



WOODCOTE
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
2013 - 2035

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Final Version
November 2021

Prepared by:

Malcolm Smith BSc (Hons) CENG MIET

Vice Chair, Woodcote Parish Council

Chair Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group

Dr Geoffrey Botting PhD BSc

Woodcote Parish Councillor

Secretary, Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group

Michael Aldridge CMA MBA MCA

Woodcote Parish Councillor

Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group

Reviewed by:

Landarb Solutions

Overall, it is considered that the draft document is a reasonably robust document. There are a number of recommendations arising from this review and some are regarded as essential to rectify errors or to strengthen compliance with the report in respect of GLIVA 3 compliance.

The LVIA process is not completely objective and there is an element of subjectivity and judgement. It is possible for two different assessors to reach different conclusions. However, having undertaken a checking appraisal of 6 of the sites assessed as part of the report, there are no substantive matters of disagreement and the findings of the LVIA as reviewed are supported.

NOTE: All of the recommendations made by the reviewer have been incorporated into Version 3.

Contents

1	Introduction	1	3.3.1	Objective NO3:	13
1.1	Study Purpose	1	3.3.2	Objective HO1:	13
1.2	Report Structure	1	3.3.3	Objective LO3:	13
2	Context	2	3.3.4	Objectives covering development	13
2.1	The Neighbourhood Area	2	4	Public Rights of Way.....	15
2.1.1	Location.....	2	5	Landscape Character Assessment	16
2.1.2	Neighbourhood Area Boundary	3	5.1	LCA 8 Chilterns Escarpment.....	16
2.2	Landscape	4	5.1.1	Location and Boundaries	16
2.3	Natural Environment.....	5	5.1.2	Key Characteristics	16
2.4	Physical Environment.....	6	5.1.3	Natural Factors	16
2.4.1	Heritage.....	6	5.1.4	Cultural and Social Factors	17
2.4.2	Developed Area	7	5.1.5	Landscape Types.....	18
3	Planning Policies	8	5.1.6	Planning, Managing and Protecting Distinctiveness	20
3.1	National Planning Policy.....	8	5.2	LCA 10 Chilterns Plateau with Valleys	21
3.2	South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) Local Plan 2035 (LP2035).....	9	5.2.1	Location and Boundaries	21
3.2.1	Policy ENV1: Landscape and Countryside.....	9	5.2.2	Key Characteristics	21
3.2.2	Policy ENV2: Biodiversity – Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species	9	5.2.3	Natural Factors	22
3.2.3	Policy ENV3: Biodiversity.....	10	5.2.4	Cultural and Social Factors	22
3.2.4	Policy ENV5: Green Infrastructure.....	10	5.2.5	Landscape Types.....	23
3.2.5	Policy ENV6: Historic Environment.....	11	5.3	Landscape Character in and around Woodcote	27
3.2.6	Policy ENV8: Conservation Areas	12	6	Methodology.....	28
3.3	Chilterns AONB Management Plan	13	6.1	Guidance and principles.....	28
			6.2	Landscape Impact Assessment Methodology	29
			6.2.1	Landscape baseline: components and character	29
			6.2.2	Defining landscape sensitivity	29

6.2.3	Landscape condition	30	7.15	WNP2-30 Land west of Garden Centre (Church Farm)	115
6.2.4	Landscape Value	31	7.16	WNP2-33 Land south of Beech Lane (Goats Gambol)	120
6.2.5	Landscape susceptibility to change	32	7.17	WNP2-34 Land south of Red Lane (Hildred fields).....	125
6.2.6	Combined landscape sensitivity	32	7.18	WNP2-43 Land east of Greenmore (Bishops Yard & Paddock) ..	130
6.2.7	Determining magnitude of change – landscape	34	7.19	WNP2-45 Chiltern Rise	135
6.2.8	Overall landscape effect	39	7.20	WNP2-98 Paddock by Wards Farm.....	140
6.2.9	Visual Impact Assessment Methodology	41	8	Summary	145
6.2.10	Sensitivity of receptors	42	Appendix A	Review of LVIA by Landarb Solutions	1
6.2.11	Evaluation of change to visual amenity	42			
6.2.12	Determining magnitude of change – visual amenity	43			
6.2.13	Overall visual amenity effect	44			
7	Site Appraisal	45			
7.1	Initial Site List	45			
7.2	Consolidated Site List	45			
7.3	WNP2-1 Hilltop Field	53			
7.4	WNP2-2 Adjacent to Yew Tree Farmhouse	59			
7.5	WNP2-3 Rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse – behind Scrooby	64			
7.6	WNP2-4 Rear of 16 Bridle Path	69			
7.7	WNP2-6 Wood Lane	74			
7.8	WNP2-9 Beechwood Court	79			
7.9	WNP2-16 Land North of Beech Lane	85			
7.10	WNP2-20 Foxcovert Farm	90			
7.11	WNP2-21 Land at Bouchier Fencing	95			
7.12	WNP2-25 Land west of Church Farm	100			
7.13	WNP2-27 Land at Greenmore Farm (behind the Black Lion)	105			
7.14	WNP2-29 Land at Greenmore	110			

1 Introduction



This document is the report of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment undertaken by the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group. The study analyses the capacity of sites in landscape terms for residential development and identifies potential developable areas together with the mitigation required should development go forward within the sites.

1.1 Study Purpose

The study will support the identification of suitable sites for residential development in the parish of Woodcote by appraising the potential impacts upon landscape character and visual amenity that would accrue from development at each site.

1.2 Report Structure

The report is presented in 7 sections:

- Section 2 identifies the extent and position of the parish within the AONB and provides a description of the landscape and natural environment;

- Section 3 lists relevant planning policies
- Section 4 identifies public rights of way in and around Woodcote;
- Section 5 provides a detailed description of the landscape character;
- Section 6 describes the methodology used to appraise the value of a potential site and the impact of developing it;
- Section 7 identifies sites for consideration and separately assesses the impact on the landscape of developing each of the sites and considers mitigation measures; and
- Section 8 presents a summary of the study's conclusions

2 Context

2.1 The Neighbourhood Area

The Neighbourhood Area is defined as the Parish of Woodcote and the wishes of those who live and work in the Neighbourhood Area provide the essential context to the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan. This section of the report provides a brief overview of the Neighbourhood Area, its location and surroundings.

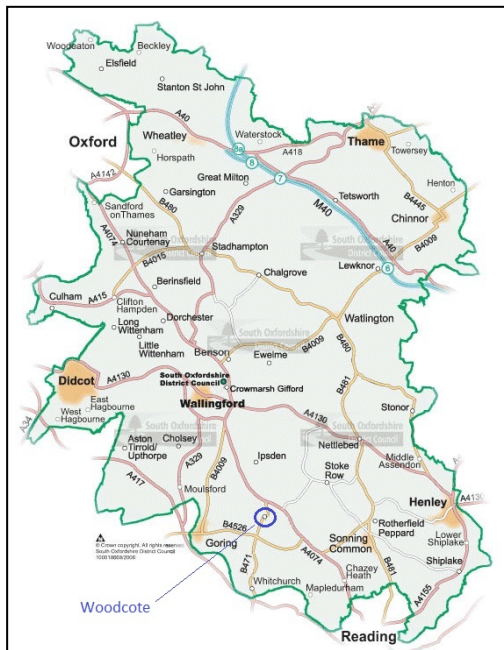


Figure 2-1 Woodcote in South Oxfordshire

2.1.1 Location

The parish is situated in a rural area of open farmland and beech woods. It is one of the larger villages in the district of South Oxfordshire at the south-western end of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), some eight miles to the north west of Reading (see *Figure 2-1*) and four miles from the point where the River Thames flows through the Goring Gap. A Nationally Important Landscape.

Woodcote is located entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) on the escarpment overlooking the Goring Gap.

The AONB and National Park designations were created by the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 to protect the finest countryside in England and Wales. In June 2000, the Government confirmed that AONBs and National Parks have the same level of landscape quality.

The Chilterns AONB was designated in 1965 to protect the beauty and special qualities of its landscape and its natural and cultural heritage. Whilst all the Chiltern Hills are within a single National Character Area¹ only a central core deemed to contain the finest landscape and to best exhibit the Chilterns landscape character is within the AONB. The Chiltern Conservation Board notes² *'In particular, it was designated to protect its special qualities which include the steep chalk escarpment...'*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) reinforces the importance attached by Government³ to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, gives them *'the highest status of protection'*, and requires that *'the scale*

¹ Natural England: National Character Area 110; Chilterns

² Chilterns Conservation Board: Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019

³ National Planning Policy Framework: Paragraph 176

and extent of development within designated areas should be limited’ and that ‘development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated area’.

The statutory duty placed on relevant authorities⁴, such as district councils, to ‘have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB’ when ‘exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an AONB’ and the requirements of the NPPF are evident in the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) Local Plan 2035. This explicitly states that ‘The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBS)’ and that ‘development in an AONB or affecting the setting of an AONB will only be permitted where it conserves, and where possible, enhances the character and natural beauty of the AONB⁵’. The plan also states that ‘development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire’s valued landscapes’ identifying, among other features trees, hedgerows, field boundaries and perceptual features such tranquillity. Natural England notes that ‘Contrasting with nearby London, this area offers relative tranquillity. tranquillity is found along parts of the escarpment, but the largest area is found in the remote and sparsely settled dip slope in Oxfordshire’.

2.1.2 Neighbourhood Area Boundary

The Neighbourhood Area comprises the parish of Woodcote; thus the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area is the Parish boundary. This is shown by the blue line on the map below *Figure 2-2*

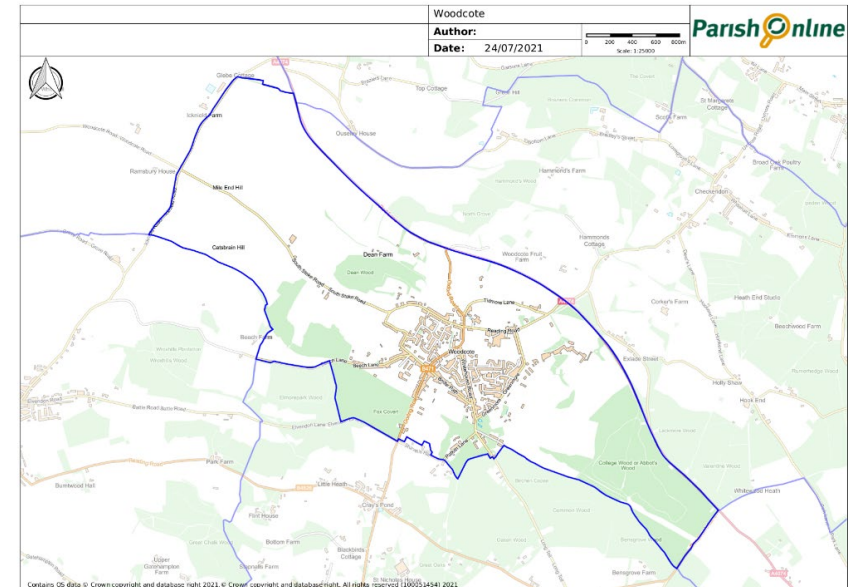


Figure 2-2 Woodcote Parish Boundary

⁴ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

⁵ South Oxfordshire Local Plan: Policy ENV1

2.2 Landscape

The Parish is located entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the escarpment above the Goring Gap. On the other side of the River Thames the eastern edge of North Wessex AONB rises steeply providing long views into Woodcote and the Chilterns AONB.

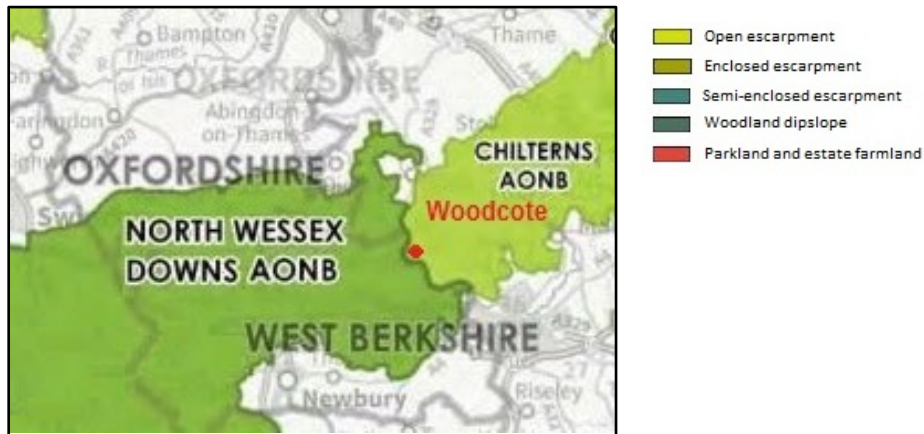


Figure 2-3 Woodcote in the Chilterns AONB

Woodcote is located mainly in Landscape Character Area (LCA) 8 with some outlying parts of the village to the south and east in LCA 10.

The South Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (SOLA) for Character Area 8 describes Woodcote as the main settlement within the “Chilterns Escarpment” a feature described by the SOLA as forming:

“the most visually significant and distinctive landform unit within the whole District. It comprises the steep face and top of the Chilterns escarpment, which forms a dramatic backdrop to the low-lying landscape of the vale to the northwest”.

The Parish straddles the escarpment and dip slope. The north-west of the Parish is, generally, open farmland which slopes down towards the river Thames. This contrasts with the south-east of the Parish which is dense

Chilterns beech woods, planted in the 18th Century to provide materials for the furniture-making industry.

Between the different north-western and south-eastern landscapes runs the Chilterns escarpment a steep wooded escarpment as illustrated in Figure 2-4

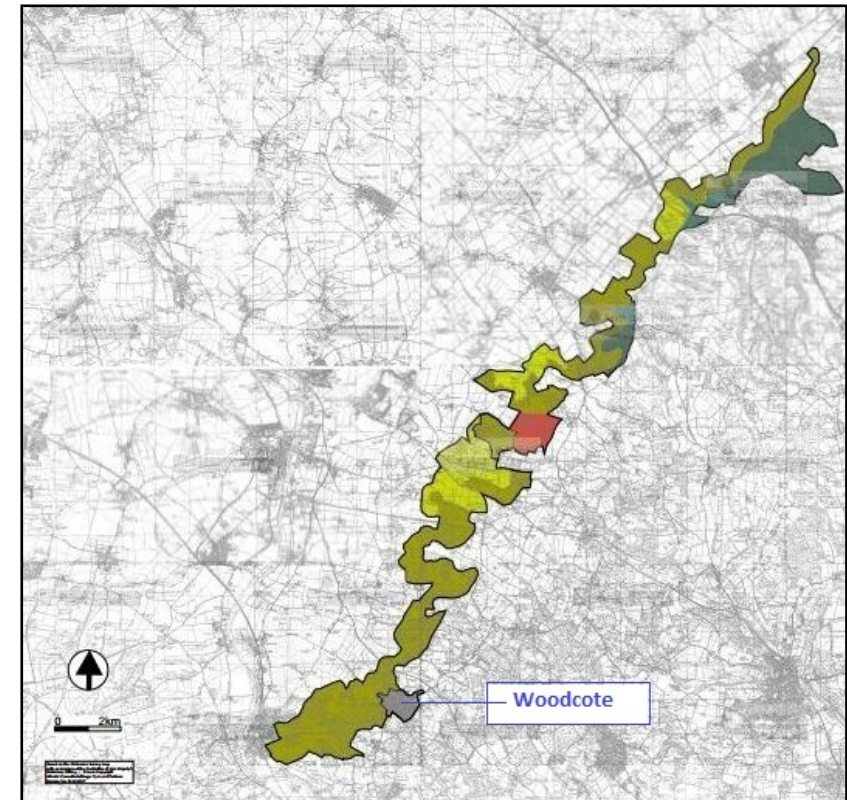


Figure 2-4 The Chilterns Escarpment

At its highest point the Neighbourhood Area is 184 metres above sea level; at its lowest some 60 metres (Figure 2-5).

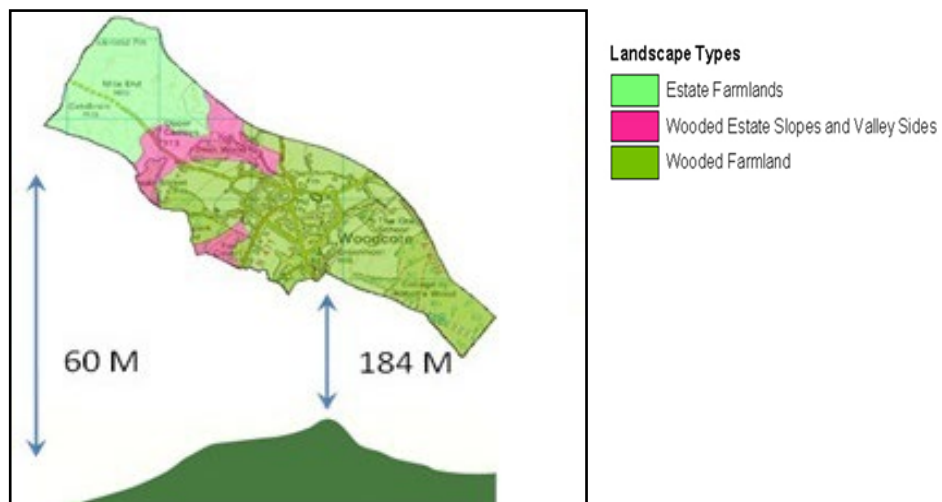


Figure 2-5 Parish Elevation

2.3 Natural Environment

Although there are no sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation or National Nature Reserves within the Parish there are three Conservation Target Areas. These are important areas for wildlife in the county where targeted conservation action can secure the maximum biodiversity benefits⁶. The three CTAs of particular significance to development in the parish of Woodcote are (shown in yellow in Figure 2-6):

the Chilterns Escarpment South CTA which abuts the south western corner of the built-up area of the village; and

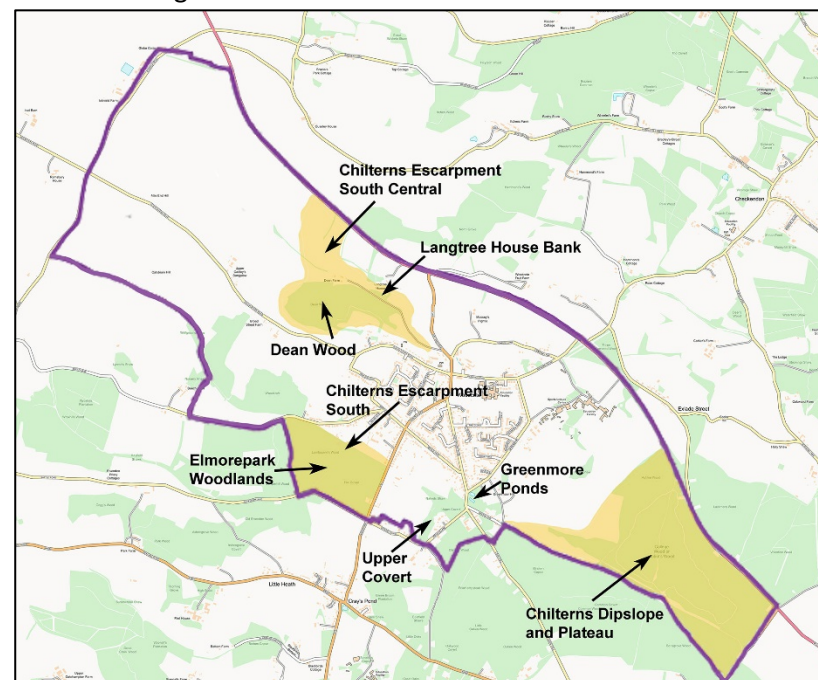
the Chilterns Escarpment South Central CTA which abuts the northern edge of the built-up area of the village.

the Chilterns dipslope and plateau which occupies the south eastern end of the Parish.

In addition:

the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre⁷ has designated four locations in the village area as 'Local Wildlife Sites' (also shown in Figure 2-6):

- Elmorepark Woods
- Dean Wood
- Upper Covert
- Langtree House Bank



⁶ Wild Oxfordshire www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk

⁷ The landscape

Local Wildlife Sites are a key component in the maintenance of the diversity of wildlife in the UK and although they are non-statutory sites the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to protect them.

The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study⁸ Biomap for South Oxfordshire identifies Woodcote as one of the most important locations for wildlife in the county with the habitat significance of some 60% of the parish being classed as **Very High** with another 25-30% being classed as **High**.

The landscape of the parish is typified by networks of tall dense hedges that support colonies of house sparrows and foraging hedgehogs. Swifts and bats still hunt over the allotments, the surrounding ancient woodland supports red kites, tawny owls and substantial carpets of bluebells, and the arable farmland running towards South Stoke is still home to rapidly declining farmland birds including corn bunting, yellow hammer and skylark.

The Neighbourhood Area has no water courses and contains no Zone 2 or 3 flood risk areas. There are a number of ponds within the Neighbourhood Area that are recognised as providing significant habitats, in particular the Greenmore ponds (shown in Figure 2-6).

2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.1 Heritage

There are 12 listed buildings and 18 recorded archaeological monuments or findspots within the Neighbourhood Area.⁹

Listed Buildings

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. The Oratory School | Grade II* |
|------------------------------|-----------|

- | | | |
|---|----------|------------------|
| 2. Barn and Kitchen Garden Wall , Oratory School | Grade II | |
| 3. Church of St Leonard (also in Church Historical Record) | Grade II | South Stoke Road |
| 4. Pillar Piscina, Church of St Leonard | Grade II | |
| 5. Church Farmhouse and Attached Barn | Grade II | Reading Road |
| 6. Barn, Church Farmhouse | Grade II | |
| 7. Granary, Church Farmhouse | Grade II | |
| 8. Pickets Cottage | Grade II | Behoes Lane, |
| 9. Toggs and Weevil Cottages | Grade II | Oxford Road, |
| 10. Dean Farmhouse | Grade II | |
| 11. The Folly | Grade II | South Stoke Road |
| 12. Barn Adjacent to the Folly | Grade II | South Stoke Road |

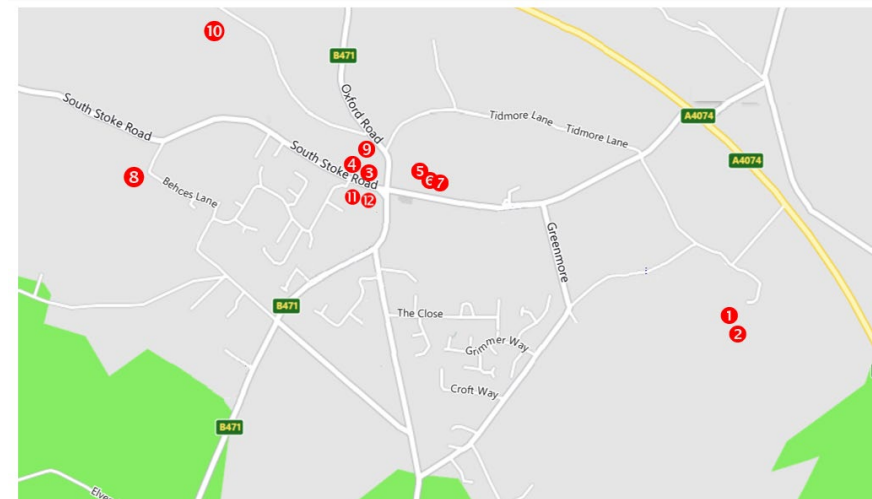


Figure 2-7 Location of designated heritage assets

⁸ <http://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

⁹ Sources: Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record and the National Heritage List for England

Designation (Non-designated entries)

Masseys Pightle, Tidmore Lane

Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record

Methodist chapel, Long Toll

Post medieval saw pits

Post medieval clay pits

Post medieval sheep wash (Greenmoor Hill)

Site of brickworks, brickyard and kiln

Undated chalk pits (c.770m south west of Woodcote crossroads)

Undated woodland boundary bank

Undated linear feature

Finds Record

Palaeolithic hand axe (Greenmoor Hill)

Roman coin hoard

Mesolithic to Neolithic flint implements

Possible Iron Age stone head

Mesolithic mace

Mesolithic tranchet axe

Historic Milestone Society Database

Fingerpost on the B471 (Goring Road) junction with Whitehouse Road

NMR Excavation Index

Archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the construction of a salt store barn.

2.4.2 Developed Area

Woodcote is a nucleated settlement with development concentrated, as shown by *Figure 2-2* and *Figure 2-7*, in a single cluster in the centre of the Parish.

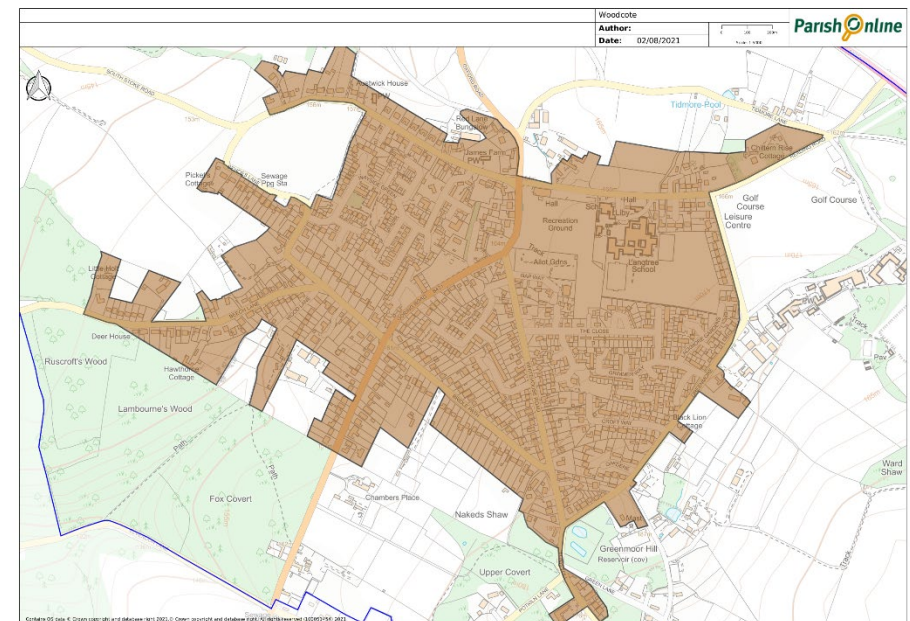


Figure 2-8 Developed Area

3 Planning Policies

All of the landscape immediately around Woodcote is protected at a national level by designation as an AONB.

