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Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

Proposed Residential Development at
Red House Farm, Burton upon Trent

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APPENDICES

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1 Introduction

1.1 Outline

Influence-cla was appointed by Barwood Strategic Land II LLP to carry out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for the proposed residential development on farmland at Red House Farm, off Lower Outwoods Road, on the western edge of Burton upon Trent. It is understood that the LVIA will support the wider planning application to be submitted in September 2012.

Red House Farm land ownership is approximately 22 hectares in total (land ownership) with the application site comprising 13.38 hectares. The application site is approximately 1.7km from the centre of Burton upon Trent at the junction with Shobnall Road and Wellington Street and within 1km from the edge of the Outwoods area of Burton upon Trent.

The LVIA is split into 10 sub-sections, with the baseline assessment forming the first five. The first section provides an introduction and describes the assessment guidance that has been adopted, primary assumptions made about the application site and consultation that has been carried out.

The second section sets out the relevant planning guidance and policy context.

Section three establishes the methodology used for the landscape and visual baseline assessment and in establishing magnitude and significance of impacts from the proposed development.

The fourth section provides the baseline study of the landscape of the existing site and its surroundings. This breaks the landscape down into component parts, which makes it easier to understand and identify any elements or features that might be particularly sensitive to the proposed development.

Section five provides a baseline study of the visual resource of the application site and its surroundings.

The sixth section sets out the potential landscape and visual implications that the proposed development could have without any mitigation, together with the proposed landscape strategy.

The seventh section describes the landscape and visual mitigation measures that are either inherent to the scheme or additionally proposed.

The eighth section describes the predicted residual landscape and visual effects after mitigation has been considered.

Section nine provides an assessment of the significance of the landscape and visual impacts.

Section ten provides a conclusion to the report and includes a summary of the residual impacts.

1.2 Guidance

The format of this assessment is based on the principles set out in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (Landscape Institute et al, 2002) and *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance* (Countryside Agency, 2002).

1.3 Field Observations

Use was made of desktop study, completion of a computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and consultation with the East Staffordshire Borough Council to identify potential viewpoints. These viewpoints and any others identified during the field assessment were then visited and their sensitivity assessed against the methodology. Fourteen viewpoints were agreed with East Staffordshire Borough Council to be assessed for magnitude of impact and overall significance.

An initial site visit was carried out on 29th March 2012 to assess the views and general landscape character of the area. An additional site visit was also carried out on the 15th

July in order take an additional viewpoint as requested by the LPA. Weather conditions on both days of the survey were bright and clear and acceptable for assessing all types of views.

Photographs illustrating views from a selection of viewpoints (see **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP08**) were taken using a Canon EOS 500D digital SLR camera set to 35mm focal length. Where views consist of more than one frame, the relevant frames were merged together using Photoshop CS6 software.

1.4 Proposed Development Time Frame

At the time of writing this report the construction timescale for the proposed development is to be phased over 4 years with the first phase developing approximately 25 dwellings and the subsequent three phases 75 dwellings per year. The landscape strategy associated with the proposals will also be implemented in a phased delivery over the 4 years.

1.5 Documents Referenced

A number of documents are referenced within this report, which is relevant to the landscape of the local area. These are listed below:

- *National planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, March 2012;
- *Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands*, Government Office for the West Midlands, January 2008;
- *Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 saved policies*, Staffordshire County Council, 2007;
- *East Staffordshire Local Plan saved policies*, East Staffordshire Borough Council, July 2009;
- *Countryside Character Volume 5: West Midlands*, Countryside Agency and Natural England, 1999;
- *Planning for Landscape Change: Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011*, Staffordshire County Council, 2000;
- *Green Infrastructure Study*, East Staffordshire Borough Council, March 2008;
- *Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance*, East Staffordshire Borough Council, February 2008; and
- *The National Forest Strategy 2004-2014*, The National Forest Company, 2004.

1.6 Changes to Planning Policy

The Government published the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* on 27th March 2012. The *NPPF* has been created in order to replace *Planning Policy Statements (PPS)* and *Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)* documents. The *NPPF* condenses and clarifies the Governments previous Planning Policies in order to give Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) greater influence, working towards 'sustainable development'.

The Government intends to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) as part of the Localism Bill. However, the legislation to abolish them will take time and as such, the RSS remain a material consideration as part of each local authority's development plan.

1.7 Technical Difficulties

No technical difficulties were encountered whilst undertaking this LVIA.

1.8 Assumptions, Limitations and Historical Context

The principal assumptions are as follows:

- Given the relatively undulating topography of the landscape surrounding the application site, it was considered appropriate to use desktop study, ZTV and field assessment to assist with the viewpoint selection and to appreciate the potential visual influence of the proposed development on the wider landscape.
- Baseline conditions have been established using existing assessments, available documentation and field assessment; it is important to note that this information may change during the construction and operation of the proposed development.
- The proposed residential development of Land at Red House Farm, Outwoods, Burton upon Trent is referred to as the 'application site' throughout this report. Should the description 'application site' not give enough clarity in the context of the paragraph it relates to, then further explanation will be provided.
- The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be referred to as 'the LVIA' or 'the report' where appropriate.

1.9 Consultation

The following sources were used in order to attain relevant information to inform the LVIA:

- Viewpoints assessed within the report were agreed with East Staffordshire Borough Council; and
- The location and numbers of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) within Staffordshire can be viewed online through the Staffordshire County Council online mapping service at: <http://localview.staffordshire.gov.uk/lvinternet/OnTheMap.aspx>

2 Planning Context

Aspects of planning guidance and policy, which are of particular relevance to the LVIA report, are examined below and designations and features are shown on **Figure INCLA_N131 PL02** and **Figure INCLA_N131 PL03**. Full citations of relevant policies can be found in **Appendix 1**.

The application site is subject to designations and policies within the *West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS)*, *Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 saved policies (SSTSP)* and *East Staffordshire Local Plan saved policies (ESLP)*. The *ESLP* forms part of the emerging Local Development Framework plan. Other relevant documents have also been examined and include national, regional and county policies as well as local supplementary design documents and design statements.

Figure INCLA_N0131 PL02 should be viewed in relation to this section of the report.

2.1 National Planning Guidance

The *NPPF* is a material consideration and provides guidance at the local planning level. It is important to note relevant core principles from the *NPPF*, for consideration in this report. The principles underpin plan-making and decision-taking; relevant principles include:

- Encouraging the use of renewable resources;
- Contribution to conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
- Taking account of different roles and character of different areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

The *NPPF* provides further detail in 13 sections; providing guidance on how to deliver sustainable development. The following citations are of relevance to the LVIA:

Section 7: Requiring Good Design - requires local policies to set out the quality of development expected, including responding to local character and history, and reflecting the identity of local surroundings and materials in order to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness. LPAs should not refuse development that promotes high levels of sustainability because of concerns with compatibility if this has been mitigated.

Section 8: Promoting Healthy Communities requires the protection and enhancement of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) and access.

Section 11: Conserving and Enhancing - the Natural Environment requires protection and enhancement of valued landscape and conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty as well as conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment requires LPAs to identify and assess the significance of heritage assets that may be affected by proposals. The conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment requires positive strategy and new development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The above citations have been given due consideration within this report and where relevant to the proposed development have been incorporated in the landscape strategy within the *Design and Access Statement (DAS)* completed as part of the planning application.

2.2 Statutory Designations

There are several significant landscape designations located within 5km of the application site that are detailed below and shown on **Figure INCLA_N131 PL02**.

