locally notable features along the length of the Upper Thames and its principal tributaries, the River Coln and River Churn. The influence of the Thames is also reflected in local nomenclature with many place names ending in 'ford' indicating the establishment of settlements at strategic crossing points over watercourses, e.g. Fairford, Whelford adjacent to the River Coln and Kempsford adjacent to the River Thames.

Canals have also been an important means of communication in the study area, although these have been abandoned and fallen into disrepair. At its eastern limit, the route of the Thames and Severn Canal commences at Inglesham at the confluence of the Thames and the River Cole, and proceeds westwards through the study area. A number of sections are evident, notably through Kempsford and Eysey, and between Cerney Wick and the south of Cirencester. Remnant sections of the canal including canal bridges and locks add interest and an historical dimension to the local landscape. There is a proposal to restore the canal as part of the Cotswolds Canals Project and once again reinstate the link between the Thames and the Severn. The North Wiltshire Canal is another abandoned route that in the vicinity of the study area links Swindon to Cricklade, and hence the Thames to Severn system. Again, there is an aspiration to restore this canal and integrate it with the Cricklade Country Way Initiative. This latter project proposes a system of alternative non-motorised routes between Swindon and the Cotswold Water Park at Cricklade, by footpaths, cycleroutes, and via the canal, and by train on the restored Swindon and Cricklade Railway.

5.3.6 Biodiversity

The Landscape Character Type supports some many areas of national and international importance for their biodiversity.

Most of the lakes within the western section of the Cotswold Water Park have been designated as a SSSI. The series of lakes that form the SSSI comprise nationally scarce marl waters caused by the lime rich geology. The lakes include a range of the varied plant communities with open water (including those associated with marl waters), reed beds and surrounding grassland habitats. The area supports a wide range notable species including wintering and breeding birds such as pochard and gadwall, as well as water vole, otter, bittern, freshwater white clawed crayfish, and the lesser bearded stonewort Chara curta all of which are targets of the Cotswold Water Park BAP.

Within the areas of predominantly intensively farmed pasture and arable there are also areas that support unimproved hay, and nationally significant for their diversity of grassland plants. These include Clattinger Farm SAC, the only lowland farm in Britain known to have received no agricultural chemicals, plus Pike Corner SSSI, Sutton Lane Meadows SSSI, Upper Waterhay Meadow SSSI, Haydon Meadow SSSI, Acres Farm Meadow SSSI and North Meadow SAC, Cricklade SSSI.

Wildlife Sites include Swillbrook Lakes Reserve in the south-western perimeter of the designated Water Park These former gravel pits are rich in bird and dragonfly diversity, including reed warbler, nightingale, hobby and four-spotted chaser and downy emerald dragonflies.

5.3.7 Buildings and Settlement

The River Basin Clay Vale supports a number of settlements of varying size. Those in the central and northern section of the study area generally retain the character of the Cotswolds local vernacular with historic cores, enhanced by the unifying effect of the predominant use of Oolitic limestone. The larger settlements of Fairford and Lechlade have developed a wider range of architecture with 'town houses' as well as typical village properties present, and new perimeter development that endeavours to link to a Cotswolds vernacular. Both Fairford and Lechlade have fine medieval churches. Other villages such as South Cerney, Ashton Keynes and Somerford Keynes retain a character typical of a Cotswolds village but have the further dimension of now being focused towards the Water Park through their proximity to large bodies of water and associated recreational interests. There are also very small and quiet villages such as Down Ampney, which retains the sense of a rural idyll, and a fitting link with Vaughan Williams who was born and lived there as a young child. A number of new residential holiday developments have established within the heart of the Water Park some of which present contrasting architectural styles.



The area also supports a pattern of both active and disused military airfields as at Fairford, and Down Ampney. The USAF military airbase at Fairford is a dominant feature in the eastern part of the study area although because of the very flat landscape is not immediately evident in wider views. The surrounding security fencing, however, together with the airborne activity serves as a reminder of its presence.

5.3 The Character Types and Areas of the Cotswold Water Park
RIVER BASIN CLAY VALE

5.3.8 Landscape Character Areas

3A South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Wetlands

This Character Area encompasses much of the western sector of the designated Cotswold Water Park where there has been a long period of sand and gravel extraction. Its character is mainly derived from the combination of an existing settled landscape of small mainly stone built village settlement with a dynamic and evolving wetland landscape.

Large-scale sand and gravel extraction comprises the dominant influence on the landscape character of this area. In addition to extensive areas of post-extraction created lakes, there are a number of areas that are still undergoing active extraction, such as Shorncote Quarry. The mosaic of lakes comprises part of a complex of water bodies that form the western section of the Cotswold Water Park. Despite the number of lakes, the visual influence of these water bodies within the wider landscape context of the area is often limited as the development of regenerating scrub vegetation and areas of woodland adjacent to many of the lakes restricts views towards the water bodies from neighbouring settlements and local roads. This has resulted in a small to medium scale landscape which feels enclosed, despite the sequence of wetlands and lakes. A network of minor roads align the lakes, broadly running north-south and east-west and the lakes and the road network combine to make a strong overall landscape pattern, with the smooth surfaces of the water bodies contrasting strongly with texture of the surrounding trees and vegetation.



