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APPENDIX MDB 4

LANDSCAPE VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Hyland Edgar Driver

St. Marys Hill Blandford St. Marys

Landscape and Visual Assessment

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This LVIA has been prepared by Hyland Edgar Driver Ltd on behalf of Mrs Linley Abbott. The report is supported by information located in the appendices as directed in the text.
- 1.2 The European Landscape Convention (2000)¹ described landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.
- 1.3 In accordance with the requirements of environmental assessment regulations² this assessment has identified the likely significant landscape and visual effects that would result from the proposed development. Landscape impacts are defined as those that derive from physical changes to the landscape and changes to the character of the landscape and to the landscape setting, whilst visual impacts are those that derive from changes to views and visual amenity resulting from the proposed development. Impacts have been assessed for the construction and operational phases.

The proposed development

- 1.4 The development site is farmland located south of the road junction of the A350 and A354 on the south-east side of Blandford Forum.
- 1.5 The development proposals are an outline planning application for a good quality, sustainable residential development of up to 300-350 dwellings, with an appropriate level of affordable housing and public open space. The detailed design of the development is to be considered at a later date however principally the new housing would comprise of two storey pitched roof dwellings with a number of three storey landmark buildings.
- 1.6 An illustrative masterplan for the scheme is shown as Figure 1 of this report.
- 1.7 The elements of the illustrative scheme that are particularly relevant to the landscape and visual assessment are:
- the site location on the edge of Blandford St Mary and the wider urban area of Blandford Forum;
 - the size, layout and character of the proposed development and how it responds to the site context and landscape and visual characteristics;
 - the inclusion of the proposed Stour Valley by-pass route within the highest most south-westerly portion of the site;
 - retention of the footpath/bridleway 'Trailway' that will run around the site and help connect the adjacent settlements with the countryside;
 - retention of existing landscape features within the scheme including tree groups and boundary hedgerows;
 - new proposed landscape elements including:
 - boundary treatments comprising of native woody planting and other ecologically friendly features;
 - a retained public open spaces; and
 - a village green to create a gateway entrance public realm to the development and the wider settlement.

¹ 718th meeting of the Committee of Minister of the Council of Europe: Florence (2000) Chapter 1, Article 1 – Definitions, 20 October.

² The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011.SI 2011 No. 1824.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 2.1 This section describes the landscape related planning legislation and policy that applies to the development site and context, and to the proposed land use. The extents and locations of the various planning policy designations discussed below are shown on Figure 2: Policy and Designations.

National legislation

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

- 2.2 The Act provides a new right of public access on foot to areas of open land comprising mountain, moor, heath, down, and registered common land, and contains provisions for extending the right to coastal land. The Act also clarifies the procedure and purpose of designating AONBs, and consolidates the provisions of previous legislation (see below).

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

- 2.3 The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, sets out the following statutory purposes for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in England and Wales:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty.

- 2.4 The Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (DAONB) lies to the west of the site over the crest of St Mary's Hill, and the Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CC&WWAONB) runs down to the opposite side of the Stour Valley and overlooks the site.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.5 This Act enables local authorities to designate areas for their special architectural and historic interest. Such areas identify higher quality townscapes, and in proximity to the site is the large Blandford Forum Conservation Area centred around the rebuilt Georgian town centre, and the smaller Charlton Marshall Conservation Area south east of the site on the A350.
- 2.6 There are a large number of listed buildings within the study area particularly in the old town centre of Blandford Forum. The listed buildings closest to the site are the cluster at Lower Blandford St Mary including The Manor House, The Old Rectory, Clerkenwell House, St Mary's Church and a number of monuments within the church yard.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)³

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

- 2.7 Section 6 of the policy framework outlines the means by which Local Planning Authorities should significantly boost the supply of new homes.

Requiring good design

- 2.8 Section 7 looks at the design of new developments, including housing schemes, and states that 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people'.
- 2.9 The principles of good design in new developments are outlined as:

³ National Planning Policy Framework, Department for Communities and Local Government, London; 2012

- High functionality that adds to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of a development;
- The establishment of a strong sense of place and local distinctiveness, using streetscapes and buildings to create visually attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
- site optimisation to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including green and other public space) and the support of local facilities and transport networks;
- responding to local character and history to reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, but allowing for appropriate innovation; and
- the creation of safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.

Promoting healthy communities

- 2.10 Section 8 of the framework expands on these themes of good design to promote interaction between people in new communities through the use of active street frontages, clear and legible pedestrian routes and high quality public spaces.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

- 2.11 Section 11 covers the protection of the wider landscape stating that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils.
- 2.12 Paragraph 113 states that 'local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting ... landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites'. Paragraph 115. goes on to state that 'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in ... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty'.

Local Planning Policy

North Dorset District Council Local Plan 2003

- 2.13 The North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan was adopted on 31 January 2003. Part 1 of the plan covers district-wide policies and is subdivided into chapters. Policies relevant to the site policies are outlined below.

Chapter 1: Strategy and Environment

- 2.14 Policy 1.19 'Lighting Standards' outlines the general requirements for the lighting design of new developments.

'The external lighting of new development will only be approved in the following circumstances where:

- (i) there is no detrimental effect on existing unlit rural areas;*
- (ii) the scale of lighting columns is in keeping with the character of an area;*
- (iii) highway safety would not be adversely affected;*
- (iv) there would be no adverse effect on wildlife habitats;*
- (v) the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for security or working purposes;*
- (vi) light spillage and glare is minimised;*
- (vii) any necessary landscaping is included as screening'.*

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- 2.15 Policy 1.40 'Landscaping of New Development' outlines the broad approach to the landscape design of new developments.
- 'On any development site where existing trees are a significant landscape feature, a full tree survey, (based on an accurate land survey), forming part of the submitted planning application is required. Existing woodland and the most significant trees and hedgerows will be retained wherever possible. Appropriate management initiatives will be encouraged.*
- Where appropriate, schemes for good quality hard and soft landscaping (and proper provision for long term landscape maintenance) should be submitted as an integral part of any development proposals, in order to enhance the environment and setting of new development or to help integrate the development into its surroundings'.*
- 2.16 Policy 1.41 'Amenity Tree Planting' outlines the general requirements new tree planting in new developments.
- 'In connection with development proposals, the planting of locally occurring trees, shrubs and hedges, and the positive management of trees and woodlands is proposed in order to;*
- (i) strengthen existing tree cover*
 - (ii) improve public amenity*
 - (iii) create new woodlands*
- unless there are overriding ecological, archaeological or local landscape or amenity objections'.*
- 2.17 Although the site is not in an AONB the more wide ranging Policy 1.33 'Landscape Character Areas' states that *'Within each of the Landscape Character Areas, defined on the Proposals Map, development should be situated and designed so as to integrate with the distinctive landscape character of the area'.*
- Chapter 2: Housing*
- 2.18 Within the local plan there are a number of identified housing objectives:
- *'To secure an adequate supply of a wide-range of housing types to meet the requirements of the population.*
 - *To enable adequate provision of "affordable" housing for those of the local community who cannot easily compete in the housing market and to seek to maintain such stock for subsequent occupiers.*
 - *To ensure that new housing development takes place in locations where it supports and reinforces the local economy, services and facilities, conserves land and energy resources, and does not harm sensitive environmental locations.*
 - *To phase and co-ordinate development with the provision of social and service infrastructure'.*
- 2.19 Within the adopted plan two sites within the area have been allocated for residential development:
- Site D Off Langton Road (60 dwellings); and
 - Site F Off Shaftesbury Lane (260 dwellings).
- Chapter 4: Community Facilities and recreation*
- 2.20 Policy 4.10 'Long Distance Footpaths and Cycleways ("Trailways")' includes the most northerly section the Stour Valley Way that runs around the site. This is a long distance cycleway also open to walkers and horse riders that is proposed to run along the line of the disused Somerset/Dorset Railway between Blandford St. Mary and Corfe Mullen.

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Chapter 5: Transportation

- 2.21 Policy 5.22 'Road Schemes' has identified that land within the site is to be 'safeguarded from development which would prejudice the implementation of the A350 Charlton Marshall, Spetisbury and Sturminster Marshall By-pass'.

Part 2: Local Area Policies

- 2.22 The plan has a combined local area policy for Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary. This acknowledges the economic importance of the settlement both today and in the future but also acknowledges the sensitivity of the landscape surrounding the towns. Policy BL1 summarises this as follows:

(i) All development in Blandford should respect the character of the town and the surrounding landscape of the Dorset Downs and the Cranborne Chase.

(ii) In accordance with the overall Local Plan strategy Blandford will act as a main centre for co-ordinated population, housing, employment growth and the development of major community services to support this growth'.

North Dorset District Council Local Plan 2011-2026 Part 1

- 2.23 The local plan is currently being updated and is undergoing consultation at the pre-submission stage. A change to this document has been 'triggered by advice from English Heritage and as a result of changes in national planning guidance that gives greater weight to the setting of historic assets'.
- 2.24 NDDC in consultation with English Heritage and have looked carefully at the proposed housing sites in the Blandford area and have also sought the views of local residents and statutory bodies. This has resulted in the removal of the Crown Meadows housing site, west of Blandford Forum, from the local plan pre-submission document in favour of the St Mary's Hill site.
- 2.25 This would result in a number of consequential changes including the realignment of the safeguarded by-pass land to the south-western edge the site.

Heritage Assessment St Mary's Hill, Blandford St Mary August 2014

- 2.26 This document examines the potential impact of the St Mary's Hill development on heritage assets in Lower Blandford St Mary, Blandford and the Blandford St Mary and Bryanston Conservation Area. These assets include the listed buildings of The Manor House, The Old Rectory, Clerkenwell House and St Mary's Church in the hamlet of Lower Blandford St Mary.
- 2.27 The assessment found intervisibility between the proposed development and these heritage assets to be limited and that any residual impacts on their setting to be Slight.

Other Guidance

Urban design guidance

- 2.28 North Dorset District Council has prepared a guidance note to help developers when preparing design proposals for planning submissions. The guidance give an indication of the design data required to help inform the NDDC during its decision making process.

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Dorset AONB Management Plan

- 2.29 The Dorset AONB Policy Framework and Delivery Plan⁴ contains a number of relevant sections:
- 2.30 Section 4.A.1 covers Landscape Quality and sets out a number of objectives including:
- *'Objective L1: Conserve and enhance the AONB and the character and quality of its distinctive landscapes and associated features:*
 - *L1a: Conserve and enhance landscape character and quality and promote the use of landscape and seascape character assessment to shape decisions affecting the AONB*
 - *L1c: Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB such as tranquility and remoteness, wildness and dark skies*
 - *Objective L2: Conserve and enhance the AONB by removing, avoiding and reducing intrusive and degrading features*
 - *L2a: Avoid and reduce the cumulative impacts of change that erodes landscape character and Quality'*
- 2.31 Section 4.B.3 covers Planning, Highways and Infrastructure and set out objectives including:
- *'Objective PH1: Support sustainable development that conserves and enhances the special qualities of the AONB.*
 - *Objective PH2: Impacts of development and land use damaging to the AONB's special qualities are avoided and reduced'.*

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan

- 2.32 The CCWWD AONB Management Plan⁵ has a complimentary structure and content to the DAONB document. Site relevant objectives and policies include:
- *'C: The landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the AONB and its settings are conserved and enhanced.*
 - *D: The landscape character and special qualities of the AONB are fully understood, informing and incorporated within effective landscape management and planning.*
 - *L: Coherent and consistent formulation and implementation of planning policies across the AONB takes full account of the purposes of designation and the character and quality of the area and its setting.*
 - *L1: Continue the use of the AONB planning protocol by local planning authorities to ensure that the AONB Partnership is consulted on all development and land use change proposals that meet the criteria or may have a significant impact and/or effect on the characteristics, special qualities, or setting of the AONB.*
 - *L3: Ensure that where new development is permitted it complements the special qualities of the AONB and takes full account of the area's setting and context through the consideration of appropriate Landscape Character Assessments and sensitivity and design studies'*

⁴ Dorset AONB, A Framework for the future, AONB Management Plan 2014-19, Dorset AONB Partnership.

⁵ Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan (2014-2019)

Policy and guidance a summary of its relevance to the LVIA

- 2.33 The legislative and policy background provides the setting against which this LVIA is undertaken, and provides an indication of the characteristics of the landscape of the study area. It also highlights various and balancing interests of the area and how these relate to any future developments.
- 2.34 The project site is currently countryside but is in the process of being incorporated into the new local plan as a site for future housing. Balancing this identified socio-economic need are the requirements of the countryside surrounding the site. Much of this is nationally designated and protected, amongst other things, for its landscape, scenic beauty and unique character. Although the site does not lie within AONB any future development on it must respect these AONB settings.

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3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The methodology for this assessment has followed current best practice as defined by the Landscape Institute and The Institute of Environmental Assessment^{6, 7}, and is based on the following three main stages:

- stage 1 - establishment of the study area;
- stage 2 - description of the landscape and visual baseline conditions; and
- stage 3 - landscape and visual assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed facilities.

3.2 The updated third edition GLVIA methodology concentrates on the principles and process of LVIA and has opted not to provide a detailed or formulaic 'recipe' for the assessment of likely significant effects⁸. When considered appropriate to this assessment, definitions and detailed methodologies from the earlier second edition of the GLVIA have been referenced and used.

3.3 For a detailed description of the assessment methodology refer to Appendix 1.

The Study area

3.4 The initial study area for the assessment of landscape and visual effects has been identified as a 12km by 12km zone approximately centred of the site. This study area has been agreed with North Dorset District Council (NDDC) and is shown on Figure 3.



Figure 3 – LVIA initial study area

3.5 Within this initial study area the potential visibility, or visual envelope, of the proposed development has been identified. This area is termed the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and is influenced by topography, vegetation and existing man-made structures such as buildings and roads.

⁶ The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and Landscape Institute (3rd Edition 2013); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Routledge; Oxford

⁷ The Landscape Institute (2011); Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment; Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11.

⁸ Preface Page x, The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and Landscape Institute (3rd Edition 2013); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Routledge; Oxford.

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- 3.6 Defining the ZTV is a recognised basis for undertaking visual impact assessments and is included in the GLVIA and other landscape assessment methodologies such as that used by the Highways Agency. The ZTV refines the initial study area as it models where the new structures would be visible and therefore the area where the important landscape and visual effects are likely to occur. Figure 4 presents the Baseline Zone of Visibility (ZV) for the St Mary's Hill site. Figure 5 presents the Theoretical Zone of Visibility for the St Mary's Hill development (the Development Case ZTVs) and defines the study area for this report.
- 3.7 Physical landscape effects have been studied for the area up to 100m beyond the development site to cover all areas where physical changes to the landscape could result from the works.

Description of the landscape and visual baseline conditions

- 3.8 For the purposes of this assessment the terms landscape, townscape and seascape are interchangeable e.g. landscape character assessment can be applied to the assessment of landscape character within rural or urban areas.
- 3.9 The landscape in the study area has been described using a combination of desk-based study and site survey. This has examined physical landscape elements such as vegetation and topography in addition to landscape character, sensitivity, value and quality.
- 3.10 Baseline visual receptors have been identified using a combination of desk-based study and site survey. This has identified the following types of potential community, residential, employment and transport based receptor locations:
- public places e.g. playing fields, cricket club, church, school, Common Land;
 - Public Rights of Way e.g. footpaths, byways and bridleways;
 - residential e.g. detached, semi-detached, bungalow, terrace, apartment;
 - workplaces e.g. business or commercial property; and
 - transport routes e.g. classified and unclassified roads (country lanes), cycle routes.

Landscape and visual assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed facilities

- 3.11 The assessment methodology has followed the standard GLVIA approach of assessing changes in the development case against the baseline condition.
- 3.12 Predicted effects have been identified for each receptor, and the magnitude of the identified landscape and visual changes evaluated by professional judgement. The significance of these effects has been determined by the inter-relationship of magnitude of effect and receptor sensitivity; a standard and accepted principle that is described in more detail in Appendix 1.

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4.0 BASELINE

Introduction

- 4.1 This section describes and records the proposed development site, in its context, as of September 2014. This forms the baseline against which any potential changes that may result from the new development have been assessed.
- 4.2 The development site is part of an area of farmland located on the south-eastern edge of Blandford St Mary. This area of open landscape is physically, but not visually, separated from the existing settlement by the A354 road. The development site area is approximately 12.1 Ha.

Landscape baseline

- 4.3 The landscape baseline is comprised of the landscape character and its aesthetic characteristics and physical landscape elements, such as topography and vegetation.

Landscape Character

- 4.4 Landscape character has been studied extensively within the initial study area. At a national level the character area profile is 134 Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase.
- 4.5 At a county level the landscape character has been defined by the Dorset Landscape Character Assessment (2000)⁹ and at a district level in the North Dorset District Council Landscape Character Assessment (2008)¹⁰.
- 4.6 In these studies the site lies in the South Blandford Downs LCA, with parts of the Stour Valley LCA and the East Blandford/Pimperne Downs LCA lying in the Zone of Theoretical Visibility. These LCA's are shown on Figure 6 and described in Table 2.
- 4.7 The key characteristics of the South Blandford Downs LCA in the immediate context of the site are:
- An undulating open chalk downland landscape distinctively edged by a chalk river valley;
 - Medium to large scale fields bounded by low, straight and clipped hedgerows;
 - Intensively farmed and arable landscape;
 - Regular-shaped small plantation woodlands dot the landscape;
 - Narrow, widely spaced out straight lanes are bounded by continuous clipped hedgerows with the occasional hedgerow trees;
 - A distinctive linear settlement edge along the eastern side of the LCA as it dips down to the Stour Valley.
 - Blandford St Mary creates a hard urban edge to the north of the area on the outskirts of Blandford and forms a detracting feature.

The site

- 4.8 The site is an arable field on a north east facing slope. The site is bounded by the A350 road to the north-east and the A354 to the north-west; the latter separating the site from the Blandford St Mary settlement to the north. To the south-east and south-west the site landscape extends into the intensively farmed undulating chalk downland. As a cultivated field permanent vegetation is limited to the hedgerows bounding the field and a visually prominent clump of mature lime trees towards the centre of the site. A bridleway, The Stour Valley Trailway, runs to the east of the site.

⁹ Dorset Landscape Character Assessment

¹⁰ Local Development Framework, Landscape Character Area Assessment, Evidence Base, NDDC, March 2008.