- The application site falls within the National Forest statutory landscape designation boundary;
- Scalpcliff Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located 3.3km to the south-east of the site within Burton upon Trent;
- There are three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) designations to the south of the application site; Sinai Park moated site is located approximately 1.5km to the south; Burton upon Trent Abbey is located approximately 2km to the south east, and an enclosure 320m north of Tivey's house located approximately 4km south-west of the application site;
- Stapenhill Cemetery Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden is located approximately 2.5km south east of the application site;
- There are eight areas of Ancient Woodland to the southwest of the site; and
- There are ten Conservation Areas within 5km of the application site namely: 1. Station Street / Borough Road; 2. George Street; 3. Burton upon Trent; 4. Clarence Street / Anglesey Road; 5. Trent and Mersey Canal; 6. Tatenhill; 7. Rolleston on Dove; 8. Tutbury; 9. Horninglow Street / Guild Street and 10. Rangemore.

The above statutory designations have been given due consideration within this report and where relevant to the proposed development have been incorporated in the landscape strategy within the DAS. In particular, active dialogue has been held with the National Forest Company Green Infrastructure and Planning Officer – Philip Metcalfe to agree how the National Forest planting requirements can be achieved and how green infrastructure can be integrated throughout the proposed development.

2.3 Regional Planning Guidance

The *West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS)* sets out regional priorities that in turn inform the development of strategies of public agencies, and provides guidance for planning policies at the local level, working towards sustainable development. These include:

Policy RR1: Rural Renaissance considers the inter-relationship of the rural areas with the larger cities and towns.

Policy QE1: Conserving and Enhancing the Environment aims to protect distinctive natural and character areas and assets through improving and maintaining existing landscape resources and considering sustainable resource use.

Policy QE3: Creating a High Quality Built Environment for All reflects on good design contributing to creating high quality environments.

Policy QE4: Greenery, Urban Green space and Public Spaces considers the importance of access to high quality green space to help improve the quality of life in urban areas by providing opportunities for sport and recreation and supporting biodiversity.

Policy QE5: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment considers the importance of conserving existing historical assets such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas, especially those that represent local character.

Policy QE7: Protecting, Managing and Enhancing the Regions Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Resources places the emphasis on all local authorities and other relevant agencies to enhance identified areas.

Policy QE8: Forestry and Woodlands sets out the strategy for tree and woodland planting through the region.

The *Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 saved policies (SSTSP)* also provides guidance for the county within which the application site falls, and forms part of the East Staffordshire Development Plan. Relevant policies include:

Policy NC1: Protection of the Countryside, NC2: Landscape Protection and Restoration, NC6: Important Semi-Natural Habitats, NC12: National and Community Forests, NC13: Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands, NC14: Sites of Archaeological Importance, NC15: Sites of National Archaeological Importance, NC17A: Historic Parks and Gardens: Protection, NC17B: Historic Parks and Gardens, Management and Regeneration, NC18: Listed Buildings, NC19: Conservation Areas, H11: Housing in Open Countryside, R1: Providing for Recreation and Leisure and R3: Recreational Facilities in the Countryside.

The above policies have been given due consideration within this report and where relevant to the proposed development have been incorporated in the landscape strategy within the *DAS*.

2.4 Local Planning Guidance

The application site is subject to designations and policies within the *East Staffordshire Local Plan saved policies (ESLP)*. These include:

CSP6: National Forest, NE14: Planting Schemes and NE15: Implementation of Planting Schemes which require regard for the National Forest Strategy when assessing the adequacy of the planting scheme for individual development proposals within the boundary of the National Forest and give guidance on the implementation of planting and landscaping schemes for approved new development.

Policy L2: Landscaping and Green space Assessment where a development of 10 or more dwellings occurs in areas that are deficient either in terms of basic access to green space or to green space of an appropriate quality, the developer will be required to contribute towards addressing these deficiencies, in proportion to the demand created by the development.

Further policies within the *ESLP*, of relevance to the application site and proposed development include:

Policy H6: Housing Design and Dwelling Extensions requires good design throughout all new housing developments.

Policy BE1: Design requires applications for development to respond positively to the context of the area surrounding the application site and in exhibit a high quality of design which corresponds to or enhances surrounding development. Such considerations will apply equally to new development and development which involves the re-use of existing buildings.

The above policies have been given due consideration within this report and where relevant to the proposed development have been incorporated in the landscape strategy within the *DAS*.

2.5 Other Local Planning Guidance

There are several Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) that expand on *ESLP* policies to provide guidance on related subjects. These will form a part of the emerging Local Development Framework and are important to consider and include:

- *Conservation Area Appraisals* - for Burton upon Trent, Station Street / Borough Road, Trent and Mersey Canal and Tatenhill Conservation Areas, along with others within the urban and rural surroundings;
- *East Staffordshire Design Guide SPG (2008)* - promoting high quality design in new development across East Staffordshire;

- *Staffordshire Landscape Character SPG* (2000) - informing developers about policy and practice for conservation, enhancement and regeneration of the rural landscapes within the Plan area;
- *East Staffordshire Green Infrastructure Plan* (2012) - providing evidence to help inform the selection of potential locations for growth in the Borough; and
- *Open Space SPG* - supports saved policies from the *ESLP*, in this case saved policies L1, L2 and L5 relating to open space provision in new residential developments and saved policy NE15, relating to the National Forest Planting guidelines.

2.6 Summary

The application site is within the National Forest on the edge of the current settlement boundary of Burton upon Trent, between two areas of existing residential development. Three SAM designations are also located to the south of the application site the nearest being Sinai Park moated site approximately 1.5km to the south.

There are several general policies within the *WMRSS*, namely; RR1: Rural Renaissance, QE1: Conserving and Enhancing the Environment, QE3: Creating a High Quality Built Environment, QE4: Greenery, Urban Green Space and Public Spaces, QE5: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment, QE7: Protecting, Managing and Enhancing the Regions Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Resources and QE8: Forestry and Woodlands.

Policies of relevance to this report from the *SSTSP saved policies* include: NC1: Protection of the Countryside, NC2: Landscape Protection and Restoration, NC6: Important Semi-Natural Habitats, NC12: National and Community Forests, NC13: Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands, NC14: Sites of Archaeological Importance, NC15: Sites of National Archaeological Importance, NC17A: Historic Parks and Gardens: Protection, NC17B: Historic Parks and Gardens; Management and Regeneration, NC18: Listed Buildings, NC19: Conservation Areas, H11: Housing in Open Countryside, R1: Providing for Recreation and Leisure and R3: Recreational Facilities in the Countryside.

The application site is subject to one designation within the *ESLP saved policies* National Forest, which is covered by Policies CSP6, NE14 and NE15.

Policies within the *ESLP saved policies* that should be considered within this report include: BE2: Built Development, L2: Landscaping and Green space, Assessment, NE1: Development outside Development Boundaries, H6: Housing Design and Dwelling and BE1: Design.

It is also important to consider five SPG's, namely *Conservation Area Appraisals*, *East Staffordshire Design Guide SPG*, *Staffordshire Landscape Character SPG*, *East Staffordshire Green Infrastructure Plan* and *Open Space SPG*.

The above designations and policies mentioned above have been given due consideration within this report and where relevant to the proposed development have been incorporated in the landscape strategy within the *DAS*. In particular active dialogue has been held with the National Forest Company to agree how the National Forest planting requirements can be achieved and how green infrastructure can be integrated throughout the proposed development.

3 Methodology

3.1 Landscape Baseline Methodology

Through both desktop study and site visits the landscape resource of the application site and the surrounding area has been assessed and principal features and characteristics identified.

Desktop study is carried out to identify the existing landscape character assessments for the region and locate existing landscape designations.

Field work was then used to confirm the physical components and structure of the landscape of the application site and surrounding area.

Landscape is a combination of both cultural and physical characteristics or components that give rise to patterns that are distinctive to particular localities and help to define a 'sense of place'. The landscape character is an interaction of influences including topography, land use and management, historic and cultural associations together with existing developments and their relationship with the surroundings.

By analysing the character of an area its principal features and elements can be identified. Once these elements are identified, potential impacts caused by proposed development can be measured and a judgement made as to the overall effect this may have on the local landscape character.

The Countryside Agency guidelines (2002) make a clear distinction between the characterisation process (in which the attributes of the landscape are described) and the judgement-making process. The baseline section of the LVIA report deals predominantly with the characterisation process.