At a local level, protection is afforded by SODC local planning policies and supplementary planning guidance.

The Chilterns AONB Management Plan sets out further policies to protect the AONB.

A review of these designations and relevant policies is brought together here for ease of reference.

3.1 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 174 states that:

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of the trees and woodland.*

NPPF paragraph 176 further states that:

Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in the National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to

these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'

Also, NPPF paragraph 177 states that:

'When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, on the local economy;*
- b) The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
- c) Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that can be moderated.*

NPPF paragraph 11 makes it clear that the application of the policies relating to AONBs and other protected areas apply equally to plan making as well as decision making.

3.2 South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) Local Plan 2035 (LP2035)

3.2.1 Policy ENV1: Landscape and Countryside

1. *The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding natural Beauty (AONBs):*
 - i. *Development in an AONB or affecting the setting of an AONB will only be permitted where it conserves, and where possible enhances the character and natural beauty of the AONB;*
 - ii. *Development in an AONB will only be permitted where it is appropriate to the economic and environmental wellbeing of the area or promotes understanding or enjoyment of the AONB;*
 - iii. *Major development in an AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest; and*
 - iv. *Development proposals that could affect the special qualities of an AONB (including the setting of an AONB) either individually or in combination with other developments, should be accompanied by a proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.*

AONB Management Plans will be a material consideration in decision making.

2. *South Oxfordshire's landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire's landscape, in particular:*
 - i. *Trees (including individual trees, groups of trees and woodland), hedgerows and field boundaries;*

- ii. *Irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland;*
- iii. *The landscapes, waterscapes, cultural heritage and user enjoyment of the River Thames, its tributaries and flood plains;*
- iv. *Other watercourse and water bodies;*
- v. *The landscape setting of settlements or the special character and landscape setting of Oxford;*
- vi. *Topographical features;*
- vii. *Areas or features of cultural and historic value;*
- viii. *Important views and visually sensitive skylines; and*
- ix. *Aesthetic and perceptual factors such as tranquillity wildness, intactness, rarity and enclosure.*

3. *Development which supports economic growth in rural areas will be supported provided it conserves and enhances the landscape, countryside and rural areas.*
4. *The Council will seek the retention of important hedgerows. Where retention is not possible and a proposal seeks the removal of a hedgerow, the Council will require compensatory planting with a mixture of native hedgerow species.*

3.2.2 Policy ENV2: Biodiversity – Designated Sites, Priority Habitats and Species

1. *The highest level of protection will be given to sites of international nature conservation importance (Special Areas of Conservation). Development that is likely to result in a significant effect, either alone or in combination, on such sites will need to satisfy the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).*
2. *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are of national importance. Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI (either on*

its own or in combination with other developments) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh any harm to the special interest features and the SSSI's contribution to the local ecological network. In such circumstances, measures should be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements) that would mitigate or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects resulting from the development.

3. *Development likely to result, either directly or indirectly to the loss, deterioration or harm to:*

- *Local Wildlife Sites*
- *Local Nature Reserves*
- *Priority Habitats and Species*
- *Legally Protected Species*
- *Local Geological Sites*
- *Ecological Networks (Conservation Target Areas)*
- *Important or ancient hedges or hedgerows*
- *Ancient woodland and veteran trees*

Will only be permitted if:

- i. *The need for, and benefits of the development in the proposed location outweigh the adverse effect on the interests;*
- ii. *It can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the interests; and*
- iii. *Measures will be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements), that would avoid, mitigate or as a last resort compensate for the adverse effects resulting from development.*

4. *Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) will be refused planning permission, unless there are wholly exceptional*

reasons justifying the granting of planning permission.

5. *Where development has the potential to affect a proposed wildlife site the developer must undertake surveys and assessments to determine whether the site meets the criteria for Local Wildlife Site status.*

3.2.3 Policy ENV3: Biodiversity

1. *Development that will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity in the district will be supported. All developments should provide a net gain in biodiversity where possible. As a minimum, there should be no net loss of biodiversity. All proposals should be supported by evidence to demonstrate a biodiversity net gain using a recognised biodiversity accounting metric.*
2. *Development proposals that would result in a net loss of biodiversity will only be considered if it can be demonstrated that alternatives which avoid impacts on biodiversity have been fully explored in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. In the absence of alternative sites or layouts, development proposals must include adequate mitigation measures to achieve a net gain of biodiversity. Where harm cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated, appropriate compensation measures will be sought, as a last resort, through planning conditions or planning obligations (depending on the circumstances of each application) to offset the loss by contributing to appropriate biodiversity projects to achieve an overall net gain for biodiversity.*
3. *Planning permission will only be granted if impacts on biodiversity can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated fully.*

3.2.4 Policy ENV5: Green Infrastructure

1. *Development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional Green Infrastructure and protect or enhance existing Green Infrastructure.*

2. *Proposals should:*
 - i. *Protect, conserve or enhance the district's Green Infrastructure;*
 - ii. *Provide an appropriate level of Green Infrastructure with regard to requirements set out in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, AONB Management Plan or the Habitats Regulations Assessment;*
 - iii. *Avoid the loss, fragmentation, severance or other negative impact on the function of the Green Infrastructure;*
 - iv. *Provide appropriate mitigation where there would be an adverse impact on Green Infrastructure; and*
 - v. *Provide an appropriate replacement where it is necessary for development to take place on areas of Green Infrastructure.*
3. *All Green Infrastructure provision should be designed with regard to the quality standards set out within the Green Infrastructure Strategy, or where relevant the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan. Consideration should also be given to inclusive access and contributing to gains in biodiversity, particularly through the use of appropriate planting which takes account of changing weather patterns. Where new Green Infrastructure is provided, applicants should ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure its ongoing management and maintenance.*

3.2.5 Policy ENV6: Historic Environment

1. *Proposals for new development that may affect designated and non-designated heritage assets should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. Heritage assets include statutorily designated Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings or structures, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, archaeology of national and local interest and non-designated*

buildings, structures or historic landscapes that contribute to local historic and architectural interest of the district's historic environment, and includes those heritage assets listed by the Oxfordshire Environmental Record.

2. *Proposals for new development should be sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment. Proposals that have an impact on heritage assets (designated and non-designated) will be supported particularly when they:*
 - i. *Conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage asset and settings. The more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that will be given to its conservation;*
 - ii. *Make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (through high standards of design, reflecting its significance, including through the use of appropriate materials and construction techniques);*
 - iii. *Make a positive contribution towards public benefits;*
 - iv. *Provide a viable future use for a heritage asset that is consistent with the conservation of its significance; and/or*
 - v. *Protect a heritage asset that is currently at risk.*
3. *Non-designated heritage assets, where identified through local or neighbourhood plan-making, Conservation Area Appraisal or review or through the planning application process, will be recognised as heritage assets in accordance with national guidance and any local criteria. Development proposals that directly or indirectly affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be determined with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.*
4. *Applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance. In some circumstances further survey, analysis and/or recording will be made a condition of consent.*
5. *Particular encouragement will be given to schemes that will help secure the long term conservation of vacant and under-used*

- buildings and bring them back into appropriate use.*
6. *Alterations to historic buildings, for example to improve energy efficiency, should respect the integrity of the historic environment and the character and significance of the building.*

3.2.6 Policy ENV8: Conservation Areas

1. *Proposals for development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area must conserve or enhance its special interest, character, setting and appearance. Development will be expected to:*
 - i. *Contribute to the Conservation Area's special interest and its relationship within its setting. The special characteristics of the Conservation Area (such as existing walls, buildings, trees, hedges, burgage plots, traditional shopfronts and signs, farm groups, medieval townscapes, archaeological features, historic routes, etc) should be preserved;*
 - ii. *Take into account important views within, into or out of the Conservation Area and show that these would be retained and unharmed;*
 - iii. *Respect the local character and distinctiveness of the Conservation Area in terms of the development's siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), proportions, design and form and should have regard to the South Oxfordshire Design Guide and any relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal;*
 - iv. *Be sympathetic to the original curtilage of buildings and pattern of development that forms part of the historic interest of the Conservation Area;*
 - v. *Be sympathetic to important spaces such as paddocks, greens, gardens and other gaps or spaces between buildings which make a positive contribution to the pattern of development in the Conservation Area;*
 - vi. *Ensure the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development are compatible with the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and/or*
 - vii. *Ensure no loss of, or harm to any building or feature that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.*
2. *Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a Conservation Area, consent will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss.*
3. *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a Conservation Area, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.*
4. *Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of structures which make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area will be encouraged to prevent harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.*

3.3 Chilterns AONB Management Plan

The Chilterns AONB Management Plan sets out a number of strategic objectives and policies relating to potential development within and adjacent to the AONB.

3.3.1 Objective NO3:

Minimise development impacts on the AONB and its setting; where they are unavoidable, ensure they provide net environmental gains.

There are a number of policies that support this objective:

Policy NP6: Protect and enhance important wildlife habitats.

Policy NP7: Improve ecological condition, resilience and diversity of important wildlife habitats.

Policy NP11: Ensure delivery mechanisms are in place to secure net gains for biodiversity in the AONB and its setting.

3.3.2 Objective HO1:

Better protect the Chilterns historic environment, both formally designated and unprotected heritage assets.

Policies that support this objective are:

Policy H3: Encourage the use of the Chilterns Building Design Guide and the Chilterns Historic Landscape Characterisation Project by developers and planners. Encourage sensitive restoration prioritising local and in-character materials.

Policy H5: Help communities to create robust Neighbourhood Plans which take heritage assets into account.

3.3.3 Objective LO3:

Safeguard the Chilterns landscape by maintaining and enhancing all landscape features (such as hedges and trees), important wildlife habitats and cultural heritage at all times.

Policies that support this objective are:

Policy LP8: Ensure there is no net loss of woodland and no loss of irreplaceable ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees within the AONB.

Policy LP13: Protect and sensitively manage historic and cultural features.

3.3.4 Objectives covering development

Objective DO1 Ensure planning decisions put the conservation and enhancement of the AONB first.

Objective DO2: Ensure that where development happens, it leaves the AONB better than it was before – richer in wildlife, quieter, darker at night, designed to have a low impact on the environment, and beautiful to look at and enjoy.

Objective DO3: Embrace opportunities to restore natural beauty on sites currently degraded by unsympathetic development, infrastructure or dereliction.

Policies to support these objectives are:

Policy DP1: Ensure planning decisions take full account of the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB and the great weight given to its protection in the NPPF.

Policy DP2: Reject development in the AONB unless it meets the following criteria:

- a. It is a use appropriate to its location,
- b. It is appropriate to local landscape and character,
- c. It supports local distinctiveness,
- d. It respects heritage and historic landscapes,
- e. It enhances natural beauty,
- f. Ecological and environmental impacts are acceptable,
- g. There are no detrimental impacts on chalk streams,
- h. There is no harm to tranquillity through the generation of noise, motion and light that would spoil quiet enjoyment or disturb wildlife,
- i. There are no negative cumulative effects, including when considered with other plans and proposals.

Policy DP3: Refuse planning permission for major developments in the AONB unless there are exceptional circumstances and where there is a clear demonstration it is in the public interest.

Policy DP4: In the setting of the AONB, take full account of whether proposals harm the AONB. For example, development of land visible in panoramic views across the Chilterns escarpment, or which generates traffic in or travelling across the AONB, or which increases water abstraction from the chalk aquifer, thereby reducing flow in chalk streams.

Policy DP5: Require a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment that meets the standards in the GLVIA latest edition for developments in the AONB or affecting its setting.

Policy DP10: Make sure that all development that is permitted in the AONB or affecting its setting delivers a net gain for the Chilterns by:

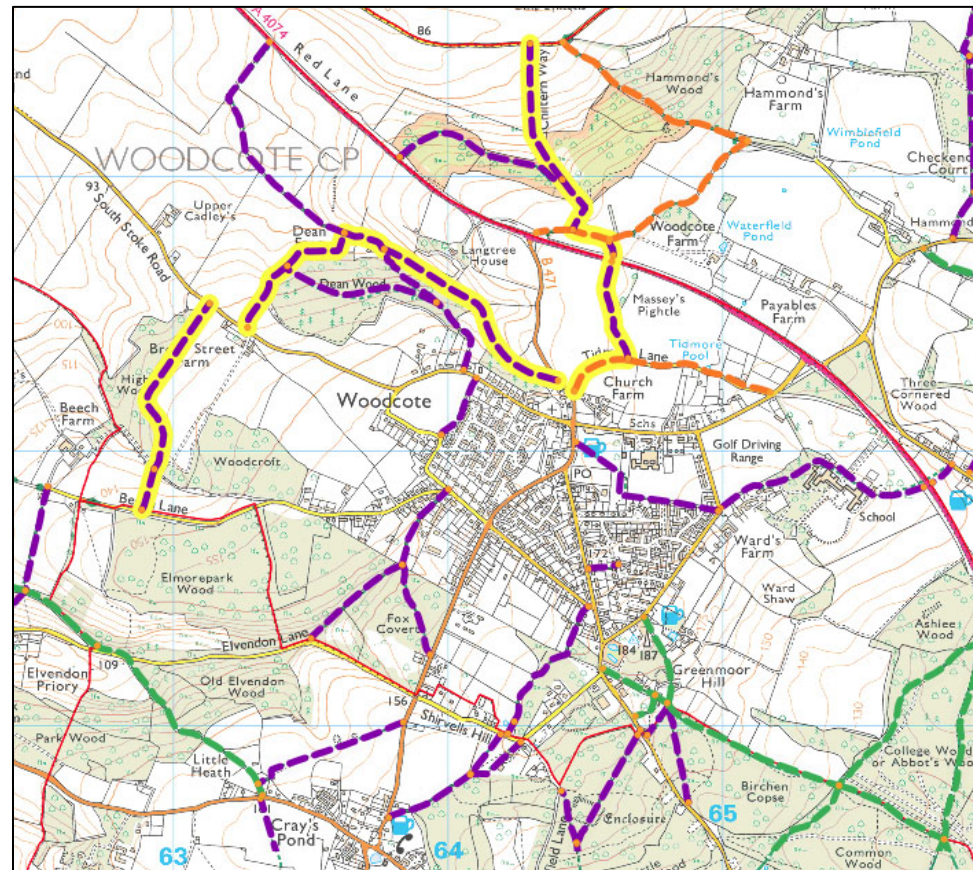
- a. On-site improvements for biodiversity, landscape, the rights of way network, AONB visitor facilities, and/or
- b. Financial contributions, secured through s106, CIL, or offsetting schemes, towards wider green infrastructure projects that enhance the AONB by meeting the aims of this AONB Management Plan.

4 Public Rights of Way

There is a dense network of public rights of way in and around Woodcote. A nationally important route - the Chiltern Way extension (highlighted in yellow on the map) - passes through the Parish close to some of the sites assessed. Public Rights of Way are important in the context of Landscape

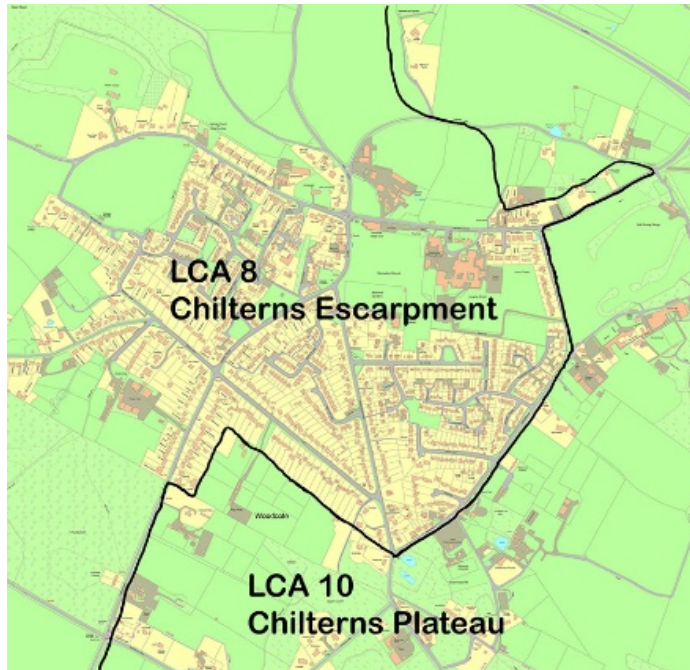
and Visual Impact Assessment because of issues of visual amenity for walkers and, in the case of bridleways, for horse riders and cyclists.

Several of the public footpaths pass through or adjacent to the sites assessed and are, therefore, key considerations in the assessment of the visual impact. The relatively extensive network of public rights of way shows the value of the landscape surrounding the settlement as a recreational resource.



5 Landscape Character Assessment

Woodcote straddles two Landscape Character Areas – LCA 8 (Chilterns Escarpment) and LCA 10 (Chilterns Plateau with Valleys).



5.1 LCA 8 Chilterns Escarpment

The following notes are taken from the Chilterns Escarpment section (LCA 8) of the South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment November 2017. The area is described as the distinctive north-west facing slopes and top of the Chilterns escarpment.

5.1.1 Location and Boundaries

Chilterns Escarpment comprises the steep face and top of the Chilterns escarpment which forms a dramatic backdrop to the low-lying landscape of the Vale to the north-east. This character area is located between the village of Chinnor to the north and the town of Goring to the south west. *Chilterns Escarpment* is located entirely within the Chilterns AONB.

5.1.2 Key Characteristics

- This character area comprises the steep escarpment of the Chiltern Hills and ranges between c. 50m AOD and c. 250m AOD.
- Much of this landscape is blanketed in broad-leaved semi-natural woodlands, including extensive areas of Ancient Woodland.
- This landscape is sparsely settled with small villages and hamlets.
- Agricultural land comprises a mixture of pasture and arable.
- Narrow lanes and tall hedgerows.

5.1.3 Natural Factors

5.1.3.1 Geology and Landform

The scarp is formed from Upper Chalk, the youngest of the several layers of chalk laid down in the Cretaceous period which were subsequently tilted downwards towards the south east leaving an abrupt north west face.

The chalk geology is exposed along the steep scarp face giving rise to thin calcareous soils on steep slopes which are unsuitable to cultivation.

Although it has the typically smooth and well defined profile of chalk landform, the escarpment is heavily incised with spurs and valleys, especially towards its western end, which give it a more complex form and character. The steepness of the scarp also

varies, with quite gentle slopes towards the western end (in places it hardly reads as an escarpment at all) and becoming increasingly and more dramatic moving eastwards.

5.1.3.2 Hydrology

Chilterns Escarpment contains limited numbers of water courses.

5.1.3.3 Biodiversity/Flora and Fauna

Priority habitats in *Chilterns Escarpment* include deciduous woodland, traditional orchards, wood-pasture and parkland, semi-improved grassland and lowland calcareous grassland.

Much of this part of the *Chilterns escarpment* is blanketed in broad- leaved semi-natural woodland which has developed in the absence of grazing management. However, this typically forms a distinctive mosaic of dense shady woodland interspersed, especially on the steeper slopes, with small pockets or larger stretches of open chalk grassland, often liberally dotted with scrub. *Chilterns Escarpment* contains extensive areas of Ancient Woodland.

Where it exists, calcareous grassland is a distinctive landscape component, usually at locations that are too steep to plough. As a habitat, the total amount of calcareous grassland left in England represents 0.03% of the total land area. Due to the underlying alkaline Oolitic and Corallian limestone of South Oxfordshire, as well as the chalk, there is a higher than average proportion of calcareous grassland than in other districts. The habitat makes an important contribution to biodiversity hosting several plants and animals that are not found in other habitat types, which is why locations like Aston Rowant have been designated as a Special Area of Conservation.

When viewing calcareous grassland on site, up close to the plants that grow there, it is a colourful and diverse visual experience with pleasant scents of herbs such as marjoram and thyme clearly discernible. The turf feels springy to walk on and it is an experience quite unlike any other landscape feature on offer in this part of the country. From a distance, calcareous grassland can look less distinctive at certain times of the year. Grassland with scrub such as at Watlington Hill is especially colourful in May when the hawthorn blossoms. It also has particular sounds associated with it such as crickets and birds of the open grassland with scrub such as Whinchat. Opportunities for extending and linking priority habitat calcareous grassland are fairly limited as many of the existing sites are small and isolated. The creation of a better-connected network of calcareous grassland that is balanced with scrub would be beneficial for a range of priority species including, in particular, invertebrates such as butterflies like the silver spotted skipper and Adonis blue.

5.1.4 Cultural and Social Factors

5.1.4.1 Land Use and Management

Besides from where land is covered by woodland, agricultural land (a mixture of arable and pasture) comprises a significant proportion of land in this character area.

Species-rich hedgerows are distributed throughout different parts of this character area. Priority should be given to safeguarding, maintaining and expanding this resource.

5.1.4.2 Settlement

The main settlement is at Woodcote, where a sizeable village has developed on the much shallower and more gentle gradients of the southern scarp. Other settlement within the character area is located on the level ground at the top of the scarp. This largely comprises individual scattered farms but also some small settlements with a loose linear form.

Traditional building materials are typical of the Chilterns as a whole, with a predominance of red and silver-grey brick and flint. Around Woodcote, brick may account for three quarters of the pre-Victorian buildings and appears in all those built after 1850. Older houses were timber-framed in oak. Plain tiles were the rule on the larger roofs, with thatch on cottages with some slate introduced in Victorian times. Farmsteads are often characterised by large timber framed barns, typically clad with black, horizontal weather boarding with gable walls constructed out of brick and flint.

The scarp has a distinctive pattern of roads, with distinctive 'sunken lanes' climbing the scarp face or minor valleys from the vale and other minor roads linking the scattered farmsteads along the plateau top.

5.1.4.3 Perceptual and Aesthetic Factors

The height of the escarpment offers long distance views to the west and north. Notable viewpoints include Watlington Hill and at Britwell Hill. Red kites are often seen in the skies above the area. Broadleaved woodland is a strong feature in the area that creates a sense of enclosure, particularly in the northern reaches. Narrow lanes with tall hedgerows exist throughout the area.

5.1.5 Landscape Types

The physical form of the scarp face and the 'semi- natural' unspoilt qualities of its vegetation cover provide both unity and coherence to the character of the landscape. However, some localised variations are created by differences in slope, vegetation cover and the degree of enclosure.

Chilterns Escarpment is comprised of the following landscape types:

Open escarpment

Key characteristics:

- Well-defined, smooth profile with the main scarp face folded into a series of spurs and valleys.
- Lack of trees creates a 'bald', open character.
- Areas of unimproved chalk grassland of high nature conservation value at Bald Hill, Beacon Hill and Swyncombe Downs, with soft, muted colours.
- Dominance of arable cultivation at Harcourt Hill where gradients are less steep, with stronger, more intense colours.
- Elevated, expansive and invigorating character, with dramatic and extensive views across the vale below.
- Predominantly rural character but with some significant intrusion from M40 motorway.
- Scarp face itself is prominent in views from surrounding area and the lack of vegetation creates high intervisibility along the scarp face.

Enclosed escarpment

Key characteristics:

- scarp face dominated by dense woodland cover or a mosaic of open grassland, scrub and woodland.
- predominantly semi-natural character with a series of broad-

leaved woodlands of significant nature conservation value (many designated as SSSI).

- Smooth scarp profile masked by roughly textured vegetation, with sombre, muted colours.
- Enclosed, intimate character within densely wooded areas.
- Semi-enclosed character and some views out across the vale from the scarp within areas with a mosaic of open grassland, scrub and woodland.
- Escarpment prominent in views but woodland cover helps to absorb prominent features and results in low intervisibility.

Semi-enclosed dip slope

Three small areas of semi-enclosed dip slope landscape lie adjacent to the scarp top at Christmas Common and either side of the M40 at Bald Hill/Beacon Hill.

Key characteristics:

- Level or gently sloping ground immediately adjacent to the scarp top.
- Generally open character but surrounded by a strong structure of woods, hedgerows or trees.
- Some views possible over the scarp edge at Bald Hill but otherwise views restricted by vegetation to create moderate to low intervisibility.
- Generally rural character but some intrusion from M40 motorway.

Wooded dip slope

Two main areas of wooded dip slope landscape lie close to the scarp top within the character area, around Crowell Hill to the north and Woodcote to the south.

Key characteristics:

- Flat or gently sloping landform dissected by valleys, particularly in the northern section around Crowell Hill.
- Strong structure of woodland and valley landform creates an attractive, intimate and enclosed character.
- Dominance of semi-natural broad-leaved woodland of high nature conservation value.
- Generally rural character but with some intrusion of built development around Woodcote.
- Low intervisibility.

Parkland and estate farmland

Two areas of wooded parkland and estate landscape occur at Swyncombe House and Watlington Park.

Key characteristics:

- Well-managed parkland character with formal features such as avenues and free-standing mature trees in pasture, blocks of mature woodland and estate walls.
- Rural and unspoilt character.
- Generally enclosed character with strong landform, woodland and tree cover.
- Low intervisibility.

5.1.6 Planning, Managing and Protecting Distinctiveness

The following table presents recommendations to protect, conserve, enhance and restore the landscape qualities of South Oxfordshire.