Plate 1: The site (South Blandford Downs LCA)

Landscape Quality and Value

- 4.9 This site has a recognisable landscape structure and the characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover (of the arable farmland) are still evident. There is some scope to improve management of the hedgerow land cover, and the lime tree clump is a feature worthy of conservation. The field, as such, has little 'sense of place' and the overhead powerlines and adjacent roads are detracting features. The landscape is locally valued as farmland and a visual resource. The byway bounding the south-eastern edge of the site is valued by a wider group for its value as a recreational resource. This study has found that the site is locally valued and of Good landscape quality.
- 4.10 The wider AONB landscapes to the north-east and north-west of the site are valued at a national scale and are protected, amongst other things, for their scenic beauty and unique character. The landscape quality of these areas is High/High Exceptional.

Townscape character

- 4.11 To the north of the site lies the townscape of Blandford St Mary. This urban area consist of a number of distinct townscape character areas (TCA's) but due to the topography and built form only two of Blandford St Mary potential TCA's lie within the study area:
- The retail park around the Tesco superstore; and
 - The original Blandford St Mary, (St Mary's Hill) residential development to the north of the A354 road.

Blandford St Mary Retail Park

- 4.12 This is a large space open grained townscape dominated by car parks and large shed like buildings. Although a conservation area and containing the old brewery buildings, the main characteristics of the area closest to the site are:
- Commercial/light industrial estates built mainly in the 20th century with large industrial style buildings;
 - bounded by a major road transport corridor,

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- massing and scale contributes to physical and visual containment of wider townscape;
- industrial and commercial buildings, dating from late 19th century to the present day, constructed from modern mass produced materials, typically brick, metal and glass;
- general absence of landmark and nodes;
- single use buildings with little activity after the working day;
- views restricted to corridor views down access roads;
- circulation dominated by vehicles with fewer pedestrian links into the surrounding townscape;
- lack of open space apart from car parks;
- decorative shrub and tree planting forms the setting for some buildings and lines the roads in some areas.



Plate 2: Bryanston Hills Residential TCA

Bryanston Hills Residential

4.13 This is a modern residential estate townscape. Its character and layout varies over a number of phases. The main characteristics of the TCA are:

- Estate type development built mainly in the very late 20th early 21st century;
- two to three storey semi-detached and terraced houses with small front and larger back gardens;
- on and off-street parking;
- townscape character and quality variations between the different development phases;
- uniform architectural styles and planned streetscape patterns create a regular urban grain in the first phase of the development;

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- varied architectural styles and more organic streetscape pattern in the later phases of the development (note design based on an analysis of the historic Blandford St Mary townscape).
- a school forms a landmark and node;
- Occasional small public open spaces and limited on street vegetation, but most on-street vegetation is privately owned and managed;

Townscape Quality and Value

- 4.14 Although the Blandford St Mary Retail Park TCA lies within the conservation area, the Blandford St Mary Residential TCA is more valued and higher quality, particularly the award winning later phase of the project.
- 4.15 Both townscapes are locally valued with the residential townscape. However the Blandford St Mary housing has a recognisable urban structure and characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover that are based on the traditional Blandford St Mary characteristics but updated to modern day requirements. Although it is too soon to say if there are any features worthy of conservation, the development has won design awards and does have a sense of place. This study has found the later phases of this townscape are of Good townscape quality dropping to Ordinary for the first phases of the development.
- 4.16 The retail park TCA is a typical commercial/retail park and although in a conservation area is of Ordinary quality.
- 4.17 Although arguably too small to be considered as a townscape character area, the settlement of Lower Blandford St Mary lies to east of the site. This is an historic settlement with a number of listed buildings and forms a pocket of higher quality urban area (a relatively dispersed village) adjacent to the site.

Landscape and Townscape Sensitivity

- 4.18 Landscape sensitivity is influenced by a combination of existing land use, the pattern and scale of the landscape, from visual sensitivity (resulting from visual enclosure/openness of views and the distribution of visual receptors), from the value placed on the landscape/townscape, and from the scope for mitigation (which would be in character with the existing landscape/townscape).
- 4.19 The site is a rural landscape with some intrinsic quality and an open simple pattern. The site, although an open field, is reasonably well enclosed and 'screened' by the surrounding landform, builtform and vegetation but there are more open long distant views available (see plate 1). The site is undesignated and locally valued. There is scope for mitigation as is demonstrated by the adjacent Blandford St Mary's housing development. This study has found the site to be at the upper end of Medium sensitivity. This would extend over the rural landscape to the immediate east, west and south that provides the majority of the development site context.
- 4.20 The surrounding rural AONB landscapes, as designated nationally valued landscape assets, one of High landscape sensitivity.
- 4.21 To the north, the adjacent Bryanston Hills Residential TCA is locally valued and has the same landuse and similar townscape character to that proposed for the site. Although it contains a high density of visual receptors, views are limited by the land and built form and by vegetation along the A354 road corridor. As such this area would have a Low Landscape Sensitivity to the proposed development type. The retail park, as a working townscape, would also have low sensitivity to the proposed development type. The historic settlement of Blandford St Mary would be more sensitive, however the presence of the A350 road corridor has somewhat compromised the village setting and arguable reduced its sensitivity to further developmental change.

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Historic and Cultural

- 4.22 The historic dimension of the landscape is subject of a separate discipline; Historic Landscape Character Assessment, however in terms of the existing landscape and this study, it adds depth and character, and is most obviously expressed in the field pattern of the site and in the listed buildings and conservation area around it. The former Somerset & Dorset Joint Railway ran through the site, but the track has been lifted, cutting infilled and no features are visible on the site itself.

Movement and Access

- 4.23 The site is bounded by roads to the north-east (A350) and the north-west (A354). The A350 offers pedestrian and vehicular access to, and around the site. The footway to the A350 is currently the northern end of The Stour Valley Trailway. This trail continues around the south-eastern side of the site on Bridleway E4/3 before following the line of the old railway along the Stour valley to the south. Bridleway E4/3 continues to run north-east south-west along Ward's Drove approximately parallel to the southern site boundary some 130m distant. A network of footpaths and bridleways criss-cross the wider landscape within the Initial Study Area.

Topography

- 4.24 Topography is important in itself, as a natural feature to be appreciated and preserved, and is important for its indirect influences on views and on how the land is used.
- 4.25 The site is defined by the underlying chalk topography and is fundamentally one north-east facing slope running from a high point of 70m AOD, at the mid-point of the south-west site boundary, falling to a low point of approximately 41m AOD by the A350 road. The slope steepens on the higher half of the site beyond an elevation of 51m AOD.
- 4.26 The topography curtails views of the site to the west and helps limits views from the north and south. The topography of the study area is illustrated on Figure 7.
- 4.27 The underlying geology of the site is chalk. The agricultural land quality is grade 3, good to moderate, as is the majority of the land in the study area¹¹.

Vegetation

- 4.28 Vegetation is important as a natural feature, often with ecological and cultural associations, but it is also important as an enclosing and screening element and, along with the urban built form, this is demonstrated within the study area.
- 4.29 As an intensively farmed and arable landscape permanent vegetation is generally limited to the medium to large scale field boundaries. There are low, straight and clipped hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. The site itself is typical of this landscape but also contains a visually prominent clump of mature lime trees towards its centre. These trees may have spread from a single central tree through natural layering.
- 4.30 Beyond the site regular-shaped small plantation woodlands dot the landscape, along with much larger woodlands on the steeper east and west facing slopes of the Stour Valley.
- 4.31 There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) on the site. The closest being a group TPO on land in Lower Blandford St Mary on east of the A350.
- 4.32 The woodland blocks within the initial study area mapped on Figure 7.

¹¹ Agricultural Land Classification Map South West Region (ALC006), <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/>

Visual baseline

- 4.33 The Zone of Visibility (ZV) for the existing site is presented in Figure 4. The ZV is limited in extent due to a combination of:
- The relatively low lying nature and north-east aspect of the site;
 - the higher plateau to the south-west and north-east of the site;
 - the overlapping layers of hedgerow vegetation and woodland blocks; and
 - the built form of Blandford St Mary.
- 4.34 The Baseline ZV (Figure 4) shows that views of the site are largely unavailable to the north and limited to the south of the site. To the south-west and north-east views are available from the more open elevated land facing towards the site. Some of these views are from within the AONB's

Viewpoint locations and receptor descriptions

- 4.35 Within the baseline ZV a record of the views from certain locations has been taken. These locations have been agreed with the NDDC to provide a good representational coverage of potential visual effects of the proposed development. The viewpoint locations are shown in Figure 8.

Table 1: Schedule of Viewpoints

Proposed Viewpoint	Location/ receptor type	Description/ comments
1	A353 Roundabout	Relatively lowlying close southerly view of the site. A roadside footpath next to a busy road.
2	Church Lane Lower Blandford St. Mary	Lowlying glimpsed easterly view from a residential lane in a small village.
3	Ward's Drove	Open north-easterly view towards the site from a rural byway/Trailway.
4	Park Hill	Elevated partial north-westerly view over a hedgerow from a quiet country lane.
5	Ward's Drove	Partial north-easterly view over a hedgerow from a rural byway/Trailway.
6	A354 Road west	Open elevated easterly view from the verge of a busy rural road.
7	Bridleway E5/4 Lower Bryanston Farm	Elevated south-easterly view towards the site from a bridleway in the DAONB.
8	A354 Road east	Informal pull-in next to a busy road with a narrow south-westerly view along the road corridor. CCWWAONB.
9	Route E13/11 nr the B3062 road	Elevated open south-westerly view form a quiet private road/footpath in CCWWAONB.
10	Black Lane	Elevated long distance south-westerly view from a quiet roadside footpath in CCWWAONB.
11	Buzbury Rings	Elevated long distance westerly view of the site. On a footpath close to a SAM and in CCWWAONB.

- 4.36 The following paragraphs describe the viewpoints in further detail highlighting the attributes that are of most relevance to the study. The baseline photographs of the views are provided in the figures. An assessment of the viewpoint characteristics are provided in Table 3 in section 5.

Close views from around the development site

- 4.37 Publicly available close-in views of the development site are limited by the hedgerows and availability of viewpoints. Those that are accessible include the adjacent A roads and roadside footpaths, the rural byway (Ward's Drove) and country lane in Lower Blandford St Mary. Private amenity view are available from the small numbers of housing close to the site.
- 4.38 The representative viewpoints covering the housing and roads around the site are Viewpoints (VP) 1-3. VP1 is from the busy A350/A354 road junction and shows a partial/glimpse view that is typical of the site views from the A roads. VP2 is from a quiet village lane but is one of the few relatively open views towards the site from the densely vegetated settlement of Lower Blandford St Mary. VP3 is also atypical in that it too is an open view towards the site from a byway that is more typically lined with dense hedgerows.
- 4.39 Receptors in these locations are either workers (farm), motorists, pedestrians walking around the site, or homeowners looking out from their properties or gardens; in all instances views include the A roads, in particular, and the Blandford urban edge more generally. Residents and recreational pedestrians and cyclists etc. would be interested in their visual surroundings and therefore more sensitive to further residential development, but this would be relative to their immediate visual context. Farm workers and motorists and other road users would be generally less sensitive due to their activity.
- Workers and Motorists: Low sensitivity.
 - Pedestrians and cyclists: Low to Medium depending upon their immediate context and activity.
 - Residents: Medium to High sensitivity due to context.

Middle distance views from the south of the site

- 4.40 These views look across the undulations of the western side of the River Stour valley. Views of the site are limited by the topography and the layers of hedgerow boundary vegetation that run perpendicular to the views.
- 4.41 The representative viewpoints for these views are VP4 Parkhill, and VP5 on Ward's Drove.
- 4.42 Receptors in these locations are farm workers, residents and recreational walkers, cyclists and equestrians, and motorists on the country lines such as Parkhill:
- Motorists and farm workers: Low sensitivity due to activity.
 - Residents and Pedestrians etc.: Medium to High sensitivity due to context.

Middle distance views from the west of the site

- 4.43 Typically these are open elevated views from the chalk plateaux. Views of the site are limited by its elevation and the layers of intervening field boundary vegetation. Lower parts of the site are out of sight in these views and often the only visible site feature is the Lime tree clump.
- 4.44 The representative viewpoint for these views is VP5 A354 west.
- 4.45 Receptors in these locations are farm workers and motorists and are of low sensitivity

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Middle distance views from the north of the site

- 4.46 Again these are very limited, in this instance by the topography and builtform of Blandford St Mary. The vegetation along the A354 provides additional filtering in these views, so that only the highest south facing slopes north of Lower Bryanston Farm would have any intervisibility with the site.
- 4.47 The representative viewpoint for these views is VP7 Lower Bryanston Farm.
- 4.48 Receptors in these locations are farm workers, recreational walkers, cyclists and equestrians:
- Farm workers and motorists: Low sensitivity due to activity.
 - Pedestrians etc.: High sensitivity due to context.

Middle distance views from the north-east of the site

- 4.49 These are views from the opposite face of the River Stour valley looking directly across to the site, with the lime tree clump providing a small landmark. The site is visually contiguous with the existing Bryanston Hills development in Blandford St Mary. VP8 along the A354 is a narrow channelled view along the road corridor, whilst VP9 is a more open view
- 4.50 The representative viewpoints for these views are VP8 and 9.
- 4.51 Receptors in these locations are motorists, farm workers and recreational walkers:
- Farm workers and motorists: Low sensitivity due to activity.
 - Pedestrians etc.: High sensitivity due to context.

Longer distance views from the north-east and east of the site

- 4.52 These are relatively long distance views from the higher ground of the East Blandford/Pimperne Downs within the CCWWDAONB. Again the views are from the opposite side of the River Stour Valley and share many of the characteristics of the middle distance north-easterly views outlined in 4.49 above.
- 4.53 The representative viewpoints covering these areas are VP10 on Black Lane near Blandford Camp and VP11 near Buzbury Rings SAM. In addition to roads, lanes and farmland, views of the site would also be available from a small number dispersed residential properties e.g Snow's Down. From these viewpoints the site is a small element of a much wider view, with only the higher slopes and the lime tree clump visible.
- 4.54 Receptors in these locations are occasional residents, farm workers, recreational walkers and motorists:
- Motorists including workers: Low sensitivity.
 - Recreational walkers: Medium to High sensitivity depending upon context.
 - Residents: High sensitivity due to context.

Summary of the landscape and visual baseline

- 4.55 The site is an arable field on the southern edge of Blandford, bounded by the A350 and A354 roads with the latter separating the site from the Blandford St Mary settlement to the north. To the south-east and south-west the site landscape continues to form the intensively farmed undulating chalk downland of the South Blandford Downs LCA.
- 4.56 The site is locally valued and of Good landscape quality, and is bounded by the Stour River valley to the west and the High quality AONB landscapes of the Dorset Downs and Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs to the north, east and west.

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- 4.57 The site is chalk geology underlying a single north-east aspect slope running from a high point of 70m AOD to a low point of approximately 41m AOD by the A350 road. The slope steepens on the higher half of the site beyond an elevation of 51m.
- 4.58 As a cultivated field permanent vegetation is limited to the hedgerows bounding the field and a visually prominent clump of mature lime trees towards the centre of the site.
- 4.59 The Baseline ZV (Figure 4) shows that views of the site are largely unavailable to the north and limited to the south of the site. To the south-west and north-east views are available from the more open elevated land facing into the generally low lying site. Some of these views are from within the AONB's. In these views the site is visually contiguous with the existing Bryanston Hills development in Blandford St Mary.
- 4.60 As a rural landscape visual receptors in these areas include farmworkers, motorists on the two busy A roads and on the quieter rural lanes, recreational pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, and residents in the scattered properties and settlement edges around the site.



Plate 3: The existing 'village green' approach to Blandford St Mary

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5.0 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Environmental change without the development

- 5.1 In the event of St Mary's Hill not being developed the site would remain as in the baseline.
- 5.2 The site would be left as open farmland and would continue to be actively farmed. There would be detail changes to the site as trees and hedges died and were replaced by others, but the site landscape character would remain essentially unchanged.

Introduction to the development and its potential to generate landscape and visual effects

- 5.3 A greenfield site, St Mary's Hill lies adjacent to the existing urban edge of Blandford St Mary, and although physically separated by the A354 by-pass the site is visually contiguous with Blandford St Mary in the more sensitive views from the surrounding AONB landscapes.
- 5.4 The development of the site would potentially generate a range of landscape and visual impacts including:
- Landtake and character impacts on the currently open green landscape;
 - Direct landscape impacts on existing landscape elements such as vegetation and topography;
 - Indirect landscape impacts on adjacent LCA's from visual intrusion etc.;
 - Visual impacts on residential amenity views from properties overlooking the site;
 - Visual impacts on recreational walkers and other users of the footpath network that runs to the east and south of the site and in the wider study area; and
 - Potential landscape impacts on the function and purposes of the AONB designated landscapes.

Mitigation

- 5.5 In considering these potential impacts, the Illustrative Masterplan design (see Figure 1) has been developed through the iterative LVIA process to optimise the housing layout to avoid and minimise potential landscape and visual impacts as follows:
- a building massing and layout that works with the site topography and uses the same grain and heights as the successful Bryanston Hills development;
 - retains virtually all of the existing site vegetation and augments it to provide a blend of rooftops and vegetation in longer views;
 - incorporates large areas of open green space within the development to enhance the design quality but also ensures that the building massing is broken up in the longer distant views; and
 - addresses the immediate site context by using large landscape spaces around the site edge:
 - new native mix boundary planting to the north to reinforce the existing planting in the A354 in cutting;
 - new treed village green to the north-eastern boundary to provide a gateway to the development, screening to Lower Blandford St Mary and context for the Stour Valley Trailway;
 - Strengthens the existing south-eastern boundary hedgerow with new tree and shrub planting and retained open green spaces;
 - Creates a new woodland belt planting to reinforce the south-western hedgerow.

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Figure 1 Illustrative landscape masterplan

Phasing

5.6 The proposed development would be phased to meet demand and would take place over a number of years with the lower section of the site most likely developed before the higher portion. To do this construction of each phase would generally follow a pattern of work of:

- securing the site and setting up of the site facilities;
- ecological and cultural heritage receptor site preparation and establishment prior to completion of any ecological and cultural heritage mitigation works;
- services diversions and re-provision;
- site clearance including vegetation removal;
- earthworks including topsoil strip;
- construction of mitigation features i.e. boundary landscape; and
- construction of housing including the roads.

Landscape and visual effects

5.7 The landscape and visual assessment has followed the defined methodology of assessing receptor sensitivity against the magnitude of change to identify a significance category for each identified effect. This process has been documented in the landscape and visual assessment tables (see Tables 2 and 3) and the Landscape Impact Assessment Diagram (Figure 9) and is used as the basis for the description of the likely

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significant landscape and visual effects for both the construction and operational phases of the project.