The study of landscape assessments at different strategic levels is important for a number of reasons:

- It aids the understanding of the landscape at a wider level;
- It allows the identification of landscape elements that may be present at a number of different scales, and thus of higher importance;
- It highlights landscape character that is 'out of context' with other levels of the hierarchy; and
- It may identify potential mitigation and restoration options that may not be present at the local scale, but can be beneficial at a higher level.

"Ideally assessments of different scales should fit together as a nested series or a hierarchy of landscape character types and/or areas so that assessment at each level adds more detail to the one above" (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

3.2 Landscape Appraisal of the Application Site and its Surroundings

The Countryside Agency guidelines (2002) on landscape appraisal, recommend that landscapes are initially characterised and that judgements about the nature and value of these landscape are then based on this characterisation process. The guidelines recommend that the characterisation process should be based on an assessment of natural factors, cultural and social factors, and aesthetic and perceptual factors.

The landscape character surrounding the application site was examined up to 3km radius. The landscape appraisal comprised of initial desktop study followed by a site visit.

3.3 Landscape Value and Sensitivity

The overall value and sensitivity of the existing landscape resource is then assessed, based on the following factors:

- The quality placed on the landscape;
- Compatibility of the proposed development with the existing land uses and landscape character;
- Condition of the landscape;
- Contribution of the landscape within the site to the overall landscape character;
- The scope for mitigation of the proposed development; and
- Degree to which landscape elements and characteristics can be replaced or substituted.
- The sensitivity of the landscape is categorised as **high, medium** or **low** (see **Table 1**).

3.4 Landscape Magnitude

The potential magnitude of the landscape impacts is assessed taking into account each phase of the development and any proposed mitigation. The magnitude of the landscape impact depends upon the following factors:

- The scale of degree of change to the existing landscape resource;
- The nature of the change caused by the proposed development (beneficial or adverse); and
- The timescale or phasing of the proposed development.

The magnitude of change is categorised as **high, medium, low** or **negligible** (see **Table 2**).

3.5 Determination of Viewpoints

A study of Ordnance Survey maps, completion of a computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders is made to identify potential viewpoints and areas for investigation based on the following criteria:

- Distance from the application site to the receptor;
- The proportion of the application site / proposed development visible, as well as the absolute visibility of the proposed development;
- The height of the proposed development relative to the receptor with reference also to the scale of other features in the view;
- The number and character of elements which would be lost from or added to the view;
- High concentrations of viewers, such as settlements, local recreational facilities, public footpaths and attractions etc;
- Views illustrating the visual character of the surrounding area; and
- Areas identified as having a high potential for visual impact, from the desk top study.

3.6 Principal and Secondary Viewpoints

Principal Viewpoints are selected on the basis of which locations provide the clearest view of the application site and are also most accessible to the public.

Secondary Viewpoints represent views from areas which are not commonly

used by the public, or which would provide less clear views of the proposed development. Secondary Viewpoints also represent areas which may be perceived from desk studies, to be sensitive to the visual impact of the proposed development, but in reality have restricted views of the application site.

Field work was undertaken to assess the views from the areas identified as having a high potential for visual impact. Due to the nature of the proposed development there are several possibilities for identification points with views towards the application site. There is, however, a restricted zone of visual influence, resulting from the nature of the surrounding land uses, nearby main roads and undulating topography.

Photographs were taken using a digital SLR Canon EOS 500D from each viewpoint to record the most representative views of the application site. The photographs were then merged as necessary using Photoshop CS6 software. The photographs have been reproduced in **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP08** with annotation and details of the image recorded.

3.7 Sensitivity of Viewpoints

Sensitivity depends on the following factors:

- **The location and context of the viewpoint** within the surrounding landscape, in terms of proximity to historical, cultural, environmental or other important features;
- **The number of users who commonly use the viewpoint.** Some viewpoints are more commonly used by the public, such as formal viewing platforms, picnic areas or public rights of way. Other viewpoints may be more difficult to gain access to;
- **The nature of the viewpoint.** Residents are sensitive to visual impacts as they experience the impacts on a regular and prolonged basis. Public footpaths can also be sensitive, since the users' attention is often focussed on the landscape. By contrast views from outdoor sport facilities, transport routes or places of work are less sensitive;
- **Movement of viewers at the viewpoint.** More transitory views, for example users of a motorway, are generally less sensitive than views experienced by residents from residential properties and footpaths that are more sensitive; and
- **The cultural significance of the viewpoint.** Including its appearance in guidebooks and tourist maps, or the strength of its relationship with cultural and historical assets.

The sensitivity of each viewpoint is categorised as **high, medium or low**, as described in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Criteria for assessing sensitivity of the landscape resource and visual receptors

Viewpoint Sensitivity	Description
High	Unique landscape, located within an internationally/nationally recognised designation such as an AONB, National Park or SSSI. Clear views across the surrounding landscape. Frequently used by visitors, such as PRow's or country park. Area with many historical or cultural associations.
Medium	Important landscape and visual resource such as local environmental designation e.g. LNRs, PRow's or designated viewpoints with predominantly clear views out. Residential area, or frequently used.
Low	More transitory routes such as other paths and roads. Screened or restricted views. Difficult to gain access to. Area with no or very few historical or cultural associations.

3.8 Magnitude of Visual Impact

For each of the viewpoints the potential magnitude of the residual visual impact is assessed, taking into account each phase of the development and proposed mitigation. The magnitude of visual impacts can be assessed by answering the following questions:

- What is the proportion of the existing view that would change as a result of the development proposals?
- How many features or elements within the view would be changed?
- How appropriate is the proposed development in the context of the existing views?
- How many viewers would be affected by the changes in the view?
- What is the timescale of the proposed development? Also, is it continuous or intermittent?
- What is the angle of the view in relation to the main activity of the receptor?

The magnitude of impact is categorised as **high, medium, low** or **negligible**, as described in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Criteria for assessing the magnitude of impact on the landscape resource and visual receptors

Magnitude of Impact	Description
High	The proposed development would cause a large change to the existing landscape for a long time or permanently. Impact upon sites and features of international and national to regional and local importance. Severe change to views of the site from the receptors, removal of valuable landscape features / elements, affects a large number of viewers, does not correspond well with the surrounding landscape character.
Medium	The proposed development would cause a noticeable change to the existing landscape. The cumulative effect of such issues may lead to an increase in the overall effects on a particular area or receptor. Moderate alteration to views from the receptors, affects features /elements on or adjacent to the application site, affects a reasonable number of people and stands out from the landscape.
Low	The proposed development would cause a barely perceptible impact and would affect few receptors. Views affected are from more transitory routes such as other paths and roads. Screened or restricted views. Difficult to gain access to. Area with no or very few historical or cultural associations.
Negligible	The proposed development is appropriate in its context. It may be difficult to differentiate from its surroundings and has very little or no impact on receptors.

3.9 Assessment of Significance of Impacts

Impact assessment refers to the change that is predicted to take place to the existing condition of the environment as a result of the proposed development.

The significance of an impact is determined by the combination of the 'sensitivity and / or value' of the affected receptor and the predicted 'extent and / or magnitude' of the impact or change that the development would have. The assessment of significance ultimately relies on professional judgement, although comparing the extent of the impact with criteria and

standards specific to the landscape and visual resource can guide this judgement. Details of criteria specific to this assessment are defined in **Tables 1** and **2**. **Table 3** outlines the significance matrix.

The two variables (sensitivity and magnitude) can be correlated as illustrated in **Table 3** below. A combination of sensitivity and magnitude will give impacts which may be major, moderate, minor or negligible. Impacts may be beneficial or adverse.

Table 3 below provides a brief definition of the full range of significance criteria. It must be emphasised that both landscape and visual impacts can be either adverse or beneficial in nature.