Forces for change	Guidelines/Mitigation
Agricultural intensification, diversification and farm amalgamation.	- Promote, where possible, the conservation of the surviving areas of permanent pasture and promote arable reversion to grassland, particularly on land adjacent to watercourses. Recognise that grazing sheep and cattle can make a contribution to the landscape's identity and distinctiveness. - Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type. Felling of mature specimens should be resisted. Planting of new hedgerow trees such as oak and ash, and tree belts, should be encouraged. - Strengthen the field pattern by conserving species rich hedgerows and sympathetically maintaining all hedgerows. Priority should be given to safeguarding and where expanding this resource, including replanting gappy hedges using species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, wayfaring tree,

Forces for change	Guidelines/Mitigation
	dogwood and spindle, particularly in those LCAs where they remain a significant feature. - Protect stone walls from deterioration. - Safeguard, maintain and enhance the quality of unimproved chalk and limestone grassland with sustainable grazing techniques. Identify opportunities for calcareous grassland restoration by linking and extending the existing resource, particularly along the Chilterns escarpment.
Development, expansion and infilling of settlements	- Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses at the fringes of towns and villages with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic of the area. This will help to screen the development and integrate it more successfully with its surrounding countryside. - Maintain the nucleated pattern of settlements, and promote the use of building materials to maintain vernacular style and a scale of development and that are appropriate to Chilterns Escarpment (see also the South Oxfordshire Design Guide , November 2016; and the Chilterns AONB Building Design Guide 2010). - Local building materials should be used, including flintstone and brick

Forces for change	Guidelines/Mitigation
	or red and blue brick and clay tiles in the Chilterns.
Introduction of tall buildings and structures such as	• Minimise impact by locating new communication masts on existing structures or by using existing masts. • Bury cables underground and seek opportunities to bury existing overhead cables
Decline in management of existing woodlands and trees.	• Promote the sustainable management of existing woods and plantations, and the establishment of new tree belts and plantations with a significant proportion of deciduous tree and shrub species characteristic of this area. • Promote small-scale planting of deciduous woodland blocks using locally characteristic species such as crack willow, oak and ash. • Promote the sustainable management of existing ancient woodland to safeguard its long-term survival. • Enhance and strengthen the character of tree-lined watercourses by planting willows and ash and, where appropriate, pollarding willows.

5.2 LCA 10 Chilterns Plateau with Valleys

The following notes are taken from the Chilterns Plateau section (LCA 10) of the South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment November 2017. The area is described as the southern part of the Chilterns dip slope formed by a gently sloping plateau dissected by an irregular pattern of shallow valleys.

5.2.1 Location and Boundaries

Chilterns Plateau with Valleys forms the part of the Chilterns dip slope, bounded by the top of the escarpment to the west and the Thames Valley to the south and east. *Chilterns Plateau with Valleys* is located entirely within the Chilterns AONB.

5.2.2 Key Characteristics

- An undulating landscape ranging from c. 40m AOD to c. 210m AOD.
- The plateau is dissected by an irregular pattern of shallow, small-scale dry valleys.
- Heavily wooded landscape.
- Extensive areas of ancient woodland some of which are designated as SSSI.
- The A407 and A4130 roads cross through the area.
- Sparsely settled with small villages and hamlets. The village of Sonning Common comprises the largest settlement.
- Agriculture comprises the predominant land use with arable and pasture.

- Narrow lanes and tall hedgerows.

5.2.3 Natural Factors

5.2.3.1 Geology and Landform

The area is underlain by Upper Chalk, the youngest of the several layers of chalk laid down in the Cretaceous period. The strata are tilted towards the south-east but the land dips away from the scarp at such a gentle angle that the fall of the ground is almost imperceptible, giving the slope the character of a plateau.

Extensive deposits of clay-with-flints, with smaller pockets of Reading Beds, mask the chalk geology on the plateau and typically support extensive areas of woodland and small areas of remnant heath and grass common (e.g. around Rotherfield, Peppard and Nettlebed).

In this part of the dip slope, the plateau is comparatively level and expansive and is dissected by an irregular pattern of shallow, small-scale dry valleys which seem to appear unexpectedly in an irregular pattern across the plateau. Their enclosed, intimate and small-scale character tends to contrast with the broader plateau landscape above.

The topography of *Chilterns Plateau with Valleys* ranges from c. 40m AOD to c. 210m AOD. The lowest areas of land are located around the River Thames to the east. The highest area of land in this character area is located in the village of Nuffield at 212m AOD. Other notable high points include Windmill Hill, to the north of the village of Nettlebed at 211m AOD.

5.2.3.2 Hydrology

Chilterns Plateau with Valleys contains a limited numbers of water courses.

5.2.3.3 Biodiversity/Flora and Fauna

Priority habitats include deciduous woodland, wood-pasture and parkland, traditional orchards, lowland dry acid grassland, semi-improved grassland and lowland calcareous grassland.

This is a heavily wooded landscape containing extensive areas of Ancient Woodland⁷².

Chilterns Plateau with Valleys contains five SSSIs either wholly or partially.

Habitats contained within the SSSIs are comprised mostly of deciduous woodland.

5.2.4 Cultural and Social Factors

5.2.4.1 Land Use and Management

Registered Parks and Gardens within Chilterns Ridges and Valleys includes Greys Court and the western area of Friar Park.

Species-rich hedgerows are distributed throughout different parts of this character area. Priority should be given to safeguarding, maintaining and expanding this resource.

5.2.4.2 Settlement

The pattern of settlement in the Chilterns is typically one of small hamlets and farms scattered amongst extensive woods

and commons. Many of these date from the early middle ages, which saw enclosure and clearance of 'wastes' and colonisation of previously unpopulated areas, during a period of relative prosperity and rapid population growth. Clusters of loosely grouped farmsteads were established on the plateau and new small fields were carved out of the extensive common woods, a process known as 'assarting'.

This process often led to the development of a loose, linear form to medieval settlements (e.g. Nettlebed) and many were also associated with a village green or with larger areas of common land (e.g. Rotherfield Greys). The village of Nettlebed is one of the largest within this area and has been an important centre of the brick and tile industry since the fifteenth century and for pottery after the seventeenth century. Production ceased in 1927⁷³ and only a single bottle kiln remains preserved within a modern housing estate. Furniture making was another important industry within this area, using timber from the extensive beechwoods.

Traditional building materials are typical of the Chilterns as a whole with a predominance of red brick, together with silver-grey flint. Older houses were timber-framed in oak and chalk blocks have sometimes been used on Chiltern buildings⁷⁴. Plain tiles were the rule on the larger roofs, with thatch on cottages with some slate introduced in Victorian times. Farmsteads are often characterised by large timber framed barns, typically clad with black, horizontal weather boarding with gable walls constructed out of brick and flint.

5.2.4.3 Perceptual and Aesthetic Factors

Large field sizes are widespread across the landscape and are often bounded by woodland. Long distance views are limited from roads across the plateau due to the sloping topography and strong woodland cover. Red

kites are often seen in the skies above the area. Narrow lanes with tall hedgerows exist throughout the area.

5.2.5 Landscape Types

Like *Chilterns Ridges and Valleys* (9), this part of the Chilterns dip slope has a surprisingly uniform character, despite its irregular pattern of plateaux and valleys and its mosaic of farmland and woodland. This complexity is a consistent and distinctive feature of the area, and the most obvious differences in landscape character are between the very intimate, enclosed wooded landscapes and those which have a more open structure and character.

Chilterns Plateau with Valleys is comprised of the following landscape types:

Open dip slope

Key characteristics:

A few isolated pockets of open farmland with a weak landscape structure occur within the Chilterns dip slope, (e.g. to the north-west and north-east of Caversham, south of Nuffield and to the west of Henley), usually where more gentle gradients have encouraged intensive arable cultivation.

- Gently sloping ground.
- Dominance of intensive arable cultivation with large scale field pattern, weak hedgerow structure and very little woodland cover.
- Distinctively 'grey' and flinty soils.
- Predominantly rural character but with some limited intrusion from power lines (e.g. on both sides of Caversham).
- Large-scale, open landscape with high intervisibility in immediate area but long-distance views contained by neighbouring

woodland.

Semi-enclosed dip slope

Key characteristics:

This loose mosaic of farmland and woodland is characteristic of the more level ground of the plateau to the south of Nuffield and near Woodcote, and particularly the 'lower' dip slope to the south of Sonning Common.

- Typically level or more gently sloping ground.
- Comparatively open fields contained within a strong structure of woods, hedgerows or trees to form a loose mosaic.
- Dominance of arable cultivation.
- Strong structure of woods and hedgerows generally provides visual containment and results in moderate to low intervisibility.
- Distinctive pattern of winding rural roads, irregular field boundaries and scattered rural settlements, typical of 'ancient countryside'.
- Generally rural and unspoilt character but with some 'suburbanising' influences within rural settlements and along main roads (e.g. A4074, A4130), and localised intrusion of built development and power lines (e.g. around Sonning Common and Caversham).

Wooded dip slope

Key characteristics:

This is the dominant landscape type within the area, with extensive blocks of woodland occupying much of the dip slope and creating a more enclosed mosaic of wooded farmland.

- Distinctive landform of plateaux dissected by a network of shallow, dry valleys.
- Heavily wooded character, including extensive stands of ancient, semi-natural broadleaved woodland, mature beechwoods and more recent plantations.
- Strong structure of woodland and complex landform creates an intimate and enclosed character with a particular feeling of secrecy in some valleys.
- Distinctive pattern of winding rural roads, irregular field boundaries and scattered rural settlements, typical of 'ancient countryside'.
- Generally rural and unspoilt character with only localised suburbanising influences within villages, along road corridors or around the fringes of the main settlements.
- Low intervisibility.

Commons and heaths

Key characteristics:

Two main areas of open common or heath occur within the area, around Nettlebed and Rotherfield Peppard.

- Unfenced character with open access.
- Semi-natural vegetation dominated by acid grassland or heath, typically forming a mosaic of open areas, scrub and woodland with typical species of acid conditions (e.g. birch, gorse, bracken etc.).
- Typically associated with loose linear settlements, with buildings dotted around the margins of the common.
- Rural and unspoilt character.
- Moderate to low intervisibility.

Parkland and estate farmland

Key characteristics:

There are several areas of distinctive parkland landscape within this part of the Chilterns dip slope, including Greys Court, Checkendon Court and Crowsley Park and several others located around the fringes of Henley.

- Distinctive parkland landscape with formal features such as avenues and free-standing mature trees in pasture, blocks of mature woodland and estate boundaries.
- Rural and unspoilt character.
- Generally enclosed character with strong landform, woodland and tree cover.
- Low intervisibility.
- Generally well-managed character but some parks showing signs of decline (e.g. Crowsley Park).

Amenity landscape*Key characteristics:*

- This type is represented by a number of golf courses scattered within the Chiltern Hills and a sports ground near Caversham.
- Typical golf course landscapes of greens, fairways, roughs and bunkers, with associated buildings and car parking.
- Intensively managed and somewhat sub urban character.
- Use of exotic tree species out of character with locality.
- Rural, often well-wooded setting with moderate to low intervisibility.

Planning, Managing and Protecting Distinctiveness

The following table presents recommendations to protect, conserve, enhance and restore the landscape qualities of South Oxfordshire.

Forces for change	Guidelines/Mitigation
Agricultural intensification, diversification and farm amalgamation.	• Promote, where possible, the conservation of the surviving areas of permanent pasture and promote arable reversion to grassland particularly on land adjacent to watercourses. • Strengthen the field pattern by conserving species rich hedgerows and sympathetically maintaining all hedgerows. Where appropriate, replant gappy hedges using species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, wayfaring tree, dogwood and spindle, and planting of new hedgerow trees such as oak and ash, and tree belts should be encouraged • Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type. • Protect stone walls from deterioration. • Safeguard, maintain and enhance the quality of unimproved chalk and limestone grassland with sustainable grazing techniques. Identify opportunities for calcareous grassland restoration by linking and extending the existing resource, particularly along the Chilterns escarpment.

Forces for change	Guidelines/Mitigation
	Prevent scrub encroachment in areas of species-rich grassland. Opportunities for expanding this habitat include the establishment and management of field margins/buffer strips adjacent to existing limestone grassland habitat using native wildflower species appropriate to the area.
Inappropriate or inconsistent management, or neglect of existing parklands.	Safeguard, maintain and enhance and the characteristic landscape features of existing parklands including veteran trees, avenues of trees, lakes, woods and walls.
Development, expansion and infilling of settlements	- Maintain the vernacular character of settlements and promote the use of building materials and a scale of development and that is appropriate to this landscape type. - Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses at the fringes of towns and villages with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic of the area. This will help to screen the development and integrate it more successfully with its surrounding countryside. - Local building materials should be used, including flintstone and brick or red and blue brick and clay tiles in the Chilterns. - Maintain the nucleated pattern of settlements, and promote the use of building materials to maintain vernacular style and a scale of development and that are appropriate to Chilterns Plateau with Valleys(see also the South Oxfordshire Design Guide, November

Forces for change	Guidelines/Mitigation
	2016; and the Chilterns AONB Building Design Guide 2010).
Introduction of tall buildings and structures such as	- Minimise impact by locating new communication masts on existing structures or by using existing masts. - Bury cables underground and seek opportunities to bury existing overhead cables
Decline in management of existing woodlands and trees.	- There are a number of ancient semi-natural woodlands distributed throughout the landscape type and the priority must be to ensure that all these sites are in favourable condition and management. - Promote small-scale planting of deciduous woodland blocks using locally characteristic species such as crack willow, oak and ash.
Decline of acid grassland and heath due to a reduction or cessation of traditional grazing management.	- Promote the re-establishment of acid grassland and heath on the Chilterns Commons through a combination of selective tree felling, scrub and bracken control, and fencing and grazing. - Traditionally, the commons would have been grazed but are now usually dominated by woodland, scrub and bracken. Selective clearance, followed by fencing and the re-introduction of grazing on appropriate sites, should be actively encouraged. There are opportunities for extending this resource within the landscape type to meet the targets outlined in the relevant habitat action plan.

5.3 Landscape Character in and around Woodcote

The Parish of Woodcote contains many of the landscape features described in the previous sections. To the north west the landscape is typical of the open escarpment as described in section 5.1.5 with sloping ground, open fields and distant views towards the North Wessex Downs AONB.

To the south east the landscape is typical of the open dip slope as described in section 5.2.5 with gentle slopes and views toward distant woodland.

Adjacent to the built area of the village, to the north and south, the landscape is characterised by small fields and paddocks enclosed by ancient woodland. The areas south of Bridle Path, north of Beech Lane and between Reading Road and Tidmore lane are typical examples. Many of the public rights of way border these fields and paddocks and the landscape provides a tranquil setting for the recreational use of these footpaths and bridleways, which also offer occasional glimpses of the long-distance views out of the village.

The pattern of residential development within the village is characterised by fairly substantial gardens, often with mature trees and hedges. These gardens provide a soft edge to the transition between the built area and the surrounding AONB.

6 Methodology

6.1 Guidance and principles

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the effects and significance of change resulting from development, on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

A methodology for LVIA is set out in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition' (GLVIA 3). This is the main source of legal basis and of good practice for LVIA in the UK.

Other key reference documents include the influential 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland' and the more recently published 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment'. Both of these are concerned with a process, developed over many years, for setting down a robust baseline that not only helps us to understand our landscapes, but which also assists in informing judgements and decisions about change. As such, these are also valuable tools for LVIA.

The methodology used in this assessment draws on guidance contained in all of the above documents.

LVIA may be carried out formally, for example, as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or informally, as a contribution to the appraisal of planning applications, or (as in this study) exploration of potential development options. The principles and the core of the method are similar in each case, but the process is adaptable and different approaches can be taken, appropriate to the type and scale of the proposed development and the purpose of the appraisal or assessment.

The aim of the process is to identify any likely changes to landscape character, specific landscape features, and / or visual amenity arising as

a result of development, and to assess the significance of those changes. This normally includes positive / beneficial; negative / adverse; direct and indirect; and long and short term; as well as cumulative effects.

For the purposes of this report, the landscape and visual effects that are identified are adverse unless stated as beneficial.

In order to avoid confusion, the following terminology is used throughout this document:

An **impact** is the action being taken while the **effect** is the change resulting from that impact.

There are two components of LVIA, landscape effects and visual effects, and each must be assessed separately. Assessment of **landscape effects** concerns the assessment of changes to the landscape as a resource in its own right. The assessment of **visual effects** concerns the assessment of changes to specific views and to general visual amenity experienced by people.

Within this study, every site lies within the Chilterns AONB and the sites all lie within the rural AONB landscape. In an ideal world, in order to ensure the protection of the AONB landscape and the integrity of Woodcote's landscape setting for the future, the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group of Woodcote Parish Council would not be considering any of the rural sites for development. So intense is the pressure for development, however, that the key question for the neighbourhood planning process becomes not, "where is development acceptable" but rather, "which, among the sites put forwards for consideration, are the 'least-worst' options".

In practice, development on each or any of the rural sites will have a major adverse landscape effect as, regardless of other landscape impacts pertaining to a specific site, development results in the permanent loss of designated AONB rural landscape to housing development. Therefore, arriving at a judgement on whether or not a site is suitable for development, in terms of landscape and visual considerations, rests largely, although not completely, on consideration

of the effects arising from impact on visual amenity and whether those effects can be adequately mitigated or not.

This is not to say, that exploration of effects on the landscape *per se* is of less importance; indeed, understanding the landscape character, its components and its vulnerabilities, is paramount in examining what opportunities are afforded for mitigation of both landscape and visual effects.

It is important to understand that landscape and visual assessments are undertaken using a methodology which deliberately avoids forming an opinion on the merits of the landscape, architecture, etc., as this is such a subjective matter.

The term ‘townscape’ can be used to refer to the character of an urban area, to distinguish this from ‘landscape’ which is usually understood to refer to land with a more rural aspect.

Although the study team were aware of a previous SODC capacity study that included an assessment of several of the sites examined in this report, we very deliberately made no reference to previous reports at any time during this assessment. This study was undertaken independently and ‘from scratch’.

6.2 Landscape Impact Assessment Methodology

Landscape impact assessment follows an iterative process that:

- identifies the landscape baseline, as described in sections 2 and 5;
- defines the sensitivity of the baseline to change;
- identifies the magnitude of change likely to arise;
- combines the landscape sensitivity with the identified magnitude of change in order to predict the overall landscape effect.

The stages of assessment, and the criteria used at each stage, are set out in full below.

6.2.1 Landscape baseline: components and character

Landscape impacts bring about changes to the character or quality of the landscape and / or to actual components of the landscape as a result of development – in the case of this study, potential housing development. This means changes to the physical landscape, including changes to its character as a whole and changes to individual elements contributing to this character.

Receptors of potential changes are all those components that make up landscape character and include **cultural heritage; built form; land use; public access** (i.e. rights of way, which in a landscape context normally means public footpaths and bridleways); **topography; vegetation; and water bodies**. Cumulatively, changes to these elements make up the overall effect upon **landscape character**.

Landscape effects are predicted on the basis of the order of change to baseline conditions prevalent at the time of the assessment. The landscape baseline is therefore described at a broad scale – in this study, through a review of the AONB landscape character area definitions – and also examined at a local level, through on-site survey.

6.2.2 Defining landscape sensitivity

GLVIA 3 defines sensitivity as: “A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.”

Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular

area, or individual element) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of the landscape planning policies and strategies.

Following the baseline survey, judgements are made with a view to determining the sensitivity of the landscape. This determination of landscape sensitivity is based upon an evaluation for each element or characteristic of the landscape likely to be affected, and also through consideration of a number of additional factors, which must be combined in order to give a statement as to the sensitivity of the landscape resource.

Typically, elements considered in **defining sensitivity** include:

- The character and quality of the existing landscape resource, including any national, regional or local designations;
- The extent and rarity of the existing resource;
- The value of the existing resource and its contribution to the national, regional and / or local context;
- The ability of the landscape to accommodate change.

For the purposes of this study, the following factors are considered in conjunction with the landscape components and landscape character:

- Landscape condition
- Landscape value
- Landscape capacity for change

The following sections set out criteria used in evaluating sensitivity, within this assessment.

6.2.3 Landscape condition

The condition of features and characteristics within the landscape provides evidence of change and can reveal causes of change.

Consideration of landscape condition is thus an important factor in assessing the sensitivity of a landscape to change.

In determining which grade of classification is applicable to a specific site, a judgement is made on which combination of 'bullet point' factors most closely reflects the site's features; in individual instances, not every bullet point may apply. For example, a site that is considered 'good' may in fact have no detracting features, but may most closely relate to the other bullet points within the 'good' classification, rather than the criteria for 'low' or 'high' condition.

Landscape condition can also guide mitigation proposals, which may, for example, be developed in order to strengthen and improve characteristic components of that landscape, which are deteriorating or disappearing.

The following table sets out the criteria used to determine landscape condition:

Landscape Condition Classification	Criteria
Outstanding	• Beautiful, distinctive, unique or outstanding natural landscape or townscape character; • Strong landscape or townscape structure with characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover; • Very appropriate management for land use and land cover; • Distinct features worthy of conservation; • Unique sense of place; • No detracting features.
High	• Very attractive, semi-natural or farmed landscape or townscape with distinctive or unusual features;

	• Strong landscape or townscape structure with characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover; • Appropriate management for land use and land cover but with scope to improve; • Distinct features worthy of conservation; • Strong sense of place; • Occasional detracting features.
Good	• Attractive landscape or townscape with some distinctive features; • Recognisable landscape or townscape structure, where characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover are evident although sometimes masked by land use; • Scope to improve management of land use and land cover; • Some features worthy of conservation; • Sense of place; • Some detracting features.
Ordinary	• Typical, commonplace farmed landscape or a townscape with limited variety or distinctiveness; • Distinguishable landscape or townscape structure, but characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are often masked by land use; • Scope to improve management of land use and land cover; • Few features worthy of conservation; • Weak sense of place; • Some detracting features; • Landscape would benefit from enhancement.

Poor	• Monotonous, uniform landscape or townscape which has lost most of its natural or built heritage features; • Weak or degraded landscape or townscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are generally masked by land use; • Mixed land use evident; • Lack of management and / or inappropriate intervention has resulted in degradation; • Frequent dominant detracting features; • Landscape would benefit from restoration; • Disturbed or derelict land requires restoration or recovery.
------	---

6.2.4 Landscape Value

Landscape value is concerned with the relative value or importance that is attached to different landscapes. This may include environmental and cultural aspects, physical and visual components together with any statutory designations and takes into account other values to society, such as the views expressed by local communities.

The following table sets out the criteria used to determine landscape value:

Landscape Value Classification	Criteria
Exceptional	• Very attractive and rare; • Exceptional landscape quality; • No or limited potential for substitution; • Value recognised by international designation, e.g. World Heritage Site or key elements/features within them.

Landscape Value Classification	Criteria
High	• Very attractive or attractive scenic quality and in part rare; • High or good landscape quality; • Limited potential for substitution; • Value recognised by national designation, e.g. National Park, AONB, SLA, CA
Medium	• Typical and commonplace and / or in part unusual; • Ordinary landscape quality; • Potential for substitution; • Value recognised by regional or local designations • May be un-designated but with a high value expressed through literature and cultural associations or through demonstrable use.
Low	• Generally monotonous, degraded or damaged; • Poor landscape quality; • Can be substituted; • Un-designated; • Certain individual landscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation • Landscape would benefit from restoration and enhancement.

6.2.5 Landscape susceptibility to change

The capacity of the landscape to accommodate change is also an important consideration in determining landscape sensitivity.

The following table sets out the criteria used to identify landscape susceptibility:

Landscape susceptibility classification	Criteria
High	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements.
Medium	A landscape or townscape capable of accepting limited change with some effects on landscape character, value, features or elements.
Low	A landscape or townscape capable of accommodating considerable change without significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements.

6.2.6 Combined landscape sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity brings together consideration of factors such as condition, value, and capacity for change; and also the contribution to landscape character and the degree to which a particular element or characteristic can be replaced or substituted.

The criteria explored above can be combined into the summary table below:

Combined landscape sensitivity classification	Criteria
High	• Important elements, and / or landscape / townscape, of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character and/or rarity.

	• Value typically recognised by national designation. • A landscape sensitive to change. • Limited potential for replacement or substitution. • High susceptibility.
Medium	• Valued elements, or landscape/townscape of moderate importance and rarity. • Value typically recognised by regional or local designation. • A landscape capable of accepting some change. • Moderate potential for replacement or substitution. • Medium susceptibility.
Low	• Elements, or landscape/townscape, of relatively low importance and rarity or degraded. • May be identified as having some valued features. • May be identified for improvement or enhancement. • A landscape tolerant of substantial change. • Good potential for replacement or substitution. • Low susceptibility.

6.2.7 Determining magnitude of change – landscape

Typically, elements considered in defining **magnitude of change** in relation to landscape effects include:

- The nature of the predicted impacts;
- The type of existing landscape feature or component affected;
- The nature of the change to that feature or component;
- The size and extent of the existing resource;
- The extent to which the character of the existing landscape is altered.

Landscape effects may be adverse or beneficial.

The criteria used for assessing magnitude of change are set out in the following tables:

Classification	Criteria
High Adverse	The proposals will cause total loss of, or major alteration to, key elements of the baseline landscape or townscape. Guidance: The proposals are very damaging to the landscape / townscape in that they: Cultural heritage assets ▪ Require removal of a designated heritage asset or cause significant damage to its setting. Land use ▪ Cause a change in the land use, creating a land use non-typical of the area and / or one which destroys the integrity of the setting. Built form ▪ Cause a change to the existing built form which destroys its integrity. Topography ▪ Require change to topography which is at considerable variance with the nature of the existing landform in the area. Vegetation ▪ Require removal of significant specimens and / or removal of substantial quantities of vegetation, which is not adequately mitigated through new planting. Public access ▪ Require removal of public rights of way / permissive access and give no wider benefits. Water courses ▪ Require removal or causes substantial damage to a water body.