- 5.8 For the operational phase, effects at day one and at day one plus 15 years have been examined. This is to understand any potential benefits of mitigation that may accrue through the maturing of the soft landscape that forms an intrinsic part of the development proposals.
- 5.9 Due to the outline nature of the application the 'principles' of the development have been assessed as:
- a developed area footprint as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan (Figure 1);
 - 300-350no. dwellings generally two storeys high, but with some two and a half to three storey landmark buildings;
 - proposed building ridge height at 52-57m AOB in the lowest north-easterly part of the site rising to a maximum of 74m AOD on the highest most south-westerly part of the site;

Construction Phase

- 5.10 Construction effects have been defined as those resulting from the temporary construction work required to build out the proposals. As the project is constructed the permanent effects from the 'existence' of the development also brought about. These are effects that result from the presence of the project itself and are assessed under the Operational Phase section of this report (see clauses 5.35 – 5.70). Although the full detail of the project would be provided by subsequent detailed applications, the construction of work would generate landscape and visual effects as described below.

Landscape effects

- 5.11 Construction phase landscape effects may be both direct and indirect. Potential direct landscape effects may result from:
- temporary effects to topography;
 - additional vegetation loss due to temporary construction measures; and
 - temporary changes to the site character resulting from construction activity.
- 5.12 The indirect effects on landscape character from construction may result from visual intrusion (reinforced by noise intrusion) and from lighting effects. These may influence the character of the surrounding landscapes.

Landscape character

- 5.13 Construction activity would bring about noticeable direct impacts on this area of farmland, moving soils, exposing chalk and creating temporary stockpiles, with the construction site busier than the baseline and with potential for lighting effects and noise from construction plant and activity to reinforce the physical and visual changes.
- 5.14 Direct construction phase landscape character impacts on the site would be temporary and short term adverse, of Moderate magnitude on a Medium-High sensitivity landscape to realise **Moderate to Major Adverse** effects.
- 5.15 Off-site the construction work would introduce new elements into the baseline landscape that would be prominent in close proximity but would diminish in impact over distance. Effects on the adjacent Blandford St Mary's townscapes would be limited as the construction activities would be largely screened and would be limited to the immediate areas adjacent to the site boundary and A354 road. As relatively busy townscapes, with a degree of ongoing developmental change, construction activity would result in

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temporary, short term occasionally **Moderate Adverse** but more generally **Minor Adverse** effects.

- 5.16 Offsite landscape character effects on the adjacent parts of the South Blandford Downs LCA would follow a similar pattern and again be more significant in close proximity and diminish in over distance. Impacts would be occasionally Moderate magnitude in proximal areas with good intervisibility reducing to Minor or Negligible magnitude with distance and reduced intervisibility. This would realise locally **Moderate Adverse** to more typically **Neutral** effects (see Figure 9).
- 5.17 There would be no direct impacts on the off-site higher quality AONB landscapes, although indirect visual intrusion effects may result depending upon the timing of the proposed boundary mitigation planting. Impacts would be adverse, temporary, small scale and distant and of Negligible to Minor magnitude on High sensitivity receptors to realise **Minor** to **Moderate Adverse** effects.

Planning Policy Designation

- 5.18 Construction activity would take place over the site leading to changes in the character of the AONB landscapes as described in 5.18 and shown on Figure 14. As generally Minor, occasionally Moderate Adverse effects the construction phase works would realise **no significant** landscape effect on the purposes and function of the AONB designation.

Topography and drainage

- 5.19 The proposed housing and streets would generally follow the existing site levels much as the existing housing in Bryanston Hills. Any potential adverse effects on topography and drainage e.g. from excavations for services and foundations and from the topsoil strip would be small scale and local. Grass filter strips, swales and SUDs ponds would be incorporated into the development to help maintain existing drainage patterns and provide ecological benefits but would also realise small-scale local topographical changes.
- 5.20 Construction effects would form part of the landscape character effects assessed above.

Vegetation

- 5.21 The site contains woody vegetation in the form of the boundary hedgerows and the visually prominent clump of lime trees.
- 5.22 Although this planning application is in outline form the masterplan would seek to retain as much of this woody vegetation as possible and enhance it by reinforcing the hedgerows and improving their current management regimes. The masterplan would also seek to add new planting.
- 5.23 A short section of hedgerow would be removed along the north–east site boundary to accommodate the diverted Trailway and create a more open and inclusive boundary to the A350.
- 5.24 These activities would lead to small scale adverse landscape effects that would not change the overall landscape character construction phase assessment identified above.

Visual effects

- 5.25 Direct visual effects of the construction would result from the temporary appearance of the site, as construction works progress, and from the increased level of activity in the site landscape. The effects of the removal of existing landscape features and permanent changes to the site topography would also lead to 'existence' effects. These have been assessed as operational effects.
- 5.26 Visual changes resulting from the construction would be most pronounced in close proximity to the site and would diminish with distance to the point that individual

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construction activities would no longer be visible merely the overall change in the appearance of the site.

Close views from around the site

- 5.27 Close-in construction phase views would be limited and filtered by the existing boundary hedgerows. Close open views of construction activity would only be possible from VP1 (A350/A354) and VP3 (Ward's Drove) and along the A350, where the removal of the site hedgerow would open up views to the road and roadside footpath and to a lesser degree for VP2 (Lower Blandford St Mary).
- 5.28 The content of the views would change with the construction works and increased activity; a noticeable difference to the baseline. Visual impacts would be short-term and temporary Moderate and occasionally Major magnitude (VP1 and along the A350), Moderate for VP3, as the immediate context of the view would remain unchanged, and Minor for VP2 as a glimpsed view through retained hedgerows. Note that a second hedgerow of evergreen Cherry Laurel has already been planted in the field south of the A350. This will effectively screen any views of the site (and the A350).
- Workers and Motorists, as Low sensitivity receptors, would experience **Minor**, occasionally **Moderate, Adverse** visual effects.
 - Pedestrians and cyclists: as Low to Medium sensitivity receptors would experience **Moderate Adverse** effects.
 - Residents: Medium to High visual receptors would experience **Moderate Adverse** effects.

Middle distance views from the south of the site

- 5.29 These are views looking across countryside towards the site. The site is not visible in either viewpoint but construction on the higher land in the later stages of the development would be visible from VP4 Parkhill.
- 5.30 Receptors in this location would be farm workers, recreational walkers, cyclists and equestrians, and motorists. The construction phase changes would be small scale additions glimpsed over the tops of existing hedgerows in wide views of open countryside and result in Negligible/Minor magnitude impacts realising **Minor Adverse** effects on motorists and farm workers and **Minor Adverse** effects on pedestrians etc.

Middle distance views from the west of the site

- 5.31 Again construction on the earlier phases of the project on the lower land would not be visible from VP5 (A354 west). The later phase construction would be visible primarily as roof tops, but the degree of intervisibility would be dependent on the timing of the proposed boundary planting. If planted early, say at the start on site, the planting could be established as a low but visually dense screen. Effects would then be small scale and glimpsed by travelling motorists. Temporary short-term Moderate/Minor magnitude visual changes on Low sensitivity receptors resulting in **Minor Adverse** effects.

Middle distance views from the north of the site

- 5.32 Views from this area are very limited. The site is not visible from VP7 (Lower Bryanston Farm) however construction of the highest building close to the A354 may be glimpsed between the rooftops and vegetation of Blandford St Mary. These would be short-term, temporary and small scale barely perceptible changes that would result in impacts of negligible magnitude and **Minor Adverse** effects.

Middle distance views from the north-east of the site

- 5.33 These middle distance views face onto the site, with it forming a small but noticeable element of the view of the opposite side of the wide river valley (see plate 1). Individual construction activities would be less perceptible at this distance, however the overall

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change in site colour, texture etc. would be a noticeable visual change for the later stages of the development. Impacts would be short-term and temporary and of Negligible to Moderate magnitude. Effects would be **Minor Adverse** for motorists and farm workers and **Moderate Adverse** for recreational walkers and residents.

Longer distance views from the north-east and east of the site

- 5.34 These are relatively long distance views with the site forming a small part of a wide panorama. Individual construction activities would not be perceptible at this distance and the overall change in site colour, texture etc. from construction would be a small scale change often barely perceptible, but more noticeable in the clearest viewing conditions. Impacts would be short-term and temporary and of Negligible to Minor magnitude. Effects would be **Minor Adverse** for farm workers and **Moderate Adverse** for recreational walkers.

Operational Phase

Landscape effects

- 5.35 Operational phase landscape effects may be both direct and indirect. Potential direct landscape effects may result from:
- land take resulting in changes to landscape character, sensitivity and quality;
 - topographical change; and
 - vegetation loss.
- 5.36 Potential indirect operational phase effects on landscape character of the site may result from:
- visual intrusion from the built environment and the activity of people living on the site;
 - noise intrusion from the built environment and the activity of people living on the site; and
 - lighting effects.
- 5.37 Balancing these adverse effects would be the beneficial changes that would result from there being a completed development in a mature landscape setting. The impacts of the immediate 'change' from the construction phase would have receded and the development's soft landscape would grow to tie the buildings into the adjacent Blandford St Mary townscape and to a degree screen and filter views from the surrounding landscape.

Landscape Character

- 5.38 At day one there would be a noticeable change in the landscape character from Good quality arable farmland to a planned townscape constructed to a high standard from sympathetic local materials and styles. There would be changes to the open green character of the site, but these would be balanced by the creation of a quality area of new townscape that would integrate well with elements of its receiving landscape (the Bryanston Hills residential area).
- 5.39 As a landscape moderately (Medium/High) sensitive to change, the operational activity of people living in the new housing would bring about noticeable change in the character of the site and its immediate context, if not the adjacent townscape areas. The housing development would be a busier scene than the baseline and there would also be lighting effects and noise. Operational activity effects and existence effects, resulting from the presence of the development, would be permanent.
- 5.40 The boundaries to the site would be planted with strong landscape buffers to help prevent visual intrusion, from the new housing, on the wider landscape. These buffers would use plants and styles that would tie into their immediate landscape contexts; hedgerows with trees and woodland belt on the south east and south-west, native mix

highway planting on the northern A354 boundary, and the more formal village green 'gateway' to the wider Blandford St Mary settlement.

- 5.41 Open spaces within the site would form an attractive green framework and would break up the builtform in views from across the Stour valley.
- 5.42 At year 15 the landscape of the site would be maturing, with woody vegetation reducing visual intrusion from the development adjacent landscape areas. Woody vegetation through the site would break up the roofscape of the new development in longer distant views and help reduce indirect intrusion based effects on the wider landscape setting including those of the AONB. From the CCWWDAONB the development would appear as a natural part of the existing Bryanston Hills development, resulting in small scale character impacts. From The DDAONB intrusion based setting effects would be even less with very subtle incremental effects in the Lower Bryanston Farm area adding to those already generated by the built form of Blandford Forum and Blandford St Mary.
- 5.43 There would be no direct operational effects on the character of the AONB landscapes and indirect intrusion based effects, although permanent, would be diminished by distance and of Negligible or Minor (Adverse) magnitude to realise **locally Moderate Adverse** effects at day one, reducing to locally **Minor Adverse** effects at year 15.
- 5.44 Offsite indirect intrusion based effects on the adjacent townscapes, as similar or identical TCA's with limited intervisibility, would be Locally **Minor Adverse** at day one and **Neutral** at year 15.
- 5.45 Operational effects on the site and its immediate landscape setting would be permanent and long-term, and a combination of both adverse and beneficial. At day one these impacts would be of Moderate magnitude on a landscape of Medium/High sensitivity and would realise **Moderate Adverse** effects on balance. At year 15, with a maturing soft landscape scheme, effects would become to be **Minor Adverse** to **Neutral** on balance.
- 5.46 The extent of these effects (day one) is mapped on Figure 9.

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- 5.47 Landscape effects on the AONB would be indirect intrusion based setting effects. These effects would be local and small scale, affecting a small number of views from the AONB and having lesser effect on the character of the AONB itself. Although locally Moderate Adverse day one landscape character effects have been identified for the CCWWDAONB, around VP7, these would reduce by year 15 to realise **no significant** landscape effects on the purposes and function of the AONB designations.

Vegetation

- 5.48 Site cover over the majority of the site is temporary and subject to annual change. The illustrative masterplan (Figure 1) demonstrates how the majority of the permeant trees and shrubs cover would be retained on site. This would include all of the hedgerows, individual trees and the lime tree clump that are significant in landscape terms. Access roads and pathways would require breaks in the existing hedgerows and along the A350.
- 5.49 Balancing this small scale local loss is the structural tree and shrub planting that would be provided around the site boundary. This would consist of native species and positively contribute to the wooded character of the site and help reinforce field boundaries that are currently in poor condition.
- 5.50 Day one operational impacts would be permanent adverse and of Minor magnitude on medium sensitivity landscape features to realise locally **Minor Adverse** effects. At year 15, with a maturing planting scheme, effects would become beneficial on balance and noticeable (**Moderate Beneficial**).

Topography and drainage

- 5.51 The housing and roads would step with the existing topography, in line with the existing townscape of Bryanston Hills. There would be small scale local topographical changes to obtain acceptable crossfalls on roads and pathways etc. but generally the existing topography would be retained with no fundamental change.
- 5.52 Day one operational impacts would be permanent Minor magnitude and adverse and would result in **Minor Adverse** effects that would continue through to year 15 and beyond.

Visual effects

- 5.53 Operational visual effects are changes to views that would be apparent on opening day and at Year 15. These include both intermittent and long term visual changes that would occur through the operation of the housing and permanent visual changes that would result from the existence (or presence) of the new development.
- 5.54 The visual changes would follow a similar pattern to that described for the construction phase as the operation activities and visual changes would occur in the same locations and relative to the same visual receptors. The TZV (Figure 5) for the development case does not differ markedly from that of the Baseline ZV (Figure 4). This demonstrates that development of this site would not markedly change its intervisibility with its surroundings rather the content of the view, with new housing and landscape seen instead of a field.

Close views from around the site

- 5.55 At day one close open views of new housing during the operational phase would only be possible from VP1 (A350/A354), VP3 (Ward's Drove) and along the A350, where the removal of the site hedgerow would open up views to the road and roadside footpath. Views from Lower Blandford St Mary (including VP2) would remain glimpsed or filtered by intervening vegetation.
- 5.56 At year 15 the enhanced boundary landscape would be maturing to provide:
- an attractive setting to the development in VP1, albeit behind the existing road junction;
 - VP2 would be largely screened by the new village green landscape along the A350, but more so by the cherry laurel hedge that has already been planted in the field south of the A350 (presumably to block views of the road); and
 - VP3 would see the new housing filtered behind a reinforced field hedgerow. The character of this view would remain much as the baseline, but with the urban edge (of Blandford St Mary) noticeably closer to the viewer.
- 5.57 At day one the most dramatic change would be to VP1, which although road dominated has a backdrop of countryside in the baseline. Visual changes to this view would be permanent, adverse and of Moderate magnitude, as would impacts on VP2 (marginal) and VP3.
- Motorists and pedestrians at VP1, as Low sensitivity receptors, would experience **Moderate Adverse** visual effects;
 - Residents and pedestrians at VP2, as Medium to High sensitivity receptors would experience **Moderate Adverse** effects; and
 - Pedestrians and cyclists at VP3, as Medium sensitivity receptors would experience **Moderate Adverse** effects.
- 5.58 At year 15 the adverse changes would be balanced by the mitigating effects of the screening and new landscape:
- Motorists and pedestrians at VP1, as Low sensitivity receptors, would experience **Minor Adverse** visual effects on balance;

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- Residents and pedestrians at VP2, as Medium to High sensitivity receptors would experience **Minor Adverse** effects; and
- Pedestrians and cyclists at VP3, as Medium sensitivity receptors would experience **Minor/Moderate Adverse** seasonal effects.

Middle distance views from the south of the site

- 5.59 These are views looking across countryside towards the site. Receptors in this location would be farm workers, recreational walkers, cyclists and equestrians, and motorists.
- 5.60 At day one the later stages of the development would be visible as small scale additions glimpsed over the tops of existing hedgerows from VP4. Negligible/Minor magnitude impacts would realise **Minor Adverse** effects on motorists and pedestrians etc.
- 5.61 At year 15 the boundary landscape would have matured to screen views of the development. Day time summer views would be screened but potentially some lighting effects or winter filtering effects would continue. This would result in Negligible to occasionally Minor magnitude impacts realising **Neutral** or **Minor Adverse** effects.

Middle distance views from the west of the site

- 5.62 Receptors at VP5 (A354 west) are motorists and occasionally farm workers. Views of the site would be seen over the surrounding farmland and glimpsed through the reinforced (woodland belt) boundary planting.
- 5.63 Day one effects would be small scale and glimpsed by travelling motorists (and farm workers). Temporary short-term Moderate/Minor magnitude visual changes on Low sensitivity receptors resulting in **Minor Adverse** effects.
- 5.64 At Year 15 the south-western boundary woodland belt would have matured to become visually dense. As with VP4 day time summer views would be screened but potential some lighting effects or winter filtering effects would continue. This would result in Negligible to occasionally Minor magnitude impacts realising **Neutral** effects

Middle distance views from the north of the site

- 5.65 Operational phase views from this area would remain very limited. Day one viewers from VP7 (Lower Bryanston Farm) may glimpse new building rooftops between the rooftops and vegetation of Bryanston Hills. These would be permanent but subtle and barely perceptible changes that would remain. Day one and Year 15 impacts would be Negligible magnitude and result in **Minor Adverse** effects.

Middle distance views from the north-east of the site

- 5.66 At Day one the overall change in site colour, texture etc. would be a noticeable change to the views from VP8 and 9. Impacts would be permeant and of Moderate magnitude. Effects would be **Minor Adverse** for motorists and farm workers and **Moderate Adverse** for recreational walkers and residents.
- 5.67 At year 15 the landscape scheme of the development would have matured to break up and filter views of the development with the new housing appearing as a natural extension of Bryanston Hills, with the new housing running across the slope at a similar elevation that should not break the skyline. Effects would remain **Minor Adverse** for motorists and farm workers and **Minor/Moderate Adverse** for recreational walkers and residents.

Longer distance views from the north-east and east of the site

- 5.68 As with the middle distance views, these north-east and easterly views would look down on the new housing. The operating development would form a small part of a wide panorama. At day one the overall change in site colour, texture etc. would be a small scale, often barely perceptible, but more noticeable in the clearest viewing conditions.