Table 3: Matrix to identify the significance of the impact to the landscape resource and visual receptors

Impact Magnitude	Description		
High	Moderate	Moderate / Major	Major
Medium	Minor / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Major
Low	Minor	Minor / Moderate	Moderate
Negligible	Negligible	Minor	Minor / Moderate
	Low	Medium	High
	Receptor Sensitivity		

Impacts may be beneficial or adverse. This is predominantly a professional judgement, although determined through careful consideration of the baseline conditions in combination with the proposed changes to the site and impact to the receptors. An adverse impact is one that introduces a new, discordant or intrusive element to the landscape character or view. A beneficial impact would be from an overall improvement to the view through the removal of existing discordant features and replacement with features of similar scale to those in the surrounding townscape or view.

When it is determined that the construction activities or proposed development will not actually be visible from a particular view there will be no significance. The result of combining the sensitivity with magnitude will, therefore, be **no impact**.

4 Landscape Baseline Conditions

4.1 Existing Landscape Appraisals of the Application Site and Surroundings

Figure INCLA_N0131 PL03 should be viewed in relation to this section of the report.

The Countryside Agency (2002) guidelines identify three main levels of Landscape Character Assessment:

- National and regional scale;
- County, district and unitary authority scale; and
- Local, parish and site-scale.

At the national to regional level, landscape character assessment is defined by the Countryside Agency's own assessment work, as set out in *Countryside Character, Volume 5: West Midlands* (Countryside Agency et al, 1999). This document identifies the majority of the application site as falling within National Character Area (NCA) **Area 68 – Needwood and South Derby Claylands**. The eastern part of the application site falls within **Area 69 - Trent Valley Washlands NCA**.

The key characteristics for **Area 68**, as defined by the Countryside Agency publication:

- “Rolling, glacial till plateau rising to prominent wooded heights above the central valley;
- Wide shallow central valley;
- Gently rolling landscape in the north, dissected by numerous small valleys;
- Frequent plantations and ancient woodland in former forest of Needwood;
- Varied hedgerow patterns, strongly rectilinear in Needwood Forest, irregular in the west, sub-rectangular elsewhere;
- Predominantly pasture with good hedges but some areas of more open arable with low hedges;
- Red brick and half-timber villages with sandstone churches;
- Historic parks and country houses”.

The key characteristics for **Area 69**, as defined by the Countryside Agency publication:

- “Flat broad valleys, contained by gentle side slopes, with wide rivers slowly flowing between alluvial terraces;
- Constant presence of urban development, mostly on valley sides, in places sprawling across the valley and transport corridors following the valley routes;
- Contrasts of secluded pastoral areas, with good hedgerow structure, and open arable with low hedges;
- Strong influence of riparian vegetation, where rivers are defined by lines of willow pollards and poplars;
- Open character punctuated by massive cooling towers of power stations and strongly influenced by pylons, sand and gravel extraction, and roads”.

The *Planning for Landscape Change: SPG Volume 3* (Staffordshire County Council, 2001) provides landscape descriptions specific to Stafford Borough; defining Regional Character Areas based upon

the NCA boundaries.

The Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands NCA comprise two distinct areas separated by the River Dove, which also forms the administrative boundary between Derbyshire and Staffordshire. The distinctive wooded landscape of Needwood lies exclusively within Staffordshire. The SPG refines the description of NCA 68 and refers to it locally as **Area 68 – Needwood Claylands**, which forms part of the wider Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands NCA.

The following key characteristics for **RCA 68** can be extracted from the SPG:

- “Rolling plateau of Triassic mudstones divided by the valley of the River Dove, which forms the boundary between Staffordshire and Derbyshire”;
- “Streams have cut through the clay to create the rolling landform in which valleys accommodate and often hide dispersed hamlets and villages”;
- “Mixed farming area, two thirds of which is down to grass to support dairying with some beef and sheep farms”, with an average agricultural quality of Grade 3;
- “Slopes and valleys, which surround Needwood’s central plateau, contain many villages and hamlets with historic links to the villages”;
- Valley settlements to the north, south and west such as Marchington, Yoxall and Abbots Bromley have a variety of timber framed buildings demonstrating their woodland dependence;
- “Landscape that has emerged at Needwood is characterised by a very regular pattern of well-cared for hedged fields, straight roads and regular conifer plantations with isolated neat brick farms of isolated neat brick farms, bounded abruptly to the north by the prominent and extensive ancient woodlands on the scarp slope above the River Dove”;
- 19th century landscaped parks and gardens locally increase the tree cover;
- To the north and west of the area between the Rivers Blythe and Trent the royal hunting reserve as had little influence, and it is characterised by small to medium scale pattern of semi-regular hedged fields and a number of moated sites;
- Deep red and brown brick cottages are characteristic of this area;
- Hedgerow decline is very apparent in places, with consequent increases in scale of the landscape.

The *Planning for Landscape Change: SPG Volume 3* (Staffordshire County Council, 2001) provides detailed descriptions of the landscape character types that form the RCA. The application site is defined as being within the **settled plateau farmland slopes** Landscape Character Type (LCT), which has the following distinctive landscape features:

- Hedgerow oak and ash trees;
- Broadleaved and conifer woodlands;
- Irregular hedged field pattern;
- Narrow lanes and hedge banks;
- Old villages and hamlets;
- Small streams and field ponds;
- Manors and parkland; and

- Undulating, sloping landform.

The referenced document also notes a number of “incongruous landscape features”:

- Extensive fencing;
- Busy roads;
- Electricity pylons;
- Agricultural intensification;
- Large modern farm buildings;
- Modernised dwellings and commuter properties; and
- Village expansion.

The issues described in the SPG are:

- “Relatively poor survival of characteristic semi-natural vegetation (e.g. ancient woodland and semi-natural grasslands); and
- Sensitive to the impacts of development and land use change”.

The SPG defines the LCT as being designated with the landscape policy of ‘landscape enhancement’, whereby existing features such as woodland and hedgerows should be retained and further enhanced.

4.2 Landscape Appraisal of the Application Site and its Surroundings

The Countryside Agency (2002) guidance on landscape appraisal recommends that landscapes are initially characterised and that judgements about the nature and value of these landscapes are then based on this characterisation process. The guidance recommends that the characterisation process should be based on an assessment of natural factors, cultural social factors, and aesthetic and perceptual factors.

These factors have been examined for the application site and its adjacent landscape up to 3km away, through initial desktop study and site visits. Each of these factors is assessed below.

4.3 Natural Characteristics

The application site forms a plateau on raised topography at approximately 95m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum), providing views over Burton upon Trent to the east and along the valley of the River Trent to the south. The maximum height of the land pertaining to the application site is 97m AOD at the top of Reservoir Road, and the lowest point is 81m AOD at the western boundary of the application site. The landscape immediate to the application site is rolling, with more undulating landscape surrounding Burton upon Trent. Burton upon Trent itself is on low lying, flatter land along the valley of the River Trent to the east of the application site.

The surrounding topography is predominantly undulating hills rising up to the west and east from the flat valley floor (40m AOD) of the River Trent, with the application site forming part of the undulating landscape west of the town centre. The topography immediately surrounding the application site is sloping. The land slopes down to Shobnall Road to the south west of the application site and back up through Sinai Park to 104m AOD. Land to the north initially slopes down to 80m AOD before rising up towards Bungalow Farm (105m AOD) before sloping gently down to the valley of the River Dove.

To the south and east of the application site, along the broad valley floor, the underlying rock types are red mud stones and siltstones associated with Mercia Mudstones of Triassic age. Most of the Trent Valley is overlain with a variety of fluvio-glacial, periglacial and river deposits, mostly sands and

gravels, forming terraces flanking the rivers. The washlands are closely defined by the rise in land, some 30m-40m AOD, formed by the Mudstones to the north and Triassic clays to the southeast.