Classification	Criteria
Medium Adverse	The proposals will cause partial loss of, or moderate alteration to, key elements of the baseline landscape/townscape. Guidance: The proposals are damaging to the landscape / townscape in that they: Cultural heritage assets - Require relocation of a designated heritage asset or cause moderate damage to its setting; or - Require removal of an undesignated heritage asset or causes significant damage to its setting. Land use - Cause a change in the land use, creating a land use less-typical of the area and one which degrades the integrity of the setting. Built form - Cause a change to the existing built form which compromises its integrity. Topography - Require change to topography which is at variance with the nature of the existing landform in the area. Vegetation - Require removal of significant specimens and / or a moderate quantity of vegetation, which is not adequately mitigated through new planting. Public Access - Require the re-alignment of public rights of way / permissive access, and give no wider benefits. Water courses - Require realignment or cause significant damage to a water body.
Low adverse	The proposals will cause minor loss of, or slight alteration to, key elements of the baseline landscape/townscape. Guidance: The proposals are slightly damaging to the landscape / townscape in that they: Cultural heritage assets - Cause no direct effect on a designated heritage asset but cause some damage to its setting; or - Cause some direct impact to an undesignated heritage asset or cause moderate damage to its setting. Land use - Cause a change in the land use, creating a land use less typical of the area and one which slightly diminishes the integrity of the setting. Built form - Cause a change to the existing built form which diminishes its integrity. Topography - Require small changes to topography, which are at slight variance with nature of the existing landform in the area. Vegetation - Require removal of significant specimens which although mitigated through extensive new planting cannot be fully replaced; or removal of small

Classification	Criteria
	quantities of vegetation, which are not adequately mitigated through new planting. Public Access - Require a small realignment of public rights of way / permissive access, with no wider benefits. Water courses - Require some works or causes slight damage to a water body.
Negligible	The proposals will cause very minor loss, alteration or addition to key elements of the baseline landscape/townscape the effect of which will not be noticeable in the long term. Guidance: The proposals cause minimal damage / benefit to the landscape / townscape in that they: Cultural heritage assets - Cause no direct effect on a designated heritage asset, and change to its immediate setting is broadly neutral; or - Cause no direct effect to an un-designated heritage asset but cause minor damage to its setting. Land use - Cause a change in the land use, but not one that is less typical of the area or one that affects the integrity of the setting. Built form - Cause a change to the existing built form, but not one which impairs or improves its integrity. Topography - Require small changes to topography, but not changes that are at variance with the nature of the existing landform in the area. Vegetation - Provide minimal additional vegetation or require removal of minimal vegetation which is adequately mitigated through new planting. Public Access - Require changes that provide access to the scheme only, with no wider benefits or adverse effects. Water courses - Require minor works but cause no permanent damage to a water body.
Neutral	The proposals will cause no change to key elements of the receiving landscape / townscape.
Low beneficial	The proposals will cause minor addition to key elements of the baseline landscape / townscape. Guidance: The proposals will slightly enhance the landscape / townscape as they: Cultural heritage assets - Provide for small enhancements (restoration) of a heritage asset or its setting. Land use - Cause a change in the land use, creating a land use more-typical of the area and one which slightly improves the integrity of the setting. Built form - Cause a change to the existing built form which slightly improves its integrity. Topography

Classification	Criteria
	- Require small changes to topography, which complement the nature of the existing landform in the area surrounding the site. Vegetation - Provide for quantities of new planting which more than compensate for any vegetation that requires removal. Public Access - Provide for small enhancements to existing public rights of way / access or - Provide minor additional public rights of way / access previously not available. Water courses - Provide for small enhancements to a water body.
Medium beneficial	The proposals will cause moderate addition to key elements of the baseline landscape / townscape. Guidance: The proposals will moderately enhance the landscape / townscape as they: Cultural heritage assets - Provide for enhancement (restoration) of a heritage asset or its setting. Land use - Cause a change in the land use, creating a land use more-typical of the area and one which improves the integrity of the setting. Built form - Cause a change to the existing built form which improves its integrity. Topography - Require changes to topography, which remove some detracting features and complement the nature of the existing landform in the area surrounding the site. Vegetation - Provide for significant quantities of new planting, far in excess of any quantity of vegetation that requires removal. Public Access - Provide for enhancements to existing public rights of way / access, and / or - Provide for moderate additional public rights of way / access previously not available. Water courses - Provide for enhancements to a water body.
High beneficial	The proposals will cause major addition to key elements of the baseline landscape / townscape. Guidance: The proposals will significantly enhance the landscape /townscape as they: Cultural heritage assets - Provide for significant enhancements (restoration) of a heritage asset or its setting. Land use - Cause a change in the land use, restoring the land use to that most typical of the area and one that greatly improves the integrity of the setting.

Classification	Criteria
	Built form ▪ Cause a change to the existing built form which significantly improves its integrity. Topography ▪ Require changes to topography, which remove all detracting features and entirely complement the nature of the existing landform in the area surrounding the site. Vegetation ▪ Provide for significant quantities of new planting, far in excess of any quantity or quality of vegetation that requires removal. Public Access ▪ Provide for significant enhancements to existing public rights of way / access and / or ▪ Provide for significant public rights of way / access previously not available. Water courses ▪ Provide for significant enhancements to a water body.

6.2.8 Overall landscape effect

In conclusion, magnitude of change is brought together with landscape sensitivity in order to identify the overall landscape effect. This may be major, substantial, moderate, low, negligible or neutral, as shown in the table below. Overall landscape effect may be adverse or beneficial.

	Sensitivity of Resource		
Magnitude of Change	High	Medium	Low
High	Major	High	Medium
Medium	High	Medium	Low
Low	Medium	Low	Negligible
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

The overall landscape effect identifies the effect on the landscape resource as a whole. It is based on the assessments of effect on the individual elements contributing to landscape / townscape character, and on a wider assessment of the effect on the overall landscape / townscape character, evaluated in relation to the sensitivity of the landscape / townscape in terms of its condition, value, and capacity for change.

The assessment of overall effect requires considerable judgement to balance the complex relationships between the different considerations and should always be qualified. For example, a high quality landscape may not necessarily be adversely affected despite effects on individual elements, if mitigating landscape features can be used to integrate the proposed development into the landscape or townscape in a way that is in keeping with its character.

The potential for mitigation of landscape effects is therefore considered, and mitigation recommended where appropriate. The change to the overall landscape effect following mitigation, is therefore also identified.

Classification	Landscape Character
High Adverse	The proposals are very damaging to the landscape / townscape in that they create a landscape / townscape whose character: • Is at considerable variance with the layout, mix, scale and appearance of the landscape / townscape. • Will introduce elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape / townscape. • Will be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape / townscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality. • Is likely to degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting. • Destroys existing sense of place. Cannot be adequately mitigated.
Medium Adverse	The proposals are damaging to the landscape / townscape in that they create a landscape / townscape whose character: • Is out of scale or at odds with the layout, mix, scale and appearance of the landscape • / townscape. • Will introduce elements considered to be substantially uncharacteristic of the attributes

	of the receiving landscape / townscape. - Will have an adverse effect on a landscape / townscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements. - Damages existing sense of place. - Cannot be largely mitigated – mitigation will not prevent the scheme from impacting the landscape / townscape in the longer term.
Low Adverse	The proposals are slightly damaging to the landscape / townscape in that they create a landscape / townscape whose character: - Does not quite fit into the layout, mix, scale and character of the landscape / townscape. - Will introduce elements that may not be characteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape / townscape. - Will have a slightly adverse effect on a landscape / townscape of recognised quality. - Cannot be completely mitigated due to the nature of the proposal itself or the character of the landscape.
Negligible	The proposals cause minimal damage / benefit to the landscape / townscape in that they cause little effect on character and / or incorporate measures for mitigation that balance any adverse effects and therefore create a landscape / townscape whose character: - Matches the layout, mix scale and appearance of the existing landscape / townscape. - Introduces elements not considered uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape / townscape. - Maintains existing landscape / townscape quality and character.

	Maintains existing sense of place.
Low Beneficial	The proposals will to a limited degree enhance the character of a landscape / townscape by: - Improving to some extent the fit into the layout, mix, scale and character of the surrounding landscape / townscape. - Introducing some elements that are characteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape / townscape. - Enabling some sense of place and quality to be restored and enhanced.
Medium Beneficial	The proposals will enhance the landscape / townscape by: - Creating a landscape / townscape whose character fits acceptably with the layout, mix, scale and appearance of the surrounding landscape / townscape. - Introducing some elements considered to be characteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape / townscape. - Enhancing and improving existing landscape character and condition. - Protecting and conserving existing sense of place.
High Beneficial	The proposals will conserve and enhance the landscape / townscape by: - Creating a landscape / townscape whose character is a good fit with the layout, mix, scale and appearance of the surrounding landscape / townscape. - Conserving and / or introducing elements considered to be very characteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape / townscape.

	• Conserving, protecting and enhancing the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting. • Conserving, protecting and enhancing an existing strong sense of place.
--	---

6.2.9 Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

Visual effects arise from changes to the appearance of the landscape as a result of development, which causes an overall change to visual amenity and / or results in the proposals either intruding into, or obstructing, existing views. Key issues related to visual amenity are therefore:

- the likely visibility of the development from the surrounding areas; and
- the potential effect on visual amenity from key viewpoints.

The assessment set out in this report is based on what we have seen ourselves during our site survey observations in October and November 2020.

The land that, theoretically, is visually connected with the proposal can be variously defined as the 'zone of visual influence', 'zone of theoretical visibility' or 'visual envelope'. For the purposes of this study, the term 'visual envelope' is used. The visual envelope defines the broad area within which it may be possible to obtain views of the development. Determining factors in rural areas are usually landform, woodland and dense hedgerows and in urban areas are usually buildings. Actual visibility is affected by local variations and features and can only be determined through site survey. The extent of the visual envelope in this study has been explored through site survey. Assessment in this study has concentrated on analysis, in relation to identified key views from within the visual envelope, on a site by site basis.

People who are likely to be affected by the changes in views and visual amenity are identified as visual receptors. For this project, potential visual receptors have been identified by visual assessment during site visits. The locations of these receptors - either individual or groups - are identified as viewpoints from which these receptors can view proposed development location(s). Locations may include:

- Public viewpoints, such as buildings and land to which there is public access, including footpaths and bridleways;
- Transport routes where there may be views from private and public transport;
- Places of work.

In some studies, it is appropriate to consider private viewpoints from residential properties. For this study, there has been some consideration of nearby properties which have potential views of development site(s). However, there has been no access to any private property as part of this study.

Selection of viewpoints has taken into account the following factors:

- Accessibility to the public;
- Potential number and sensitivity of viewers who may be affected;
- Viewing direction, distance and elevation;
- Nature of the viewing experience (e.g. static, moving);
- View type (glimpsed, panoramic);
- Potential for cumulative views of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.

In practice, this means that our site survey focused on the network of public footpaths, bridleways, public access land and the public highway.

Potential visual effects are usually assessed in relation to construction; at the year of opening of the development (or in the short term); and in the longer term, after any mitigation planting has had chance to become established. However, for an appraisal like this study, a full assessment of this type is not practicable, due to the absence of firm, site-based design proposals and developed mitigation measures. This study therefore concentrates on identifying predicted change post-

construction upon visual amenity for identified receptors. Potential mitigation measures are identified, and the effects of these assessed. In relation to each site, topography, how this affects visibility, and the potential for mitigation on that basis are also considered.

Baseline site survey work for this study was carried out in October and November 2020, when vegetation was partially leafed-out and consequently screening potential of existing vegetation was variable. A judgement therefore has to be made in respect of potential for summer visibility when vegetation may block views and winter visibility, when deciduous vegetation often provides visual filtering, rather than screening. Where this is applicable, it is described in the report and indicated by the use of 'may' rather than 'will'.

6.2.10 Sensitivity of receptors

The degree of visual effect depends not only on the degree of change brought about by the proposals, but also on the sensitivity of the receptors, that is, people looking at the new development, to change. Receptors vary in their degree of sensitivity to change depending on such factors as proximity, activity and period of time exposed to the change.

Residents are generally considered to be highly sensitive receptors. Any new development will alter their existing views, and the degree of change will vary according to the amount of direct view and the distance from the site.

The nature of the layout, master-planning and detail design of any development will affect the degree of change to visual amenity. Sensitive design which achieves integration with the local landscape will reduce the impact for most receptors, particularly for long distance views where development is seen within a wider context of the local vegetation. Hedgerows can be especially important features in achieving integration in this respect.

The following table identified the relative sensitivities to visual amenity for the receptor groups identified in this study:

Sensitivity of visual receptor	Receptor
High	- Residents at home - People engaged in outdoor recreation, whose attention is engaged with the landscape, e.g. walkers, cyclists, horse riders, people boating on the river - Visitors to heritage assets where views of the surroundings make an important contribution to the experience - Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents
Medium	Travellers on the road and rail network
Low	- People engaged in outdoor sport which does not depend on appreciation of views of the landscape - People at their place of work where the view is not important to the quality of working life

6.2.11 Evaluation of change to visual amenity

The change to visual amenity is evaluated in terms of size, scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility.

The visual prominence of any development and thus the degree of change to visual amenity will obviously depend to a large extent on the height of the buildings, and also upon the materials used; for example, glass and other light reflective surfaces are likely to be more visually prominent than darker, matt surface materials. For the purposes of this

study, a design height of maximum 2 storeys has been assumed, and at a density appropriate to the location of the site. The Local Plan policy STRAT5: Residential Densities requires that:

“The density of development should be informed by:

- I. The capacity of the site and the need to use land efficiently in accordance with policy DES7: Efficient Use of Resources;
- II. The need to achieve high quality design that respects local character;
- III. Local circumstances and site constraints, including the required housing mix, and the need to protect or enhance the local environment, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, heritage assets, and important landscapes, habitats and townscapes;
- IV. The site’s current and future level of accessibility to local services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport; and
- V. The need to minimise detrimental impacts on the amenity of future and/or adjoining occupiers.”

The Local Plan does not set target densities for development in the villages. As Woodcote is located within the Chilterns AONB a residential density of 30 dwellings per hectare has been assumed for the purposes of the assessment.

Factors that are considered and criteria used to reach a judgement, include:

Factor	Criteria
Size, scale	Scale of change in the view, with regard to the loss or addition of features change in composition proportion of view occupied by proposed development

Factor	Criteria
Degree of contrast or integration	Degree to which any new features or changes to the view contrast or are integrated with remaining landscape elements and characteristics, in terms of: • Form • Scale and mass • Line • Height • Colour and texture
Nature of the view	the relative amount of time over which the view of the development will be experienced whether views will be full, partial or glimpsed
Geographical extent	The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible
Duration of the view and reversibility of visual effects	• Short term • Medium term • Long term • Permanent

6.2.12 Determining magnitude of change – visual amenity

The following table summarises the criteria for determining the magnitude of change in relation to visual amenity:

Classification	Criteria
High	- Where the development proposals will be individually appreciated in the overall view, causing a substantial deterioration: - Being a principal feature to which other elements become subordinate; and / or - Completely affecting the overall character of the scene.
Medium	- Where the development proposals will be individually appreciated in the overall view, causing a moderate deterioration: - Forming an immediately apparent part of the scene; and / or - Considerably affecting the overall character of the scene.
Low	- Where the development proposals will be individually appreciated in the overall view, causing a slight deterioration: - Forming a minor element in the scene; and / or - Having a minor effect on the character of the scene.

6.2.13 Overall visual amenity effect

The magnitude of change and the sensitivity of the visual receptors is brought together to identify the overall visual effects, which, like landscape effects, are assessed using the terms major, substantial, moderate, low, negligible or neutral significance. As for the assessment of landscape impacts, these are presented in a matrix, below.

	Sensitivity of receptor		
Magnitude of change	High	Medium	Low
High	Major	High	Medium
Medium	High	Medium	Low
Low	Medium	Low	Negligible
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

The effects may be adverse or beneficial. The following table summarises the criteria used in assessing the overall visual effect:

Overall effect	Criteria
Major adverse	The development will result in a major harmful change in the existing view with the development as the dominant visual effect
High	The development will result in a substantial harmful change in the existing view with the development as a prominent element in the overall visual setting
Moderate adverse	The development will result in moderately harmful change in the existing view with the development as one of a number of elements in the overall visual setting
Medium	The development will result in a slightly harmful change in the existing view with the development one of many elements in the overall visual setting
Negligible	There will be little change to the existing view
Neutral	The proposals will cause no change to the existing view
Beneficial	The development results in a positive change in the visual setting

7 Site Appraisal

7.1 Initial Site List

The initial site list was constructed by taking all sites in Woodcote on the South Oxfordshire District Council's Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) –and adding to these:

- all unallocated sites identified for the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2012 – 2027 (WNP1);
- Table 6-2 Sites Identified, but not allocated, in the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2012 -2027;
- other sites notified to South Oxfordshire District Council – Table 6-3;
- all responses to an advertisement (opposite) placed in the Henley Standard; and
- the paddock by Wards Farm in response to local concerns about parking on the road.

The result was a consolidated list of sites– Table 6-5 – containing approximately 70 entries many of which were duplicates and which, therefore, required substantial verification and 'cleaning'.



7.2 Consolidated Site List

The initial site list was 'cleaned' to remove:

- sites that their owners did not want to develop;
- duplicates;
- sites already allocated for development, including the reserve sites from WNP1;
- sites already having planning permission;
- sites already developed;
- sites that would be considered as infill.

Table 6-6 shows the list as it was in the summer of 2017

Table 6-1 SODC Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2017

SHELAA Ref	Call for Sites ref	Site name
339		Beechwood Court, Woodcote (Long Toll)
368		Spen Cottage, Woodcote
371		Church Farm, Woodcote
374		Wards Farm
468		Grimmer Way, Woodcote
803	006	Land west of Woodcote Reservoir
820	039	Land south of Bridle Path, Woodcote (1)
823	042	Land north of Beech Lane, Woodcote
824	043	Land at Woodcote Garden Centre, Woodcote
844	086	Land at Tidmore Lane, Woodcote
851	094	East of Long Toll, Woodcote
869	125	Foxcovert Farm, Woodcote
945	226	Land at Bouchier Fencing, Woodcote
948	229	Land at Wayside Green, Woodcote (1)
964	253	Land south of Bridle Path, Woodcote (2)
971	262	Land west of B471, Woodcote
972	263	Land west of Church Farm, Woodcote
999	307	Land east of Goring Road, Woodcote
1028	345	Land at Greenmore Hill Farm, Woodcote
1103	012	Land south of Beech Lane, Woodcote (1)
1105	015	Land at Greenmore, Woodcote
1111	264	Land west of Woodcote Garden Centre, Woodcote
1125	401	Land at Wayside Green, Woodcote (2)
1154	187	Land south of Red Lane, Woodcote (1)
1168	305	Land south of Beech Lane, Woodcote (2)
1182	391b	Land south of Red Lane, Woodcote (2)

Table 6-2 Sites Identified, but not allocated, in the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2012 -2027

WNP Site Id	Site name
W001 (a)	Chiltern Rise
W001 (a)	Chiltern Rise
W002	Woodcote Garden Centre
W003	Land to the east of Church Farm
W004	Church Farm poultry field
W005	Hilltop Field
W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - Land adjoining Yew Tree Farmhouse
W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Scrooby
W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Chilterns
W007	Land to the north of Beech Lane
W008	Adjacent to Goat's Gambol
W009	Adjacent to Bouchier Fencing
W010	Japonica Acre, Goring Road
W011	Rear of 14 Bridle Path
W012	Rear of 16 Bridle Path
W013	Adjacent Upper Covert wooded area
W014	Adjacent to reservoir
W015	East of Greenmore
Other 1	Bus Depot (East)
Other 3	End of Wood Lane (East of footpath)
Other 17	Fox Covert - Hatt's Yard & surrounding fields
Other 20	Land at Greenmoor Hill Farm
Other 22	Land off Tidmore Lane
Other 23	Horns Farm, Tidmore Lane
Other 24	Red Lane Bungalow

Table 6-3 Other Sites Known to South Oxfordshire District Council

Ref	Call for Sites ref	Site name
1351	W00 2	Londis and TS Cars
1352	W00 2	Woodcote Garden Centre
1353	W00 6	Land to the rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse
1354	W00 6	Land to the rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse
1355	W00 6	Land at rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse
1356	W00 10	Japonica Acre
1357	W00 10	Japonica Acre
1358	W00 13	Land adjacent to Upper Covert wooded area
1359	W00 15	Land east of Greenmore - Bishops Yard + additional land

Table 6-4 Public Call for Sites

Description
Hilltop Field
Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - Land adjoining Yew Tree Farmhouse
Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Scrooby
Rear of 16 Bridle Path
Chambers Place
Wood Lane
Meadow View, Beech Lane
Woody Nook

Table 6-5 Combined Site Submission List

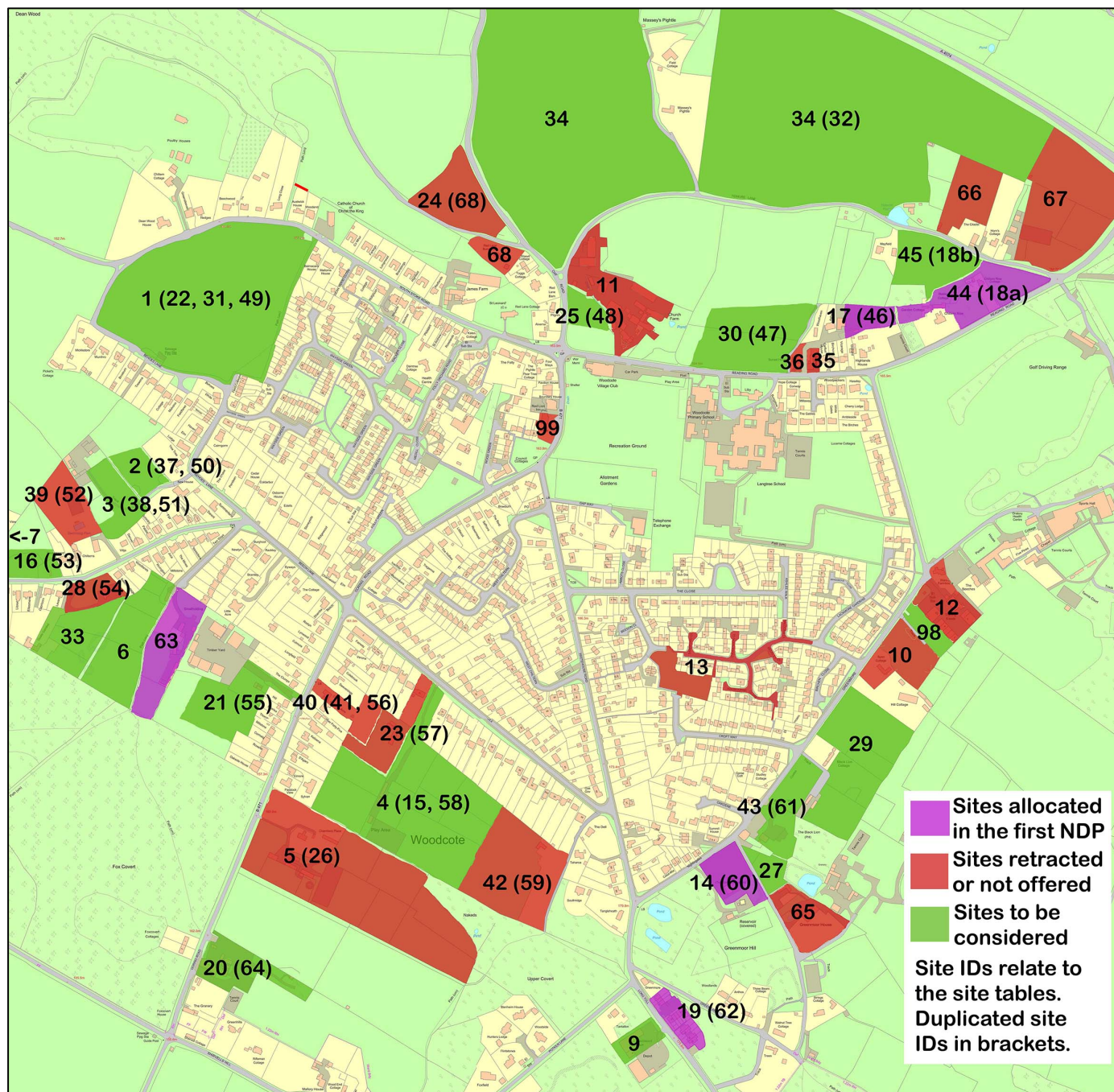
Site Id	Source	Ref (if applicable)	Other site ref	Description	Duplicated by entries:	Comments
1	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W005	Hilltop Field	22, 31, 49	
2	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - Land adjoining Yew Tree Farmhouse	37, 50	
3	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Scrooby	38,51	
4	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W012	Rear of 16 Bridle Path	15, 58	
5	WNP2 Approach			Chambers Place	26	Retracted
6	WNP2 Approach			Wood Lane		
7	WNP2 Approach			Meadow View, Beech Lane		Retracted
8	WNP2 Approach	-	-		-	Retracted
9	HELAA	339		Beechwood Court, Woodcote (Long Toll)		
10	HELAA	368		Spen Cottage, Woodcote		Retracted
11	HELAA	371		Church Farm, Woodcote		Retracted – current employment site
12	HELAA	374		Wards Farm		Retracted – current employment site
13	HELAA	468		Grimmer Way, Woodcote		Not available
14	HELAA	803	006	Land west of Woodcote Reservoir, Woodcote	60	WNP1 Allocation
15	HELAA	820	039	Land south of Bridle Path, Woodcote (1)	4, 58	Duplicate
16	HELAA	823	042	Land north of Beech Lane, Woodcote	53	
17	HELAA	824	043	Land at Woodcote Garden Centre, Woodcote		WNP1 Allocation
18	HELAA	844	086	Land at Tidmore Lane, Woodcote	44, 45	Duplicate - Combination of WNP1 allocated and reserve sites
19	HELAA	851	094	East of Long Toll, Woodcote	62	WNP1 Allocation – completed
20	HELAA	869	125	Foxcovert Farm, Woodcote	64	
21	HELAA	945	226	Land at Bouchier Fencing, Woodcote	55	(WNP1 Reserve Site)

Site Id	Source	Ref (if applicable)	Other site ref	Description	Duplicated by entries:	Comments
22	HELAA	948	229	Land at Wayside Green, Woodcote (1) - Hill Top Field	1, 31, 49	Duplicate
23	HELAA	964	253	Land south of Bridle Path, Woodcote (2)	57	No response from landowner – excluded – has planning permission for one house
24	HELAA	971	262	Land west of B471, Woodcote		Retracted
25	HELAA	972	263	Land west of Church Farm, Woodcote	48	
26	HELAA	999	307	Land east of Goring Road, Woodcote	5	Duplicate
27	HELAA	1028	345	Land at Greenmore Hill Farm, Woodcote		
28	HELAA	1103	012	Land south of Beech Lane, Woodcote (1) - Adjacent to Goat's Gambol	54	Retracted
29	HELAA	1105	015	Land at Greenmore, Woodcote		
30	HELAA	1111	264	Land west of Woodcote Garden Centre, Woodcote	47	
31	HELAA	1125	401	Land at Wayside Green, Woodcote (2)	1, 22, 49	Duplicate
32	HELAA	1154	187	Land south of Red Lane, Woodcote (1)	34	Duplicate of part of 34
33	HELAA	1168	305	Land south of Beech Lane, Woodcote (2)		
34	HELAA	1182	391b	Land south of Red Lane, Woodcote (2)	32	
35	HELAA+	1351	W00 2	Londis and TS Cars		Retracted
36	HELAA+	1352	W00 2	Woodcote Garden Centre		Retracted
37	HELAA+	1353	W00 6	Land to the rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse	2, 50	Duplicate
38	HELAA+	1354	W00 6	Land to the rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse	3,51	Duplicate
39	HELAA+	1355	W00 6	Land at rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse (behind Chilterns)	52	Retracted
40	HELAA+	1356	W00 10	Japonica Acre	41, 56	Retracted
41	HELAA+	1357	W00 10	Japonica Acre	40, 56	Retracted
42	HELAA+	1358	W00 13	Land adjacent to Upper Covert wooded area	59	No reply from landowner– excluded
43	HELAA+	1359	W00 15	Land east of Greenmore - Bishops Yard + additional land	61	
44	WNP1	SHLAA	W001 (a)	Chiltern Rise	18	WNP1 Allocation
45	WNP1	SHLAA	W001 (a)	Chiltern Rise	18	WNP1 Reserve Site
46	WNP1	SHLAA	W002	Woodcote Garden Centre	17	WNP1 Allocation