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Impacts would be permanent and of Negligible to Minor magnitude. Effects would be **Minor Adverse** for farm workers and **Moderate Adverse** for recreational walkers.

- 5.69 At year 15 the new planting would help to reduce the colour and textural changes to the site in these long distance views reducing impacts further (Negligible/Minor magnitude) resulting in **Neutral** effects for farm workers and motorists (VP10) and **Minor Adverse** effects for recreational walkers (VP11).

Summary of Construction Phase Landscape and Visual effects

Construction Phase

- 5.70 Direct landscape impacts would result in small scale temporary effects from the site stripping operations and vegetation removal required to facilitate construction, and from the site appearance, as construction works progress, temporarily changing the landscape character.
- 5.71 Construction activity would also bring about smaller scale indirect effects on the adjacent landscape character through visual and noise intrusion and temporary lighting effects.
- 5.72 Visual effects would be generally more noticeable during the 'busy' construction phase as a result of the rapid changes in the appearance of the site. These temporary effects although locally significant would diminish with distance
- 5.73 The direct construction phase landscape effects would not be entirely out of character for a settlement edge site, however the extent and scale of the construction activity would result in a temporary but significant effects. The indirect effects on surrounding landscapes and townscape would be smaller in scale and not significant. Construction phase visual effects would be temporary and significant in terms of the close in private amenity views, however the impacts on publicly available viewpoints would be more limited and would only be locally significant for receptors on the footpaths closest to the construction activity.

Operational Phase

- 5.74 The change from farmland to housing would bring about permanent changes to the landscape and to people's views of it. These changes would include noticeable adverse effects resulting from the loss of the farmland and the open predominantly green view. The replacement views would be of a good quality housing constructed using locally sympathetic styles and materials based upon the proven principles of the existing Bryanston Hills housing development. The effects from these visual changes would start to balance as the scheme matured to ensure no significant adverse residual effects.
- 5.75 Significant effects on landscape character would also be limited to immediate context of the site. These effects would also be a combination of adverse and beneficial changes with the new townscape appearing as a natural extension to the adjacent townscape.
- 5.76 Impacts on views of the new housing and infrastructure from the wider AONB countryside would be diminished by viewing distance and the changes would be seen as small scale and incremental, adding to existing views of Blandford St Mary.
- 5.77 Although locally significant, the incremental change to views from the CCWWD AONB would not realise significant intrusion based landscape effects and would not significantly affect the purposes and function of the AONB designations.

Table 2: Landscape assessment

Landscape Character Area	Baseline landscape characteristics (Taken from NDDC LCA)	Receptor type and landscape sensitivity (to residential developments)	Landscape changes resulting from the proposed development (CP=construction phase) (OP=operational phase)	Landscape assessment Construction phase day and night	Landscape assessment Operational phase day and night
South Blandford Downs	<p><i>Undulating chalk downland edged by the river Stour, this is an expansive, intensively farmed, landscape with some open views to the horizon.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An undulating open chalk downland landscape distinctively subdivided by four chalk river valleys These river valleys create distinctive sub divisions within the area Medium to large scale fields bounded by low, straight and clipped hedgerows Intensively farmed and arable landscape. Regular-shaped small plantation woodlands dot the landscape. Narrow, widely spaced out straight lanes are bounded by continuous clipped hedgerows with the occasional hedgerow trees. The urban settlement edges to Milborne St Andrew and Winterborne Whitechurch at the junction of the chalk stream valley and upland landscape form detracting features in places. A distinctive linear settlement edge along the eastern side of the area as it dips steeply down to the Stour Valley. Blandford St Mary creates a hard urban edge to the north of the area on the outskirts of Blandford and forms a detracting feature. Weatherbury Castle, which is an SNCI and SAM, is a key feature. The Spelsbury Rings are both an SAM and a SNCI and a feature of interest. The Jubilee Trail, which crosses the area, is a key feature. Long Falls Wood, which is partly an SNCI and its surrounding tumuli which is a SAM, is also a key feature. Some important SNCI woodland copses and plantations. Milborne Wood is a key feature and an SNCI A distinctive network of straight bridleways and paths, some of historic importance. The parkland landscape at Watcombe Park is an important local feature. 	<p>Receptor type: Open Chalk Downland.</p> <p>Sensitivity: Medium/High as an open and rural landscape that is undesignated and locally valued. It's largely open nature increases the potential for visual intrusion from development.</p>	<p>Construction Phase Noticeable direct landscape effects would result, widespread but small scale landform modelling and construction activity on the new housing and roads. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse)</p> <p>Operational Phase A combination of adverse changes to the openness of the site and localised small-scale topographical change etc., and beneficial changes resulting from creation of a new good quality townscape that would integrate with the adjacent townscape. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day one and Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Medium/High Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) Significance category: Moderate to Major Adverse</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Medium/High Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day and Year 15). Significance category: Moderate Adverse (Day one OP) then Minor Adverse on balance (Year 15 OP).</p>

<p>Mid Stour Valley</p>	<p>A wide and flat river flood plain landscape bounded and enclosed by rising chalk downland, a busy feel to a valley that supports roadside ribbon development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A flat and wide flood plain with gently rising sides to the northeast and steeper on the south western side. Meandering river and associated sub-channels, ditches and streams. Distinctive linear settlement pattern along the sides of the flood plain with locally distinctive use of flint and stone. The road network follows either side of the valley floor at the junction with the chalk downland landscape. Small copses, wet woodland, tree groups and individual trees follow the river course and the edges of the area. Important historic crossing points, for example, at Blandford. Provides an important setting and context for Blandford. Sleep valley side plantation woodland (The Cliff) and the parkland landscape at Bryanston are key features. The remnants of traditional river valley features, such as old wifty beds, oxbow lakes, mills, weirs and the water meadows are all important features across the area. 	<p>Receptor type: Valley Pasture</p> <p>Sensitivity: Medium/High as a relatively open and rural landscape with numerous smaller scale settlements. Undesignated and locally valued</p>	<p>Construction Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect intrusion based effects from the construction works would be diminished by distance and limited intervisibility. Magnitude: Negligible/Minor (Adverse) Operational Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect effects from visual intrusion from the residential development would be diminished by distance. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one and Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Medium/High (Adverse) Magnitude: Negligible/Minor Significance category: Neutral/Minor Adverse</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Medium/High Magnitude: Minor Significance category: Minor Adverse</p>
<p>East Blandford/Pimperne Downs</p>	<p>A largely uniform area of rolling and undulating chalk downland and valley. An intensively farmed, open and expansive landscape with long views from the prominent edges elevated plateaux.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A typical chalk landscape comprising valley floors, undulating and indented side slopes and elevated open uplands around the watershed. Some distinctive elevated plateaux and wide ridgelines which afford wide views Open, large scale geometric-shaped and mainly arable fields often bounded by thin, straight and weak hedgerows or replacement fencing. Straight roads, lanes and footpaths run across the area, along valley floors and the edges of the side slopes. Lanes lined with clipped hedgerows and the occasional group of trees. Several Neolithic barrows, tumuli and rings on the elevated ridge lines. The area is well served by bridleways and footpaths. The visually prominent edges to Blandford, Blandford Camp and Pimperne create hard and visually distracting edges to the area. A few steep-sided and wooded or scrub-covered slopes provide important key features of local interest at the far northern end of the area. Pimperne Valley and its associated narrow stream and/or lane along the valley floor is a feature of interest. The A354 forms a major visual corridor across the area detracting from character 	<p>Receptor type: Chalk Valley and Downland.</p> <p>Sensitivity: High as a large-scale AONB designated landscape valued for its undeveloped and tranquil character. It's largely open and elevated nature increases the potential for visual intrusion from development in adjacent LCAs.</p>	<p>Construction Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect effects from visual intrusion from the construction works would be diminished by distance and very small scale. Magnitude: Negligible/Minor (Adverse) Operational Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect effects from visual intrusion from the residential development would remain small scale and diminished by distance. Magnitude: Locally Minor (Adverse) (Day one) and Negligible (Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: High (Adverse) Magnitude: Negligible/Minor Significance category: Minor/Moderate Adverse</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: High (Adverse) Magnitude: Locally Minor (Adverse) (Day one) and Negligible (Year 15) Significance category: Locally Moderate Adverse (Day one) and Locally Minor Adverse (Year 15).</p>

Townscape Character Area	Baseline landscape characteristics	Receptor type and landscape sensitivity (to residential developments)	Landscape changes resulting from the proposed development (CP=construction phase) (OP=operational phase)	Landscape assessment Construction phase day and night	Landscape assessment Operational phase day and night
<p>Blandford St Mary Retail Park</p>	<p>This is a large scale open grained townscape dominated by carparks and large shed like buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial/light industrial estates built mainly in the 20th century with large industrial style buildings; bounded by major road transport corridor, massing and scale contributes to physical and visual containment of wider townscape; industrial and commercial buildings, dating from late 19th century to the present day, constructed from modern mass produced materials, typically brick, metal and glass; general absence of landmark and nodes; single use buildings with little activity after the working day; views restricted to corridor views down access roads; circulation dominated by vehicles with fewer pedestrian links into the surrounding townscape; lack of open space apart from car parks; decorative shrub and tree planting forms the setting for some buildings and lines the roads in some areas. 	<p>Receptor type: Commercial Estate.</p> <p>Sensitivity: Low due to landuse type and pattern, visual sensitivity, value and requirements for mitigation.</p>	<p>Construction Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect intrusion based effects from the construction works would be diminished by distance and limited intervisibility. Magnitude: Negligible/Minor (Adverse) Operational Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect effects from visual intrusion from the residential development would be minimal. Magnitude: Negligible (Day one and Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Negligible/Minor (Adverse) Significance category: Neutral</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Negligible (Day one and Year 15). Significance category: Neutral (Day one and Year 15).</p>
<p>Blandford St Mary Residential</p>	<p>A modern residential estate townscape. Its character and layout varies over a number of phases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate type development built mainly in the 20th century; two to three storey semi-detached and terraced houses with small front and larger back gardens; on and off-street parking; townscape character and quality variations between the different development phases, uniform architectural styles and planned streetscape patterns create a regular urban grain in the first phase of the development; varied architectural styles and more organic streetscape pattern in the later phases of the development (note design based on an analysis of the historic Blandford St Mary townscape). a school forms a landmark and node; Occasional small public open spaces and limited on street vegetation, but most on-street vegetation is privately owned and managed. 	<p>Receptor type: Commercial Estate.</p> <p>Sensitivity: Low due to landuse type and pattern, visual sensitivity, value and requirements for mitigation.</p>	<p>Construction Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect intrusion based effects from the construction works would be prevented by limited intervisibility to small localised areas. Magnitude: Occasionally Moderate more generally Negligible/Minor (Adverse) Operational Phase No direct landscape effects would take place and indirect effects from visual intrusion from the residential development would be minimal as same landuse etc.. Magnitude: Locally Minor (Adverse) (Day one) and Negligible (Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Occasionally Moderate more generally Negligible/Minor (Adverse) Significance category: Occasionally Moderate Adverse more typically Neutral</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Locally Minor (Adverse) (Day one) and Negligible (Year 15) Significance category: Neutral (Day one and Year 15).</p>

Table 3: Visual assessment

Viewpoint (Baseline photograph figure ref.)	Location	Baseline view characteristics	Receptor type and Sensitivity (to residential development)	Visual changes resulting from the proposed development (CP=construction phase) (OP=operational phase)	Visual assessment Construction phase day and night	Visual assessment Operational phase day and night
VP1 Fig. 10 Baseline (day)	A353 Roundabout Junction of two A roads	An open view of a roundabout and busy A roads set in gently rising arable farmland. In this view the farmland has the appearance of being well vegetated due to the overlapping layers of mature hedgerows and shelterbelts. The site is on the opposite side of the road and is visible through the field entrance (onto the roundabout) in the centre of the view. The road is generally busy and often has queues of traffic, particularly at peak times. The roundabout has been planted with ornamental trees and shrubs and numerous road signs, lamp columns and advertising boards add visual clutter. A view largely rural in character but dominated by the road and influenced by the associated visual clutter and power lines. A view of low scenic value. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 60m.	Receptors: Motorists and occasional cyclists and pedestrians. Sensitivity: Low for motorists and low for cyclists and pedestrians given context.	Although the immediate context of the view would remain as the baseline, the character of the wider view would be noticeably changed from rural in to largely urban. Construction Phase Construction activity would be a noticeable addition to the middle ground of the view. Magnitude: Moderate occasionally Major (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase The relatively open view of farmland beyond the roadway would be closed off and replaced by urban forms that would create a new entrance gateway to the town. The road would remain to dominate the view. The character of the view would change but with some potentially attractive new features, such as a village green fronting onto the roundabout, to balance the adverse visual effects. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day one and year 15)	Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Moderate/Major Adverse Significance category: Moderate Adverse	Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day one and Year 15) Significance category: Minor Adverse on balance as the scheme and its landscape matured.
VP2 Fig. 11 Baseline (day)	Church Lane Lower Blandford St. Mary Residential lane in a small village	An oblique view from a quiet village lane looking through a gateway in the hedgerow and across a field to the A350 road and site beyond. This is a narrow glimpsed view of the site that looks up the rising field to a hedgerow of old ornamental conifers and newly planted Cherry Laurels (presumably to screen the view of the A350). The adjacent Manor House (Listed Building) would have a more perpendicular and seasonally more open version of this view, although in the summer a large purple beech tree would screen much of it. The view is essentially one of a well vegetated village lane with glimpses of open land beyond. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 150m.	Receptors: Residents and pedestrians. Sensitivity: High for residents and pedestrians	Construction Phase New buildings and roads would be set back from the eastern, and nearest, side of the site to this viewpoint. The immediate context and middle ground of the view would remain unchanged. Construction activity would be an addition to the view glimpsed through the roadside hedgerow conifers. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase The operational phase would continue these effects at day one but the already planted evergreen hedge (landscape mitigation) on the eastern side of the road would grow to eventually screen these views but cut off the currently glimpsed and road influence longer distance views of farmland. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one and year 15)	Receptor sensitivity: High Magnitude: Minor Adverse Significance category: Moderate Adverse.	Receptor sensitivity: High Magnitude: Minor Adverse (Day one and year 15) Significance category: Moderate (Day one) then Minor Adverse (Year 15).
VP3 Fig. 12 Baseline (day)	Ward's Drive Rural track and trailway	One of the few open views from the hedgerow lined Ward's Drive. A view from an old railway bridge (the railway cutting having been infilled) of farmland with glimpses of the settlements of Blandford St. Mary and Blandford Forum beyond. Although there are urban elements within this view, it is essentially rural in character with an influence of urban edge. The overhead powerlines and road lighting add to this feeling. This section of Ward's Drive forms part of the Trailway a footpath and cycleway. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 130m.	Receptors: Farmers, cyclists and pedestrians. Sensitivity: Low for farmers. Medium-high for pedestrians and cyclists due to context	There would be a noticeable change in this view with the baseline 'urban edge' repositioned closer to the viewer. The immediate context would not change as the field in front of the viewer would remain open and farmed. The new development would retain the existing hedgerows and reinforce them to create a largely green urban edge with glimpses of buildings; much as the baseline character of the view. Construction Phase This would bring about a noticeable change with housing construction visible behind the existing hedgerows. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase The operational phase would continue these effects at day one but as the enhanced site boundary vegetation matured views of the buildings and any night time lighting would be reduced. The adverse effects of shortening the view would remain however. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day one and year 15)	Receptor sensitivity: Low and Medium-High Magnitude: Moderate Adverse Significance category: Minor/Moderate Adverse	Receptor sensitivity: Low and Medium-High Magnitude: Moderate adverse Significance category: Minor/Moderate Adverse

<p>VP4 Fig. 13 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>Park Hill Country lane</p>	<p>A view from a quiet country lane looking north north-west towards the site. The view is perpendicular to the lane, and glimpsed above the hedgerow looking over the rolling arable farmland towards Blandford Forum nestled down in the valley beyond. This is a view of larger scale arable fields divided by hedgerows often running perpendicular to the view, providing the scale and pattern to this rural landscape. The urban forms of Blandford Forum are softened by the surrounding vegetation and provide focus to this attractive rural view. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 1.3km.</p>	<p>Receptors: Farmers, motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. Sensitivity: Low for farmers and motorists and Medium-High for cyclists and pedestrians due to context.</p>	<p>Construction Phase The changes to this view would be small scale and seen at distance. The majority of the construction and completed housing would sit down below the intervening downs and out of sight. Construction activity on the higher south-west part of the site may be visible over and through the hedgerows. Magnitude: Negligible/Minor (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase These effects would continue at day one with some rooftops visible above and through the hedgerows. In time the proposed boundary planting would grow to further screen views of buildings during both day and night. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one) then Minor/Neutral (Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low and Medium/High Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one OP) then Minor/Neutral (Year 15) Significance category: Minor Adverse becoming Neutral</p>
<p>VP5 Fig. 14 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>Ward's Drive Rural Track</p>	<p>Ward's Drive is lined by dense hedgerows on both sides. At approximately 3m high, these hedgerows generally limit views from Ward's Drive to channelled views up and down the track. Where the topography allows there are views out and over the adjacent rolling arable farmland. Field entrances are in frequent and the selected viewpoint is the only position along this section of the drove where the hedge is low enough to allow a more open view towards the site. However there is no view of the site due to the intervening topography. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 130m. <i>It is considered that limited filtered views of the site would be available in winter by closely looking through the hedgerow on the northern side of the drove near its highest point.</i></p>	<p>Receptors: Farmers, cyclists and pedestrians. Sensitivity: High for farmers, pedestrians and cyclists due to context</p>	<p>Construction and Operational Phase There would be no change to this view. Magnitude: No Change (CP and OP) Operational Phase <i>NOTE: where filtered seasonal views through the drove's north side hedgerow are possible then it is anticipated small scale changes of Minor Adverse effects would occur.</i></p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low and High Magnitude: No Change Significance category: Insignificant <i>NOTE: where filtered seasonal views through the drove's north side hedgerow are possible then it is anticipated small scale changes of Minor Adverse effects would occur.</i></p>
<p>VP6 Figs. 15 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>A354 Road west Rural A road</p>	<p>A quick sequential elevated view from the top of St Marys Hill above the site. The view has the busy A354 as a foreground before opening out over the rolling downland to the west. The site is not visible from this viewpoint but the clump of lime trees is visible as are parts of the south-western boundary hedge. An attractive rural view from a busy A road. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 700m.</p>	<p>Receptors: Motorists and farmers Sensitivity: Low.</p>	<p>Construction Phase The later stages of the proposed development constructed on the higher parts of the site would be partially visible in this view. They would be partially screened by the dipping landform but the upper parts of the buildings would be seen filtered by the south-west boundary hedgerow. This would be a small scale but noticeable addition to the view. Magnitude: Minor/Moderate (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase The construction phase effects would continue at day one but would reduce as the proposed south-west boundary landscape planting enhancements matured to filter and screen day and night views of the new housing, leaving the long distance views of Hungry Down beyond. Magnitude: Minor/Moderate (Adverse) (Day one) becoming Minor Adverse/Negligible (Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Minor/Moderate (Adverse) (Day one) becoming Minor Adverse/Negligible (Year 15) Significance category: Minor Adverse becoming Neutral</p>

