

APPENDIX 4: LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Landscape Assessment Criteria to accompany written LVIA assessment
Prepared by Barbara Griffin-Wright for Boyce SPV 10 Ltd

Assessment Criteria – Sensitivity, Magnitude of Change and Effects Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

SENSITIVITY	DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES (VALUE) Landscapes recognised and valued for their quality and / or cultural associations	KEY CHARACTERISTICS AND FEATURES As recognised in published Landscape Character Assessments	LANDSCAPE CONDITION Degree to which the landscape is intact and legible	LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY The ability for the landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences
HIGH	National / Regional Importance (Landscape Designations - AONB, National Park, Registered Parks and Gardens)	Features which are dominant within the landscape and are fundamental to defining the distinct landscape character of an area. Important characteristics and features recognised as forming intrinsic part of nationally and regionally designated landscapes. Distinctive individual or rare features.	Distinct landscape structure with strong pattern and intact features. Few detractors or uncharacteristic features or elements present.	The landscape is such that changes in terms of the development proposed would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.
MEDIUM	Local Importance (Other Designations - Special Landscape Areas / Protected Features)	Locally important and notable features that contribute to the overall character of an area. Features and elements protected by local policy.	Landscape exhibits recognisable structure and characteristic patterns. Some detracting features present.	The proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
LOW	No Designation	Features or elements that are uncharacteristic and detract from the landscape character of an area.	Degraded landscape structure with fragmented pattern and poor legibility of character. Detracting features notable within the landscape. Opportunities for the restoration of landscape through mitigation measures associated with proposals.	The development proposed is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including use, scale and mass.

Table 2: Visual Sensitivity Criteria

VISUAL SENSITIVITY	Occupation and Activity of Users (Visual Value)	Visual Susceptibility
HIGH	- Observers whose attention or interest may be focussed on the landscape and recognised views in particular. - Recognised / Important Viewpoints, including those identified within and protected by policy. These viewpoints may be tourist destinations and marked on maps. - Designed views, including from within historic landscapes. - Residential Properties - Views from rooms occupied during daylight / waking hours (predominantly ground floor rooms). - Users of Rights of Way and Recreational Trails. - Users of land with public access (i.e. Open Access Land and National Trust Land).	The visual composition following the development as proposed will include discordant and incongruent elements.
MEDIUM	- Views of the landscape are part of, but not the sole purpose of the receptors' activities. - Residential Properties - Views from rooms unoccupied during daylight /waking hours (1st floor rooms)1. - Those playing or participating at outdoor sports or undertaking formal outdoor recreation. - Users of local roads where there are clear / open views across the landscape and low levels of traffic.	The visual composition with the development as proposed will be consistent with the baseline situation, although some aspects may be at odds with the visual composition.
LOW	- Attention is focused upon the activity of the receptor and not upon the wider views. - Users of main roads travelling at speed, or local roads where the focus is upon the road ahead owing to traffic conditions and the context / composition of views. - Places of work - Views from permissive routes.	The visual composition following the development as proposed will be in harmony with the existing composition.

Table 3: Magnitude of Change Criteria - Landscape

MAGNITUDE	Change experienced
High	Adverse Development would result in the irrevocable loss of key landscape elements and features, resulting in a permanent change to the landscape character and context of the area. Introduction of uncharacteristic, dominant elements within the landscape. Proposals erode of the context of existing features and their perception within the landscape. Result of change may undermine any designation. Mitigation measures do not reserve loss although will deliver some localised benefits. Beneficial Proposals strengthen existing landscape structure through the introduction of lost or degraded features and reinstatement of fragmented landscape patterns. Development fits within existing landscape character and enhances and / or reinstates key landscape features. Delivers policy objectives for landscape conservation or enhancement.
Moderate	Adverse Development would result in the localised medium to long- term loss of some key characteristic landscape features. Introduction of development / uncharacteristic elements within the landscape which alongside characteristic features. Beneficial Proposals introduce characteristic development and key landscape features whilst respecting the scale and pattern of the landscape.
Low	Adverse Development would result in the temporary loss of a low number of localised key features. Mitigation is possible and can maintain or restore losses. The proposals introduce temporary uncharacteristic features into the landscape. Beneficial The proposals retain existing key features and respect the pattern of the landscape. Proposals allow for local enhancements through the removal of detracting features.
Negligible	The development would introduce barely discernible elements or physical change to the landscape. Key characteristics of the landscape and the integrity of the landscape remain unaffected.

Table 4: Magnitude of Change Criteria - Views

MAGNITUDE	Change experienced
High	Adverse Proposals introduce dominant, discordant elements altering the composition and balance of the view. Total and complete change in the composition of the view with the introduction of features and elements not present in the locality. Development interrupts or detracts from the focus of a recognised important view or vista. Proposals introduce features not present in skyline views of the area. Beneficial Development introducing positive elements that enhance legibility and composition of degraded views. Proposals reinstate a formerly lost valued view. Development introduces a valued landmark or feature within views from a recognised vantage point Proposal removing existing visual detractors and introduce development that respects the scale, form and layout of existing visual components.
Moderate	Adverse Development is clearly visible, but not prominent in views. Proposals may introduce some uncharacteristic elements that are incongruous in limited localised views. Development may form skyline features amongst existing development and / or vegetation where such skyline views are not typical. Beneficial Proposals enhance the visual setting and complement the composition of the view and the scale and form of development within it.
Low	Adverse Development does not introduce uncharacteristic or incongruent features into the view. Proposals do not alter the overall composition of the view or the dominance or balance of elements within it. Development does not protrude above existing elements to be dominant on the skyline. Views of the proposals are filtered or seen in partial, glimpsed views between existing development and vegetation. Views of development brief and fleeting as seen from moving vehicles. Beneficial Development compliments the composition and balance of elements within existing views.
Negligible	The development would be barely discernible in views. Proposals perceived as a background component in views or are subservient to other elements within it.

Table 5: Landscape and visual effect criteria

EFFECT	Justification
High Beneficial	The development would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and enhance the existing landscape character. The development would create a highly improved change in the view.
Moderate Beneficial	The development would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, maintain and/or enhance the existing landscape character. The development would create a noticeable but improved change in the view.
Minor Beneficial	The development would complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, whilst maintaining the existing character. The development would result in minor improvements to the existing views.
Negligible	The development would be barely discernible in views. Proposals perceived as a background component in views or are subservient to other elements within it.
Minor Adverse	The development would cause minor permanent and/or temporary loss or alteration to one or more key elements or features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The development would cause limited visual intrusion.
Moderate Adverse	The development would cause substantial permanent loss or alteration to one or more key elements of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements that are apparent but may not be substantially uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape. The development would be clearly visible.
High Adverse	The development would cause total permanent loss or major alteration to key elements and features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements totally uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The development would be clearly evident and would disrupt fine and valued views both into and across the area.