Site Id	Source	Ref (if applicable)	Other site ref	Description	Duplicated by entries:	Comments
47	WNP1	SHLAA	W003	Land to the east of Church Farm	30	Duplicate
48	WNP1	SHLAA	W004	Church Farm poultry field	25	Duplicate
49	WNP1	SHLAA	W005	Hilltop Field	1, 22, 31	Duplicate
50	WNP1	SHLAA	W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - Land adjoining Yew Tree Farmhouse	2, 37	Duplicate
51	WNP1	SHLAA	W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Scrooby	3, 38	Duplicate
52	WNP1	SHLAA	W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Chilterns	39	Duplicate
53	WNP1	SHLAA	W007	Land to the north of Beech Lane	16	Duplicate
54	WNP1	SHLAA	W008	Adjacent to Goat's Gambol	28	Duplicate
55	WNP1	SHLAA	W009	Adjacent to Bouchier Fencing	21	Duplicate - WNP1 Reserve site
56	WNP1	SHLAA	W010	Japonica Acre, Goring Road	40, 41	Retracted
57	WNP1	SHLAA	W011	Rear of 14 Bridle Path	23	Duplicate
58	WNP1	SHLAA	W012	Rear of 16 Bridle Path	4, 15	Duplicate
59	WNP1	SHLAA	W013	Adjacent Upper Covert wooded area	42	Duplicate
60	WNP1	SHLAA	W014	Adjacent to reservoir	14	Duplicate - WNP1 Allocation
61	WNP1	SHLAA	W015	East of Greenmore	43	Duplicate
62	WNP1	Approach	Other 1	Bus Depot (East)	19	Duplicate - WNP1 Allocation
63	WNP1	Approach	Other 3	End of Wood Lane (East of footpath)		WNP1 Allocation
64	WNP1	Approach	Other 17	Fox Covert - Hatt's Yard & surrounding fields	20	Duplicate
65	WNP1	Approach	Other 20	Land at Greenmoor Hill Farm		Not put forward
66	WNP1	Approach	Other 22	Land off Tidmore Lane		Not put forward
67	WNP1	Approach	Other 23	Horns Farm, Tidmore Lane		Not submitted
68	WNP1	Approach	Other 24	Red Lane Bungalow		Retracted - Planning permission granted for 3 houses
98	WNP2 Approach			Paddock by Wards Farm		
99	WNP2 Approach			Woody Nook		Retracted - Planning permission granted for 4 houses

Table 6-6 Consolidated site list

Site Id	Source	Ref	Other site ref	Description	Size (ha)	Comments
WNP2-1	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W005	Hilltop Field	4.88	
WNP2-2	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - Land adjoining Yew Tree Farmhouse	0.38	
WNP2-3	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W006	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Scrooby	0.44	
WNP2-4	WNP2 Approach		SHLAA - W012	Rear of 16 Bridle Path	3.4	
WNP2-6	WNP2 Approach			Wood Lane	1.0	
WNP2-9	HELAA	339		Beechwood Court	0.25	Offices at present
WNP2-16	HELAA	823	042	Land north of Beech Lane	0.4	
WNP2-20	HELAA	869	125	Foxcovert Farm	0.66	
WNP2-21	HELAA	945	226	Land at Bouchier Fencing	0.8	WNP1 Reserve Site
WNP2-25	HELAA	972	263	Land west of Church Farm	0.29	
WNP2-27	HELAA	1028	345	Land at Greenmore Hill Farm (Black Lion)	0.15	
WNP2-29	HELAA	1105	015	Land at Greenmore	1.7	
WNP2-30	HELAA	1111	264	Land west of Woodcote Garden Centre (Church Farm)	1.46	
WNP2-33	HELAA	1168	305	Land south of Beech Lane (Goats Gambol)	0.5	
WNP2-34	HELAA	1182	391b	Land south of Red Lane (Hildred Fields)	23	
WNP2-43	HELAA+	1359	W00 15	Land east of Greenmore - Bishops Yard + additional land	0.3	
WNP2-45	WNP1	SHLAA	W001 (a)	Chiltern Rise	0.7	WNP1 Reserve Site
WNP2-98	WNP2 Approach			Paddock by Wards Farm	0.14	



7.3 WNP2-1 Hilltop Field

Grid Ref 463943 182181 Assessed by MJ Smith 18/10/20

Description

Site 1 comprises a large, open, arable greenfield site of about 4.88 ha. It is classified as agricultural land grade 3A. The site lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the north west of Woodcote and acts as a transition from the village to the rural, open countryside of the Chilterns AONB.. It is surrounded on all sides by 2m hedges. The site is bounded by Behoes Lane to the south and west, South Stoke Road to the north and the rear of properties in Wayside Green to the east. Public footpath 411/8 runs along the east side of the field from a gated entrance on South Stoke Road to a gap in the hedge at the corner of Behoes Lane. Footpath 411/8 links to footpath 411/6 to the north, providing public access through Deans Wood, making this a popular route for walkers. The site is slightly elevated compared to the level of South Stoke Road.

Although the site appears, from the aerial view, to be surrounded on three sides by development, that is not the visual impression on site. On South Stoke Road the properties are spacious and set far apart, allowing views into the countryside through the gaps. The perception is one of a low-density ribbon of development in the countryside. Behoes Lane is a single carriageway, rural road where the properties are mostly single storey with the ability to see the countryside beyond.

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The site is clearly visible from footpath 411/8 which runs inside the hedge and from the rear elevations of the properties in Wayside Green adjacent to the site. This site is also visible in distant views from the North Wessex Downs AONB. There are also brief views through the gated entrances from South Stoke Road and Behoes Lane.

Previous Planning History

There have been two previous outline planning applications (P11/E1205/O and P18/S1371/O) for housing on this site. Both were refused because of the impact on the landscape/AONB.





View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4



View 5



View 6



View 7



View8

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently arable agriculture.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site. There is built form on the opposite side of South Stoke Road and Behoes Lane adjacent to the site and the rear of properties in Wayside Green to the east	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a slight fall towards the north west.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The field that comprises this site is in arable cultivation. There are hedges surrounding the site on all sides.	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse There will be some loss of boundary hedge to provide access to the site.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Neutral
Public access	A public footpath (411/8) runs through the site along the eastern edge. South Stoke Road runs along the northern side of the site and Behoes Lane runs along the south side of the site.	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse The footpath will change from a rural path through the field to an urbanised path through housing.	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-1 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of this greenfield site. The proposals are damaging to the landscape in that they create a landscape whose character: - Is at considerable variance with the layout, mix, scale and appearance of the landscape - Will introduce elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape - Will be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality - Destroy an existing sense of peace - Cannot be adequately mitigated	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Sense of peace.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Very attractive scenic quality Good landscape quality Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Residential receptors include housing to the east in Wayside green, to the north in South Stoke Road and to the south in Behoes Lane.	High	High adverse Views into and across the site will be severely affected by development. The elevated position of the site will emphasise the effect.	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	A frequently used public footpath (411/8) runs through the site inside the eastern boundary.	High	High adverse It will result in a high degree of change in visual amenity, particularly for those using the footpath, given that one of the main purposes of such recreation is to enjoy the visual amenity afforded by the landscape.	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	There are distant views from the North Wessex Downs AONB.	Medium	Medium adverse Due to the open characteristics of the site, and the slightly elevated ground, development impact will be seen over a relatively wide area.	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After Mitigation	Medium
	There is a limited view through the gated entrances for passers-by on South Stoke Road and Behoes Lane.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Low
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Any construction would result in the irreversible loss of an open arable greenfield site. It would have an adverse effect on the landscape of the Chilterns AONB as it would result in the loss of openness along the western edge of the Chilterns escarpment. The development of this site would result in a large extension of built development into the countryside around Woodcote.

The rural nature of the public footpath through this site would be lost and the footpath would be urbanised.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

Visual Effect

Any development on this site would be visible from the North Wessex Downs AONB. Visual amenity would be degraded for walkers using the footpath and roads near to the site. A number of residents would also be affected, mainly those occupying the houses in Wayside Green to the east of the site, who experience direct views from the rear of their properties.

At the time of the field study, the border hedges were fairly high, obscuring the view, but the desk study based on Google Earth's Streetview showed that hedges had been trimmed to a lower height in previous years which would open up views from the roads and properties around the site.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the site boundaries, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site, particularly along the eastern edge. However, buffer planting would also restrict the longer views and compromise the important visual connections with the wider landscape and would considerably alter the openness that make this part of the Chilterns AONB special.

Planting to mitigate visual impact would therefore exacerbate the landscape impacts by causing additional adverse changes to the prevailing landscape character. It is therefore not recommended.



The major adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.4 WNP2-2 Adjacent to Yew Tree Farmhouse

Grid Reference 463842 181938 Assessed by MJ Smith 29/10/20

Description

Site 2 comprises an area of unimproved grassland to one side and behind Yew Tree Farmhouse, Behoes Lane. It lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the north west of Woodcote. The landowner is only offering part of the land (0.38 ha) for development for five houses on the area shown in the aerial view to the right. There is another site adjacent to this site – site 3.

Access to the site is via a track leading from Behoes Lane. The track is not wide enough to provide adequate access for this and the adjacent site and will be widened.

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The site is not visible from Behoes Lane, although widening of the track may open glimpses of the front gardens of the houses.

There are distant views from open ground to the north west but there are no footpaths in that area that have views to the site.

The site may be visible in distant views from the North Wessex Downs AONB but as it is a small site it is unlikely to be distinguishable from the general view of this part of the village.

There is limited visibility from adjacent residential properties.

Previous Planning History

There have been no recent planning applications for this site.



Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently unimproved grassland used as a paddock..	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse Impact will result in the loss of a small greenfield site creating a land use less typical of the area which slightly diminishes the integrity of the setting	Before/ without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Negligible
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	Unimproved grassland	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After mitigation	Negligible
Public access	There is no public access to the site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site		Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-2 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
	After Mitigation			Low	
Landscape condition	Typical, commonplace landscape with few features worthy of conservation.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	Medium			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of relatively low importance. A landscape tolerant of change. Good potential for replacement or substitution.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium adverse				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of five houses on the site	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is no public access to the site and no views of the site from Behoes Lane. Limited views from residents - Yew Tree Farmhouse, Newhouse and properties in Beech Lane.	Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Low
	Limited distant views from the land to the north west and from the North Wessex Downs AONB.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium adverse				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. However, the site makes a minor contribution to the overall landscape in this area.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **medium adverse**.

Visual Effect

There are no views of the site from Behoes Lane and only distant views from the land to the north west. The small size of the site would make any distant view from the North Wessex Downs indistinguishable from the rest of the village in this area.

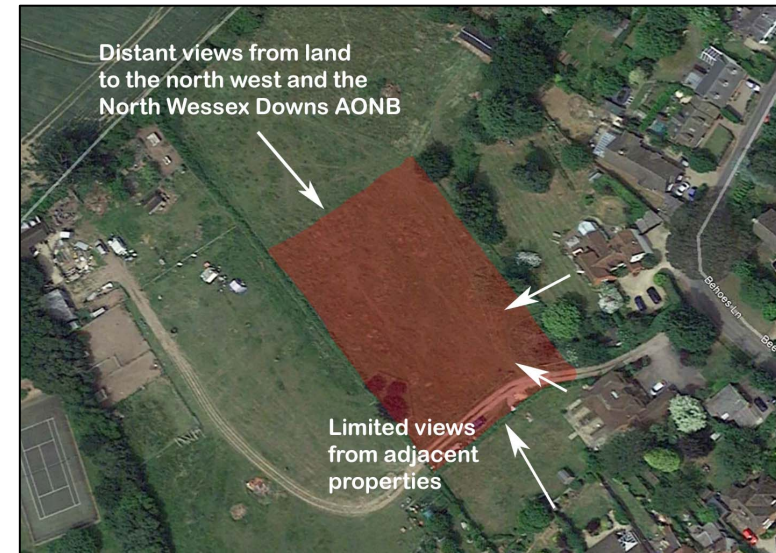
There are limited views from residents adjacent to the site.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **medium adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of limited landscape buffer planting along the north west site boundary, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site and would not detract from any longer views into the site.

Planting in front of the houses would limit the impact on residents nearby.



The medium adverse landscape and visual effects that can be mitigated means that **this site is suitable for development**.

7.5 WNP2-3 Rear of Yew Tree Farmhouse – behind Scrooby

Grid Reference 463796 181897 Assessed by MJ Smith 24/10/10

Description

Site 3 comprises an area (0.44 ha) of unimproved grassland with a smallholding and piggery to the rear of the site which is excluded from the area to be developed. Part of the site is used as a paddock. It lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the north west of Woodcote. The landowner is offering the site for four houses only, retaining the paddock and a buffer planting area to the south east of the site. There is another site adjacent to this site – site 2.

Access to the site is via a track leading from Behoes Lane. The track, which is owned by the owners of site 2, is not wide enough to provide adequate access for this and the adjacent site and will be widened.

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The site is not visible from Behoes Lane.

There are distant views from open ground to the north west but there are no footpaths in that area that have views to the site.

The site may be visible in distant views from the North Wessex Downs AONB but as it is a small site it is unlikely to be distinguishable from the general view of this part of the village.

There is limited visibility from adjacent residential properties in Beech Lane.

Previous Planning History

There have been no recent planning applications for this site.



Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of four houses on the site	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently unimproved grassland and paddock.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse Impact will result in the loss of a small greenfield site creating a land use less typical of the area which slightly diminishes the integrity of the setting.	Before/ without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Negligible
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	Unimproved grassland.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-3 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
	After Mitigation			Low	
Landscape condition	Typical, commonplace landscape with few features worthy of conservation.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	Medium			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	scape of relatively low importance. A landscape tolerant of change. Good potential for replacement or substitution.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium adverse	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of four houses on the site	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is no public access to the site and no views of the site from Behoes Lane. Limited views from residents - Yew Tree Farmhouse, Newhouse and properties in Beech	Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After Mitigation	Neutral
	Limited distant views from the land to the north west and from the North Wessex Downs AONB.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium adverse				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. However, the site makes a minor contribution to the overall landscape in this area.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **medium adverse**.

Visual Effect

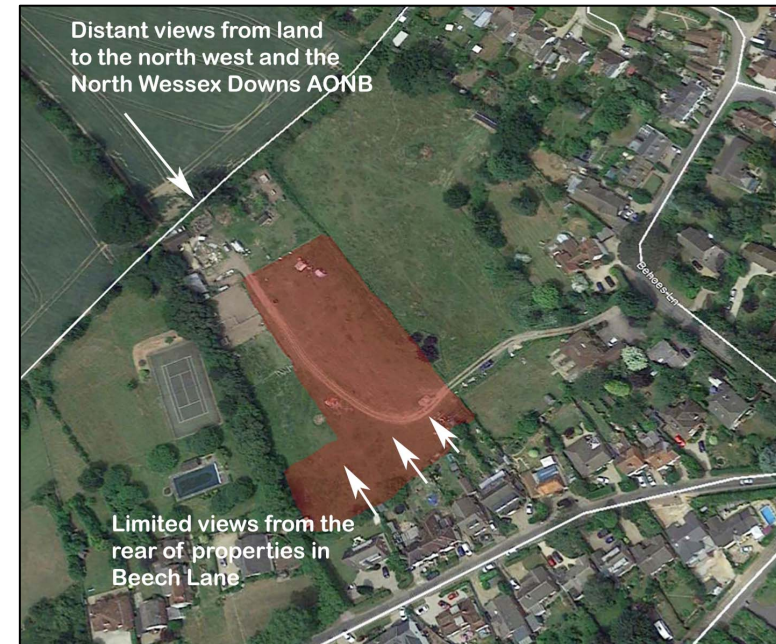
There are no views of the site from Behoes Lane and only distant views from the land to the north west. The small size of the site would make any distant view from the North Wessex Downs indistinguishable from the rest of the village in this area.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **medium adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of limited landscape buffer planting along the north west site boundary and, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site and would not detract from any longer views into the site.

Similarly, buffer planting to the south west of the site behind the houses in Beech Lane would screen the development from view. The existing view is of limited value as it includes the smallholding and piggery.



The medium adverse landscape and adverse visual effects that can be mitigated means that **this site is suitable for development**.

7.6 WNP2-4 Rear of 16 Bridle Path

Grid Reference 464237 181440 Assessed by GP Botting 2/11/20

Description

The 3.4 ha site is located to the south of the village, on land between Bridle Path and Goring Road. The site is predominantly an area of grassland consisting of small horse paddocks sub-divided by fencing and containing several small shed or stable buildings and a floodlit ménage. The site borders the rear gardens of the properties in Bridle Path to the north, and Goring Road to the west. The south of the site is enclosed by a mix of native hedgerow and trees, with an ancient woodland close to the southern boundary. The south western edge is formed by a tree belt, beyond which are further paddocks and part of Upper Covert woodland. A post and rail fence forms the eastern boundary of the site. The site is within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

The site is clearly visible, and forms an important part of the view, from footpath 411/9 which runs along the higher ground at the east of the site.

The site will be visible to residents of Bridle Path and, to a limited effect, residents of Goring Road.

Previous Planning History

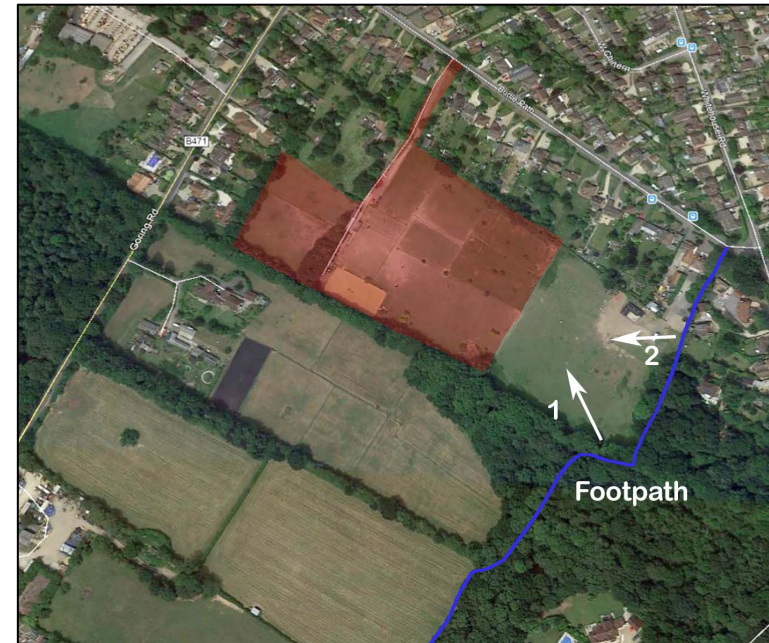
There have been two previous outline planning applications in the past five years: P18S0004/O and P16/S3306/O. Both were refused because of their impact on the landscape.



View 1



View 2



Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently used for grazing of horses and equestrian use.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the permanent loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	This is a greenfield site containing several small wooden shed or stable buildings.	Condition: ordinary medium value, Medium susceptibility to change, combined sensitivity = Medium .	High adverse Development would cause a change to the existing built form which destroys its integrity.	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Topography	The ground is relatively flat sloping from 168 metres at the south eastern boundary to 165 metres at the north western boundary	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	Unimproved grassland	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After mitigation	Negligible
Public access	There is no public access	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-4 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
	After Mitigation			Major	
Landscape condition	The site contributes a characteristically typical Chilterns paddock and long valued views	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	The site is characteristic of the AONB and development would result in significant changes to the landscape character, value and elements.	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site is a characteristic element of the Chilterns AONB designated in recognition of the area’s particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 25 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is no public access to the site. There are limited views from the bungalows and 1.5 storey homes on Bridle Path albeit across extensive rear gardens.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	There are views into the site from footpath 411/9 and long views (Greater than 15 km) across the AONB toward Didcot.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude <				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is assessed as typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Any construction would result in the irreversible loss of a series of small characteristic open fields and have an adverse effect on the landscape of the AONB locally. The development of this site would result in a large extension of built development into the countryside around Woodcote.

The valued impact of the site's contribution to the landscape for walkers emerging from the woodlands on the public footpath would be irretrievably lost.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

Visual Effect

Any development on this site would be visible from Woodcote Footpath 411/9 and degrade the visual amenity for walkers using the footpath because development would significantly degrade the local view from this footpath and intrude upon, and block, the long views towards the north west.

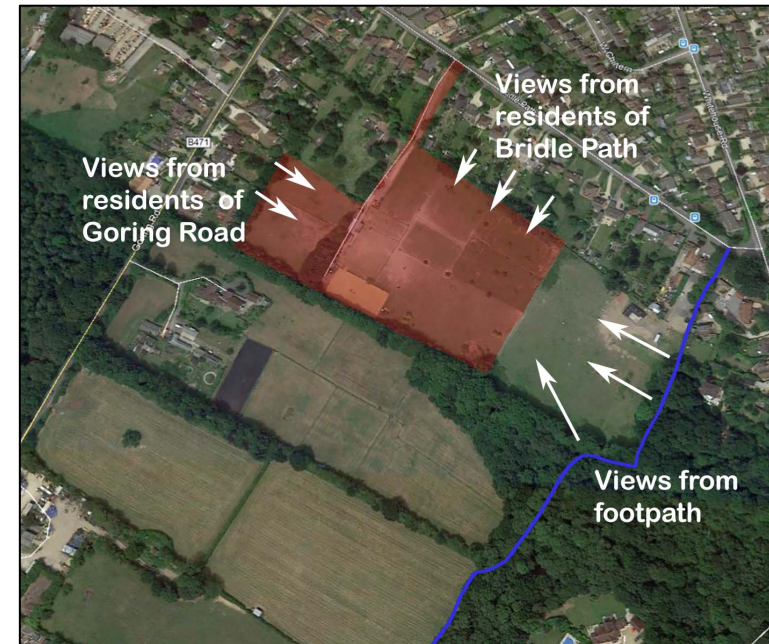
A number of residents would also be affected, mainly those occupying the houses in Bridle Path to the north east of the site, who experience direct views from the rear of their properties.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the north western site boundary could mitigate the impact of the development on Bridle Path residents' views. Buffer planting along the south eastern boundary would provide limited screening of the development but also restrict the longer views, compromise the important visual connections with the wider landscape and significantly alter the openness that make this part of the Chilterns AONB special.

Planting to mitigate visual impact would therefore exacerbate the landscape impacts by causing additional adverse changes to the prevailing landscape character. It is therefore not recommended.



The major adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.7 WNP2-6 Wood Lane

Grid Reference 463833 181705 Assessed by GP Botting 30/10/20

Description

This site is 1 ha of undeveloped species-rich, semi-improved, grassland, on the edge of the settlement. The site occupies the eastern side of a small dry valley alongside a Public Right of Way which leads south-south west into Elmore Park Wood (ancient and semi-natural woodland) which adjoins the south of the site. The site slopes steeply upwards from footpath 411/2. In the north eastern corner is a small, well-presented wooden stable building.

The whole of Woodcote is washed over by the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the site therefore falls within this statutory designation.

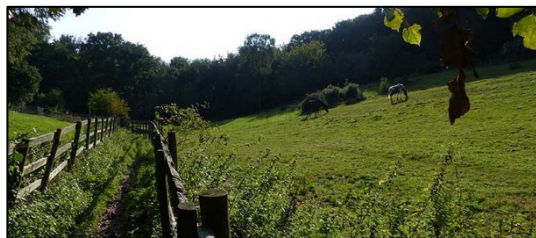
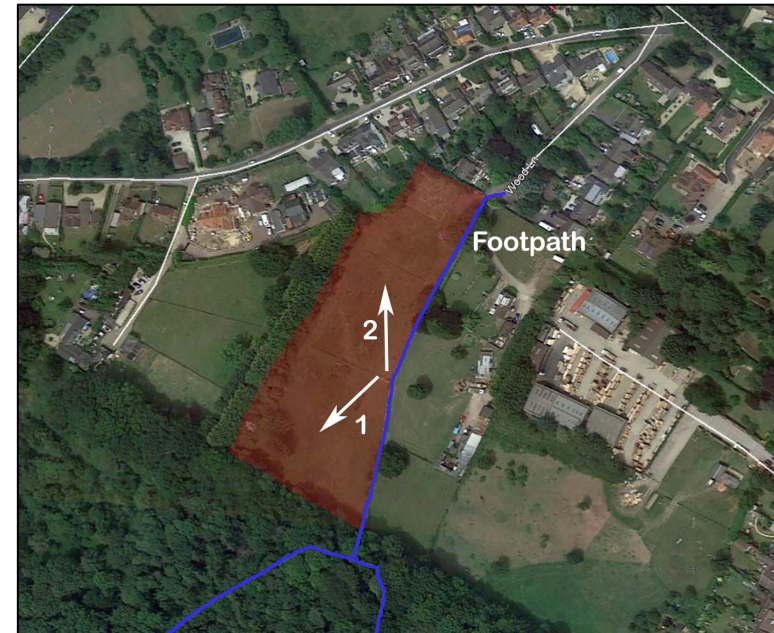
The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The site is clearly visible from the footpath and The Mill Stone, a house adjacent to the north-east corner of the site, and the Smallholding, a house on the high ground on the other side of the valley. Visibility from Beech Lane is limited to one residence having a restricted view through the thin tree line that bounds the western edge of the site.