<p>VP7 Fig. 16 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>Bridleway E514 Lower Bryanston Farm Bridleway in AONB</p>	<p>A view of rolling farmland looking down over Blandford Forum nestling in the Stour valley beyond. The farmland is part arable part grassland with the grassland used for horse grazing and set up with training jumps. The skyline is composed of large mature trees interspersed with the rooflines of the Bryanston Hills development. The site is not visible in this view although the top of the clump of lime trees can be seen. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 900m.</p>	<p>Receptors: Farmers, pedestrians and equestrians. Sensitivity: Low for farmers and High for pedestrians and equestrians</p>	<p>Construction Phase Any new housing, if visible, would blend with the roof tops of the existing Bryanston Hills homes. Any changes would be small scale and incremental. Magnitude: Negligible (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase The operational phase would continue these effects. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one and Year 15).</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low and High Magnitude: Negligible Adverse Significance category: Neutral/Minor Adverse.</p>
<p>VP8 Fig. 17 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>A354 Road east Rural A road informal pull-in. AONB</p>	<p>A brief channelled view looking south west down the A354 to the site on the opposite side of the valley. The view has the busy A354 as a foreground flanked by the dense highway boundary planting. St Mary's Hill and the site are the focus of the view, with the clump of lime trees and the south-western boundary hedge visible. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 1.2km.</p>	<p>Receptors: Motorists. Sensitivity: Low.</p>	<p>Construction Phase The earlier phases of the development would introduce new built forms replacing the arable field. The later phase, towards the top of the site, would be most visible and may break the skyline, depending upon the detailed design. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase As the proposed internal and boundary soft landscape matured, the day one effects would reduce as the new development was softened by planting to become a natural visual extension of the existing Bryanston Hills housing. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day one) becoming Minor (Adverse) (Year 15).</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low Magnitude: Moderate Adverse Significance category: Minor Adverse.</p>
<p>VP9 Fig. 18 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>Route E13/11 nr the B3062 road Rural footpath in AONB</p>	<p>An elevated view from a footpath and private driveway looking south-west over the downland and River Stour valley to the site. The settlements of Littleton, Lower Blandford St Mary and Blandford St Mary can be glimpsed amongst the mature vegetation. The site can be seen at the northern end of the river valley side (right of the photograph) with the distinctive lime tree clump to the right hand side of it. An attractive rural view. Distance for the viewpoint to site is 1.2km.</p>	<p>Receptors: Residents and farmers and pedestrians. Sensitivity: Low farmers. High for residents and pedestrians</p>	<p>Construction Phase The site housing phase and construction would take place largely out of sight below the landform and intervening vegetation. Later phases would be visible with construction and completed homes most prominent on the higher land to the west of the site. Magnitude: Negligible becoming Moderate (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase These effects would continue at day one, however they would reduce as the proposed internal and boundary planting softening the development and integrating it into the wider landscape; the completed development appearing as a natural extension to Bryanston Hills. Magnitude: Moderate (Adverse) (Day one) becoming Minor (Adverse) (Year 15)</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low and High Magnitude: Moderate becoming Moderate Adverse Significance category: Minor to Moderate Adverse.</p>
<p>VP10 Fig. 19 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>Black Lane Rural road with footpath in AONB</p>	<p>An elevated view looking south-west down the road up to Blandford Camp. The road is lined by two hedgerows which tend to channel views up and down the road but this low point in the hedge offers a view over the rolling downland with Blandford Forum nestling in the valley below. The site is seen in the distance with the distinctive lime tree clump acting as a visual reference Distance for the viewpoint to site is 3km.</p>	<p>Receptors: Farmers, motorists and pedestrians. Sensitivity: Low for farmers. Low-Medium for motorists (as some are visiting the museum) and Medium for pedestrians given context.</p>	<p>Construction Phase Construction would be visible in the distance but not in any detail. Topsoil strip for construction (revealing bare chalk) would potentially be more visible than the initial construction of buildings etc. The later construction, further up the slope would be more noticeable but again distance would reduce the visual effect. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase Opening day would continue these effects but as the development matured the on-site planting would soften the housing to give the appearance of a natural extension to the Bryanston Hills development Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one and Year 15).</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low to Medium Magnitude: Minor Adverse Significance category: Minor Adverse</p>

<p>VP11 Fig. 20 Baseline (day)</p>	<p>Buzbury Rings Footpath in AONB and adjacent to a SAM.</p>	<p>An elevated approximately westerly longer distance view of the site. Semi-enclosed by the adjacent hedgerow and maize crop, the viewpoint still affords an extensive view of the rolling downland with Blandford St Mary and Blandford Forum in the valley bottom. This is an attractive rural view with the site is seen in the distance with the distinctive lime tree clump acting as a visual reference Distance for the viewpoint to site is 2.8km.</p>	<p>Receptors: Farmers and pedestrians. Sensitivity: Low for farmers and high for pedestrians</p>	<p>Construction Phase Similar to VP 10 with the more extensive construction activities visible in the distance but not in any detail. The later construction, further up the slope would be more noticeable but again distance would reduce the visual effect. Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (CP) Operational Phase Opening day would continue these effects but as the development matured the on-site planning would soften the housing to give the appearance of a natural extension to the existing St Mary's Hill development Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one) and Minor (Adverse) /Negligible (Year 15).</p>	<p>Receptor sensitivity: Low and High Magnitude: Minor (Adverse) (Day one) and Minor (Adverse) /Negligible (Year 15). Significance category: Minor/Moderate Adverse becoming Neutral/Minor Adverse</p>
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6.0 MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

- 6.1 The Illustrative Masterplan (Figure 1) design has incorporated landscape and visual measures to prevent or reduce construction and operational effects as an integral part of the design development process. These measures have been taken into account in the foregoing assessment of potential landscape and visual effects.
- 6.2 Further detailed measures to prevent or reduce construction effects, may be set out in a Code of Construction Practice (CoCP). These would include best practice measures and would be put in place during any detailed planning negotiations as the site was brought forward for development.
- 6.3 Management plans for the existing and proposed site vegetation may also be brought forward as part of any detailed planning negotiation and permission. This would ensure the maximum benefit of these mitigation measures.

7.0 RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

- 7.1 As the measures to prevent or reduce construction and operation phase landscape and visual effects form an integral part of the assessed illustrative design for the project (see Figure 13), no further measures have been incorporated. The assessment would remain unchanged from that previously identified in the foregoing assessment.

8.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

- 8.1 Within the NDDC adopted local plan there is one other site zoned for housing that lies within the St Marys Hill study area. Site D 'Off Langton Road' for 60no. dwellings, on the west side of the A354 by-pass north of the B3062 roundabout is located near to the area of TZV on Snow's and Hungry Downs (VP7). However the sides of the A354 are well vegetated and Site D lowlying and so the development is well screened from VP7 with any new buildings seen as part of the wider Blandford Forum built up area.
- 8.2 Although VP7 lies in the CCWVAONB and visual receptors are potentially highly sensitive any additional changes that have resulted from the 'Off Langton Road' development are small scale and would not add significantly to the effects identified for the St Marys Hill development.
- 8.3 Any other housing development sites are likely to be 'Windfall', relatively small scale and would be experienced as small scale changes within existing settlements and would therefore be unlikely to realise significant and widespread landscape and visual effects.

9.0 LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- 9.1 The limitation of assessing potential intervisibility of the proposed development with its surroundings during the summer months has been discussed in the 'Visual Baseline' Appendix 1 Methodology of this report. As a large number of the important vegetation blocks within the study area are dense and twiggy, any potential seasonal changes due to deciduous vegetation have been considered as not significant.
- 9.2 This assessment, although focusing on detailed themes and issues, is assessing an outline planning application with an illustrative masterplan. As such the assessment and findings of this report could differ to those of any final scheme that may be brought forward.














10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Due to restrictions on site availability, any new housing within Blandford Forum/Blandford St Mary is likely to require the development of a greenfield site and would therefore result in significant landscape and visual effects. The Crown Meadows was previously considered within the emerging local plan allocation but this site has been withdrawn following discussions with English Heritage.
- 10.2 The St Mary's Hill site, situated on the urban edge of the Blandford St Mary, provides an opportunity to create much needed housing in a sustainable and desirable location whilst realising localised and relatively small scale adverse landscape and visual effects.
- 10.3 The findings of this report correspond with those of the St Mary's Hill Heritage Statement, which found any potential impacts on the setting of heritage assets to be Slight.
- 10.4 The site provides the opportunity to extend the existing urban area in a logical way by utilising urban edge landscape that is of relatively low scenic beauty when compared to the AONB landscapes surrounding it.
- 10.5 The development would provide a network of new attractive public open spaces that would act as focal points, not only to the site, but to the wider Blandford St Mary townscape. These would provide important gateway and townscape structure functions, in addition to providing spaces for play and community interactivity, as well as helping to realise ecological and sustainability benefits.

11.0 FIGURES

Status and Purpose:	Final Planning Application
Date:	28 th January 2015
Version:	2.0

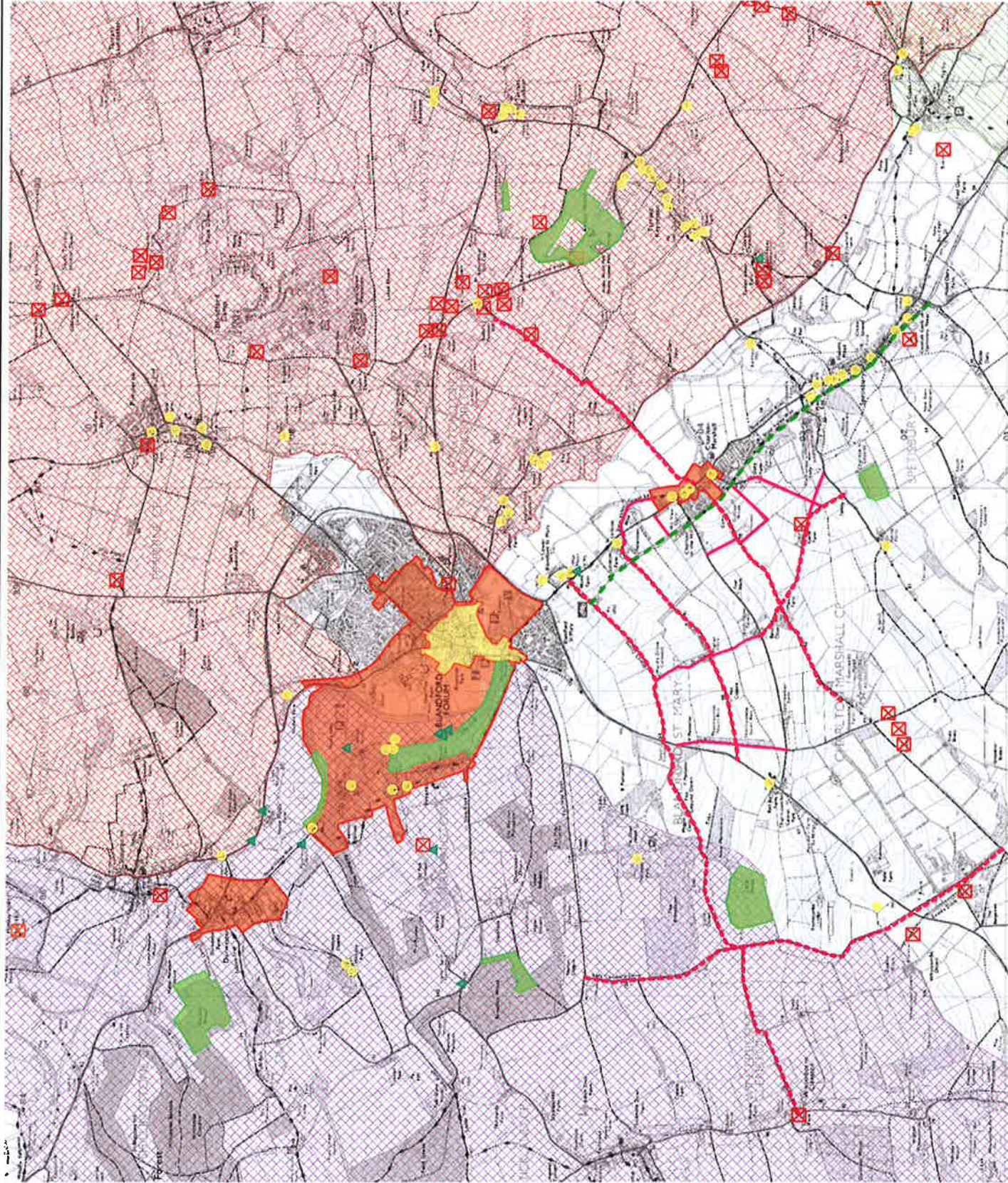
NOTE: This is a preliminary plan. It is not intended to be used for any legal purposes. It is not intended to be used for any legal purposes. It is not intended to be used for any legal purposes.

-  Dorset Downs AONB
-  Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB
-  Green Belts
-  Veteran Trees
-  Ancient Woodlands
-  Conservation Areas
-  Conservation Areas and high density of Listed Buildings
-  Listed Buildings
-  Scheduled Monuments (England) - Points
-  National Trust Property
-  Bridleway (CROW 2000)
-  Footpath (CROW 2000)
-  National Cycle Network Route NCN 25

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PROJECT	ST. MARY'S HILL Blandford St. Mary
DATE	06.10.14
SCALE	1:5000 (0.63)
FIGURE	DP
REVISIONS	
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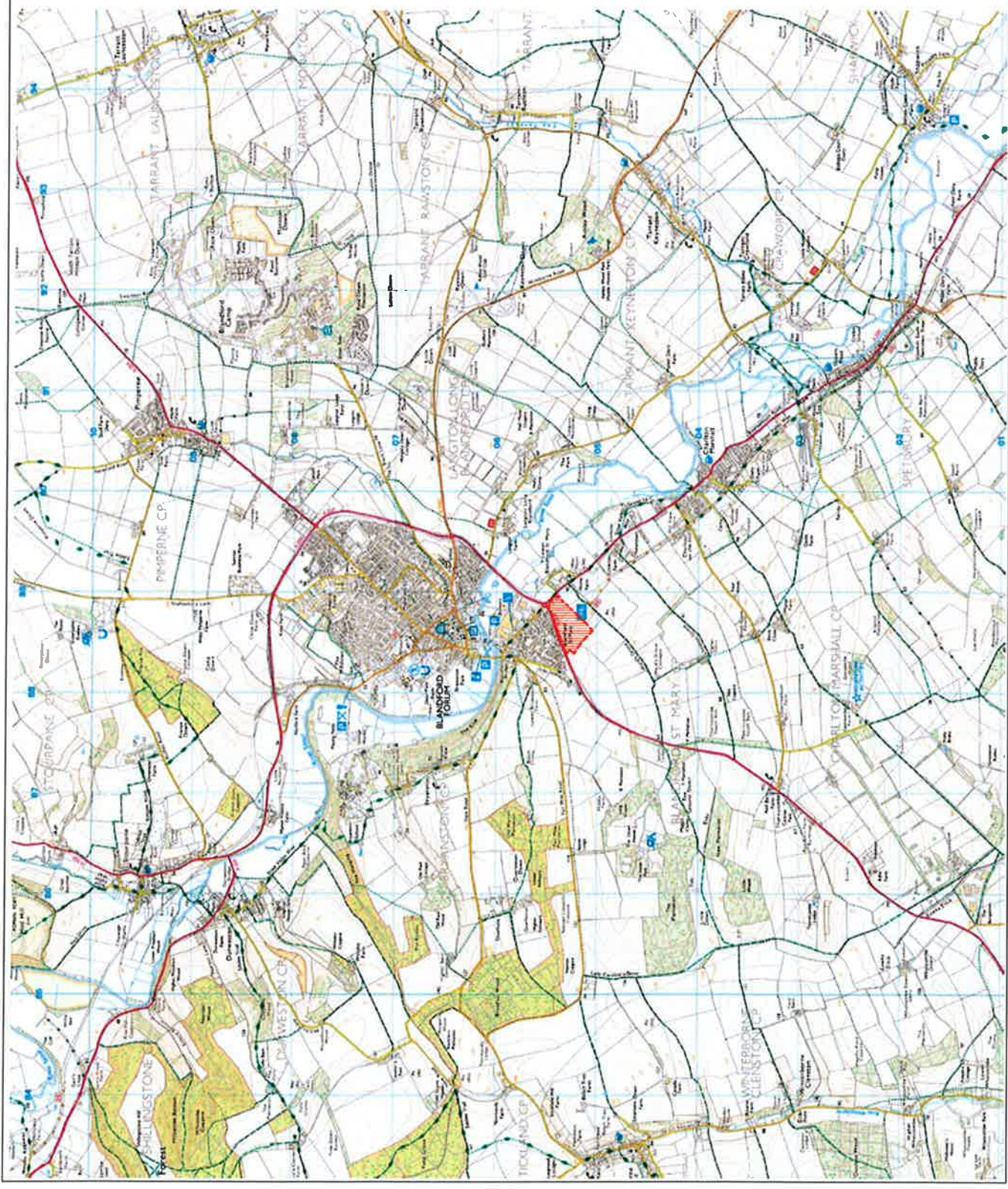


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Fig. 3
Initial Study Area



St. Mary's Hill



REVISONS

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Landmarks Architecture and Urban Design
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Telephone: 515.281.7700 Fax: 515.281.7702

PROJECT
ST. MARY'S HILL
Baltimore St. Mary

DATE
Initial Study Area

SCALE 1:50000@1/8"=1'-0"
DATE 05/03/11
DESIGNED BY DP
CHECKED BY DP
DATE 05/03/11
PROJECT NO. 11-000000-00
DRAWING NO. 11-000000-00-001
SCALE 1:50000@1/8"=1'-0"
DATE 05/03/11