The landscape to the west of the application site is characteristic of the aforementioned Needwood Claylands RCA, with blocks of ancient woodland linked by hedgerows and woodland strips across the undulating topography to give the impression of a woodland landscape. The historic and well established tree lined hedges of oak and broadleaf species form the most prominent vegetative landscape feature. The landscape to the north and east of Burton upon Trent is less wooded and more agricultural, between settlements south of Derby. Oaks Wood and Outwoods Hills broadleaf woodlands provide a localised green buffer along the A38 corridor. Further small woodland sites are dispersed along the A38, to the southwest, connecting to woodland at Borough Holme and further southwest to the National Memorial Arboretum.

The application site itself consists of open field systems used for the commercial cultivation of lawn turf. The application site has mature hedgerow boundaries, which are gappy in places. Internal hedgerows have been removed to allow space for large machinery. There are several small ponds in the vicinity of the application site, some of which host Great Crested Newt populations. There is a small watercourse along the western site boundary; a tributary to the Shobnall Brook to the south. The watercourses are not obvious features in the landscape due to the surrounding built form, although contribute to the undulating form of the topography.

Agriculture dominates the adjacent landscape to and west of the application site, with mature hedgerow boundaries with trees, with scattered woodland blocks. There is very little significant vegetation within the application site itself, although the hedgerows and tree groups along the west and northwest site boundaries are species rich, and provide a valuable ecological resource.

4.4 Cultural and Social Factors

The landscape surrounding the application site contains a variety of land uses. Residential areas extend to the northeast, with higher density residential areas to the east of the A38 towards the town centre; along the valley of the River Trent. Commercial and industrial developments dominate the south of Burton upon Trent, along the A38 corridor and around the canal and railway routes. Residential land use extends out of Burton upon Trent along Shobnall Road to the south and Beamhill Road to the north of the application site, as linear developments towards the outlying villages of Rough Hay and Anslow.

Burton upon Trent is characteristic of a town that expanded due to industry. Industrial practices were established along principal transport routes; originally the river, canal and railway and more recently the A38. Original factory and brewery buildings contribute to the heritage and character of the town.

The application site itself is used for commercial lawn cultivation and with industrial units on site; the application site has Class B consent. Agricultural land surrounds the north and west of the application site; consisting of medium size irregular fields with hedgerow boundaries, predominantly used for arable farming and mixed crop growing for cereal and other purposes. To the west of Needwood Forest the fields are smaller and less regular with more frequent trees, the land use is predominantly pasture. Away from the developed fringes of the application site, woodland remains a major landscape element with both ancient semi-natural woodland and commercial plantations. Woodland management forms a key element of the history of the area, providing valuable building material which is seen in many of the older buildings.

Within the old village centres and throughout the town of Burton upon Trent red brick is the predominant building material. Within the villages the churches are typically constructed of a variety of locally-quarried sandstones and occasionally half-timbered properties survive in the outlying villages and larger farmsteads.

4.5 Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects

The aesthetic qualities of the local area are summarised in **Table 4** and are divided into the main categories identified within the guidance (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

Table 4: Aesthetic attributes of the landscape within and adjacent to the application site

Aesthetic Aspects	
Enclosure	The major factors that influence the enclosure of the site are the undulating topography of the settled plateau farmland slopes, existing residential and commercial built form and surrounding vegetation. The character of the application site itself can be described as relatively open due to the removal of internal hedgerows. However, the surrounding landscape is tight as a result of the established woodland blocks and hedgerow boundaries to the west and built form to the east.
Balance	The landscape consists of a variety of land uses, with residential, commercial and associated transport network to the northeast to south and agricultural land, grassland, mature hedgerows and woodland to the north to southwest. These combined characteristics give a generally discordant character to the landscape.
Pattern	The edge of settlement landscape which the application site forms part of has a random pattern. The pattern of the town centre is more regular, with residential development formed along parallel streets in close proximity to factories. Undulating topography to the north, west and south is patch-worked with mixed woodland, giving a more random pattern.
Diversity	A diverse landscape with agricultural, industrial, built and natural elements, which combine to form this area. Undulating topography with a patchwork pattern of land use and vegetation.
Scale	The site specific landscape has a small scale predominantly due to the enclosure by existing hedgerows, nearby residential developments and plateaued topography.
Form & Line	The landscape is predominantly rolling due to the topography with small watercourses combined with wider valleys. The vertical elements such as woodland and built form combine with horizontal lines of transport routes and river valleys. The lines of settlement edges, valleys, hedgerows and woodland blocks are predominantly sinuous .
Colour	The existing vegetation cover and large areas of farmland are predominantly green with occasional browns and whites of industrial units to the south. The developed built areas are predominantly dark reds with the lighter browns, yellows and blues of the river floor producing a colourful landscape.
Movement	The landscape surrounding the application site is predominantly busy due to the industrial land use on site, adjacent residential and hospital areas, proximity to the A38 transport corridor and arable crop production.
Texture	Textured landscape with a variety of natural and built features.

4.6 Landscape Dynamics

The landscape is not still but continually changing and evolving, mainly in response to the demands placed upon it through residential and commercial development. This is not just limited to the urban fringe of Burton upon Trent, but it is also taking place in many of the small villages interspersed across the landscape. However, sometimes changes are due to a lack of management. An examination of the likely changes to the landscape as a whole is important in setting the context of potential changes caused by the proposed development. It may also identify opportunities in which the proposed development can help the landscape resist changes perceived as negative, or help extend changes considered as positive.

The application site predominantly consists of industrial buildings and commercial turf cultivation and open field systems bounded by mixed hedgerows with trees.

The application site has a limited cultural and ecological value, although hedgerows and trees along the watercourse to the west provide a valuable ecological resource. The proposed alteration to the application site will provide an opportunity to enhance both social, economic, transport and ecological needs to the area and reduce pressures that exist currently on the neighbouring community.

4.7 Classification and Evaluation

Table 5 below illustrates how these criteria have been appraised to achieve an assessment of the areas of sensitivity. In conclusion, the classification of the existing landscape as part of the ‘settled plateau farmland slopes’ LCT is a partially accurate reflection of the landscape character of the application site. The application site forms a plateau, which has experienced a change of land use from agriculture to having class B consent. Through this change, the application site contains modern, large barn buildings and hedgerows have been removed and become gappy in places. Hedgerows to the west of the application site are more intact and woodland planting along a watercourse defines this boundary. The adjacent landscape to the north, west and south is more characteristic of the LCT. A further sub classification has not been considered necessary due to the extremely localised nature of the application site land uses.

Table 5: Sensitivity of the existing landscape resource of the application site

Sensitivity Criteria	Description
Quality	The application site is located within The National Forest landscape designation under the East Staffordshire Local Policy Framework. The overall quality of the application site is considered to be low . However, there are elements of the existing site of a higher quality, such as the watercourse and associated trees along the western site boundary. The quality of the surrounding landscape is considered to be medium due more intact hedgerows and woodland blocks across the agricultural landscape, which adds richness to both the ecological value and character.
Compatibility	The application site currently consists of a farm development with principal dwelling and large barns for light industry. Large open field systems of commercial lawn turf interspersed with some broad leaf tree lined hedges and mixed vegetation. The proposed development will replace the industrial land uses and the design will reflect the style and character of the existing residential properties within the local area.
Condition	The landscape within the application site and its surroundings is well managed and of reasonable condition. The existing fields are of relatively low ecological value compared with that of their surrounding hedgerows, field margins, pastoral fields and mature broadleaf woodland.
Scope for Mitigation	Landscape elements such as the mature broadleaf trees, woodland and hedgerows that add ecological and environmental value should be retained and enhanced where possible. The vegetation combines with the undulating topography to provide a natural screen in many areas in relation to the line of sight of the proposed development.
Potential for replication or substitution	The application site has already experienced a land use change from agricultural to industrial. The industrial land use is an anomaly amongst the surrounding residential and arable land uses. The surrounding hedgerows provide visual and physical connections from the urban area to the surrounding rural landscape. The landscape strategy should be created in line with the landscape policy 'landscape

	enhancement'; working to retain and enhance existing ecological resources and features as well as providing physical and visual links between existing built form, which at present is divided by industrial land use.
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After consideration and analysis of the above criteria, the overall sensitivity of the existing landscape resource of the site is considered to be **low**.