Previous Planning History

In 2017 an outline application (P17/S3701) was refused because development would extend the built-up limits of the settlement and would detract from the character and appearance of the site and this part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



View 1



View 2

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently use for horse grazing	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	The north-east corner of the site contains a small, well-presented, wooden stable appropriate to the site's current use as a paddock.	Condition: Ordinary Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium .	High adverse Development would cause a change to the existing built form which destroys its integrity.	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Topography	The site slopes steeply upwards from the footpath on the eastern boundary ((147-149m) to the western boundary (151-155m). Viewed from the midpoint of the eastern boundary the increase in land slope exceeds 1 in 6	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High Adverse The site is one half of a steep dry valley. Development would have a significant effect on the valley landform with little potential for mitigation.	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Vegetation	Pasture and semi-improved grassland.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Public access	Footpath 411/2 runs along the bottom of the dry valley and forms the eastern boundary of the site. Development would require road access which could result in the urbanisation of the footpath	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse The footpath will change from a rural path through the valley to an urbanised path tightly bounded by housing and, at the northern end, high beech hedges.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-6 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The topography and landform on the site is a distinctive feature of the Chilterns AONB. The dry valley and deciduous woodland are typical of the special qualities of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Landscape condition	The site is an strong element of a very attractive local landscape whose distinct features are worthy of conserving. The use as a paddock for horses is typical of the AONB.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	The site is characteristic of the AONB and development would result in significant changes to the landscape character, value and elements.	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site is within the Chilterns AONB, an area designated because of its particularly distinctive and highly valued character.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 25 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Potential residential receptors are limited to The Millstone, adjacent to the site, the Smallholding on the opposite side of the valley and one residence in Beech Lane.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	Footpath 411/2, a public footpath frequently used by local people and recreational walkers, runs alongside the eastern boundary of the site.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The dry valley and deciduous woodland are typical of the special qualities of the AONB. Development would result in the irreversible loss of pasture in the dry valley and the views of the open valley sides from the footpath and Wood Lane, particularly at the southern most sensitive end. This would be harmful to the character and appearance of the site and therefore this part of the AONB.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

Visual Effect

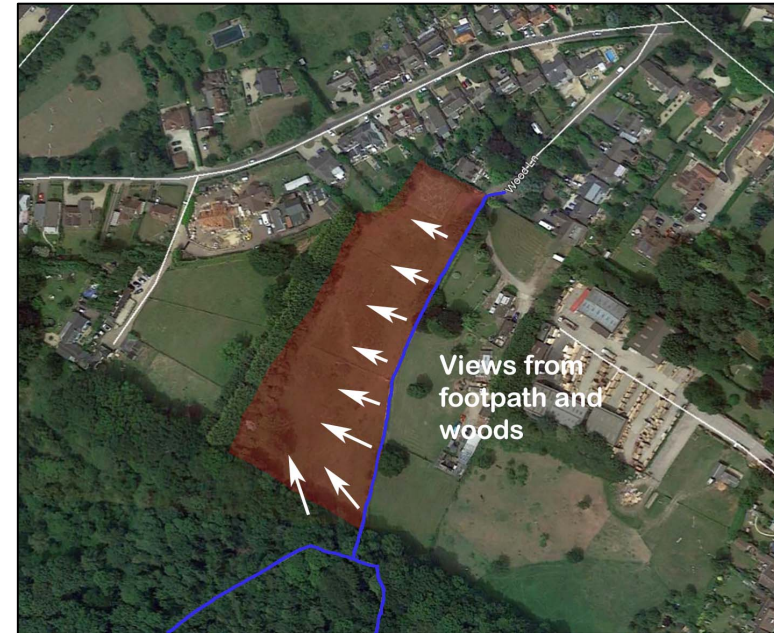
Any development on this site would be visible from footpath 411/2 and degrade the visual amenity for walkers using the footpath. Open views of pasture and the ancient, semi-natural, deciduous woodland would be largely lost.

The impact on local residents is small to negligible.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

The impact of development could be mitigated by restricting construction to the northern half of the site with screening separating it from an open southern half. This would, however, still result in the loss of valued views and urbanise the northern half of the footpath.



The major adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.8 WNP2-9 Beechwood Court

Grid Reference 464583 181101 Assessed by MB Aldridge 9/11/20

Description

Site 9 comprises an existing building of offices, some occupied, covering an area of some 0.25 ha. The building is just at the limit of the built environment of the village. Access to the site is from Long Toll. There is parking provided for all the offices and guest parking, currently.

The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

The site is stepped back from the road nestled in among trees in all directions. The site is not fully open to Long Toll as trees line both sides of the driveway. Should the entrance be widened to accommodate easier access the entire location becomes visible from the road and from the living spaces of the houses opposite.

The site is surrounded by woodland that forms part of The Chilterns AONB.

Previous Planning History

There has been one previous planning application P04/E0510 for the construction of the offices.





View 1



View 2



View 3

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently offices for rent or sale.	Ordinary condition Low value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Neutral There will no noticeable impact change to the land use, as the offices lend themselves to being adapted to flats.	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Built form	The site comprises offices. The building is a two-storey block with parking facility adjacent.	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity= Low	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a slight fall towards the south. The southern aspect of the site is used for parking.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	There are woods to the north, west and southern boundaries of the site.	Poor condition Low value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Public access	Currently the site is accessed from Long Toll road to a bespoke driveway and parking.	Good condition Low value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-9 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau. As a built brownfield site, the landscape character of the site is not considered to be typical of this part of the AONB.	Poor condition Low value Low susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After Mitigation	Neutral
Landscape condition	Brownfield site.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB	Medium			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Medium			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Neutral = Neutral				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 25 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is no public access to the site and no distinct views from Long Toll road. Overall there are limited distant views from the site given the surrounding woodland.	Low	Low	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Low x Low = Negligible				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Particularly in light of the significant woodlands that surround the site on three sides. As the buildings exist and shall be considered as a change of use the effect on the landscape will to a large extent remain as is today.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **neutral**.

Visual Effect

There are no significant distant views from the north, west and south of the site. The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **negligible**.

Recommendations

No further mitigation of visual effects is feasible. The site is already screened from views from Long Toll except at the entrance.



The neutral landscape effects and negligible visual effects means that **this site is suitable for development**.

7.9 WNP2-16 Land North of Beech Lane

Grid Reference 463371 181804 Assessed by MB Aldridge 9/11/20

Description

Site 16 comprises a 0.4 ha greenfield site currently used as a paddock and manege. The site is set among houses along Beech Lane and backs onto arable land. It lies within the Chilterns AONB at the extremity of the built area of to the west of the village. The roadside and pathway along the northern perimeter are tree-lined and lend to the overall visual effect of the area. The site lies at 150 metres above sea level and land to the north drops towards the Goring Gap.

This part of Beech Lane has a loose knit, semi-rural character and appearance. The site is considered to make a valuable contribution as an open and important space within the village and contributes to the loose knit nature of this part of the Chilterns AONB.

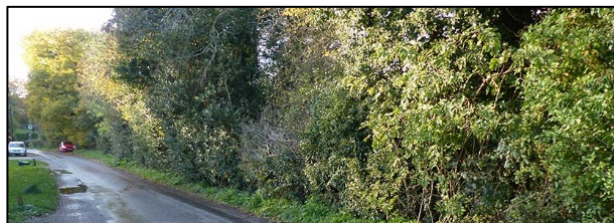
The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The site is clearly visible from Beech Lane and also from housing located to the north west and east of the site. The site boundary along Beech Lane and to the north west is heavily endowed with trees.

Previous Planning History

There have been eight previous planning applications (P64/H0354, P65/H0316, P69/H0543, P69/H0752, P75/S0112/O, P80/S0720/O, P84/S0644/O and P15/S3434/FUL). All were refused, the last five applications were also refused on appeal.



View 1



View 2



View 3

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently arable agriculture used as a horse paddock and manege.	Ordinary condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a slight fall towards the north west.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The site is in arable cultivation. Trees line the southern and north-western boundary.	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-16 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
	After Mitigation			Major	
Landscape condition		Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Potential residential receptors include housing to the south in Beech Lane, and, to houses located adjacent to the north west boundary.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	Beech Lane is heavily used by walkers.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Any construction would result in the irreversible loss of an open arable greenfield site. It would have an adverse effect on the landscape of the Chilterns AONB as it would result in the loss of openness in this area.

The site forms a distinctive gap in the established building pattern. It has an informal and natural road frontage with glimpsed views through. The site's use for equestrian grazing reinforces the informal juxtaposition of development and rural land use that is characteristic of the immediate locality. The pattern contributes to the underlying and distinctive landscape mosaic and creates a semi-rural character to this section of Beech Lane. The development of two-storey buildings would bring an urban formality and uniformity to the lane and would also consolidate the building pattern on the northern side of Beech Lane. Housing would have an adverse impact on the tranquillity and rural character and would result in the loss of the loose settlement edge and rural character.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

Visual Effect

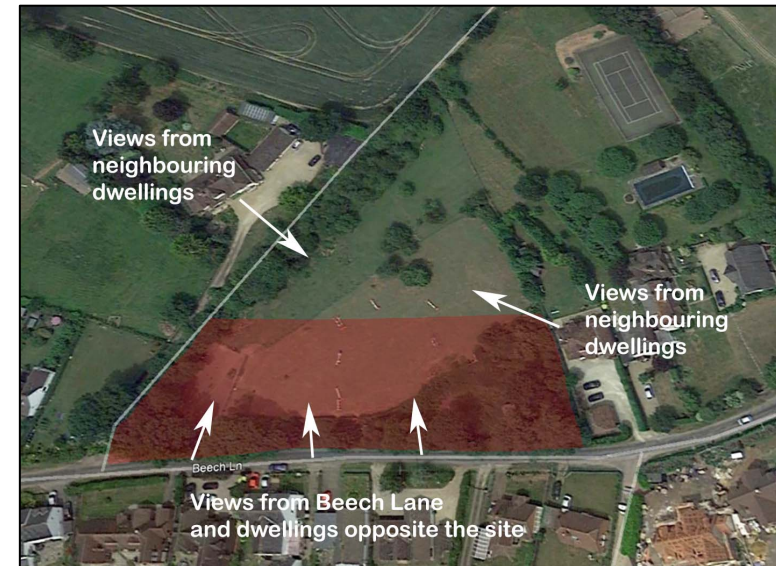
Any development on this site would be visible from both Beech Lane and the housing lying to north-west and from Behoes Lane in the north-east, as the land is relatively flat across this section of the village and arable fields. During the winter months the level of foliage reduces the masking of the site from all sides, resulting in the views from all the houses adjacent to the site.

Although a large proportion of the hedgerow could be retained to provide screening, the lane would require widening along the length of the site boundary as well as cutting back of the hedgerow to facilitate visibility. The vehicular access would open views into the site and the development would be visible from the road at this point. This would diminish the prevailing semi-rural character of the locality.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the site boundaries, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site, particularly along the southern and northern edges.



The major adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.10 WNP2-20 Foxcovert Farm

Grid Reference 463972 181200 Assessed by MB Aldridge 9/11/20

Description

Site 20 comprises a 0.66 ha brownfield site. It is situated almost at the southernmost point of the parish on the Goring Road. There are houses to the south, and opposite in the woods is one further house. The northern boundary of the site extends onto cultivated arable fields. To the west, are major woods forming part of the Chilterns AONB, which include the public footpath 411/17 through Fox Covert Woods (View 1).

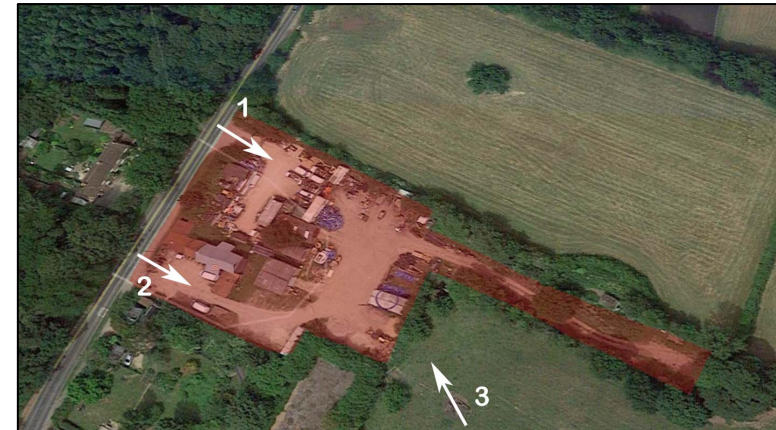
The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

The site is clearly visible from Goring Road and glimpsed from Shirvells Hill. Fox Covert woods are opposite the site entrance on Goring Road. There are distant views from the Upper Covert woods and from footpath 411/9 (View 3). This view is also downslope of the woods and therefore shows off more of the site than a flatter landscape: a drop of some 10 metres. The front of the site is clearly visible from the footpath opposite in Fox Covert woods which opens onto Goring road.

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications



View 1



View 2



View 3

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently a brown field site used by a water engineering firm.	Poor condition Low value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low Beneficial Impact will result in the potential improvement of the brownfield site. A new development would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view.	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Built form	The current built form is industrial in nature and scale befitting the type of business carried on today. Materials range from wooden buildings to brick and rendered facades. The site includes various sized slabs of concrete, wood and metal. The industrial aspect of the buildings further compounds the man-made dominance over the potentially attractive natural elements of the site and surroundings.	Poor condition Low value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Medium Beneficial	Before/ Without mitigation	Low beneficial
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat at an approximate elevation of 160 metres and slopes upward to the rear of the site rising to almost 170 metres towards the Upper Covert woods behind the site.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	Little vegetation apart from boundary hedges to the rear.	Poor condition Low value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ Without	Neutral

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Public access				mitigation	
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-20 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau. As a built brownfield site, the landscape character of the site is not considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The site is an isolated location some 250 m from the edge of the built area of the village and is prominent in the landscape.	Poor condition Low value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After Mitigation	Neutral
Landscape condition	Brown field site.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB but Brown field site.	Medium			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape capable of accepting limited change with some effects on landscape character, value, features or elements.	Medium			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of moderate importance and rarity. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape capable of accepting some change. Moderate potential for replacement or substitution.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Neutral = Neutral	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There are views from the living areas of residential properties both adjacent and behind the site on Shirvells Hill.	Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	Medium
	Frequently used footpaths that run both opposite (411/17) and behind the site (411/9). The entrance to one of the footpaths is literally opposite the site entrance.	Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	Medium
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x High = High				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Whilst the site is currently a brownfield site used industrially, it. Would benefit from a change of use to residential properties. In turn this would have a beneficial impact to the site and its surroundings.

The isolated, prominent location remote from the built area of the village means that development will have a significant impact on the landscape.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **neutral**.

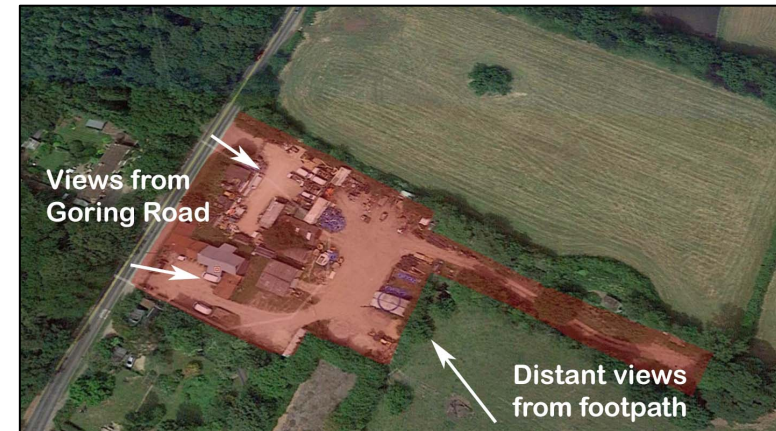
Visual Effect

As the site is highly visible both from the Goring Road and also from the two significant footpaths, one to the front of the site and the other to the rear of the site, the visual effect must be considered when developing the site making a natural and indistinguishable part of the village and surrounds.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as high **adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the site boundaries, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site, particularly along the eastern edge.



The neutral landscape and high adverse visual effects means that, even with limited mitigation, **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development.**

7.11WNP2-21 Land at Bouchier Fencing

Grid Reference 463953 181586 Assessed by MB Aldridge 9/11/20

Description

Site 21 comprises a large (0.8 ha) open area and horse stables adjacent to Bouchier Fencing supplies, and directly behind a row of seven properties along the Goring Road. The site is also adjacent to the Fox Covert Wood. Footpath 411/2 runs through a small valley to the north west and links to footpath 411/17 through Foxcovert Wood. The site slopes downwards in a south westerly direction by some 10m toward the woods. The site is part of the Chilterns AONB.

The site is adjacent to site WNP19 allocated in the original Neighbourhood Plan. The proposed layout of the site includes a buffer space to the north west to separate the development area from site WNP19 and a buffer space to the south west to separate the development area from the ancient woodland.

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The site is partially visible from footpath 411/2 which is at a lower level than the site. The site is also visible from footpath 411/17 as it passes into the woods. The entrance to the site is visible from Goring Road.



Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications



View 1



View 2

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently arable agriculture. Part of the site has horse stables and a paddock.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are a few timber buildings on this site. However, the greater part of the site is made up of a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a fall towards the north west.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The area that comprises the site is arable land, used for grazing. To the west are significant ancient woods.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-21 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	Medium
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape with some distinctive features. Scope to improve management of land use and land cover. Some features worthy of conservation.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB. Limited potential for substitution Undulating topography alongside the established vegetation structure and extensive woodlands provide positive landscape features.	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a moderate importance. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape capable of accepting some change. Moderate potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x Medium = High	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Dwellings to the south east on Goring Road will have views into the site.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	Walkers on footpaths 411/2 and 411/17 will have limited views of the site. As the houses on Goring Road are mostly single storey there may be some limited views over and between the houses from passers-by on Goring Road.	High	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After Mitigation	Low
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. However, the site makes a medium contribution to the overall landscape in this area.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **high adverse**.

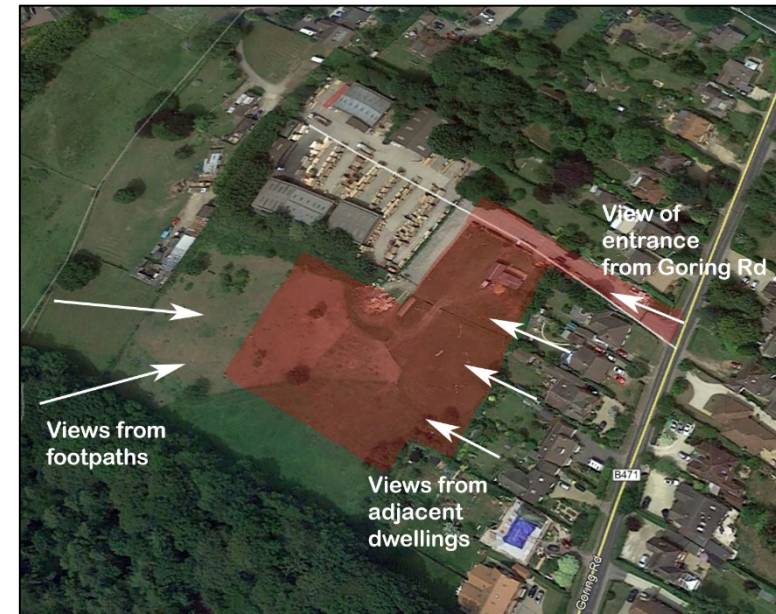
Visual Effect

There are only limited views from housing on Goring Road and from footpaths into the woods.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting to the north west and south west of the development area, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site, particularly from the footpaths



The high adverse landscape and major adverse visual effects, which cannot be totally mitigated means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.12 WNP2-25 Land west of Church Farm

Grid Reference 464488 182148 Assessed by GP Botting 31/10/20

Description

This site comprises the northern 60% of a 0.46 ha field on the north-eastern corner of the junction of the Reading, Oxford, Goring, and South Stoke roads, making an area of 0.29 ha for development. The site is bounded to the west by the Oxford Road, to the south by the Reading Road while the north and eastern boundaries consist of industrial units. The field is not in productive agricultural use and has a small container stored at its northern-most point.

Standing close to the eastern edge of the site, but separated by industrial buildings, is the grade II listed Church Farmhouse. To the south-east of the site, partially separated by the access track and an industrial unit, are two grade II listed buildings: a small weatherboarded granary and a large, thatched barn in a poor state of repair.

The landowner has offered the site for employment use.

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

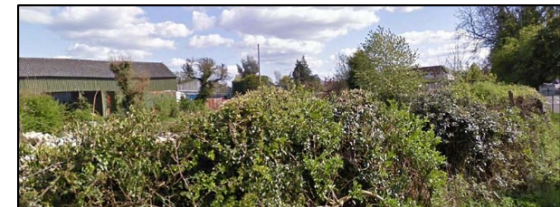
The site is clearly visible from the track leading to the industrial units and there are views (1 and 2) into the site from the car park at the eastern end of the Village Hall. High hedges (2 to 3m) along the eastern boundary and all but 50m of the southern boundary block views into the site from the Oxford Road and crossroads. The roof of an industrial unit is visible above the hedge at the junction of Tidmore Lane and Oxford Road (view 3).



View 1



View 2



View 3

Previous Planning History

In 2004 an application (P04/E1173/O) for housing on the whole site was refused following an unsuccessful appeal. There has been no application to develop only the rear of the field.



Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; 7 assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. single storey development of the site for employment use	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site. There are three grade II listed buildings near the site but the intervening presence of industrial units makes the site's relationship to the listed buildings weak	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently unproductive grassland unused except for the location of a storage container	Ordinary condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse Development will cause a significant, permanent change in the land use and the loss of a non-productive, partially cluttered greenfield site.	Before/ without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Negligible
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is flat at around 163 m	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The land is unimproved grassland surrounded in part by mixed hedging, primarily hawthorn with some dog rose, holly, maple and, on the eastern boundary a substantial ash and maple tree.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse Some hedging will be lost to create an access to the site.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Public access	There is no public access to the sight although a narrow unmetalled track runs alongside part of the entire field to give access to the industrial units.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-25 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After Mitigation	Neutral
Landscape condition	The current use of the field and the immediate presence of the industrial units make the condition of this part of the landscape unexceptional (=ordinary).	Good			
Landscape value	This field sits between high hedges and industrial units and makes little contribution to the adjacent AONB landscape. Good potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	Well-designed changes to this field could be accommodated without degrading the surrounding landscape.	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	This field is washed over by the AONB but has no particularly sensitive elements nor does it add to the character of the AONB locally. Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Good potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x Negligible = Neutral	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. single storey development of the site for employment use	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Potential receptors include those using the Village Hall Car Park and adjacent footpath and those using the industrial units on the northern and eastern boundaries of the site.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Low beneficial
	There is a limited view through the gated entrances for pedestrians and cyclists using Reading Road and for walkers using Tidmore Lane, a restricted byway.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Low beneficial
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Low x Low = Negligible				

Effect on the Landscape

This site is part of a field of unproductive grassland largely screened by high hedging (2-3m) containing several mature trees and bordered by a small industrial estate. The site contains a container and although washed over by the AONB partial development would be unlikely to change any significant or valued views.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **neutral**.

Visual Effect

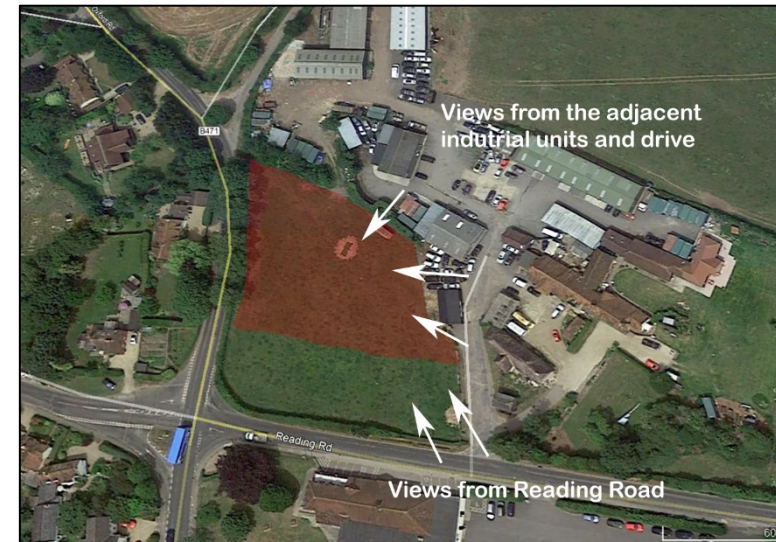
Development on this site would be visible from the footpath on the Reading Road and the adjacent industrial units. Development would not be visible from the Oxford Road and any loss of visual amenity would be negligible with no residents affected.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **negligible**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects. The visibility of the development and impact on the local landscape can be substantially reduced by:

- landscape buffer planting along the existing hedge/tree boundaries, alongside the western edge of the track into the industrial site, and along the southern edge of any development;
- leaving the southern, approximately 30m deep, strip undeveloped;
- development being no higher than two stories.



The low impact on the landscape and visual effects when suitably mitigated means that **this site is suitable for development**.

7.13 WNP2-27 Land at Greenmore Farm (behind the Black Lion)

Grid Reference 464761 181347 Assessed by MJ Smith 3/11/20

Description

Site 27 comprises a small greenfield site of about 0.15 ha. Bridleway 19 runs to the west of the site. The site is located behind the Black Lion public house and adjacent to the old coal yard (part of site WNP2-43). The site comprises species rich unimproved grassland and is bounded by a 1.8m close boarded fence to the west and trees to the remaining sides. Access to the site would be from Greenmore over the first part of the bridleway.

The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

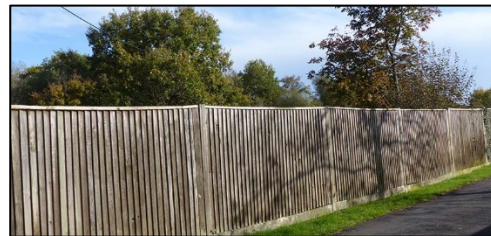
The site is visible from the bridleway. Although the fence blocks views of the ground (views 1 & 2), any development would require at least part of the fence to be removed for access and two storey buildings would be clearly visible over the fence, if retained. View 3 shows the site looking over the fence.