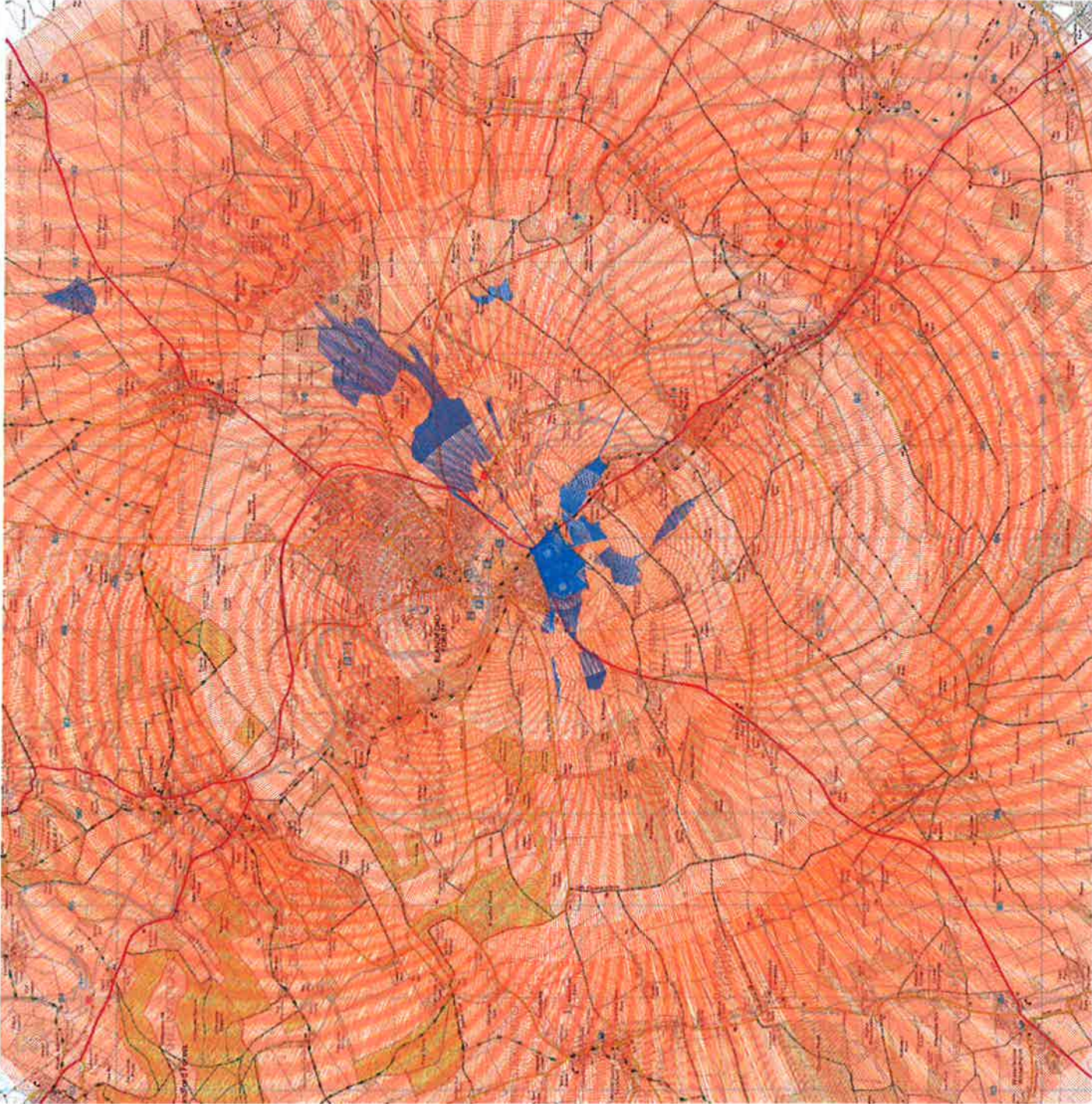
HED-1726



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**Baseline
Zone of Visibility**

October 2014



REVISIONS

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 Telephone: 702.734.1800 Fax: 702.734.1845

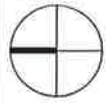
PROJECT

ST. MARY'S HILL
 BLANDFORD ST. MARY

SUBJECT

Baseline
 Zone of Visibility

DATE	06.10.14	DRAWN BY	AW
SCALE	1:2000@A3	CHECKED BY	DP
DRAWING NUMBER	Figure 4	REVISION	-
DRAWING STATUS	A		
A - PRELIMINARY	B - ISSUED FOR PERMITS	C - ISSUED FOR DESIGN	D - ISSUED FOR CONSTRUCTION
E - ISSUED FOR APPROVAL	F - ISSUED FOR CONSTRUCTION	G - AS BUILT	H - AS BUILT



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Development Case
 Theoretical Zone of Visibility

October 2014

Key



Target Point



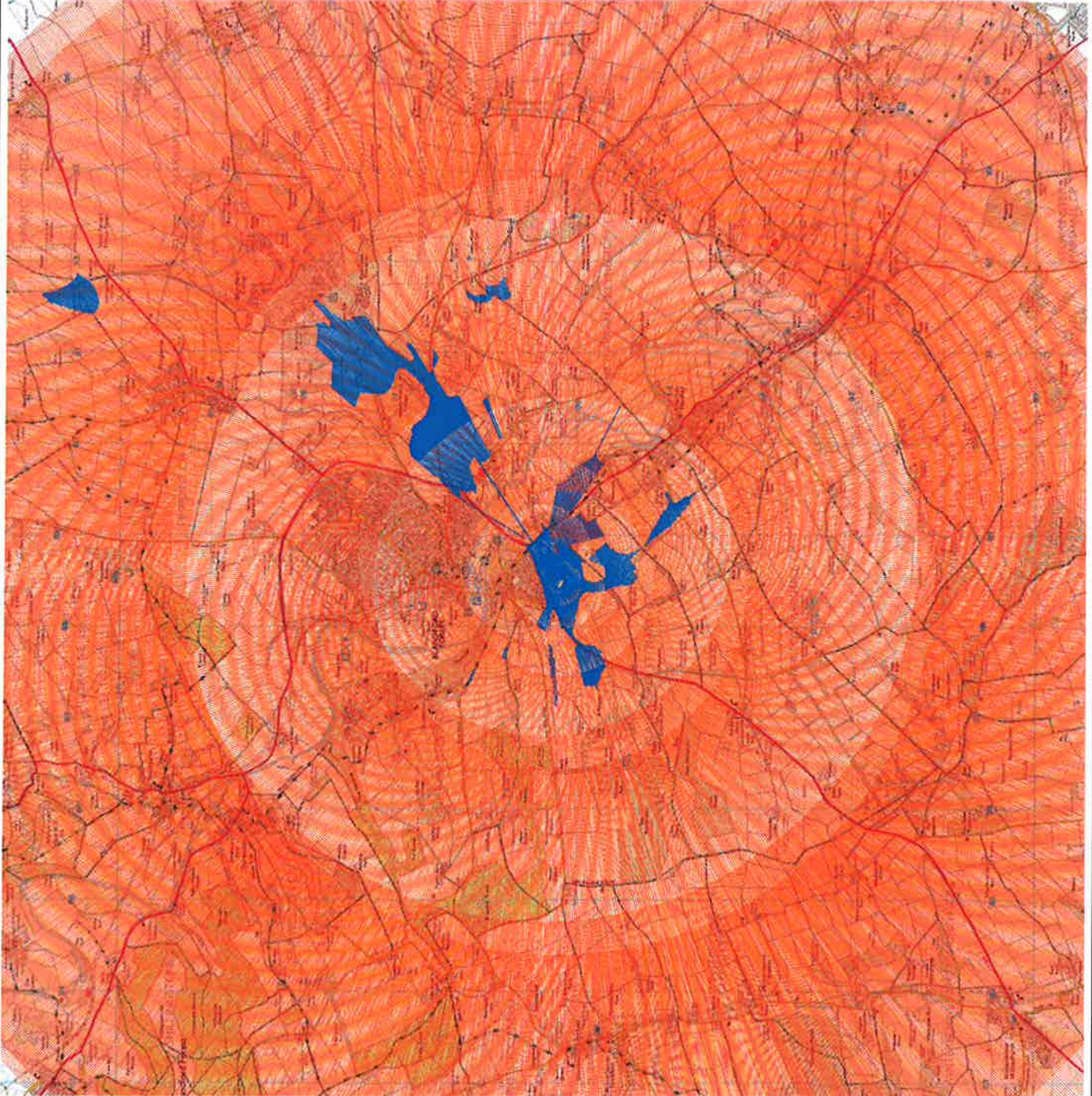
Theoretical Zone of Visibility -
 Visible



Theoretical Zone of Visibility -
 Invisible



Site Boundary



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 Hyland Edger Driver

Landscape Architects and Urban Designers

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 Telephone: 775.333.7100 Fax: 775.333.7105

PROJECT

ST. MARY'S HILL
 BLANDFORD ST. MARY

SUBJECT

Development Case
 Theoretical Zone of Visibility

DATE	06.10.14	DRAWN BY	AW
SCALE	1:2500@A3	CHECKED BY	DP
DRAWING NUMBER	Figure 5	REVISION	-
DRAWING STATUS	A		

A - PREPARED FOR PLANNING
 E - ISSUED FOR APPROVAL
 F - ISSUED FOR CONSTRUCTION
 G - AS BUILT
 H - ISSUED FOR RECORD

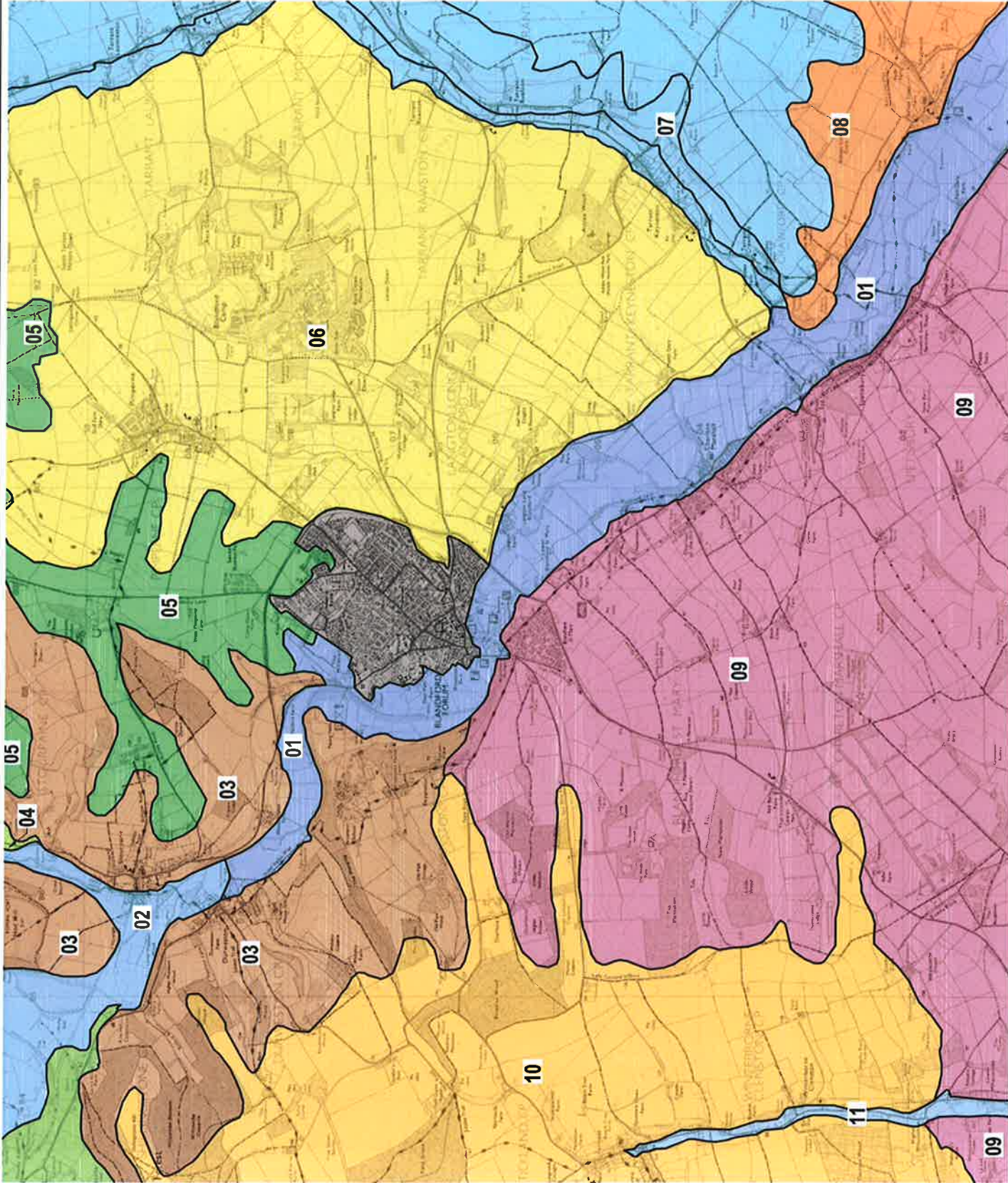
NOTES:
 1. The LCA boundaries are based on the LCA Assessment Report. The LCA boundaries are based on the LCA Assessment Report. The LCA boundaries are based on the LCA Assessment Report.

Figure 5: Landscape Character Areas

KEY

- 1 Mid Stour Valley (a),(c)
- 2 Upper Stour Valley (e),(c)
- 3 North Dorset Chalk Escarpment (e),(b)
- 4 Blackmore Clay Vale (e)
- 5 Cranborne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland (e),(a)
- 6 East Blandford / Pimperne Downs (a)
- 7 Tarrant Valley (a)
- 8 Chettle/Abeycroft Downs (e),(c)
- 9 South Blandford Downs (e),(b)
- 10 Upper North Wiltshire Valley (e)
- 11 Lower Wiltshire Valley (e)

LCA Source Material
 (a) North Dorset District Council (2009), LDF Landscape Character Area Assessment
 (b) East Dorset District Council (2008), East Dorset Landscape Character Assessment
 (c) Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB (2003), Integrated Landscape Character Assessment



REVISIONS

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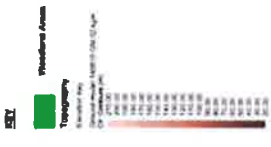
Landscape Architects and Urban Designers
 One Market Way, Gillingham, Dorset, Hampshire, SO21 1WQ
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PROJECT
 ST. MARY'S HILL
 Blandford, St. Mary

PROJECT
 Landscape Character Areas

DATE	05/08/14	ISSUED BY	AW
SCALE	1:500000	DESIGNED BY	DP
TITLE	Landscape Character Areas		
PROJECT NO.			
CLIENT			
LOCATION			
PROJECT NO.		PROJECT NO.	
PROJECT NO.		PROJECT NO.	

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Landmark Architecture and Urban Design

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 10000 La Jolla Village Drive, Suite 1000, San Diego, CA 92037

PROJECT

ST. MARY'S HILL
 Standard St. Mary

TITLE SHEET

Topography and Vegetation

TOWN	0610114	DATE	11/11/2024
SCALE	1/8"=1'-0"	CHECKED BY	JD
DRAWN BY	JD	DATE	11/11/2024
FIGURE	Figure 7		

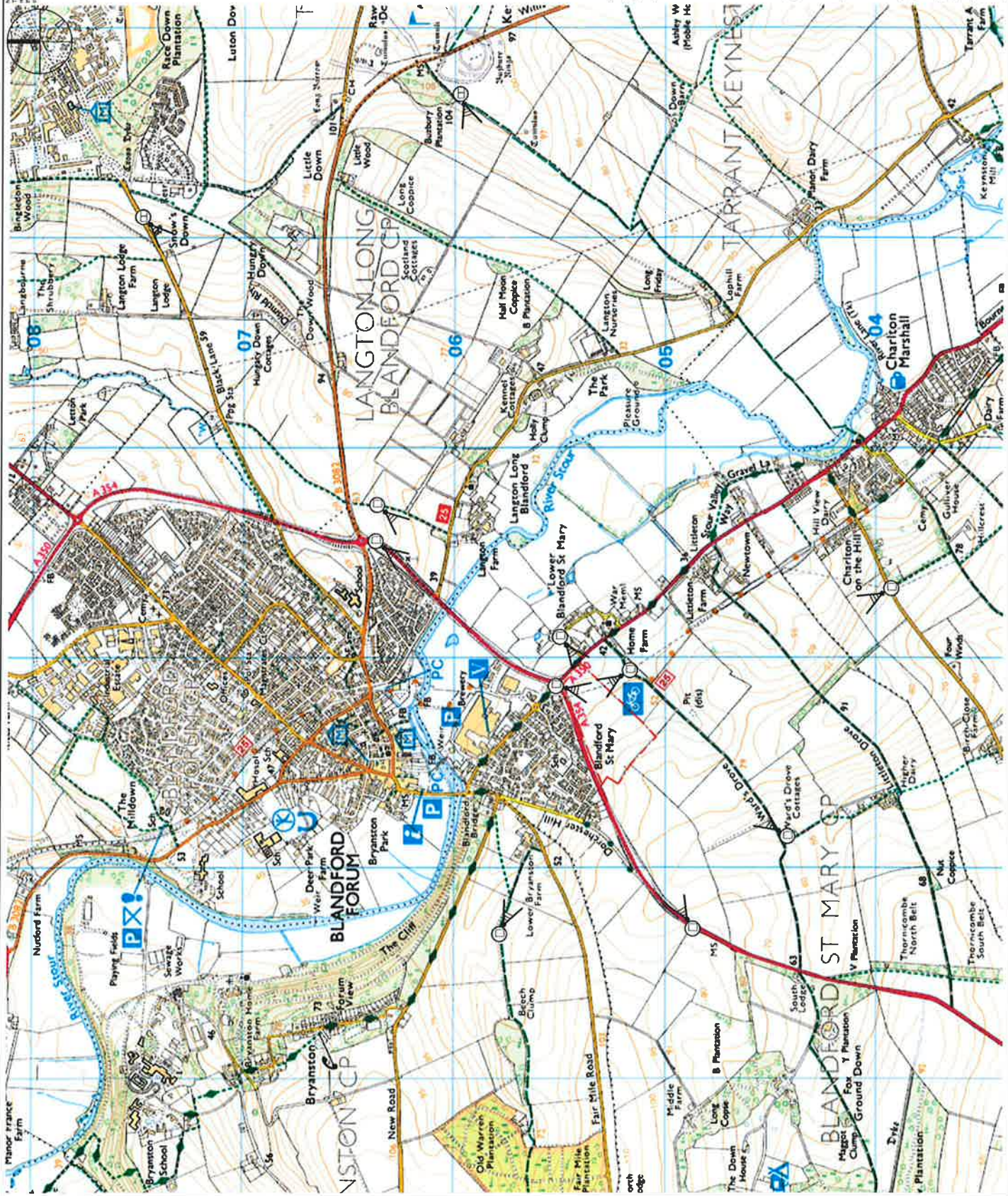
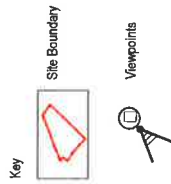
1. PREPARED BY: JD
 2. CHECKED BY: JD
 3. DATE: 11/11/2024