The numerous water bodies within the South Cerney, Ashton Keynes and Somerford Keynes section of the Cotswold Water Park have a very important nature conservation value. A number of the lakes have SSSI designations and Coke's Pit Lake and Swillbrook Lakes are designated as a Local Nature Reserve. Other sites with nature conservation value in the Character Area include Wildmoorway Meadows and Elmlea Meadows in the eastern part, both of which are designated as SSSIs for the invertebrate ecology of their grassland habitats.

Beyond the lakes of the Cotswold Water Park, a traditional land use pattern of small scale regularly enclosed pasture fields continues within the floodplain adjacent to the River Churn and River Thames with horse and sheep grazing fields separated by low, well maintained and regularly trimmed hedgerows predominating along the valley bottom and occasional medium scale arable fields aligning the shallow slopes and occasional local hillocks that rise above the floodplain, as at Ashton Down to the west of South Cerney. Where agricultural land abuts areas of former gravel extraction, the landscape often appears marginalised and in decline with hedgerows becoming overgrown and/or gappy in places.

The creation of the Cotswold Water Park has facilitated a proliferation of recreational opportunities in the area with many of the lakes supporting yacht clubs, sailing schools, angling clubs and nature reserves, notably the Somerford Lakes Reserve, designated as a SSSI, and Keynes Country Park, to the west and east of Somerford Keynes respectively. It appears that many of the lakes have been constructed specifically for recreational purposes and although some attempts have been made to naturalise these lakes through lakeside planting, many of the water bodies tend to be poorly integrated into the wider landscape. In addition to water-based activities other recreational opportunities in the area include parking sites with picnic facilities, a horse-riding school at Cerney Wick, a wildlife centre on the northern edge of Somerford Keynes and the Thames Path national trail that extends through the southern portion of the area.



Numerous clusters of recently constructed lakeside holiday and second homes and chalets have developed around many of the lakes and these new developments are particularly prominent around the water bodies to the south-east of South Cerney. Although vegetation filters views towards many of these developments, the buildings tend to draw the eye as their architectural style is in contrast with the local vernacular of the surrounding villages; also, the individual developments do not share a consistent character with one another.

The main settlements associated with this Character Area comprise Ashton Keynes, Somerford Keynes and South Cerney.

Ashton Keynes is a compact nuclear village with the central historic core designated as a Conservation Area. Many of the older buildings are constructed in the local vernacular and limestone typical of Cotswold villages, together with more recent development,

particularly on the village perimeter. The juvenile River Thames flows through the village and is celebrated as an integral part of the village form with a series of pedestrian stone bridges linking dwellings. Although surrounded to the west, north and east by restored lakes and a wetland landscape, this is not immediately evident within the village and it presents a sense of a detachment from the nearby water based activities.

Somerford Keynes in the west is a linear settlement and includes a Conservation Area with a distinctive historic core of yellow/grey Cotswold stone-built properties with occasional areas of modern infill scattered throughout the settlement. South Cerney also includes two Conservation Areas with the settlement centred around an historic core interspersed with areas of modern infill. The settlement has developed at the intersection of a crossroads of local roads and a ditch runs east-west through the village in a wide grass verge. There are a few shops and pubs located in the village centre and an industrial area on the southern outskirts of the village including the recent development of the Lakeside Business Park.

Cerney Wick forms a small linear hamlet to the south-east of the western sector of the Cotswold Water Park and includes Churn Pool trout fishery on the outskirts of the settlement. Horse grazing is the common land use at both ends of the settlement with evidence of poached pasture both to the north and to the south. Stone walls thread through the hamlet and give an added sense of unity to the settlement.

In the north of the area, beyond the immediate influence of the lakes, the village of Siddington is located on the valley floor of the River Churn. The settlement comprises a range of new stone built properties, new and old red brick terraces, Siddington Manor, farm buildings, allotments and horse pasture all mixed and clustered together.

Beyond the new lakeside holiday home developments and the villages described above, settlement is very limited within the wider landscape of the Character Area, although scattered 'Mills' and 'Mill Farms' are associated with isolated dwellings and farms in close proximity to the upper reaches of the River Thames, between Somerford Keynes and Ewen.

3B Down Ampney and Meysey Clay Vale Farmland

This is a low lying and predominantly flat landscape, with landform varying between 80 – 85m AOD. Occasional undulations are of local significance, however, such as Poulton Hill to the north of Down Ampney which rises to a height of nearly 120m AOD and Meysey Hampton to the north at 104m AOD.

This scale and pattern within this Character Area portrays a subtle shift in emphasis in comparison with the wider characteristics of the landscape type. Arable agriculture tends to predominate as a land use and field sizes are generally larger in scale. There is evidence of field amalgamation in places with isolated field trees marking



former field boundaries. These vary in condition from gappy and overgrown in places to well-maintained in others. Hedgerows tend to be medium in height adjacent to roads, and low, well maintained and regularly trimmed when forming divisions between fields.