4.8 Potential for Landscape Enhancement

The landscape character assessment of Staffordshire and Stoke identifies the site as being within the landscape character 'Area 68, Needwood Claylands' RCA, and forming part of the 'settled farmland plateau slopes' LCT. The landscape report encourages interventions, which would suit the scale and landscape character of the particular area concerned.

The potential exists for the following:

- Conservation of the character and vernacular style of the traditional buildings. Where development occurs it should make a positive contribution to the local vernacular and scale;
- Conservation and enhancement of hedgerows and mature broadleaf trees and woodland and where possible incorporation of further planting;
- Planting of new hedgerows; and
- Conservation of the relationship between urban fringe and the distinctive rural character of the patchwork field systems of a regular pattern and established hedgerows with mature broadleaf trees.

4.9 Conclusions on the Landscape Appraisal of the Existing Site

The application site falls within the National Forest designation (*ESLP saved policies* CSP6, NE14 and NE15) and there are a number of ancient woodlands in the surrounding area. Within a 5km radius of the site there are several designations including Sinai Park moated site SAM, Scalpcliff Hill LNR and Stapenhill Cemetery Registered Park and Garden.

The landscape to the north, west and southwest of the application site is dominated by pasture and arable land. The defining rural elements include medium size fields, mature hedgerow boundaries, broadleaf woodland blocks and trees along watercourses, small settlements, and linear settlements along arterial routes; as extensions to the urban area. The urban area of Burton upon Trent extends across the River Trent to the northeast of the application site, forming the areas of Horninglow and Outwoods and incorporating the Queens Hospital. The application site is located between the two residential areas of Outwoods to the north and Shobnall to the south. The overall landscape within which the application site is located is relatively tight due to undulating topography, with a few individual trees and hedgerows, although large scale due to the extensive field network. The application site itself is more open, due to removal of internal hedgerows and location on a plateau.

The application site and its environs lie within the 'settled farmland plateau slopes' LCT; part of the 'Needwood Claylands' RCA. There are opportunities for effective landscape enhancement, management, maintenance and preservation of the landscape features which provide the local character.

Overall the application site and its adjacent environs lack a sense of local distinctiveness and as such are considered to have an overall **low** landscape sensitivity.

5 Visual Baseline Conditions

In order to assist with the viewpoint selection, to appreciate the potential influence of the proposed development in the wider landscape, and to indicate areas from which it might be possible to secure a view towards the application site, a desktop study, computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and consultation with East Staffordshire Borough Council was undertaken prior to the field assessment.

It is important to note that the ZTV illustrates the potential visibility of the proposed development based upon topographical (bare earth) information only. Therefore it does not take into account objects which may occur in the landscape such as woodland or buildings which may affect lines of sight.

Figure INCLA_N0131 PL04 illustrates the ZTV and location of viewpoints.

The visibility of the application site from mid and long distance views is predominantly contained by a combination of undulating topography, woodland blocks and orientation of many of the surrounding settlements, villages and towns. Views in close proximity to the application site are more open due to the presence of mature hedgerows in some areas, which help to reduce the exposed nature of the site.

To the north, immediate views of the application site are restricted by existing residential properties on Lower Outwoods Road and existing industrial B2 units within the application site. Undulating topography and sloping valley sides further contain views. Properties on Lower Outwoods Road, adjacent to the application site along St Margaret's and St George's Road and nearby PRow's 9, 10 and 11 experience more open views. Further north, distinctive undulating topography and large open skies dominate with the townscapes of Outwoods, Horninglow, Rolleston on Dove and Tutbury dividing the landscape. To the north the field patterns become less regular and patchworks of mature trees and mixed vegetation along with the more significant hill forms of the southern reaches of the Peak District are prominent. Settlements and villages that are located at the bottom of many of the valley floors or on the north facing slopes have limited or no views towards the application site.

Immediate views into the application site from the east are limited, as topography decreases in height down to Queen's Hospital, woodland of Outwoods Hills and the A38. Glimpsed views of the application site may be experienced by motorists using the A38 and from occasional angles of view within the urban fabric of Burton upon Trent but these are generally limited. Further east, views from Newton Solney, Winshill and the edge of Swadlincote are predominantly contained by a combination of distance, topography, built form and vegetation.

Views from the south of the application site, at the southern edge along Forest Road are predominantly restricted by existing built form, well established tree lined hedgerows, woodland and scrub as well as the sloping valley sides. It is important to note that clear views are experienced by several properties on higher topography close the southern boundary of the application site on Reservoir Road. Many of the surrounding smaller settlements and villages have little or no visibility of the application site due to the undulating topography and orientation. Views of the application site are experienced when looking across the valley of Forest Road from PRow 7 (between Battlestead Hill and Sinai Park). The height and levels of the commercial and residential developments of Shobnall and Branston within the valley floor limit the views towards the application site from motorists utilising the major transport route of the A38. Further south, within and surrounding the National War Memorial Arboretum and village of Alrewas, views along the valley floor are constantly interrupted and contained by a combination of distance and mature vegetation.

To the west, views from villages of Anslow and Anslow Common and from surrounding PRow's are limited due to a combination of undulating topography and extensive mature and historic broadleaf woodland. Views further west become more obscured by landscape and topography.

In summary, those parts of the surrounding landscape likely to be sensitive to the proposed development within the application site include:

- Residential Properties within Outwoods;

- Residential properties on Reservoir Road close to the application site southern boundary;
- Residential properties along the B5017 (Forest Road);
- PRoWs within Sinai Park (south of Forest Road) on higher topography;
- Users of PRoWs and Residential Properties around Lower Outwoods; and
- Raised memorial and viewpoint at The National Memorial Arboretum.

Fieldwork was undertaken to assess the potential views from these areas. In the case of the longer distance views, identification points with clear views towards the application site proved difficult due to the combination of topography, intervening vegetation and existing built form.

Several viewpoints have been recorded to illustrate the general range of visibility across the application site and surroundings, as well as viewpoints with the potential to suffer most impact from the proposed development.

Photographs were taken from each viewpoint to record the view and are reproduced in **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP08**.

5.1 Principal Viewpoints

The location of the Principal Viewpoints, a photograph of each view and a specification are included on **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP05**.

Principal Viewpoint 1 – Denton Road, looking southwest towards the application site

The high vantage point within the residential area of Outwoods on Denton Road allows glimpsed views for residents and motorists towards the application site. Mature trees and large established mixed hedgerows line the edge of this well used residential access road.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 2 – Reservoir road, looking north towards the application site

This viewpoint from Reservoir Road looks north, through railings towards Red House Farm and residential properties on Lower Outwoods Road. The South Staffordshire Water PLC works are visible in the centre foreground of the view. Views are predominantly open and would be experienced by nearby residents.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 3 – On PRoW 5, looking southeast towards the application site

This viewpoint is located just off Field Lane on PRoW 5, looking southeast. The view looks across open arable land towards Bungalow Farm to the far left of the view and Red House Farm to the far right of the view. Isolated patches of mixed coppice and mature trees and hedgerows and the gentle sloping topography limit views across the undulating topography.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 4 - Outwoods Lane, looking southeast towards the application site

Outwoods Lane is a prominent feature within the landscape, bordered by well-managed, low level, mixed hedgerows and mature trees predominantly of oak. The gentle undulating topography helps to highlight the enclosed regular field systems of arable and pastoral usage. Upper Outwoods Farm and Bungalow Farm are also visible in the distance. This viewpoint would predominantly be experienced by motorists and recreational users of Outwoods Lane.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **low**

Principal Viewpoint 5 - From PRoW 17 on Outwoods Lane, looking southeast towards the application site