PROJECT NO: HED-112E

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View Points

August 2014



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 Telephone 01982 711800 Fax 01982 713463





PROJECT
 ST. MARY'S HILL
 BLANDFORD ST MARY

DATE 15 Aug 14
SCALE 1:2500@A3
DESIGNED BY DP
CHECKED BY DP
REVISION -

DRAWING STATUS A
 A - PRELIMINARY B - ISSUED FOR PLANNING C - ISSUED FOR PERMITS
 D - ISSUED FOR CONSTRUCTION E - ISSUED FOR TENDER F - AS BUILT

NOTES:
 1. This map is a site plan and does not show existing conditions. It is intended to show the proposed layout of the site and the proposed landscaping.
 2. The site is located within the Blandford Forum Conservation Area. The map shows the proposed layout of the site and the proposed landscaping.
 3. The site is located within the Blandford Forum Conservation Area. The map shows the proposed layout of the site and the proposed landscaping.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Major Adverse - Moderate Adverse
-  Moderate Adverse - Minor Adverse
-  Neutral

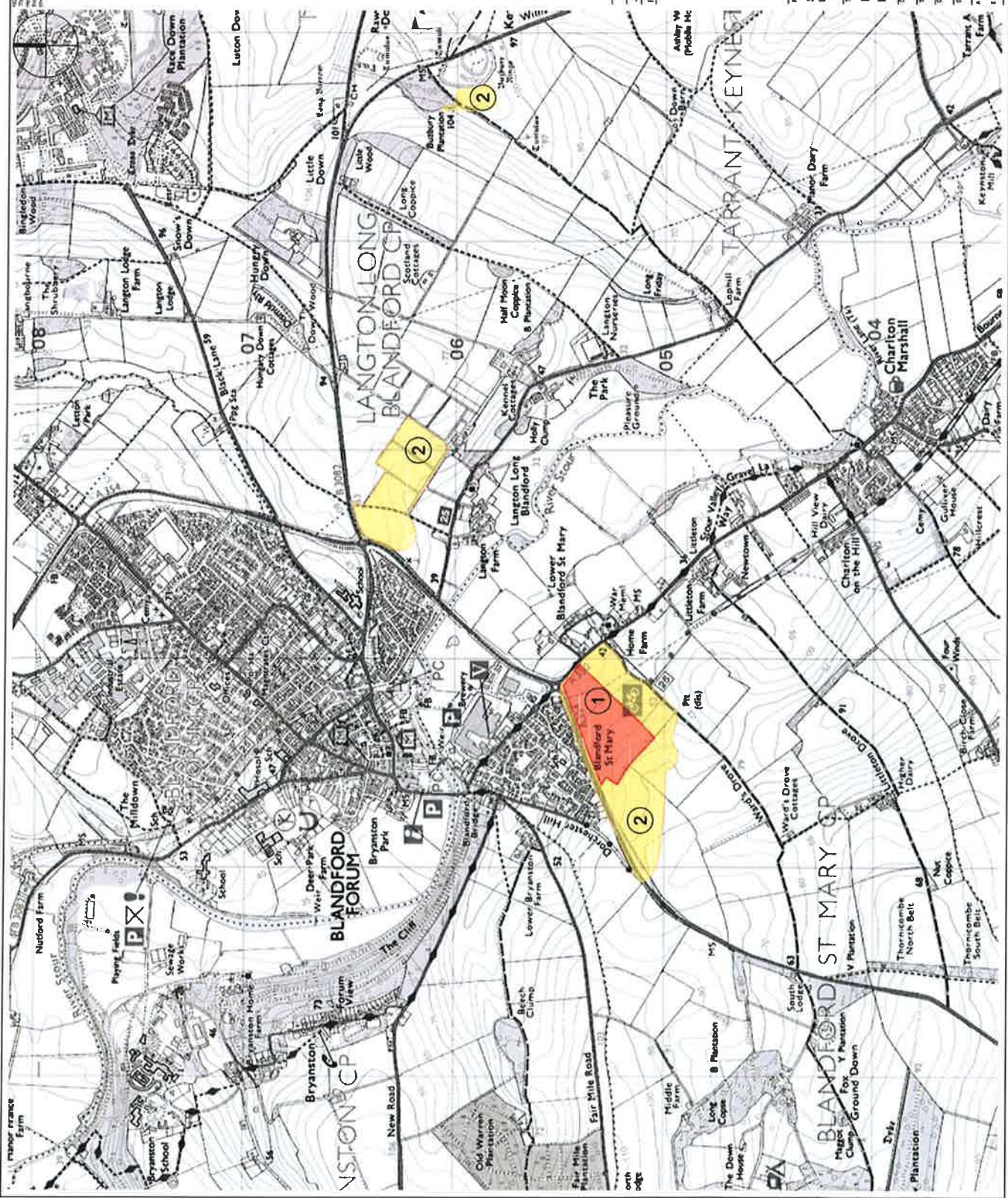
- ① Major Adverse - Construction Day One Year 15
- ② Moderate Adverse - Construction Day One Year 15

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PROJECT
 ST MARY'S HILL
 BLANDFORD ST MARY

Figure 09
 Impact Assessment

DATE	15 Aug 14	DRAWN BY	AW
SCALE	1:2500000	CHECKED BY	BP
DESIGNED BY	AW	APPROVED BY	AW
DATE	15 Aug 14	SCALE	1:2500000
DESIGNED BY	AW	APPROVED BY	AW
DATE	15 Aug 14	SCALE	1:2500000
DESIGNED BY	AW	APPROVED BY	AW



REVISIONS

REVISION	DATE	BY	REASON
1	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
2	15 Aug 14	BP	BP
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4	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
5	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
6	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
7	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
8	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
9	15 Aug 14	AW	AW
10	15 Aug 14	AW	AW



VP1 Roundabout A354

DIRECTION OF VIEW: South-south-westerly
 ADD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 4m



Church Lane

VP2 Church Lane Lower B.S.M

DIRECTION OF VIEW: South-westerly
 ADD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 37m

FILE NO:

St. Mary's Hill

DATE:

Viewpoint 1&2: Baseline photographs

DATE:

October 2013

SCALE:

NTS

PROJECT NO:

Nikon 5200D digital camera

18-70mm lens set at 50mm focal length.

FILE NO: 16-10-14-001

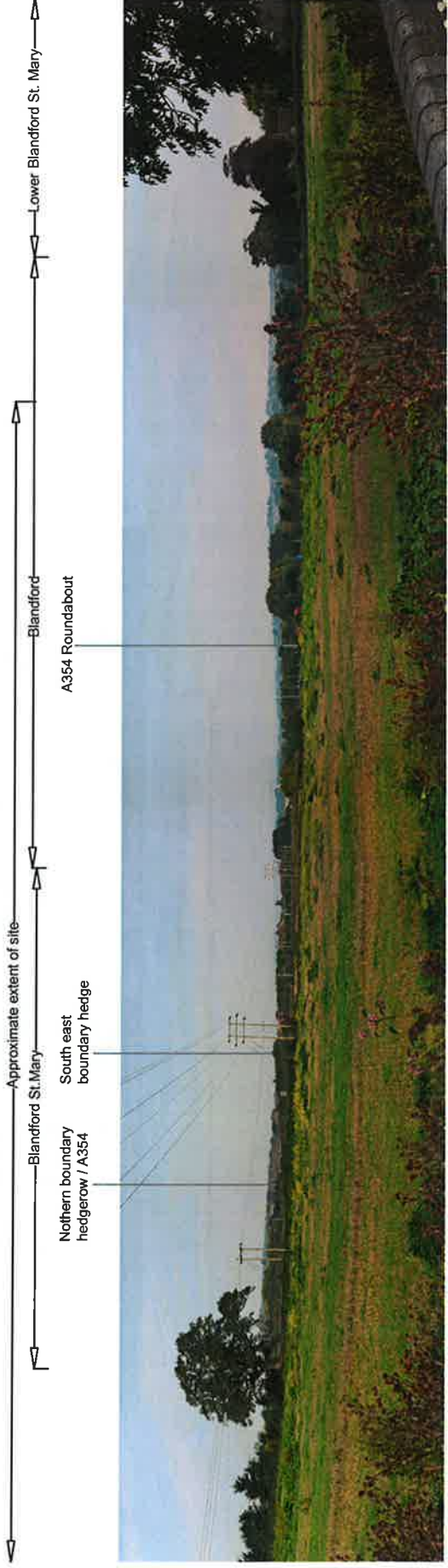
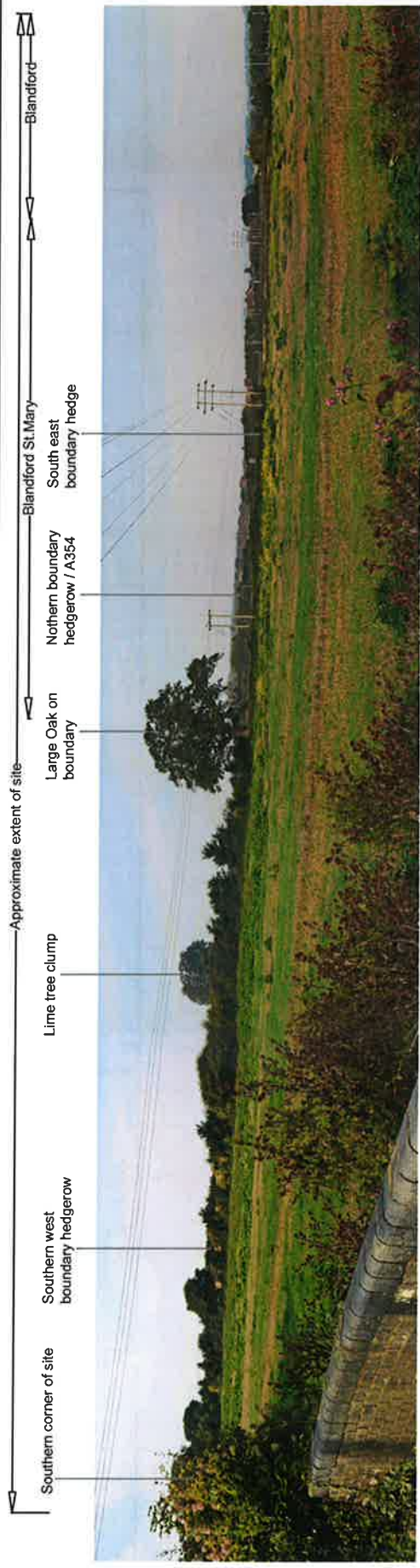
VP1: 12nd August 2014, 16.41pm.

Dry, sunny and clear.

VP2: 23rd September 2014, 12.20am.

Dry with light haze.

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VP3 Wards Drive
 DIRECTION OF VIEW: North westerly
 AOD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx 46m AOD

DATE AND TIME: 23rd September 2014, 11.08am.
 DRY, sunny and clear.

PROJECT	St. Mary's Hill
VIEWPOINT	Viewpoint 3: Baseline photograph
DATE	October 2013
SCALE	NTS
INSTRUMENT USED FOR SURVEY	Nikon S2000 digital camera, 18-70mm lens set at 50mm focal length.

H | E | D
 Hyland Edgar Driver

Approximate extent of site

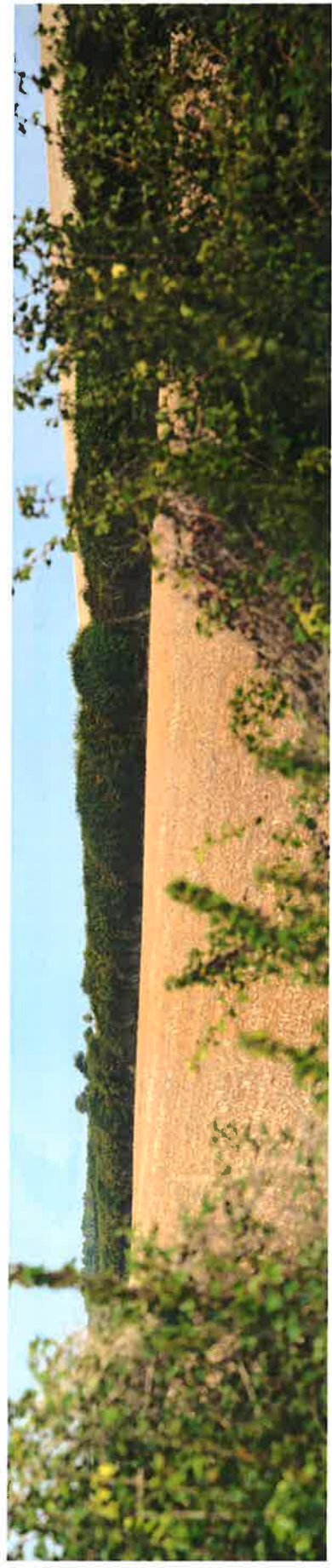
Wards Drove

Lime tree clump

Littleton Drove



VP4 Park Hill
 DIRECTION OF VIEW: North westerly
 AOD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 8m



VP5 Ward's Drove Cottages
 DIRECTION OF VIEW: North westerly
 AOD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 50m

<p>ST Mary's Hill</p>	<p>VP4: 23rd September 2014, 15:40pm. Dry with light haze.</p>
<p>Viewpoint 4 & 5: Baseline photograph</p>	<p>VP5: 23rd September 2014, 11:45am. Dry with light haze.</p>
<p>Figure 12</p>	
<p>October 2013</p>	<p>NTS</p>
<p>Nikon S2000 digital camera. 18-70mm lens set at 50mm focal length.</p>	

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Approximate extent of site
Lime tree clump



VP6 A354
DIRECTION OF VIEW: East south easterly
ADD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 60m

Approximate extent of site
Blandford St. Mary
Lime tree clump



VP7 Lower Broughton Farm
DIRECTION OF VIEW: East south easterly
ADD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 60m

PROJECT	St. Mary's Hill
DATE	VP6: 12th August 2014, 16.51pm VP7: 23rd September 2014, 15.38pm
VIEWPOINT 6 and 7: Baseline photograph	Dry with light haze, Dry with light haze
FIGURE NO. 13	
DATE OF VISIT TO SITE	October 2013
SCALE	NTS
INSTRUMENT USED AT THE TIME	Nikon S2000 digital camera, 18-70mm lens set at 50mm focal length.

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Approximate extent of site

Lime tree clump St. Mary's Hill (Blandford St Mary)



VP8 A354
DIRECTION OF VIEW: South westerly view
AOD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 62m

Park Hill VP4
Littleton

Littleton Drove Lower Blandford St.Mary

Ward's Drove Lime tree clump Blandford St.Mary

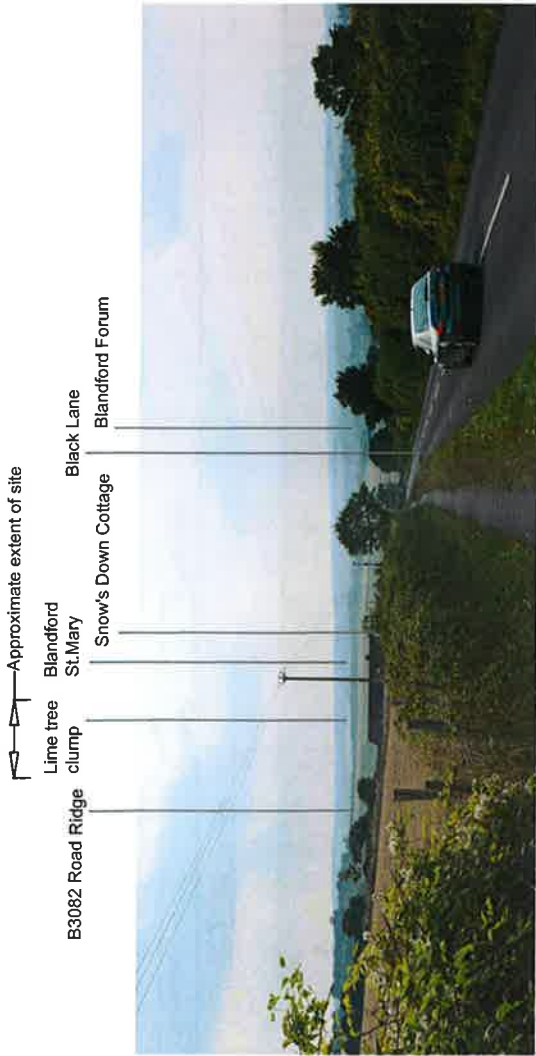


VP9 Footpath
VIEW: South westerly
AOD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 62m

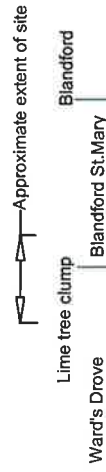
St. Mary's Hill
VP7: 23rd September 2014, 15:38pm.
Dry, sunny and clear.
VP8: 12th August 2014, 16:29pm.

PROJECT	St. Mary's Hill
VIEWPOINT	Viewpoint 8 and 9: Baseline photographs
DATE	October 2013
CLIENT	NTS
EQUIPMENT	Nikon 5200D digital camera, 18-70mm lens set at 50mm focal length.

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VP10 Black Lane
 DIRECTION OF VIEW: South easterly view
 ADD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 98m.



VP11 Buzbury Rinds
 DIRECTION OF VIEW: West south-westerly
 ADD CAMERA HEIGHT: Approx. 107m.

PROJECT	St. Mary's Hill
DATE	October 2013
SCALE	NTS
FILE NO.	VP10 and 11: Baseline photographs
FIGURE NO.	Figure 15
DATE	23rd September 2014, 13.57pm.
WEATHER	Dry with light haze
DATE	23rd September 2014, 15.14pm.
WEATHER	Dry with light haze.
EQUIPMENT	Nikon 5200D digital camera 18-70mm lens set at 50mm focal length.