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications for this site.



View 1



View 2



View 3

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently unused.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground slopes down to the south east by 4m over a distance of some 65m.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The site comprises species rich unimproved grassland surrounded on three sides by trees.	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After mitigation	Medium
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-27 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
	After Mitigation			High	
Landscape condition	Some features worthy of conservation. Sense of place.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	Medium			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Valued elements of moderate importance. Value typically recognised by regional or local designation. A landscape capable of accepting some change.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x Medium = High				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Walkers, cyclists and horse riders on the adjacent bridleway would have an uninterrupted view of the site, despite the existing fence.	High	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
	The adjacent site (the old reservoir) is scheduled for development as a site in the original neighbourhood plan. Residents on this site will have a clear view of this development.	High	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x Medium = High				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. The ground cover is currently species rich grassland which may provide wildlife habitat. Development of this site would destroy any such habitat.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **high adverse**.

Visual Effect

Users of the bridleway will have an uninterrupted view of the development on this site. To provide access to the site will create a significant opening that will be visible from Greenmore as well as the bridleway.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **high adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the western site boundary, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site, however, tree planting would have an overbearing effect on the bridleway. It is, therefore, not recommended.



The high adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.14 WNP2-29 Land at Greenmore

Grid Reference 464883 181537 Assessed by MJ Smith 1/11/20

Description

Site 29 comprises a large greenfield site of about 1.7 ha. It lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the south east of Woodcote. The site has a frontage onto Greenmore and extends back and behind the adjacent dwelling and the site WNP2-43. The site comprises unimproved grassland although the aerial view on Google Earth shows signs of previous ploughing of parts of the site suggesting previous arable use. There are a number of buildings in the rear section behind site WNP2-43. There is a gated access to the site on Greenmore. The site is fairly flat, but beyond the rear boundary the ground falls away to the south east.

This part of Greenmore has a loose knit, semi-rural character and appearance. The site is considered to make a valuable contribution as an open and important space within the village and contributes to the loose knit nature of this part of the Chilterns AONB.

The site is bounded by hedges which vary in height. At the time of the site visit the hedge bordering Greenmore was about 2m high, but the desk study using google Earth indicated that this hedge had been trimmed to a lower height in the past.

The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

The site is visible through the gated entrance from Greenmore and, as indicated had been more visible when the hedge was lower in the past. The site is also visible in distant views from land to the south east because of the elevated position relative to the land to the south east.



View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4

View 4 was taken from Google Earth Streetview from a time when the hedge was cut lower.

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications for this site.



Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land has been used for arable agriculture but appears to have little use now.	Ordinary condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are some buildings on this site although most of the site is greenfield.	Ordinary condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The site comprises mostly unimproved grassland although there are signs of previous cultivation.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-29 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Ordinary condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Sense of peace.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB Attractive scenic quality. Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is limited visibility of the site from residential properties on the opposite side of Greenmore.	Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
	The site has some limited visibility for walkers, cyclists and riders using Greenmore. The development could result in some loss of the hedge increasing the visibility.	Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
	There are distant views from land to the south east as the site is elevated relative to the land to the south east and prominent in views.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x High = High				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Any development would result in the loss of an open largely greenfield site. It would have an adverse effect on the landscape of the Chilterns AONB as it would result in the loss of openness in this location. The development of this site would result in a large extension of built development into the countryside around Woodcote.

This stretch of Greenmore is semi-rural in nature. To the south east of the road there are only a few dwellings set back from the road and well screened. To the north west of the road there are few dwellings that front onto the road and most of the adjacent development is screened by tall hedges. The site forms a distinctive gap in the established building pattern. It has an informal and natural road frontage with glimpsed views through. The pattern contributes to the underlying and distinctive landscape mosaic and creates a semi-rural character to this section of Greenmore. The development of two-storey buildings would bring an urban formality and uniformity to the road. Housing would have an adverse impact on the rural character and would result in the loss of the loose settlement edge.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

Visual Effect

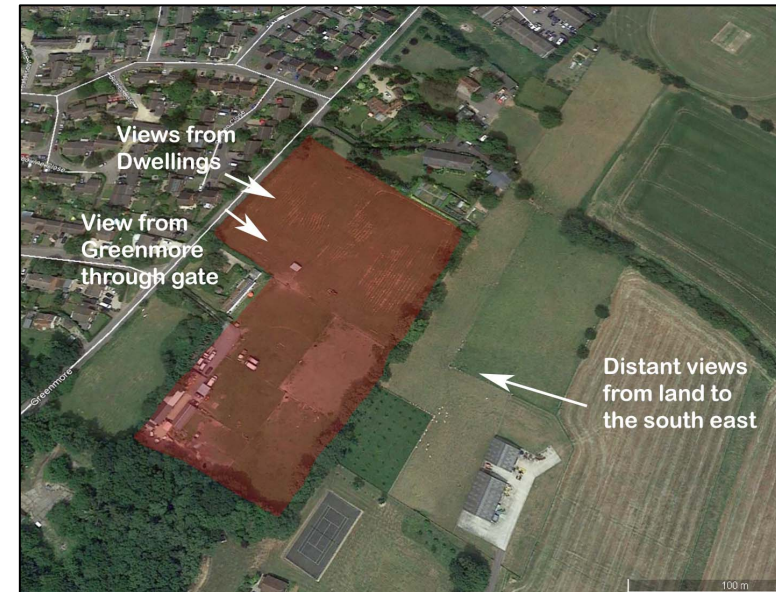
Any development of this site would be visible from Greenmore and the adjacent residential properties. Visual amenity would be degraded for walkers and cyclists using Greenmore. Any development would also be highly visible from the land to the south east because of the elevated position of this site.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **high adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the site boundaries, could help to provide some filtering effect on views of the development on this site, particularly along the south eastern edge. However, buffer planting would also restrict the longer views and compromise the important visual connections with the wider landscape and would considerably alter the openness that make this part of the Chilterns AONB special.

Planting to mitigate visual impact would therefore exacerbate impacts by causing additional adverse changes to the prevailing landscape character. It is therefore not recommended.



The adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.15 WNP2-30 Land west of Garden Centre (Church Farm)

Grid Reference 464721 182111 Assessed by GP Botting 2/11/20

Description

Site 30 is a level, rectangular, grassed field of about 1.46 ha not, at the time of inspection, in productive agricultural use. The site runs north from the Reading Road opposite the Village Hall car park, Community Centre and Schools and falls wholly within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty within LCA 8 Chilterns Escarpment/LCT Enclosed escarpment towards the south eastern edge of the AONB.

There are strong boundaries to the south, where views are blocked by a high (2-3m) mixed hedge, and the eastern end by a bungalow (for which planning application P17/S3283/FUL applies) and a house with associated garden centre buildings. As presented, there is an 80 m wide strip of grassland, with a 2m hedge running north-south down the centre, separating the site from the cluster of farmhouse and industrial buildings on the west of the site.

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

A strong hedge blocks all views into field from the Reading Road. A single, very limited, view across an overgrown gate at the extreme south-eastern corner of the site is now blocked by a hoarding above the gate (views 1, 2 and 3). There are also views from the residential property on the eastern boundary. Views from the farmhouse on the west of the site are blocked by a 2 m hedge.

Walkers along Tidmore Lane have occasional views through the hedge/tree line (views 4 and 5).

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications for this site. Planning Application P17/S3201/FUL for two new houses on the eastern edge of the site was approved in 2017.



View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4



View 5

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site. To the west, beyond a 2 m high hedge, are three grade II listed buildings: Church Farmhouse (80m), Church Farmhouse Barn (100m), and Church Farm Granary (105m).	Medium condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ without mitigation	Low adverse
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Land use	The land use is currently unused, semi-improved, grassland.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	Medium
Built form	This is a greenfield site containing no built structures.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The site is semi-improved grassland with a hedge running east-west across the centre of the site. There is a mixed hedge bordering the site on the Reading Road which contains a variety of species including hawthorn, maple, holly and dog rose.	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse The landowner has indicated that the hedge across the middle of the sight will be relocated along the northern boundary.	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After mitigation	Neutral
Public access	There is no public access	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-30 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
	After Mitigation			Medium	
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Tranquillity reduced by presence of schools, community centre, playground and high number of traffic movements.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB but offering no public views. High potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	The site is located within the AONB and, as such, sensitive to the replacement of a greenfield with housing.	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site is typical of the ANOB but contains no particularly distinctive landscape features.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There are no views from residential properties. Views for pedestrians, cyclist and motorists using the Reading Road are very limited by a strong 2- 3m hedge running along the southern boundary of the site.	Medium	Low adverse Due to the current lack of views any development will not be a major change to the visual amenity of the area despite being a significant change to the land use.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Negligible
	There are limited views from Tidmore Lane, depending on the state of tree/hedge line edging the lane, to the northern boundary of the site some 135 m distant.	Medium	Low adverse Relocation of the hedge to the rear of the site will block views from Tidmore Lane.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Low = Low				

Effect on the Landscape

Development will result in the loss of a greenfield site on the edge of the village. The site is screened to the extent that the impact on the landscape is low so that even though the site is a small field characteristic of the AONB in this area the overall effect on the landscape is identified as **medium adverse**.

Visual Effect

Any development on this site would be visible from parts of the surrounding hedging removed to provide access and, in small part, from Tidmore Lane, a restricted by-way. The only residents that would be affected are the occupants of the house on the Garden Centre at the west of the site. The residents of Church Farmhouse, who own the site, would also have a view of any development.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **low adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation

The visibility of the development and impact on the local landscape can be substantially reduced by:

- replanting the lost hedge across the centre of the site with a similar hedge along the northern boundary which would screen development from observers on Tidmore Lane;
- improving the landscape buffer planting along the western edge of the site;
- adding landscape buffer planting to the western edge of the site;
- minimising the loss of hedge on the Reading Road required to access any development; and
- development being no higher than two stories.



The medium impact on the landscape and low visual effects when suitably mitigated means that **this site is suitable for development**.

7.16 WNP2-33 Land south of Beech Lane (Goats Gambol)

Grid Reference 463745 181705 Assessed by GP Botting 5/11/20

Description

This 0.5 ha site is an enclosed flat area of open and grassed land, separated into paddocks by post and rail fencing adjacent to the residential property Goats Gambol, a stable block and some sheds with access via a long narrow driveway off Beech Lane. To the north the site is bounded by low density housing, while to the south-east the land falls into a dry, wooded valley. On its southern side the site is adjacent to Elmore Park woodland which is both an ancient woodland and a proposed local wildlife site. The site falls entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

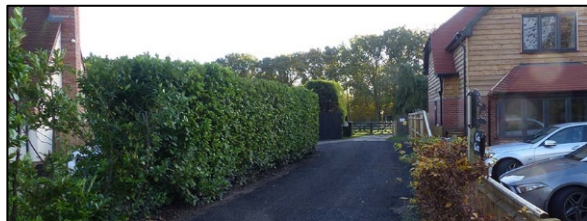
Although relatively well contained by vegetation on the boundaries, parts of the development would be visible from Beech Lane, and it would be likely that development on the south-east of the site would be noticeable in views from a public footpath (411/2) that passes across open countryside some 70 m below. The development would also be clearly visible to occupants of Levant and the houses at the Conifers.

Previous Planning History

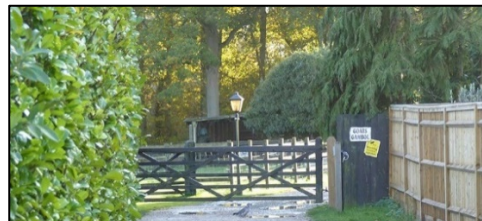
In 2005 permission was granted (P05/E0308) to erect a two storey and a single storey side extension.

In 2013 the refusal of permission to erect 10 houses (P13/S3798/O) was upheld at appeal (APP/Q3115/A/14/2223330)

In 2016 permission was granted, on appeal, APP/Q3115/W/17/3171547 to demolish and replace the existing dwelling with new dwelling. Demolish and replace existing stables with new bungalow dwelling (P16/S2714/FUL)



View 1



View 2

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of part of the site with four houses	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently small unused paddocks.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	Medium
Built form	Currently there is one house, a stable block and some sheds adjacent to the site. Planning permission has been obtained to demolish both the house and stable block and replace them with a two story and a single-story dwelling.	Condition: Ordinary Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium .	Negligible Neither the existing buildings nor those replacements that have planning permission will be removed.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is a flat field at the top of land (outside the development area) which drops away steeply into a dry valley.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	Development would lead to the loss of heavily grazed grassland with no known ecological importance. Access would require the removal of leylandii hedging.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Public access	There is no public access.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-33 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment.	Ordinary condition High value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
	After Mitigation			Low	
Landscape condition	Typical smallholding landscape with limited variety and distinctiveness, tranquil but with few features worthy of conservation and capable of improvement.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	The limited visibility of the site limits the sensitivity of the immediate landscape to some, mitigated, development.	Medium			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site does not make a distinctive contribution to the landscape although development would result in the loss of paddocks in the AONB.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x medium = Medium	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of part of the site with four houses	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Residential receptors are, primarily, housing to the north on Beech Lane.	Medium	Low adverse Development would, largely, be behind houses in Beech Lane and, therefore, the visual impact will be limited to the residents of adjacent properties.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Low
	A frequently used public footpath (411/2) runs through the dry valley some 60 m below the rear of the site.	Medium	Medium adverse Walkers on footpath 411/2 may, depending on the height and positioning of any development of the site have partial views of the development.	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After Mitigation	Low
	There is a limited view through the access drive off Beech Lane.	Low	Low adverse Walkers and properties opposite will have a limited view through the access off Beech Lane.	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium				

Effect on the Landscape

This is a small paddock typical of the character of the landscape in this part of the AONB.

Development could be designed and mitigated such that the impact, although a permanent loss of grassland, would not result in a major change to the landscape nor introduce a prominent element into the AONB.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **medium adverse**.

Visual Effect

Development on this site will be visible to walkers and some local residents in Beech Lane and, subject to design and mitigation, walkers on footpath 411/2. Overall, however the impact is likely to be small.

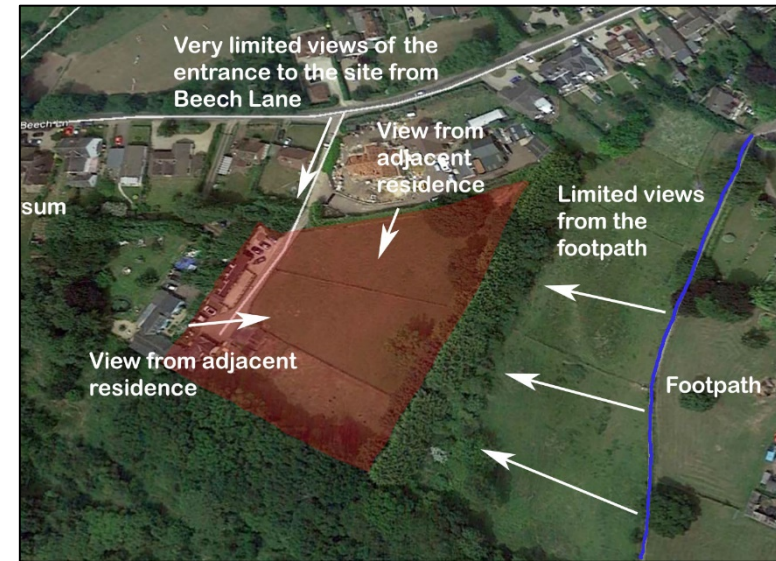
The impact on local residents is small to negligible.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **medium adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of:

- Limiting the development to a central strip running diagonally NE to SW across the site;
- Strengthening the south-eastern border (and thus protecting the views from the footpath) with a buffer strip (some 15m wide) with native hedge and tree planting; and
- Locating the gardens of new homes adjacent to the buffer strip.



With satisfactory mitigation, as proposed, the landscape effect would be **medium adverse** and the impact on visual effect **medium adverse**, which means that **this site is suitable for development**.

7.17 WNP2-34 Land south of Red Lane (Hildred fields)

Grid Reference 464654 182364 Assessed by MJ Smith 28/10/20

Description

Site 34 is a greenfield site comprising two large, open arable fields of about 23 ha in total. It lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the north of Woodcote some 200m beyond the built area of the village. Both fields are surrounded by tall hedges. Tidmore Lane (a restricted byway 411/27) borders both fields to the south. The A4074 Oxford to Reading road borders both fields to the north and a footpath (411/1) leading from Tidmore Lane to the A4074 borders the western field to the east. Both fields are reasonably flat. The site is characteristic of the LCA in this area.

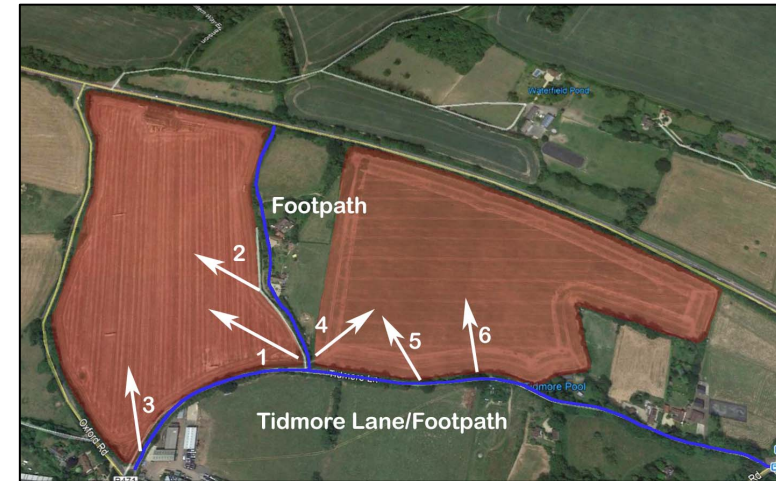
The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

Visual Envelope

The fields are clearly visible from the gated entrances on Tidmore Lane and intermittent views are visible through the hedges from Tidmore Lane and the footpath from Tidmore Lane to the A4074.

Previous Planning History

A planning application (P19/S4050/FUL) to use the western field for equestrian purposes has been approved.



View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4



View 5



View 6

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently arable agriculture.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The western field that forms part of this site is in arable cultivation. The western field is being set up as an equestrian centre. Both fields are surrounded by hedges which contain specimen trees.	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse There will be some loss of boundary hedge to provide access to the site	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Public access	There is no public access to the site, but there are public footpaths adjacent to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-34 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Sense of peace.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There are significant views from residential properties between the two fields (Massey's Pightle and Field Cottage).	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	Frequently used footpaths (part of the Chiltern Way Extension) run along the borders of the fields. There are views through the gated entrances to the fields and through gaps in the hedgerow from Tidmore Lane (restricted byway 411/27). There are views from the footpath 411/1.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. Any construction would result in the irreversible loss of an open arable greenfield site. It would have an adverse effect on the landscape of the Chilterns AONB as it would result in the loss of openness in this area. The development of this site would result in a large extension of built development into the countryside around Woodcote.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

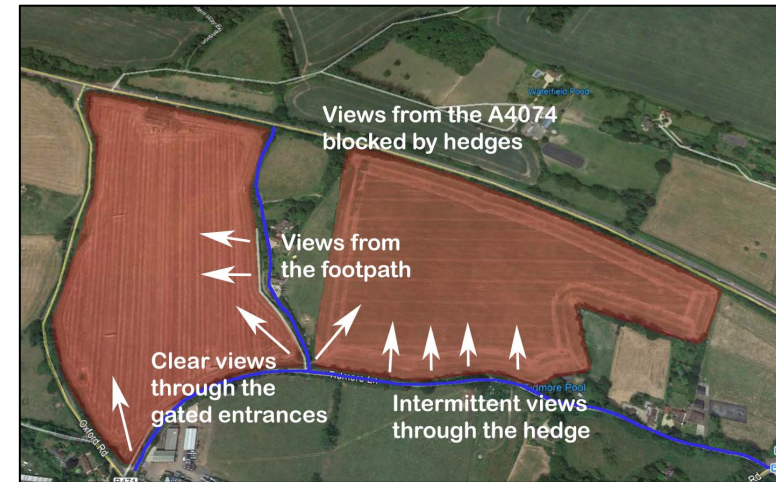
Visual Effect

Any development on this site would be visible from the Chiltern Way Extension footpath. Visual amenity would be degraded for walkers using the footpath and Tidmore Lane. The residents of the cottages adjacent to the fields would also be affected. Views from the A4074 are blocked by the tall hedges, although there may be some intermittent views from passing motorists in the winter season when the hedges have lost their foliage.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, by landscape planting within the site would help to improve the view of the site from the footpaths but would lose the current open feel and tranquillity of the landscape in this area.



The major adverse landscape and visual effects means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.18 WNP2-43 Land east of Greenmore (Bishops Yard & Paddock)

Grid Reference 464781 181450 Assessed by MJ Smith 1/11/20

Description

Site 43 comprises an unused employment site – the old coal yard (to the south west) and a paddock (to the north east). It lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the south east of Woodcote. The landowner has indicated that he wishes to retain the existing use of the coal yard as an employment site, so this assessment is confined to the paddock as a potential site for housing. The paddock is about 0.3 ha and comprises unimproved grassland.

The site is bounded by Greenmore to the north west and by hedgerow and trees on the other sides. The site is flat with a slight fall to the north. This part of Greenmore has a loose knit, semi-rural character and appearance. The site is considered to make a valuable contribution as an open and important space within the village and contributes to the loose knit nature of this part of the Chilterns AONB.

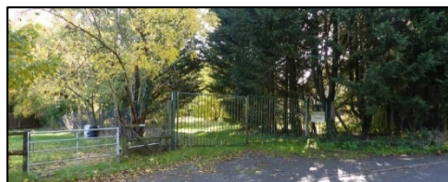
The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

The site is clearly visible from Greenmore. The site is also visible from residential properties on the opposite side of Greenmore. The surrounding hedges and trees block any views from the open ground to the south and east.

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications for this site



View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently as a paddock.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a slight fall towards the north.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The paddock comprises unimproved grassland and is surrounded by hedges and trees on three sides. Some trees may be lost to create adequate amenity space for the dwellings and there is limited capacity for replacement on site.	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After mitigation	Medium
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-43 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x High = High				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	The site is fully visible from residential properties on the opposite side of Greenmore. The development will have a permanent effect on the views.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	The site is highly visible to walkers, cyclists, horse riders and drivers of vehicles on Greenmore.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB.

The development will have a permanent effect on this site resulting in the irreversible loss of a small greenfield site currently used as a paddock. The overall characteristic of this side of Greenmore is rural with a small number of well concealed dwellings. The site forms a distinctive gap in the established building pattern. It has an informal and natural road frontage open to view throughout its length. The site's use for equestrian grazing reinforces the informal juxtaposition of development and rural land use that is characteristic of the immediate locality. The pattern contributes to the underlying and distinctive landscape mosaic and creates a semi-rural character to this section of Greenmore. The development of two-storey buildings would bring an urban formality and uniformity to the road. Housing would have an adverse impact on the rural character and would result in the loss of the loose settlement edge.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **high adverse**.

Visual Effect

This site is clearly visible along its full length from Greenmore and from residential properties along the opposite side of Greenmore.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Because of the small size of the site, it is not feasible to provide either buffer planting to screen the site or adequate planting to replace any removed vegetation.



The adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.19 WNP2-45 Chiltern Rise

Gird Reference 465026 182229 Assessed by GP Botting 7/11/20

Description

This site occupies a relatively flat area of some 0.7 ha on the eastern edge of the village at the entrance to Tidmore Lane, a tranquil restricted byway providing access to a handful of widely spaced dwellings beyond the developed area of the village and the Chiltern Way. The site is grassland, with hazel and other shrub growth, with trees and a small barn-like building to the west and the undeveloped Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan site WNP01 to the south and east, Tidmore Lane (restricted byway 411/27) comprises the northern boundary.

The site is entirely within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The site is characteristic of LCA 8.

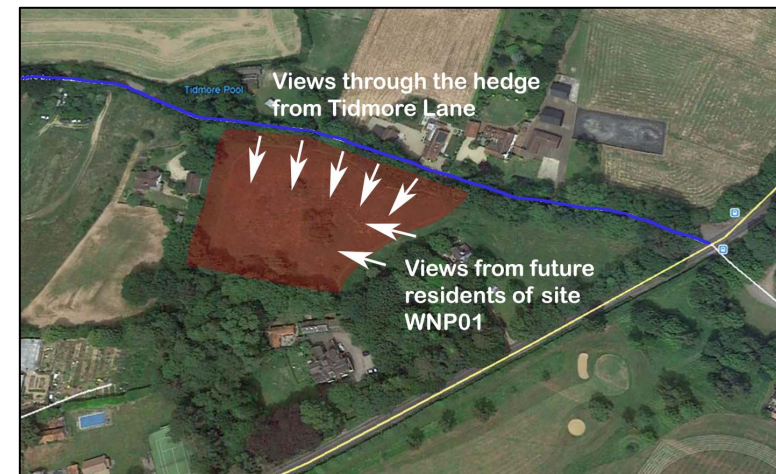
Visual Envelope

Walkers on Tidmore Lane have many views (1, 2, 3 and more on the aerial view opposite) through the thin tree and hedge line separating the lane from the site. One property on the northern side of the lane has a limited view into the site. The site will also be in clear view from the homes to the south and east.

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications for this site. In 2015 permission was granted for the development of the area south of the site subject to substantial

mitigation, tree and hedge protection conditions and a requirement to translocate the grassland in respect of a concern about the effect on biodiversity.