Although there are no extensive areas of woodland cover within the Character Area, the deciduous woodlands of Dukes Brake and Vines Brake are notable features. These are located to the north of Lattton at the transition with the Cornbrash Limestone Lowlands and merge with further woods in this area. Numerous copses are also located in the vicinity of the village of Down Ampney. These include Horseground Covert, Poplar Wood, Gally Leaze Copse, The Grove and Bean Hay Copse and are associated with the planned estate farmland of the village of Down Ampney House. They also lie close to or surround the disused airfield to the south-east of Down Ampney. The airfield formed one of a number of airfields constructed in the south of the Cotswolds during World War II and is associated with the air attack of the Battle of Arnhem. This historical feature provides a visual contrast with the remainder of the Character Area with its long vistas within the flat expansive landscape. Coniferous linear copses prevail around the perimeter of the disused airfield, whilst elsewhere copses tend to be predominantly deciduous and more irregular in shape. In this part of the Character Area, overgrown boundaries and hedgerow trees combine with views to distant copses to create an intermittent wooded feel to the landscape with copses, located within the adjacent Cornbrash Limestone Lowlands, often providing the primary horizon feature. The large scale field pattern combines with the distant expansive views to give landscape that is simple and open.



5.3 The Character Types and Areas of the Cotswold Water Park
RIVER BASIN CLAY VALE

Hydrological influences on the area include a number of streams and ditches draining the landscape and a water body known as Down Ampney Pits which is a Key Wildlife Site. In addition to the River Thames which flows through the southern part of the Character Area, its tributary the Ampney Brook is also a locally notable watercourse. Their courses are delineated in the landscape by mature trees including pollarded willows and scrubby vegetation aligning the banks.

The North Meadow National Nature Reserve is located at the south-east perimeter of the Character Area, on the north-western side of Cricklade between the confluence of the Thames and Churn. It is nationally renowned for the rare snakeshead fritillaries (Fritillaria meleagris) that bloom across the meadow in late April. The 60 hectare site comprises ancient Lammas land where certain Cricklade townspeople have the right to graze their animals in winter, the land reverting to meadow during the summer. With the land held in common it escaped drainage and agricultural improvement and now supports 80%of Britain's wild population of fritillaries.

The dispersed linear settlement of Down Ampney lies adjacent to Ampney Brook. This village includes a Conservation Area and comprises numerous traditional grey/brown stone houses with high pitched roofs scattered throughout the settlement. The historic house of Down Ampney House is located in the south of the settlement and fronts onto a parkland landscape demarcated by a parkland fence. The large modern stone development of Broadleaze is located on the northern outskirts of the village. The village has historical associations with the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams who was born in The Vicarage in 1872. Although he only lived there for a few years up to his father's death, he retained a strong association and love of the Gloucestershire landscape and expressed this in a number of his compositions.



Other settlements in the Character Area comprise Latton, a compact village to the east of the A419 which has recently been expanded to accommodate new housing development, and Meysey Hampton, a nucleated village located in the north of the area. Part of Meysey Hampton is designated as a Conservation Area and set around a village green with a predominance of brown/grey old stone properties and an orchard located in the historic centre. A series of old stone walls thread through the village to impart an additional sense of unity. The compact linear village of Marston Meysey is located on the eastern perimeter the Character Areas, close to the boundary of Fairford Airfield. The remainder of the landscape area is very sparely settled, limited to a few isolated farms.

The Eastern Spine Road crosses the Character Area from the Weavers Bridge interchange on the A419, with recent improvements at Sheepen Bridge. This route provides a link to A417 and Fairford, but it retains the character of a local road. There is also a limited road network of minor roads broadly running north-south in the area and these connect the settlements of Down Ampney, Meysey Hampton, and Marston Meysey and to villages in the wider landscape beyond the Character Area.



The Character Area forms part of the central sector of the Cotswold Water Park comprising Latton / Down Ampney / Marston Meysey. In comparison with the western and eastern sectors, this area has experienced much less gravel extraction and the landscape character is therefore more influenced by agricultural intensification than restoration to lakes. As the reserves in the first two sectors become depleted, however, this area will be progressively vulnerable to change through the existing and potential future extraction. The Cotswold Water Park Management Strategy provides the framework to ensure that a long term vision and management plan for this sensitive area is defined which seeks to ensure that the area is appropriately managed and restored. The setting and protection of the settlements in the area, including Latton, Down Ampney and Marston Meysey will be particularly crucial in managing any future landscape change arising from extraction of the underlying mineral reserves.

3C Fairford and Lechlade Settled Wetlands

This area comprises a mixture of contrasting land uses that includes areas of agricultural landscape, the Fairford/Lechlade/Kempsford Section of the designated Cotswold Water Park and Fairford Airfield. The area is predominantly flat and low-lying with the exception of Horcott Hill which rises to a height of 102m AOD and comprises an upstanding outcrop of the Oxford Clay Formation.

The Eastern Section of the Cotswold Water Park has developed as a result a post-extraction remediation treatment which has created a series of water bodies similar in character to the South Cerney and Ashford Keynes Settled Wetlands Character Area, but lake

coverage is not as extensive. The lakes are used for a variety of recreational pursuits including coarse and game fishing, water skiing and sailing. Some lakes also have informal paths around their perimeter with viewing benches. There are very limited views to the lakes from the surrounding road network, however, as they are generally well enclosed by surrounding vegetation. Tree and scrub planting adjacent to most of the lakes has created a naturalistic feel to many of the lakeside edges, and serves to better integrate the water bodies into the wider landscape where these are visible. The smooth surface of the lakes contrasts with the texture of the surrounding vegetation to create a simple landscape pattern throughout the area.