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Appendix 1: Methodology

Establishment of the study area

- 12.1 The study area for the landscape and visual assessment has been defined as the Theoretical Zone of Visibility for the proposed development.
- 12.2 The Baseline ZV and the Development Case TZV have been modelled by creating a 3D digital terrain model (DTM) generated from Ordnance Survey (OS) base data.
- 12.3 Additional visual barriers have been incorporated into the DTM to represent visually opaque existing structures. Urban areas have been modelled at 10m high. Tree heights in woodland blocks have also been modelled at 10m high.
- 12.4 Additional visual barriers, such as individual hedgerows, have not been included in the model. This is because individually each hedgerow does not represent a year round visually opaque screening element.
- 12.5 The Baseline ZV has been modelled using Key Terra Firma software. Points at existing ground level at the highest point of the site has been used as the 'target' or reference point.
- 12.6 The Development Case ZTV has been modelled using the same process but has used a target points as the highest ridgelines of the first and last project phases. The latter being the highest proposed built form on the site.

Description of the landscape and visual baseline

Landscape baseline

- 12.7 For the purposes of this assessment the terms landscape, townscape and seascape are interchangeable e.g. landscape character assessment can be applied to the assessment of landscape character within rural, urban or coastal areas.
- 12.8 The landscape in the study area has been described using a combination of desk-based study and site survey. This has examined physical landscape elements such as vegetation and topography in addition to landscape character and its perceptual qualities.
- 12.9 Identification of the nature of the landscape receptor (sensitivity) may also form part of the baseline, particularly if external studies have been commissioned or completed by the Local Planning Authority (or Competent Authority). These studies may include evaluation of landscape value and or quality and condition.

Physical landscape

- 12.10 The topographical data has been generated from Ordnance Survey (OS) base data (OS Terrain 5 5m DTM). The location, extent and height of existing vegetation have been recorded from the OS 1:25,000 scale raster file, from Google Earth and site observation.

Landscape character

- 12.11 Landscape character describes the different types of landscape within any given area taking account of topography, vegetation, built form, settlement patterns, land use, local materials, hydrology and other landscape and cultural/historical features. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is the process by which landscape character is appraised and subdivided into homogenous units.
- 12.12 The baseline for the development site and wider study area has been extensively studied at national, county, and district scale, as part of national and county landscape character initiatives. The relevant studies are:

Status and	Final
Purpose:	Planning Application
Date:	28 th January 2015
Version:	2.0

- National Character Areas¹²;
- County LCAs; and
- District LCAs.

12.13 The Dorset Landscape Character Assessment has been supplemented with district scale studies from North Dorset District Council.

12.14 As required, these existing studies have been further developed using desk-based study and site survey work carried out in accordance with the 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidelines for England and Scotland' (2002)¹³.

Landscape Value

12.15 This is the relative value attached to different landscapes by society. The value placed on a particular landscape may vary for different individuals within that society and value can be applied to whole landscapes, elements within it and particular aesthetic and perceptual dimensions that it provides.

12.16 Landscapes are valued at community, national or international levels, noting that undesignated landscapes (local or national level) do not necessarily have no value and may contain valued elements.

12.17 The baseline has recorded landscape value through a review of the existing landscape designations. Areas of undesignated landscape have been assessed through a combination of desk and site based study to examine a range of factors including landscape quality and condition, scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations¹⁴. The criteria used for the assessment of landscape quality is described below.

Landscape Sensitivity

12.18 Some local authorities have developed studies to look at landscape sensitivity as part of a wider landscape character assessment, however more generally this forms part of the assessment process.

12.19 Landscape sensitivity is a measure of the value of a particular landscape and its capacity to accept change resulting from a particular development type. Landscape sensitivity identifies the vulnerability of each landscape unit to change through the introduction of the new features, such as housing, or the loss of existing valued features such as mature hedgerows.

12.20 The GLVIA¹⁵ defines the sensitivity of a landscape as varying with a combination of:

- Landscape sensitivity resulting from existing land use, the pattern and scale of the landscape/townscape;
- Visual sensitivity resulting from visual enclosure/openness of views, and distribution of visual receptors;
- the value placed on the landscape/townscape; and
- the scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape/townscape.

12.21 The assessment has applied these descriptors to the Study Area landscape using a criteria range of High, Medium and Low.

¹² The Countryside Agency (1996 as updated); Countryside Character Volume 8: South West; The Countryside, Agency, Northampton.

¹³ Swanwick, Carys and Land Use Consultants (2002); Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland; Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage; London and Edinburgh

¹⁴ Box5.1, page 84, The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and Landscape Institute (3rd Edition 2013); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Routledge; Oxford.

¹⁵ p87, section 7.17, The Institute of Environmental Assessment and Landscape Institute (2nd Edition 2002); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Spon Press; London.

Table 4: Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity rating	Criteria
High	<p>Important/highly valued (components of the) landscape or landscapes of particularly distinctive character susceptible to relatively small changes.</p> <p><i>Examples include the highly valued, important AONB landscapes that are of high intrinsic quality with open character and open views of the proposed development.</i></p>
Medium	<p>Landscape of moderately valued characteristics reasonably tolerant of changes.</p> <p><i>Examples include locally valued, undesignated rural landscapes with some intrinsic quality and with open views of the development.</i></p>
Low	<p>Relatively degraded or low value landscape, the nature of which is potentially tolerant of substantial change.</p> <p><i>Examples include brownfield land that has been subject to a history of constant change with relatively few established features.</i></p>

Landscape Quality

- 12.22 Landscape Quality is part of the assessment and follows a GLVIA⁶ described methodology. The GLVIA defines landscape quality as the comparative value placed on a landscape or feature relative to its location, rarity or particular attributes. It considers the visual and physical attributes of the landscape, including ecological interest and cultural/heritage associations, identifying seven categories from Exceptional (National Park/AONB) to Damaged Landscapes (Derelict Land). The criteria used in the assessment are set out in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Landscape (and Townscape) Quality Criteria.

Category	Criteria
High exceptional	<p>Very strong landscape (urban) structure, characteristic patterns, balanced combination of landform and land cover. Appropriate management for land use and land cover. Extensive features worthy of conservation. Unique sense of place. No detracting features.</p>
High	<p>Strong landscape (urban) structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover. Appropriate management for land use and land cover but with potential scope to improve. Extensive features worthy of conservation. Strong sense of place. Occasional detracting features.</p>
Good	<p>Recognisable landscape (urban) structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover are still evident. Some scope to improve management for land use and land cover. Frequent features worthy of conservation. Sense of place. Some detracting features.</p>

Ordinary	Distinguishable landscape (urban) structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover often masked by land use. Scope to improve management for land use and land cover. Some features worthy of conservation. Some detracting features.
Poor	Weak landscape (urban) structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are often masked by land use. Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation. Lack of features worthy of conservation. Frequent detracting features.
Very Poor	Degraded landscape (urban) structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are masked by land use. Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation. Lack of features worthy of conservation. Extensive detracting features.
Damaged landscapes	Damaged landscape (urban) structure. Disturbed or derelict land requires treatment. Detracting features dominate.

Visual baseline

Identification of the visual receptors

12.23 Baseline visual receptors have been identified using a combination of desk-based study and site survey. This has identified the following types of potential community, residential, employment and transport based receptor locations:

- public places e.g. playing fields, cricket club, church, school, Common Land;
- Public Rights of Way e.g. footpaths, byways, and bridleways;
- residential e.g. detached, semi-detached, bungalow, terrace, apartment;
- workplaces e.g. business or commercial property; and
- transport routes e.g. classified and unclassified roads (country lanes), cycle routes.

Recording the visual baseline

- 12.24 All potential visual receptors within the Development Case TZV have been considered. Following consultation with the PDC the principal representative viewpoints have been agreed. These key viewpoints demonstrate the wide range of potential baseline and development case views of the development site and the proposed development.
- 12.25 Views from these locations have been documented in a structured and consistent manner. This process has used written descriptions and photographs to record the visual baseline. The viewpoint photographs have been taken in accordance with the Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11⁷. Day-time views have been photographed for all viewpoints. As there is no lighting proposed as part of the development these views have not been photographed at night.
- 12.26 Due to the timing of the project the visual assessment and the baseline photography have been undertaken in the early summer (average) condition. As such they may not fully represent the worst case scenario for potential visibility, which is generally considered to occur during the winter months when deciduous trees have dropped their leaves.
- 12.27 For this study, the assessment of the 'average', and not the 'worst case' winter, condition is not considered to be a significant limitation. Vegetation is either limited in views of the site or, consists of overlapping layers of densely twiggy mature woody plants. In either

case the views would not be subject to significant seasonal change and allowance has been made for more subtle seasonal changes in the assessment.

- 12.28 A description of the view and identification of the type, location and receptor sensitivity has been made through a site based visual assessment. This was undertaken during May 2014 by qualified and experienced landscape architects.

Visual sensitivity

- 12.29 This is another receptor attribute that, although forming part of the baseline information, is actually part of the assessment process. When determining the sensitivity of a visual receptor the following parameters are considered:

- location and context of the viewpoint;
- expectations and occupation/activity of the receptor;
- importance of the view; and
- degree of exposure to the view e.g. permanence versus transience.

- 12.30 Visual sensitivity has been assigned using the criteria given in Table 6 (below) derived from the GLVIA¹⁶:

Table 6: Visual Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity rating	Criteria
High	Receptors with a high interest in a visual environment that contains little, or none, of the proposed development/development type. <i>Examples include leisure users of public footpaths and open space in rural areas, residents with good quality rural views, and users of nationally or regionally significant viewpoints (including the AONB).</i>
Medium	Receptors with a moderate interest in a visual environment that contains some views of the proposed development/development type, or 'permanent' receptors with a high interest in a visual environment which is dominated by open and often close views of the proposed development/development type. <i>Examples include pedestrians and recreational motorists on minor roads and people taking part in outdoor sport or receptors in locations where there are existing views of the proposed development site.</i>
Low	Receptors with passing or momentary interest in a visual environment, or 'transient' receptors with a high/moderate interest in a visual environment which is dominated by open and often close views of the proposed development/development type. <i>Examples include commuting motorists and people at work with existing views of the proposed development site.</i>

¹⁶ p90-p91, The Institute of Environmental Assessment and Landscape Institute (2nd Edition 2002); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Spon Press; London.

Assessment of landscape and visual effects

- 12.31 This section describes the landscape and visual assessment methodology and how it has been applied to the construction and operational phases of the proposed development.
- 12.32 The assessment methodology follows the standard GLVIA approach of assessing changes in the development case against the baseline condition.
- 12.33 Predicted effects have been identified at, or for each receptor, and the magnitude of the identified landscape and visual changes evaluated by professional judgement. The significance of these effects has been determined by the inter-relationship of nature of effect (magnitude) and the nature of receptor (sensitivity): a standard and accepted principle that is described in more detail below.

Landscape assessment

- 12.34 Landscape assessment identifies the likely scale and nature of change to individual landscape elements and characteristics, and any consequential effects on character resulting from the proposed development. Components of the landscape which have been examined in this assessment are:
- landscape character;
 - landscape designations; and
 - physical characteristics such as topography and vegetation.
- 12.35 Once a potential impact on these components has been identified an experienced based judgement of the nature of the predicted landscape effect has been made and recorded as:
- Beneficial or adverse.
 - Direct or indirect.
 - Temporary/permanent.
 - Short, medium or long term.
 - Local/regional/national in scale.
 - Single or cumulative.
- 12.36 The duration of effect would fall into the following categories:
- short term – 0-5 years e.g. partial clearance of vegetation for construction;
 - medium term – 5-10 years e.g. loss of new hedgerows for construction but replanted;
 - long term – 10-50 years e.g. loss of semi-mature woody vegetation for construction but replanted; and
 - permanent – 50+ years e.g. loss of vegetation where replacement vegetation would not achieve pre-construction dimensions within 50 years.
- 12.37 The next step in the process uses experience based judgement to identify the magnitude of the potential change that would result from the identified landscape impact. The magnitude of the impact is the degree of change experienced by a receptor. The magnitude of landscape effects has been described using the criteria set out in Table 7 (below).

Table 7: Magnitude of Impact on Landscape Criteria

Magnitude Rating	Criteria
Major	Major alteration (loss/enhancement) to key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic/characteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.

Moderate	Partial alteration (loss/enhancement) to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Minor	Minor alteration (loss/enhancement) to one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape.
Negligible	Very minor alteration (loss/enhancement) to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the baseline i.e. pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.
No Change	No noticeable alteration (loss or gain) of key elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline.

12.38 The significance of the predicted landscape effects has then been identified using a matrix form of evaluation. The thresholds of landscape effects significance criteria have been based on the matrix provided in Table 8, which is adapted from the guidance set out in the GLVIA¹⁷. Effects have been assigned one of the four categories of Insignificant/Minor/Moderate or Major considering the magnitude of the change and the ability of the receptor to accommodate the proposed change (sensitivity).

Table 8: Significance Thresholds for Landscape and Visual Effects

Magnitude of potential change to receptors	Nature of the receptor (sensitivity to proposed change)		
	Low	Medium	High
Major	Minor/ Moderate	Moderate/ Major	Major
Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Moderate/ Major
Minor	Neutral/Minor	Minor	Minor/ Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral/Minor	Neutral/Minor
No Change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

12.39 The matrix has been applied to both landscape and visual significance criteria to allow cross comparison of effects. The parameters for the significance category assigned for each identified landscape and visual effect are defined within the written assessment.

Visual assessment

12.40 The visual assessment has described the changes to the existing views resulting from the proposed facilities. This has used a written assessment supported by photographic analysis of the baseline views.

12.41 For each viewpoint an experienced based judgment of the nature of the predicted visual effect has been made and recorded as:

- Beneficial or adverse.
- Direct or indirect.
- Temporary/permanent.
- Short, medium or long term.

¹⁷ p139, The Institute of Environmental Assessment and Landscape Institute (2nd Edition 2002); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Spon Press; London.

- Local/regional/national in scale.
 - Single or cumulative.
- 12.42 The magnitude of the identified visual impact has been identified for receptors through a written assessment. This process used the following magnitude indicators as adapted from the GLVIA¹⁸:
- Extent – the extent of the baseline view that would be occupied by the development: full (unobstructed by vegetation, topography or intervening structures) or partial (obstructed to some extent vegetation) or glimpsed?
 - Proportion – what proportion of the development would be visible: full (all), most (more than 75%), half (50%), small amount (less than 25%) or none?
 - Contrast – how would the visible elements of the development relate to the remaining/adjoining features of the baseline landscape: high, medium or low levels of contrast?
 - Loss of features – what landscape features in the view would be lost/changed as a result of the proposed facilities?
 - Duration – temporary, permanent, intermittent or continuous e.g. transient (views which are normally viewed while in motion as in while travelling by train or car) and seasonal (views which will be subject to seasonal leaf cover).
 - Angle of view – direct (approximately head on), oblique (45 degrees to head on) or peripheral (greater than 45 degrees i.e. on the edge of vision).
 - Distance – measured in kilometres between the site and the receptor. View distance has been described as follows:
 - Short 0-100m;
 - Medium 100- 1000m; and
 - Long 1000m or more.
- 12.43 Using these indicators, an experience based judgement has been made for each visual receptor as to the degree of alteration in the baseline view that would result from the loss/change of baseline landscape elements and the introduction of the proposed facilities. The degree of alteration and the criteria used are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Visual Magnitude of Impact Criteria

Category	Criteria
Major	Large scale changes that would alter the overall perception of the view.
Moderate	Changes to a view that would be readily noticeable but would not change the overall perception of the view.
Minor	Small scale visual changes that may be missed by the casual observer or receptor.
Negligible	Changes that would barely be perceptible to the naked eye.

- 12.44 The significance of the identified visual effects has then been determined by the inter-relationship of magnitude of impact and receptor sensitivity as shown in Table 8. The parameters for the significance threshold assigned for each identified landscape and visual effect have been defined within the written assessment.

Significance of the landscape and visual assessment

- 12.45 The evaluation of the individual landscape and visual effects has assigned a relative degree of impact using a range of values that is consistent within this LVIA, across all LVIA projects that Hyland Edgar Driver undertake and in accordance with recognised

¹⁸ p91, section 7.37 The Institute of Environmental Assessment and Landscape Institute (2nd Edition 2002); Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Spon Press; London.

standard industry practice. Significance must also be defined in terms of the overall assessment. This is to identify which of the landscape and visual impacts are considered important enough to be 'likely significant impacts' of the wider project?

- 12.46 Neutral landscape and visual effects equate to a maintaining of the Staus Quo and have been considered as not significant.
- 12.47 Minor (Adverse or Beneficial) Landscape and visual effects have also been considered as not significant. Such effects represent very small scale impacts on the most sensitive landscape and visual receptors and small to larger scale changes on receptors of low sensitivity e.g. noticeable visual changes (deterioration/improvement) for low sensitivity receptors such as workers on the farmers.
- 12.48 Moderate (Adverse or Beneficial) landscape and visual effects represent more noticeable changes on moderately sensitive receptors or small scale impacts on the most sensitive receptors. These have been considered significant when 'groupings' of these effects have occurred together e.g. noticeable changes to views from groups or large numbers of residential receptors.
- 12.49 Major (Adverse or Beneficial) landscape and visual effects have been considered significant even if local and relatively small in extent. Such effects generally include the total loss or alteration of the key characteristics of landscape receptors, or large scale changes to the views of higher sensitivity visual receptors e.g. larger scale noticeable changes to views from the known viewpoints in the AONB's.

Appendix 2: Baseline Photography methodology

- 11.1 Photographs have been taken in accordance with the Landscape Institute guidelines using a Nikon D5200 digital camera fitted with a 28-55mm or 16-85mm zoom lens set at a defined focal length. The Landscape Institute guidelines state that 'there is no single best focal length that works best under all circumstances'. The photographer has therefore selected the lens focal length to provide the best balance between the detail captured and field of view for each viewpoint. The camera has been fixed to a tripod at a height of 1.6m above the existing and proposed ground levels. Images have been taken either as single frames or as panoramas. The panoramic images have been taken sequentially from a viewpoint at the same vertical angle as a series of images suitable for merging. A generous overlap of approximately one half between adjacent images has been provided to aid the mosaicing process.
- 11.2 From each location the following information has been recorded for the sets of images:
- OS Easting and northing co-ordinates;
 - Camera lens setting;