This viewpoint is taken from the PRoW at the end of Outwoods Lane in Anslow and looks east towards the application site. The footpath is bordered by mixed vegetation and mature trees and is adjacent to open pasture land. Post and rail fencing to the left in the foreground of the view indicates a private residential garden on Outwoods Lane. This view is experienced by residents and walkers, and is restricted to the foreground.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 6 – On PRoW 4 from Hopley Road, looking east towards the application site

This viewpoint is located on a public footpath on Hopley Road out of Ansley Leys. Small, regular fields of pastoral land lined with mixed permeable hedgerows enclose the view to the foreground. Mature broadleaf trees of mostly oak intersperse the landscape. This view would be experienced by users of the PRoW and nearby residents.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 7 – From a footpath looking across the Trent Washlands park from the A444, looking northwest towards the application site

The view is located within parkland close to St Peter's Church. The view is enclosed by tall mature trees in the mid-ground and built form on the edge Burton upon Trent beyond. The flat topography of the valley floor of Burton upon Trent limits the views to the foreground. This view is experienced by recreational users of the park and nearby residents.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 8 – From residential properties on Beaufort Road, Winshill, looking west towards the application site

This view is experienced by residents and vehicles on the road. The residential area of Winshill on the undulating topography dominates the view, with a line of mixed woodland separating the water tower of Waterloo Mount upon the higher ground. Long distance views are limited.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **low**

Principal Viewpoint 9 – In front of All Saints Church on Tatenhill Lane, Rangemore, looking northeast towards the application site

This viewpoint is experienced by visitors to the church and users of the adjacent recreation ground. The view is enclosed and limited to the foreground by the mature tree line around the recreation ground, woodland blocks beyond and built form along the road to the east.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Principal Viewpoint 10 – On PRoW 7 adjacent to Shobnall Grange, northeast of Sinai Park SAM, looking north towards to the application site

This viewpoint is experienced by walkers of the nearby footpaths, local residents and visitors to Sinai Park. Residential properties on Sinai Close dominate the foreground of the view. Due to the raised topography views are relatively wide ranging, although contained to the east by mature woodland blocks and tree belts pertaining to the A38 corridor and nearby properties. Beyond the foreground built form, woodland planting on the hillside limits long distance views.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

5.2 Secondary Viewpoints

The location of the Secondary Viewpoints, a photograph of each view and a specification are included on **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP06 to INCLA_N0131 VP09**.

Secondary Viewpoint A – Open access land on Battlestead Hill, looking northeast towards the application site

This viewpoint is taken from Battlestead Hill looking north across the extensive broadleaf woodland of the Bass Millennium Wood, and is experienced by walkers and visitors to the parkland. Wide-ranging views are achieved from this location. The built form of Burton upon Trent is visible, spanning the valley floor to the northeast and east. Views to the north and northeast across the ridge are enclosed by the topography and associated woodland.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Secondary Viewpoint B – On a public footpath adjacent to the former Drakelow Power Station site on Walton Road, looking north towards the application site

This view is experienced predominantly by motorists and walkers along the footpath from Rosliston. Views to the north are restricted by the mature trees on the industrial site boundary with the road. Views to the northeast are more open, looking across large open fields.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **low**

Secondary Viewpoint C – On a public footpath to the west of Newton Solney, looking southwest towards the application site

This viewpoint is located on a footpath along the River Trent and will be experienced by walkers, local residents and visitors to the nearby St Mary's Church. There are clear open views across the low lying valley floor. Mature tree belts border the fields and road to the south, on gently undulating ground. Mature woodland on higher land in the mid-ground encloses views and limits longer distance views to the southwest. Views to the west are more open, looking across the river flood plain.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Secondary Viewpoint D – From PRoW 14 on Belmot Road, Tutbury, looking southeast towards the application site

Views towards Burton upon Trent are relatively open and wide-ranging, experienced by walkers and nearby residents. The foreground of the view is dominated by the large fields, separated by low hedgerows with occasional mature trees. The undulating topography surrounding Burton upon Trent is clearly visible in the distance and the urban built form can be glimpsed on the valley sides.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **medium**

Secondary Viewpoint E – From the entrance to the monument at the National Memorial Arboretum looking northeast towards the application site

This view is experienced by visitors to the National Memorial Arboretum. The view is generally open and wide-ranging from this location, looking along the flat valley floor. However, views towards the undulating topography and built form of Burton upon Trent are restricted by the tree planting surrounding the viewpoint. These trees are a dominating landscape feature, along with the monuments and associated buildings of the Arboretum and the workings on the sand and gravel pits to the northwest. The roofs of industrial units at Barton under Needwood can be glimpsed between the ornamental trees.

The viewpoint's sensitivity has been assessed and rated as **high**

5.3 Summary

The main locations that are visually sensitive can be listed as:

- Residential properties on higher topography within Outwoods on Denton Road;
- Residential properties along Reservoir Road;
- PRoW within Sinai Park (south of Forest Road);
- Users of PRoW on high topography to the north and west; and
- The raised memorial and viewpoint at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Fieldwork was undertaken to assess the potential views from these areas. In the case of the longer distance views, identification points with clear views towards the application site proved difficult due to the combination of rolling topography, intervening vegetation and existing built form.

Fifteen viewpoints have been recorded to illustrate the general range of visibility across the application site and surroundings, as well as viewpoints with the potential to incur most impact from the proposed development.

Photographs were taken from each viewpoint to record the view and are reproduced in **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP08**.

Each view highlights features within the landscape to aid orientation. In general the landscape surrounding the application site is both urban and rural with a variety of industrial, residential, semi-urban, agricultural and landscape features, which can be seen in a number of the views. Particular screening elements include built form, undulating topography, mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and wooded areas.

The overall sensitivity of the immediate area surrounding the application site to visual impact is considered to be **medium**. Low visual impact receptors were those views considered to be transitory or isolated with little to no public access. The most sensitive views were identified as those from residential properties and PRoW situated on higher topography and the National Memorial Arboretum.

6 Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts

The baseline to the LVIA, in the first five sections of the report, has provided an appraisal of the existing landscape and visual resource of the application site on land at Red House Farm, Outwoods, Burton upon Trent. The following sections of the report examine the nature and extent of the proposed development and bring forward and summarise the relevant constraints and opportunities, now fully understood in the context of the existing site and preliminary development proposals.

The location of the application site on existing horticultural and agricultural land is shown on **Figure INCLA_N0131 PL01**. The proposed development will consist of three, four and five bedroom residential housing units, which requires a change of land use from Class B industrial to residential. Service connections will be required for each unit, along with provision for vehicular access across the application site. Access for the construction and development of the housing scheme will be carried along existing transport routes and driveways, no alterations will be required to the highways, although there will be a temporary increase to the volume of traffic due to site activities.

6.1 Constraints and Opportunities

The *Planning for Landscape Change: SPG* (Staffordshire County Council, 2000) identifies the application site as being within 'settled plateau farmland slopes' LCT and defines particular characteristics of the surrounding landscape that provide opportunity for changes to take place. The landscape has a relatively small scale with mixed use field systems (arable and pasture) of an irregular pattern, bounded by mature tree lined hedgerows, undulating topography and mature broadleaf woodland. The *SPG* also defines the application site as being within a 'landscape enhancement' policy area, which requires retained existing landscape features to be enhanced where possible with regards to the surrounding landscape character.

The application site is located between two residential areas and has a current class B land use, with the potential to provide a physical and visual link between Outwoods and Shobnall.

Due to the raised plateau location, the proposed development is potentially visible from elevated areas. However, existing landscape features and undulating landform limit direct and clear views of the application site. Built form to the north and east, undulating topography to the north, south and west, and blocks of mature vegetation in the surrounding landscape provide existing screening elements. PRowS in close proximity to the application site, in particular those along the northern site boundary and northwest towards Upper Outwoods (PRowS 6, 8, 9, 10 and 0.545A) have predominantly clear views of the application site; the proposed development will be visible to walkers along these footpaths. Views of the proposed development from PRowS 6 and 7 to the south, in Shobnall will be predominantly screened by existing built form and mature broadleaf woodland on the hillside up to the application site.