Many of the lakes in the Character Area have been classified as Key Wildlife Sites by Gloucestershire County Council, two of which have been designated as SSSIs. Water bodies of nature conservation interest in the Fairford and Lechlade area include two lakes to the north of Lechlade which form the Edward Richardson and Phyllis Amey GWT Nature Reserve. Other Key Wildlife Sites include a strip of semi-natural grassland aligning the dismantled Bryworth Railway Line in the north of the Character Area, Bushyleaze Copse on the northern boundary to the north of Lechlade, and Whelford Meadows which includes areas of invertebrate rich grassland, and is also designated as a SSSI.

In addition to the series of lakes within the designated Cotswold Water Park, other hydrological features and influences in the area include the River Coln; the River Thames; and an extensive network of ditches, which commonly form field boundaries and align local roads.

A diverse agricultural landscape predominates with varying field sizes and land uses. In the wider landscape a mixture of arable and pastoral land use predominates in medium to large scale fields. Smaller scale fields are evident, however, on the slopes of the local hillocks, and small scale arable fields and scrubby pasture can be found adjacent to the River Thames. Low, well maintained and regularly trimmed hedgerows with isolated hedgerow trees form the common boundary treatment in the agricultural landscape. These hedgerows are becoming gappy in places, however, so that adjacent fields are open to one another. Where hedgerows lie in close proximity to the Thames, they have often become overgrown and in places give a localised sense of enclosure adjacent to the course of the river.

Woodland is not particularly prevalent in the wider landscape although there are a few small copses associated with the localised hillock of Horcott Hill and elsewhere a number of mature trees along local tracks form linear wooded elements in the landscape. There is a predominance of deciduous species in these copses and within hedgerows with the exception of some stands of coniferous trees around Kempsford.

The active extraction of sand and gravel continues as a significant land use in this area. The most visually and audibly significant areas of activity occur to the west of Horcott Hill, with unrestored post-extraction works west of the Hill still evident in the area adjacent to the current works. Elsewhere works are evident to the east of Kempsford and west of Fairford at Warren's Cross Farm. As this latter area is progressively restored, however, it is proposed that Claydon Pike will be created as a Country Park together with an hotel and lodge development on the neighbouring Bowmoor Lake.



The main settled influences on the area are the village of Fairford and the small market town of Lechlade on Thames. Fairford is located in the north of the area. The settlement includes a Conservation Area and extends outwards from an historic core which hosts a renowned 15th century church with a distinctive square stone tower. There is a compact village centre with an extensive range of shops and stores, eating establishments, pubs and hotels. There is a mixture of architectural styles within the settlement including a few timber framed houses and a new stone built estate at the edge of the village. Old Cotswold stone walls wind through the village forming a common boundary treatment for many residential properties and unifying the ad hoc mixture of historic housing styles in the settlement.



Lechlade on Thames is located at the east of the study area and includes a Conservation Area comprising various eras of housing styles associated with the incremental expansion of the settlement. There is a proliferation of new housing on the outskirts of the village including both stone and brick of varying types as well as some rendered properties. The elegant spire of the church is a particularly

distinctive landmark within the wider landscape. The settlement has a well developed commercial centre including several pubs, a medical centre, estate agents, a bank and a pharmacy as well as a range of shops. The proximity of Lechlade to the River Thames has resulted in a cluster of recreational uses and tourist facilities on the southern periphery of the village including an hotel, the Thames Path National Trail, St. Johns Priory Park caravan park and pleasure craft cruising.





Other settlements in the area include Horcott, a small linear village located at the north-west base of Horcott Hill; Whelford, a small dispersed settlement to the east of Fairford Airfield; and Kempsford, a linear village that extends along the northern bank of the River Thames. These settlements generally comprise a mixture of older stone properties and with newer housing clustered at the edges. These smaller settlements have limited facilities with the exception of Kempsford which includes a Conservation Area and has a local primary school, a few public houses and a church with a square stone tower that forms a local landmark visible from the wider landscape beyond the village. Beyond the villages and town described above, settlement is generally very sparse in the wider landscape, comprising isolated farm buildings often located on or at base of the localised hillocks and accessed by minor tracks.

Fairford Airfield is a notable feature in the west of the area and creates a strong military presence that has a significant influence on the local landscape character. The airfield has been developed across a flat, large scale landscape with expansive areas of hardstanding and mown grass extending beyond the periphery of the runway. A number of large scale buildings punctuate the horizon; these include substantial hangars of varying form, including many rectilinear hangars and a large arching domed structure. Intermittent towers also form prominent vertical features across the airfield and there is also a sequence of large turfed geometric bunkers. The boundary of the airfield is demarcated by a large perimeter security fence. Overgrown hedgerows align most of the airfield boundaries limiting views towards the airfield from the surrounding area but there are filtered views through gaps in the vegetation and at the entrance gates.

The A417 extends across the north of the area connecting Fairford and Lechlade with other settlements along the Upper Thames Clay Vale. Elsewhere, access is very limited with a sparse minor road network connecting local villages and skirting around the edge of Fairford Airfield.

3D Swill and Derry Brook Clay Vale Farmland

The Swill and Derry Brook Clay Vale Farmland comprises a low lying area of predominantly permanent pasture farmland to the south of the South Cerney and Ashton Keynes Settled Wetlands. Underlain by the Oxford Clay Formation, morphologically it is part of the Upper Thames River Basin Clay Vale and although there is a very gentle fall to the River Thames, the area appears flat. The area is drained by two watercourses. To the west, the Swill Brook rises to the west of the village of Oaksey beyond the study area and within the Pool Keynes and Ewen Cornbrash Limestone Lowlands, and hence resulting in lime rich water. The course of its lower reaches defines the boundary of the Character Area. Further east, the Derry Brook also rises beyond the study area within the Rolling Clay Lowlands to the south, and follows a generally north-easterly course to meet the Swill Brook at High Bridge and close to the further confluence with the Thames. In addition to the watercourse there are numerous ditches that drain this low lying area together with many small ponds, providing evidence of the high water table.