View 1



View 2



View 3

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently a grassed field with hazel and other woodland plants.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Development will urbanise this area with the permanent loss of a natural area where the village transitions to the AONB.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a 2m slope from north-west to south-east.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The majority of the site is grassland with hazel and regenerating woodland. The grassland is moderately species rich and may qualify for consideration as a BAP priority habitat. The hedgerow along the north-eastern boundary is species rich and classified as Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat and may shelter dormice.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Development will result in the loss of a moderately species rich area of grassland and a hedgerow classified as a Priority habitat.	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Public access	There is no public access	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-45 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	High condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Landscape condition	The site is an attractive area of grass and regenerating woodland that contributes to the tranquillity of the restricted byway and forms a strong part of the transition to the open countryside of the AONB at this point. There are no detracting features and some worthy of conservation.	High			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibility to change	Development at this site on the edge of the village would introduce a significant change to the adjacent rural lane and the immediate landscape as it transitions into the low-density development at the edge of the village	High			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site contributes to a distinctive and valued transition into the open rolling countryside of the AONB. It is sensitive to change with only limited potential for replacement or substitution. Landscape features will also be lost to effect access to the site and from the lighting associated with residential development.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 25 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Residential receptors are currently limited to one house on the northern side of the Lane. Residents of properties to be built to the south of the site will have clear views of any development.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	Tidmore Lane (restricted byway 411/27) is a popular route for local walkers and those using the Chiltern way which joins the lane some 300m from the north-western corner of the site. There are many views into the site from the Lane.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. In what is the most heavily wooded part of the Chilterns AONB the site provides an important edge at the lightly developed area of the village where it transitions to the open fields of the AONB.

Private gardens might have greater biodiversity than the existing vegetation. However, irrespective of the particular plant species that might be used in the gardens, the gardens level of usage would potentially create a greater level of disturbance to local fauna than is currently the case for the site.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **major adverse**.

Visual Effect

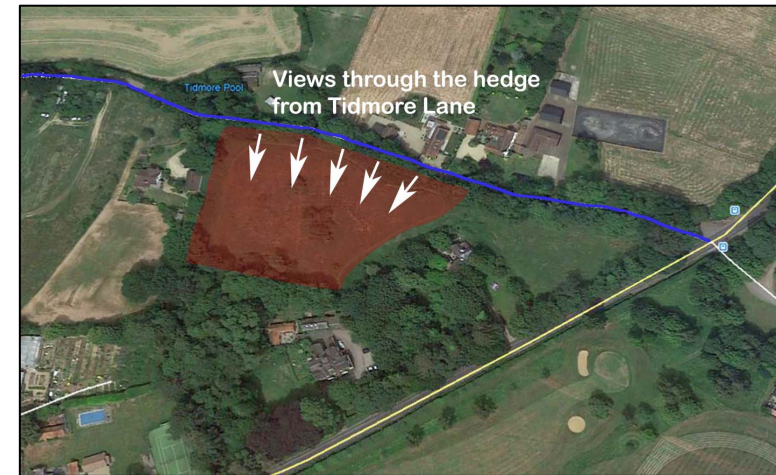
Any development on this site would be visible from the restricted byway that forms the northern border of the site and degrade the view of walkers using the byway to join or leave the Chiltern Way.

Residents of one home would be affected as will residents of homes to south and east.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **major adverse**.

Recommendations

Adding to the tree and hedge line along the northern boundary will obscure, to a limited degree new building but degrade the current visual amenity for walkers and. Mitigation of residential lighting and the loss of tranquillity is not possible. Substantial planting on the southern boundary will obscure the new development from receptors to the south of the site but may not be possible given the small size of the site.



The major adverse landscape and visual effects, which cannot satisfactorily be mitigated, means that **landscape constraints make this site unsuitable for development**.

7.20 WNP2-98 Paddock by Wards Farm

Grid Reference 464994 181698 Assessed by MJ Smith 6/11/20

Description

Site 98 comprises a small paddock of about 0.14 ha adjacent to the Wards Farm industrial estate. It lies within the Chilterns AONB and is located to the east of Woodcote.

The site has been submitted for development as an employment site with car parking to support the existing business on the Wards Farm industrial estate.

The paddock is not in use and has been used to dump rubbish.

The site is characteristic of LCA 10.

Visual Envelope

The site is visible from Greenmore via the gated entrance. The gate is set back from the road, so passers-by have a limited view of the site.

Previous Planning History

There have been no previous planning applications for this site.



View 1



View 2



View 3

Landscape and Visual Effects

The table below considers the various elements which comprise the landscape character and visual qualities; assigns sensitivity and expected magnitude of change and summarises any effect arising from the impact of development. Potential for mitigation is taken into account. The various elements are considered in combination, to give a judgement on the overall landscape and visual effect of development impact.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on development for employment use and car parking	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently unimproved grassland.	Poor condition Low value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse Impact will result in the loss of a small greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Medium
				After mitigation	Medium
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The site is covered with unimproved grass and bounded for part of one side by a tall hedge.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-98 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After Mitigation	Medium
Landscape condition	Few features worthy of conservation. Weak sense of place.	Ordinary			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	Medium			
Landscape susceptibility to change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of moderate importance. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape capable of accepting some change. Moderate potential for replacement or substitution.	Medium			
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium	

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on development for employment use and car parking	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Limited visibility of the site for walkers, cyclists, horse riders or drivers of vehicles passing on Greenmore.	Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Low
	There are some distant views from land to the south east.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Low = Low				

Effect on the Landscape

The landscape character of this site is considered to be typical of the character of this part of the AONB. However, the small size of the site and its location adjacent to the Wards Farm industrial estate limit the value of the landscape's contribution to the surrounding area.

The overall effect on the landscape is identified as **medium adverse**.

Visual Effect

The limited view from Greenmore through the entrance means that there will be limited impact on passers-by. The small size of the site and its location adjacent to the Wards Farm industrial units means that the site will not be distinguishable in distant views.

The overall effect on visual amenity is identified as **low adverse**.

Recommendations

Mitigation of visual effects, in the form of landscape buffer planting along the south eastern boundary, could help to provide some filtering effect on distant views of the development on this site.



The limited adverse landscape and visual effects, which can be satisfactorily mitigated, means that **this site is suitable for development**.

8 Summary

The results of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment are summarised below

Site Id	Description	Landscape Effect	Visual Effect	Suitability	Development
1	Hilltop Field	Major adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
2	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - Land adjoining Yew Tree Farmhouse	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Suitable	Housing
3	Rear of Yew Tree Farm House - land behind Scrooby	Medium adverse	Medium adverse	Suitable	Housing
4	Rear of 16 Bridle Path	Major adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
6	Wood Lane	Major adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
9	Beechwood Court	Neutral	Negligible	Suitable	Housing
16	Land north of Beech Lane	Major adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
20	Foxcovert Farm	Neutral	High adverse	Unsuitable	
21	Land at Bouchier Fencing	High adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
25	Land west of Church Farm	Neutral	Negligible	Suitable	Employment
27	Land at Greenmore Hill Farm (Black Lion)	High adverse	High adverse	Unsuitable	
29	Land at Greenmore	Major adverse	High adverse	Unsuitable	
30	Land west of Woodcote Garden Centre (Church Farm)	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Suitable	Housing
33	Land south of Beech Lane (Goats Gambol)	Medium adverse	Medium adverse	Suitable	Housing
34	Land south of Red Lane (Hildred Fields)	Major adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
43	Land east of Greenmore - Bishops Yard + additional land	High adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
45	Chiltern Rise	Major adverse	Major adverse	Unsuitable	
98	Paddock by Wards Farm	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Suitable	Employment

Appendix A Review of LVIA by Landarb Solutions

LANDARB SOLUTIONS



Review of Draft 2 Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2035

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Review

May 2021

The purpose of this report is to review the Draft 2 Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2035 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Consultation Version October 2020. The review has been undertaken by LandArb Solutions Limited, an Oxfordshire based Landscape and Arboricultural consultancy who regularly undertake the preparation of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) as part of the development and planning process. This report has prepared by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute.

The review is intended to be a constructive critique of the consultation document LVIA prepared by members of the Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Group as part of the evidence base in support of the new Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan. The stated purpose of the LVIA document is to analyse the capacity of sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area, in landscape terms, to accommodate, with mitigation, potential development.

This report includes a review of the document text and a selective review of some of the site assessments undertaken as part of the LVIA. As part of the review process a site visit was undertaken.

For ease of understanding, the review of the LVIA is set in a tabulated format that addresses the LVIA sequentially and as matters arise.

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
Introduction	Reference is made to the report being a Landscape Capacity Study.	A Landscape Capacity Study and a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment are two different things and should not be confused. Though there is inevitably some overlap the types of assessment are not synonymous and do follow a different process. Landscape Capacity can be defined as the 'relative ability of the landscape to accommodate different amounts of development without unacceptable adverse	The first paragraph would be better combined with section 1.2 'Study Purpose' and capacity, if referred to at all, used in lower case. When referring to 'development' it should be stated that type of development in the context of the LVIA is residential development.

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
		impacts, taking account of appropriate mitigation measures'. As defined by GLIVA3, an LVIA, 'is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of the effects if change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.' Capacity also infers quantum of development.	
1.3 Report Structure	Sections 2 to 4 inclusive	These sections are essentially providing the base line context for your assessment and are, or should be, factual with no interpretation.	Section 1.1 is transferred to section 2 of the report and would logically follow 2.1.1. Location. No mention is made of current National or Local Plan Policy. Reference and acknowledgement of policy relating to landscape is normally included in an LVIA. This gives and acknowledgement of the context by which any development with the Neighbourhood Plan area would have its planning application determined (along with the NP's own policies). South Oxfordshire has policy in place to help protect and conserve the AONB and the character of the landscape in general.

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
			Another omission possible is reference to the special qualities of the AONB as outlined in AONB Management Plan and landscape elements and features which contribute to the area's natural beauty. The AONB also has its own policies and the AONB's own Landscape Character Assessment.
2.3	Natural Environment	3 Local Wildlife Sites are referred to. Reference is made to the Neighbourhood Plan area having no watercourses. There are however several fairly prominent waterbodies shown on the Ordnance Survey (OS)	It would be helpful to show the Local Wildlife sites be shown on a plan. Include reference to water bodies as these would be a constraint to potential future development around the settlement and are an important feature of the landscape.
2.4.1	Heritage	Reference is made to listed buildings and archaeological monuments	The source of this information should be stated and ideally a plan included showing the locations of these features so as to help clarify their importance or otherwise to the character and value of the landscape. Reference could also be made to the Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation project
2.4.2	Developed Area	Shown on figures 2-6 and 2-7	Is there a source for figure 2-6, if so, this should be referenced? Figure 2-7 is weak as it appears arbitrary and to contradict 2-6 which shows a tighter developed area.
Section 3	Public rights of way		Important to note that also that the presence of a relatively extensive network of public

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
			rights of way shows the value of the landscape surrounding the settlement as a recreational resource.
Pages 9 through to 18		Changes in font and size between paragraphs and pages	Re-format
Section 4	Landscape character	Own/report character assessment	Having identified the published landscape character assessments, it is good practice to add your own assessment of the local character. Again this should be essentially factual but it provides an opportunity to highlight any nuances that the South Oxfordshire might have missed, where changes might have occurred since the previous assessment was made, experiential factors such as tranquillity (an absence of noise and movement) etc. It does not need to be extensive.
5.1	GLIVA 3	'source of legal basis and good practice in the UK and EU' Plus last sentence of the third paragraph from the section end references objectivity.	Really only good practice in the UK. Whilst there is scope for quantitative measurement of some interrelating elements (e.g. the loss of trees), much of the landscape assessment will rely on qualitative judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion. To mention this fact is not necessarily a flaw because the subjectivity is coming from members of the community living in Woodcote and as such is a valid factor in giving credence to the sensitivity of the area.

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
5.2	Landscape baseline: components and character		Should reference back to preceding sections of the report which are fundamental to understanding the baseline context of the landscape character of the Neighbourhood Plan area.
5.2.2.	Defining landscape sensitivity	GLIVA 3 is very clear that 'sensitivity' of the landscape character, element of feature or view is a product of susceptibility and value attributed to the landscape character, element of feature or view.	Add the definition of sensitivity from the glossary given in GLIVA 3. A suggested extension to the definition of susceptibility would be: <i>Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/ condition of a particular area, or individual element and/ or feature) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and / or the achievement of the landscape planning policies and strategies.</i> Susceptibility is particularly important when considering landscape features such as trees or topography etc. For example to build residential properties in a wood or on a steep slope is highly likely to make the trees in the wood or the profile of the land on the sloping site susceptible to change.
5.2.6	Combined landscape sensitivity	Need to reference susceptibility	Within the table: Under High criteria add High susceptibility Under Medium criteria add Medium susceptibility and under Low criteria add Low susceptibility

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
5.2.7	Determining the magnitude of change - landscape	The table given on pages 25 to 31 is not correct. This combines the magnitude of change with the nature of the effect. The two need to be given separately.	The table needs to be amended and a second table created which needs to be inserted at the end of section 5.2.8. In the original table the nature of the effect needs to be removed e.g. adverse, beneficial etc, so too do the bullet points that are indicated by circles at the bottom of each of the criteria columns. The latter need to be transferred to the new table and matched back to the classification column which will say High adverse, medium adverse etc. Such an amendment should not undermine the assessment already undertaken but will make the methodology more compliant with GLIVA 3.
5.2.11	Evaluation of change to visual amenity	Mention of 'density appropriate to the location'.	If referred to, then mention of density should be expanded and clarified. Ideally reference the appropriate South Oxfordshire planning policy on acceptable development density. The LVIA is an assessment of the principle of residential development on a particular site but any ambiguity on the appropriate scale of development being assessed may be exploited. For example, in assessing a site is unsuitable for 30 units may lead to a presumption that 15 would be appropriate. Similarly, where there is no mention of appropriate scale of development a prospective developer may seek to fill the site.
Page 35	Magnitude of change and overall visual effect	Section 5.2.12 correctly separates magnitude of change from the overall nature	

LVIA reference	item	Review Comment	Recommendation
		of effect in contrast to the preceding landscape section.	
Plan on page 43	Sites under consideration	Numbering of sites confusing especially in relation to the remainder of section 6 which prefixes the plan numbers with WNP2 but then speaks about site 1, 2, etc.	Rationalisation of site numbering

As part of the review of the Draft 2 Woodcote Neighbourhood Plan 2013-2035 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Consultation Version October 2020 a selection of sites were visited and re-examined to appraise the robustness of the original assessment. The sites chosen were 1, 4, 6, 29, 30 and 34. These sites were randomly selected. The notes and observations on each site is outlined below.

WNP2-1 Hilltop Field Grid ref: 463943 182181

The description of the site is accurate. Though there is no mention of the views out of the site to the west.

Any variation from the original assessment (given below) are highlighted in red. Overall, in agreement with assessment and conclusions drawn.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently arable agriculture.	Good condition High value High susceptibility for change	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/without mitigation	Major
				After	Major

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
		Combined sensitivity = High		mitigation	
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site. There is built form on the opposite side of South Stoke Road and Behoes Lane adjacent the site and the rear of properties in Wayside Green to the east. Poor quality edge to site formed by rear garden boundary treatments to properties fronting Wayside Green.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat with a slight fall towards the north west.	Ordinary condition Medium value Medium susceptibility for change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The field that comprises this site is in arable cultivation. There are hedges surrounding the site on all sides.	Good condition Medium value Low capacity for change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse There will be some loss of boundary hedge to provide access to the site.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Neutral
Public access	A public footpath (411/8) runs through the site along the eastern edge. South Stoke Road runs along the northern side of the site and Behoes Lane runs along the south side of the site.	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility for change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse The footpath will change from a rural path through the field to an urbanised path through housing.	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-1 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve.	Good condition High value Low capacity for change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of this greenfield site. The proposals are damaging to the landscape in that they create a landscape whose character: - Is at considerable variance with the layout, mix, scale and appearance of the landscape - Will introduce elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic of the attributes of the receiving landscape - Will be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality - Destroy an existing sense of peace - Cannot be adequately mitigated	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Sense of peace.	High			
Landscape value	AONB Very attractive scenic quality Good landscape quality Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape susceptibly for change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major

WNP4 – Rear of 16 Bridle Path

A 1.8 metre high metal palisade security fence now defines the site's southern boundary. In respect of the visual envelope, the visibility of the site is quite restricted and there is little intervisibility with the wider landscape beyond the site boundary.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently used for grazing of horses and equestrian use.	Good condition High value High susceptibility for change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the permanent loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	This is a greenfield site containing several small wooden shed or stable buildings.	Condition: ordinary medium value, medium susceptibility for change, combined sensitivity = Medium.	High adverse Development would cause a change to the existing built form which destroys its integrity.	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Topography	The ground is relatively flat sloping from 168 metres at the south eastern boundary to 165 metres at the north western boundary	Ordinary condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	Unimproved grassland	Ordinary condition Medium value Low susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After mitigation	Negligible
	There is no public access	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral

Public access				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-4 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau.	Good condition High value High susceptibility for change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
	After Mitigation			Major	
Landscape condition	The site contributes a characteristically typical Chilterns paddock and long valued views	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape capacity for change	The site is characteristic of the AONB and development would result in significant changes to the landscape character, value and elements.	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site is a characteristic element of the Chilterns AONB designated in recognition of the area’s particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 25 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is no public access to the site.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major

	There are limited views from the bungalows and 1.5 storey homes on Bridle Path albeit across extensive rear gardens.			After Mitigation	Major
	There are views into the site from footpath 411/9 and long views (Greater than 15 km) across the AONB toward Didcot.	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Agree with the findings and conclusions of the assessment. The site comprises a series of paddocks with some horse related structures and can be said to be rural in character. Importantly, the site also forms a transitional open space between the existing 'soft' edge to the built up area of Woodcote, which is defined along the north-eastern boundary of the site by built form set amongst mature trees and garden vegetation, and the less developed parts of the AONB to the west. Though the site forms a discrete parcel of land in plan, the site is experienced by the public, as there are views from public right of way 411/9 to the east of the site, towards and across most of the site.

WNP2 – 6 Wood Lane

Agree with the description of the site.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently use for horse grazing	Good condition High value High susceptibility change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	The north-east corner of the site contains a	Condition: OrdinaryMedium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	small, well-presented, wooden stable appropriate to the site's current use as a paddock.	value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium .	Development would cause a change to the existing built form which destroys its integrity.	After mitigation	High
Topography	The site slopes steeply upwards from the footpath on the eastern boundary ((147-149m) to the western boundary (151- 155m). Viewed from the midpoint of the eastern boundary the increase in land slope exceeds 1 in 6	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High Adverse The site is one half of a steep dry valley. Development would have a significant effect on the valley landform with little potential for mitigation.	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Vegetation	Pasture and semi-improved grassland.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Public access	Footpath 411/2 runs along the bottom of the dry valley and forms the eastern boundary of the site. Development would require road access which could result in the urbanisation of the footpath	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse The footpath will change from a rural path through the valley to an urbanised path tightly bounded by housing and, at the northern end, high beech hedges.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-6 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The topography and landform on the site is a distinctive feature of the Chilterns AONB. The dry valley and deciduous woodland are typical of the special qualities of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility for change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect
Landscape condition	The site is an strong element of a very attractive local landscape whose distinct features are worthyof conserving. The use as a paddock for horses is typical of the AONB.	Good		
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High		
Landscape capacityfor change	The site is characteristic of the AONB and development would result in significant changes tothe landscape character, value and elements.	Low		
CombinedLandscape Sensitivity	The site is within the Chilterns AONB, an area designated because of its particularly distinctive and highly valued character.	High		
Overall landscape effect				Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major

Agree with the findings and conclusions of the assessment. However, the allocation of the adjoining site as part of the first NDP does provide a context for saying that development of site 6 would not extend development any further into the AONB than the allocation of site 63 allows for.

WNP2- 29 Land at Greenmore

Agree with the description of the site and its context.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
	The land has been used for arable agriculture	Ordinary condition	High adverse	Before/ without mitigation	Major

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Land use	but appears to have little use now.	High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are some buildings on this site although most of the site is greenfield.	Ordinary condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	High
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value Low susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The site comprises mostly unimproved grassland although there are signs of previous cultivation.	Ordinary condition Medium value Low susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Public access	There is no public access to the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-29 lies within landscape character 10 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Plateau. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Ordinary condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation.Sense of peace.	Ordinary		
Landscape value	AONB Attractive scenic quality. Limited potential for substitution	High		
Landscape capacity for change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low		
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation.A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High		
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major			

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There is limited visibility of the site from residential properties on the opposite side of Greenmore.	Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
	The site has some limited visibility for walkers, cyclists and riders using Greenmore. The development could result in some loss of the hedge increasing the visibility.	Medium	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	High
	There are distant views from land to the south east as the site is elevated relative to the land to the south east and prominent in views.	Low	Low adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Negligible
				After Mitigation	Negligible

Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x High = High
-----------------------	---

Agree with the findings and conclusions of the assessment. Though not particularly visually evident, the site nevertheless forms a perceptible break in development when travelling along Greenmore. Development on the site would cause development to encroach into the wider AONB and would extend the urban edge of Woodcote eastwards.

WNP2 – 30 Land west of garden centre (Church Farm)

Agree with the description of the site.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site. To the west, beyond a 2 m high hedge, are three grade II listed buildings: Church Farmhouse (80m), Church Farmhouse Barn (100m), and Church Farm Granary (105m).	Medium condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Low	Low adverse	Before/ without mitigation	Low adverse
				After mitigation	Low beneficial
Land use	The land use is currently unused, semi-improved, grassland.	Ordinary condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	High
				After mitigation	Medium
Built form	This is a greenfield site containing no built structures.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value Low capacity Low susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Vegetation	The site is semi-improved grassland with a hedge running east-west across the centre of the site. There is a mixed hedge bordering the site on the Reading Road which contains a variety of species including hawthorn, maple, holly and dog rose and is a notable feature when travelling along Reading Road. .	Good condition Medium value Medium susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Medium adverse The landowner has indicated that the hedge across the middle of the site will be relocated along the northern boundary.	Before/ Without mitigation	Medium
				After mitigation	Neutral
Public access	There is no public access	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-30 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment. The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB. The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium High	Medium adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	High
				After Mitigation	Medium
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Tranquillity reduced by presence of schools, community centre, playground and high number of traffic movements.	Good-High			
Landscape value	AONB but offering no public views. High potential for substitution	High			

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect
Landscape capacity for change	The site is located within the AONB and, as such, sensitive to the replacement of a greenfield with housing.	Low		
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	The site is typical of the AONB but contains no particularly distinctive landscape features.	Medium		
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Medium = Medium			

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There are no views from residential properties. Views for pedestrians, cyclist and motorists using the Reading Road are very limited by a strong 2- 3m hedge running along the southern boundary of the site.	Medium	Low adverse Due to the current lack of views any development will not be a major change to the visual amenity of the area despite being a significant change to the land use.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Negligible
	There are limited views from Tidmore Lane, depending on the state of tree/hedge line edging the lane, to the northern boundary of the site some 135 m distant.	Medium	Low adverse Relocation of the hedge to the rear of the site will block views from Tidmore Lane.	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After Mitigation	Negligible
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude Medium x Low = Low				

The assessment does lead to the conclusion that the site is suitable for development. However, the site does provide a green edge to the settlement along Reading Road and the hedgerow along the highway boundary is important to the character of the street giving it a more rural feel. Any loss of the hedgerow to provide sight lines for access into the site would be detrimental and would be a loss in character terms. Development on the site would extend the settlement edge northwards and this would be seen from Tidmore Lane. Consideration would need to be taken of the setting of the nearby listed buildings and whether there is any association with the site.

WNP2- - Site 34 Land south of Red Lane (Hildred Fields)

Agree with the description of the site.

Landscape receptor	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of landscape receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average density of 30 dwellings per ha	Landscape Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
Cultural heritage assets	There are no heritage assets on the site.	Neutral	Negligible	Before/ without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Land use	The land use is currently arable agriculture.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse Impact will result in the loss of a greenfield site and therefore cause a significant change in the land use.	Before/ without mitigation	Major
				After mitigation	Major
Built form	There are no buildings on this site. This is a greenfield site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Topography	The ground is reasonably flat.	Ordinary condition Medium value Low susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Negligible There is unlikely to be any change to the topography.	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Vegetation	The western field that forms part of this site is in arable cultivation. The western field is being set up as an equestrian centre. Both fields are surrounded by hedges which contain specimen trees.	Good condition Medium value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = Medium	Low adverse There will be some loss of boundary hedge to provide access to the site	Before/ Without mitigation	Low
				After mitigation	Low
Public access	There is no public access to the site, but there are public footpaths adjacent to the site.	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral
Water courses	There are no water courses on site	Neutral	Neutral	Before/ Without mitigation	Neutral
				After mitigation	Neutral

Landscape effect summary	Description	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Landscape effect	
Landscape character	WNP2-34 lies within landscape character 8 of the Chilterns AONB – the Chilterns Escarpment.	Good condition High value High susceptibility to change Combined sensitivity = High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
	After Mitigation			Major	
	The landscape character of the site is considered to be typical of this part of the AONB.				
	The SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Chilterns AONB management recommendation for this character area is Conserve .				
Landscape condition	Attractive landscape. Some features worthy of conservation. Sense of peace.	Good			
Landscape value	AONB Limited potential for substitution	High			
Landscape capacity for change	A landscape or townscape particularly sensitive to the proposed change, which would result in significant effects on landscape character, value, features or elements	Low			
Combined Landscape Sensitivity	Landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character. Value typically recognised by national designation. A landscape sensitive to change. Limited potential for replacement or substitution.	High			
Overall landscape effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	There are significant views from residential properties between the two fields (Massey's Pigtle and Field Cottage).	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major
				After Mitigation	Major
	Frequently used footpaths (part of the Chiltern Way	High	High adverse	Before/ Without mitigation	Major

Visual amenity	Description of receptor	Sensitivity of visual receptor	Magnitude of change Based on max. two storey development of entire site @ average 30 dwellings / ha	Visual Effect Adverse unless stated as beneficial	
	Extension) run along the borders of the fields. There are views through the gated entrances to the fields and through gaps in the hedgerow from Tidmore Lane (restricted byway 411/27). There are views from the footpath 411/1.			After Mitigation	Major
Overall visual effect	Combined Sensitivity x Magnitude High x High = Major				

Completely agree with the assessment of the site and the conclusions drawn.

Summary and Conclusions

Overall, it is considered that the draft document is a reasonably robust document. There are a number of recommendations arising from this review and some are regarded as essential to rectify errors or to strengthen compliance with the report in respect of GLIVA 3 compliance.

The LVIA process is not completely objective and there is an element of subjectivity and judgement. It is possible for two different assessors to reach different conclusions. However, having undertaken a checking appraisal of 6 of the sites assessed as part of the report, there are no substantive matters of disagreement and the findings of the LVIA as reviewed are supported.