Unlike the land to the north, the farmland has not been significantly affected by gravel extraction operations. The quiet, pastoral landscape character is derived from the pattern of pasture fields, riparian vegetation with pollarded willows, and a largely intact network of hawthorn hedgerows with intermittent, mainly oak and some ash hedgerow trees. Along the watercourses, and particularly

the Swill Brook, there are also areas of riparian ash and willow / alder carr woodland. This combination of landscape elements is therefore indicative of how many areas to the north would have appeared prior to the extensive exploitation of the sand and gravel reserves and restoration to lakes.

There are no villages in the Character Area and settlement is confined to a dispersed pattern of farms, and clusters of dwellings that form a series of hamlets. There is a particular concentration along Swan Lane that links the Malmesbury and Ashton Roads. The field pattern is characterised by generally small to medium sized fields. Smaller fields, sometimes irregular in form, are particularly evident around the hamlets.

The Clattinger Farm Nature Reserve is located in the north-western section of the Character Area to the north of Swill Brook and has been managed by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust since 1996. Designated as a SSSI and a candidate SAC, it is considered to be the finest remaining example of enclosed lowland grassland in the country and an important remnant of a traditional hay meadow. The previous owners farmed the meadows without fertilisers for many years, and the site is particularly renowned for the snake's head fritillary that flowers in the meadow in late April as well as several species of orchid.

On the northern margin of the Character Area, the Waterhay Car Park is located at one of the Gateways to the Western section of the Cotswold Water Park. Here, visitors can leave their cars behind and gain access to the nearby Cleveland Lakes. It is also a key access point for horse riders as horse boxes can be left in the car park, and riders can use the network of nearby bridlepaths. The Car Park is also located adjacent to the Thames Path National Trail with links either eastwards to Cricklade and North Meadow or west to the head of the Thames.

3E Castle Eaton and Inglesham Clay Vale Farmland

The Castle Eaton and Inglesham Character Area extends across the south-eastern section of the study area from Cricklade in the west to Lechlade and the St John's Bridge crossing of the Thames in the east. The area is generally low lying with an imperceptible fall to the River Thames, which defines the northern limit of many sections of the area. In contrast to the otherwise flat landform the small hillocks of Brazen Church Hill and the broader elongated hill immediately to the north at Dudgrove Farm are locally notable features in the landscape and form reference points in wider views. Their apparent prominence is enhanced by the woodland that extends across part of their slopes.

In addition to the east - west course of the Thames, the area is drained by a series of small tributaries of the main river. These comprise the River Ray in the west, followed by Share Ditch, Bydemill Brook and finally, the River Cole. These are generally small watercourses with their course often only discernible by lines of riparian vegetation including willow and alder.





The land use across the area comprises a mixture of pasture and arable with a predominance of pasture. The generally geometric fields are of a medium to large scale although occasional smaller fields are evident in close proximity the settlements within the area.

Although there is a limited woodland cover across the area, there are nevertheless some substantial areas of woodland which form strong skyline features in the landscape where views are possible across the broad and simple horizons of this flat landscape. The most substantial is Water Eaton Copse, a rectangular area of deciduous woodland to the west of Share Ditch. In the vicinity of this woodland there are further linear belts of woodland including Pope Farm woodland to the west, and further north, the woodlands surrounding North and South Farms. Together these visually link to form a strong north-south line of woodland across the western side of the Character Area.

Settlement within the Character Area is generally small scale and dispersed. The two principal villages are both located adjacent to the River Thames and comprise the compact nuclear Castle Eaton and the larger and linear Kempsford. The 13th Century Church of St Mary has a distinctive spire that forms a notable landmark in this flat landscape. Elsewhere, the small settlement of Hannington Wick to the south-east of Kempsford comprises a nucleus of several farms that serve the wider area. Finally the small village of Upper Inglesham is located at the extreme east of the Character Area on locally elevated land between the Thames and the River Cole. Beyond these villages there is a very dispersed pattern of isolated farms.

5.3 The Character Types and Areas of the Cotswold Water Park
RIVER BASIN CLAY VALE

A limited network of roads serves the area confined to simple rural roads connecting the villages. The area surrounding the Water Eaton Copse woodlands is particularly inaccessible to traffic and presents a quiet and isolated character. Similarly, in the eastern section of the Character Area, the land between the River Thames and River Cole and extending west to Kempsford is also very inaccessible with access limited to simple tracks to isolated farms. This quiet and peaceful rural character and its inaccessibility is a particularly notable feature of many parts of this Character Area.

In the extreme west of the Character Area a disused railway line demarks the former Cheltenham to Andover line that was closed in 1961, two years before the more swathing Beeching cuts. Further south the line has been restored as the Swindon and Cricklade Railway, and currently terminates at Hayes Knoll Station just south of the Character Area. The proposal is to reinstate the line as far as Cricklade and integrate this with the Cricklade Country Park Initiative which is working to establish a green recreational and wildlife corridor linking urban Swindon to Cricklade and the Cotswold Water Park. A network of routes will be provided between Cricklade and Swindon - either by train, foot, cycle or by canal boat through the restoration of the West Berkshire Canal that once served the area.

APPENDIX 7: PROPOSED SITE PLAN

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- Do not scale from this drawing.
- Unless noted otherwise all dimensions are in millimetres.
- All dimensions to be checked on site prior to commencement of works.

Drawing Revisions

00	14/07/25	Option Study
01	28/07/25	Option 1 Revised
02	25/09/25	Layout Updates
03	29/09/25	Cycle Path Updates
04	06/11/25	Site Layout Updates



1 proposed site plan_Option 1
1:1000

KEY:

1. Viewing + Seating Area
2. Vertical Axis Wind Turbine
3. Sub-Station / Plant
4. Slipway + Hardstanding
5. Parking Spaces
6. Gym + Fitness Studio/ Consultation Room / WC
7. Bicycle Hire
8. Recycling + Refuse Collection Points
9. Accommodation Lodges
10. Accessible Lodges
11. Extended Parking Bays

new vehicular / bicycle access route

existing paths around the site

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Issued For

INFORMATION

Client

Mr P Cripps

Project

Development of Lake 62 Cotswold Water Park

Derrylfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire, SN6 6QT

Drawing

Title	**Proposed Site Plan**
Date	November 2025
Scale	As indicated @ A1
Project number	**LAD058**
Drawing number	**CWP- 102**
Revison	**04**

APPENDIX 8: LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS



Example of mobile accommodation unit in naturalistic setting

TREE PLANTING

Species	Form	Girth cm	Height cm	Root condition
Acer campestre	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Alnus glutinosa	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Betula pendula	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Betula pubescens	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Corylus colurna	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Prunus avium	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Salix alba	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L
Sorbus aucuparia	EHS	14-16	425-600	65/85 L

NATIVE STRUCTURE MIX @ 1M CTRS

Species	Root Condition	Age + Times Transpl	Height cm
Acer campestre	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Crataegus monogyna	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Corylus avellana	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Cornus sanguineum	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Euonymus europaeus	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Ligustrum vulgare	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Prunus spinosa	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Salix caprea	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Taxus baccata	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Viburnum lantana	Bagged	1+1	40-60
Viburnum opulus	Bagged	1+1	40-60

KEY

Soft Landscaping

Existing Trees Retained

Proposed Tree Planting

Proposed Mixed Native Structure Planting

Proposed Grassland -
EM8 Meadow Mixture for Wet Soils

Hard Landscaping

Proposed Access - Hoggin

POND EDGE AND AQUATIC MARGINALS (Planted randomly – up to 0.5m above and 0.3m below settled water level)

Species	Root condition	No. / m2
Potentilla palustris	P9/0.5lt	3
Alisma plantago-aquatica	P9/0.5lt	3
Mentha aquatica	P9/0.5lt	3
Veronica beccabunga	P9/0.5lt	3
Lythrum salicaria	P9/0.5lt	3
Potamogeton pectinatus	P9/0.5lt	3
Potamogeton crispus	P9/0.5lt	3
Ceratophyllum demersum	P9/0.5lt	3
Myriophyllum spicatum	P9/0.5lt	3
Persicaria amphibium	P9/0.5lt	3
Sagittaria sagittifolia	P9/0.5lt	3

Emorsgate EG8 Meadow Mixture for Wet Soils sown at 5gms/m2

Grasses

%	Latin name	Common name
12.5	Agrostis capillaris	Common Bent
3.75	Alopecurus pratensis	Meadow Foxtail (w)
3.75	Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet Vernal-grass (w)
3.75	Briza media	Quaking Grass (w)
32.5	Cynosurus cristatus	Crested Dogstail
2.5	Deschampsia cespitosa	Tufted Hair-grass (w)
35	Festuca rubra	Red Fescue
6.25	Schedonorus pratensis (Festuca pratensis)	Meadow Fescue
100		

Proposed scattered tree and mixed native scrub planting, to strengthen boundary and break up accommodation units

Proposed wet soil/damp tolerant grassland mix to repair eroded areas/overseed where needed.

Proposed mixed native scrub planting

Water edge to be planted with marginal planting between units

Proposed scattered tree and mixed native scrub planting, to break up accommodation units

Proposed scattered tree and mixed native scrub planting, to strengthen boundary and break up parking areas

N

0 100m



Example of mobile accommodation unit in naturalistic setting

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	3/3/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

Description:
Landscape Strategy Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
1:750 @A0	**DP MP**	**03/03/2026**

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 938	**04**	**-**

APPENDIX 9: REPRESENTATIVE VIEWS



Viewpoint 1 – View from Ashton Road looking in the direction of the site.

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV



Viewpoint 2 – View from Spine Road West looking into the site.

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV



Viewpoint 3 – View from Kings Water new development looking towards the direction of the site.

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV



Viewpoint 4 – View from Whitefriars Lane looking towards the direction of the site.

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV



Viewpoint 5 – View from right of way AKEY1A looking towards the direction of the site.

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV



Viewpoint 6 – View from right of way AKEY1A looking in the direction of the site.

Single 'monocular' view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV



Viewpoint 7 – View from right of way AKEY4 looking in the direction of the site.

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Camera make & model - Canon 5d Mark IV

APPENDIX 10 - VISUAL SUMMARY TABLE

Table 6.1 – Summary of Visual Effects

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Year 1 – Scale of effect	Year 15 = scale of effect
Viewpoint 1 - View from Ashton Road looking in the direction of the site	Medium	No change	No effect	No effect
Viewpoint 2 - View from Spine Road West looking into the site	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Negligible neutral
Viewpoint 3 - View from Kings Water new development looking towards the direction of the site	High	Low	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse
Viewpoint 4 - View from Whitefriars Lane looking towards	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Negligible neutral

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Year 1 – Scale of effect	Year 15 = scale of effect
the direction of the site				
Viewpoint 5 - View from right of way AKEY1A looking towards the direction of the site	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Negligible neutral
Viewpoint 6 - View from right of way AKEY1A looking in the direction of the site	Medium	No change	No effect	No effect
Viewpoint 7 - View from right of way AKEY4 looking in the direction of the site	High	No change	No effect	No effect

APPENDIX 11 – TREE RETENTION AND LOSS PLAN



KEY - BS 5837 : 2012 Categories

- Tree Category A - High Quality
- A Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category B - Moderate Quality
- B Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category C - Low Quality
- C Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category U - Unsuitable for Retention
- Default Root Protection Area to BS:5837:2012
- Adjusted Root Protection Area to BS:5837:2012
- Shrub Mass / Offsite Tree
- Survey Item to be Removed
- Survey Item to be Retained

N

0 100m

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	19/2/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

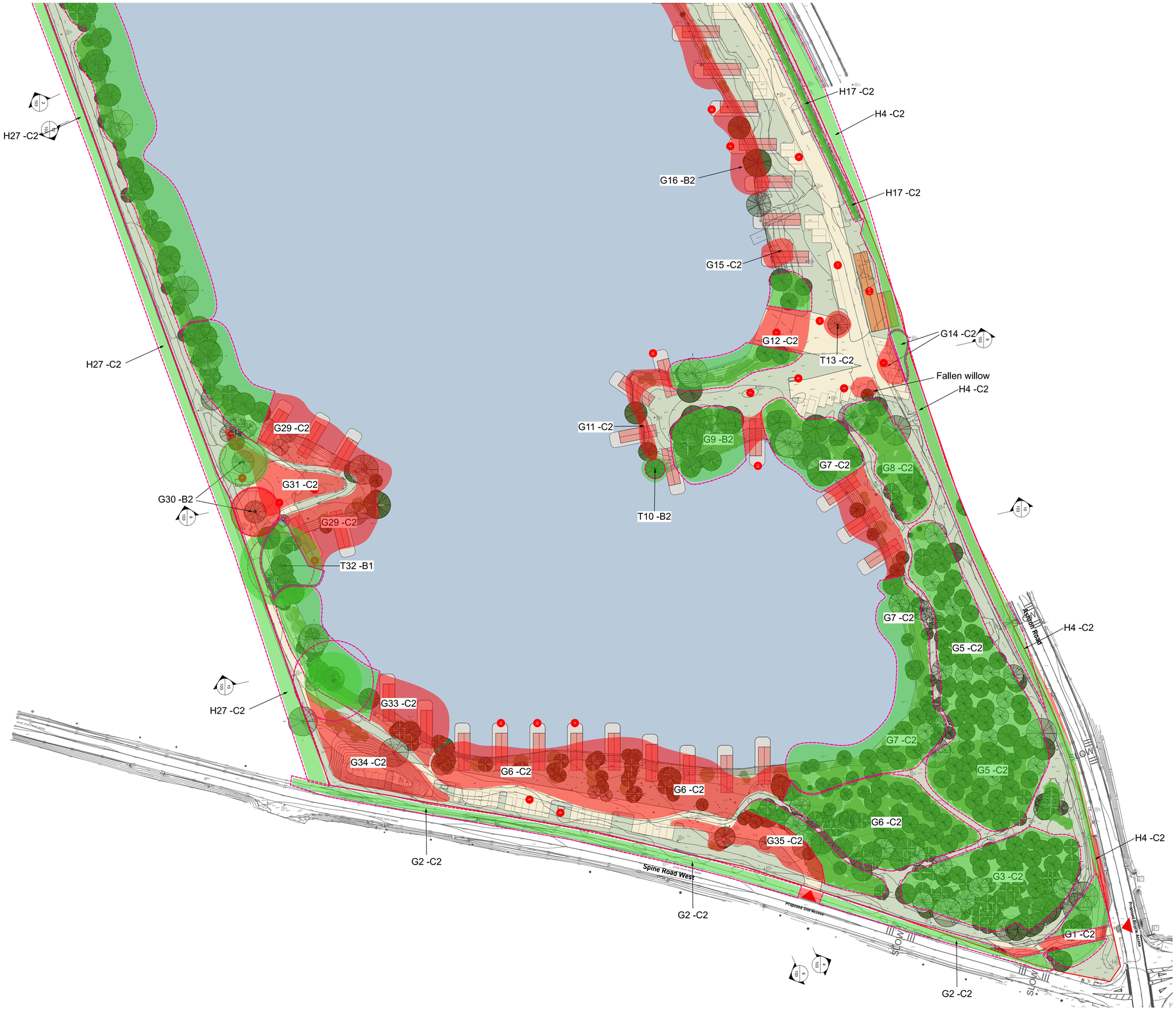
Project:
Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

Description:
Tree Retention and Loss Plan - Sheet 1 of 3 Site Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
1:500 @A0	**DP MP**	**19/02/2026**

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 938	**02**	**-**



KEY - BS 5837 : 2012 Categories

- Tree Category A - High Quality
- A Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category B - Moderate Quality
- B Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category C - Low Quality
- C Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category U - Unsuitable for Retention
- Default Root Protection Area to BS:5837:2012
- Adjusted Root Protection Area to BS:5837:2012
- Shrub Mass / Offsite Tree
- Survey Item to be Removed
- Survey Item to be Retained

N

0 100m

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Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	19/2/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

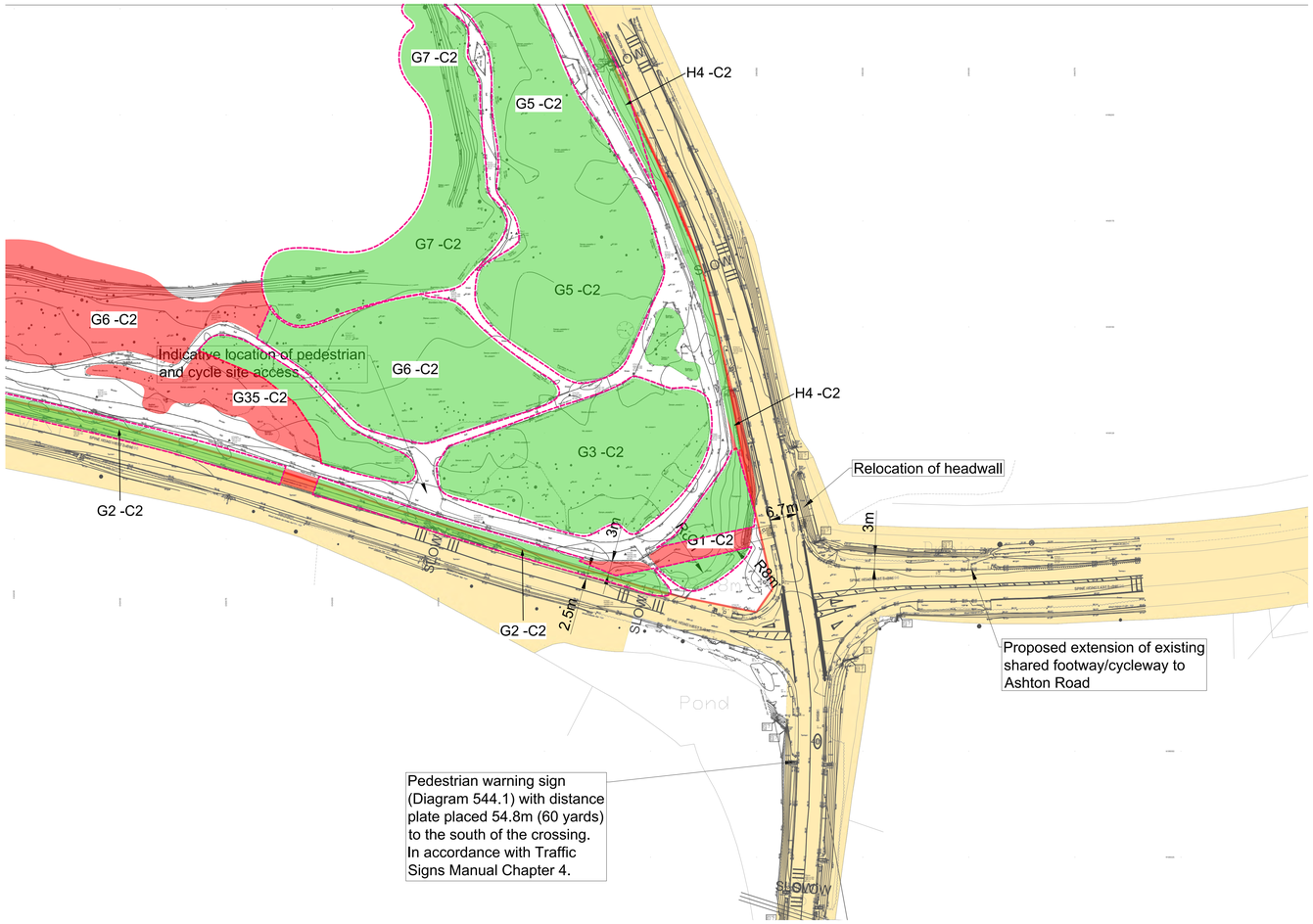
Project:
Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

Description:
Tree Retention and Loss Plan - Sheet 2 of 3 Site Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
1:500 @A0	**DP MP**	**19/02/2026**

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 938	**02**	**-**



KEY - BS 5837 : 2012 Categories

- Tree Category A - High Quality
- A Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category B - Moderate Quality
- B Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category C - Low Quality
- C Category - Hedgerow, Group, Woodland
- Tree Category U - Unsuitable for Retention
- Default Root Protection Area to BS:5837:2012
- Adjusted Root Protection Area to BS:5837:2012
- Shrub Mass / Offsite Tree
- Survey Item to be Removed
- Survey Item to be Retained

N

0 100m

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	19/2/26

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Lake 62, Cotswold Water Park, Derryfields, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire

Description:
Tree Retention and Loss Plan - Sheet 3 of 3 Highways

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn I Checked	Date:
1:500 @A0	**DP MP**	**19/02/2026**
Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 938	**02**	**-**