The visual baseline has identified several sensitive viewpoints from both short and long distances; including from higher vantage points such as Battlestead Hill to the south and residents on Denton Road to the north. The National Memorial Arboretum formed part of that baseline analysis. Significant public points of interest and views towards the site from Battlestead Hill and parks within Burton upon Trent were in reality obscured or contained in the majority of cases due to a combination of existing undulating valley, sloping valley sides, built form, woodland and established tree lined hedgerows.

It will be necessary to carry out extensive earthworks across the application site, in order to establish the transport routes, foundations and associated services for the proposed development. There are no historical or cultural landscape designations that would be impacted by these processes, although the site falls within the National Forest designation (*ESLP saved policies* CSP6, NE14 and NE15). The existing activities at the application site suggest that the present road system would be capable of supporting the vehicles required for delivery and construction of the application site.

The mature hedgerows along field boundaries and the mixed tree coverage around the farmland provide important natural features that help to restrict views from both long and short distances. However, lower-level, gappy hedgerows along the northwest boundaries would require further planting and enhancement as part of the landscape proposals.

The surrounding landscape is diverse, with a mixture of agricultural, industrial, residential, built and natural elements which combine to form this area. The hedgerows, individual trees, irregular field patterns, broadleaf woodland adjoining the urban fringe of residential, commercial and industrial activities provides a discordant character to the landscape. Planning policies aim to protect the distinctive character and features of the rural and urban landscape but take account of the needs for changing, progressive landscape and diversity of features.

The scale of the surrounding landscape is relatively large scale and the pattern is relatively tight. However, the hedgerows and surrounding woodland blocks contain the application site to a small scale, but open character due to internal removal of vegetation.

Due to the nature of the proposed development there is scope for mitigation. There are areas across the application site where existing hedgerows and mature trees can be retained and there is potential to enhance these as part of the proposals along with additional mixed tree and hedge planting across the proposed development. There should be very little removal of existing hedgerows or trees for the provision of the development or access during and after construction.

6.2 Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts during Construction

The key potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed residential development during construction, not taking into account mitigation measures are summarised below:

- Potential direct landscape impacts will be very localised in scale and restricted to the application site itself, and immediate environs including access used by transportation and construction vehicles and plant machinery.
- There will be a low impact to the landscape of the application site; from removal of commercial land currently used for the cultivation of lawn turf, with low value ecological. Additional impact will be from the removal of industrial units and their foundations and services, and the large area of hardstanding around the built form.
- Removal of vegetated boundaries and trees will be avoided where possible, with the existing access roads used for the removal of overburden and delivery and provision of construction materials throughout the development phase.
- There will be a temporary change in landscape character due to the medium term change in activity from commercial lawn cultivation and industrial units to bare earth, excavated land and construction activities. This will include an increase in the volume of light and heavy machinery and vehicles accessing the application site; all of which will utilise the existing transport infrastructure.
- Potential improvements to the highways around Reservoir Road would be the only alteration to take place on the local road network.
- There will be a temporary adverse visual impact on nearby receptors, including nearby PRow and those locations with clear views of the construction area; due to the presence of plant machinery, associated construction vehicles and equipment used in the construction process, scaffolding and partially built form.
- Impacts during the construction phase will be of a medium term with some localised impact from task lighting.

6.3 Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts once Completed

The key potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed residential development once completed, not taking into account any mitigation measures, are summarised below:

- A change in landscape character from class B light industrial and cultivation, to residential development with associated transport links and open spaces.

- The new residential units and highways will be assimilated into the landscape through the proposed planting and have a low impact on the local landscape character due to the adjacent urban form, consisting of residential areas in the immediate vicinity and commercial and industrial units further south, leisure facilities to the east and the hospital to the northeast. The proposed development will correspond with the existing character of the local residential areas, and transport infrastructure.
- Loss of cultivated turf areas and hard standing, which will be replaced with built form, transport links and appropriate landscape treatments throughout the development.
- Some loss of meadow land, which will be replaced by built form and associated landscaping.
- There will be no direct or indirect impact on nearby designated sites, including scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings and ancient woodlands.
- Due to proximity there will be a significant visual impact on users of nearby PRoWs and residential properties on the site periphery.
- The impact on longer distance receptors will be reduced by distance, undulating topography and intervening landscape features and built form.

7 Proposed Mitigation and Enhancement

As briefly mentioned in section 6 of the report there is scope for direct mitigation measures, due to the nature of the development and context within the surrounding landscape and features. The visibility of the application site is relatively open due to the gentle undulation of the landform and plateau, with breaks in vegetation. The opportunity to improve existing and provide new hedgerow and tree planting around the application site boundary exists; to improve biodiversity and drainage, and assimilate the proposed development into the landscape.

Additional planting would combine with the surrounding undulating topography to reduce the visibility of the application site from medium and long distance viewpoints. The woodland vegetation across rural areas to the south and west and the built form to the east, provide additional barriers and limit views of the site. Any future planting would enhance the ecological value of the application site and help reduce the impact on drainage from the proposed development.

Indirect mitigation is introduced through the careful consideration and design of the proposed development; complementing the existing local vernacular of the area. Additionally the proposed development is predominantly away from statutory landscape designations, cultural and historical assets and local landscape designations and within close proximity to the existing urban fringe of Outwoods. The application site is within National Forest designated land and the proposed development should, therefore, conform to *ESLP saved policies* CSP6, NE14 and NE15.

It is important to avoid, where possible, adverse impact to or removal of hedgerows and trees along field boundaries, individual trees and valuable field edge vegetation. Where this is unavoidable, measures should be taken to re-establish such vegetation once the development is complete.

Landscape and visual issues have been a key consideration during the iterative assessment and design process. A landscape strategy has been completed (refer to the *DAS*) during the development evolution process to give priority to the landscape and visual mitigation and to ensure that a comprehensive and integrated approach is taken to the landscape proposals included as part of the development of the application site.

The inherent landscape and visual mitigation measures that will be incorporated within the design of the proposed development are the following:

- Retain and protect existing hedgerows around the application site boundary, with additional planting to reinforce the planting and fill in gaps, to maintain visual amenity and landscape character;
- Retain and protect existing trees along the western site boundary in order to maintain valuable ecological area along the watercourse, to maintain visual amenity and landscape character;
- Retain and protect individual trees around the existing farm building, to contribute to an area of informal open space;
- Provision of further tree and hedgerow planting along the application site boundary, to provide security to properties that back onto the open fields, provide ecological links around the site and provide visual buffers towards and across the proposed development;
- In line with National Forest requirements, 30% of the proposed development will be set aside for National Forest planting and landscaping. This will include extensions to surrounding woodland planting through the site, a permanently wet area around an attenuation pond and tree planting along streets, as well as use of timber in urban design features;
- Use of recommended species to improve local biodiversity and enhance and define the local character;

- Improve the route of the existing PRoW along the northern site boundary, to provide a robust pedestrian link to the town centre;
- Provide ecological enhancement along the route of the PRoW, by creating new habitats which also allow local residents to interact with the surrounding environment;
- Create pedestrian links with the existing residential areas improve the current access routes to reduce the burden on local highways and provide valuable links from the B5017 to Queen's Hospital, Outwoods;
- Provide public open green spaces that link through the proposed development, providing visual and physical connections to the surrounding countryside for residents and wildlife;
- Reduction of visual impacts on nearby residential areas and existing PRoWs and footpaths through effective planting both through and around the proposed development;
- Incorporation of a built design that reflects the existing character of the local area and integrates with and contributes to the overall character of the landscape;
- Minimise impervious surface areas to aid drainage; and
- Adopt a simple palette of materials that provides continuity and helps to define zones and routes through the proposed development;

The additional more detailed landscape and visual mitigation that is proposed is as follows:

- Fencing off of existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows to be retained, before construction;
- The provision of 5 metre stand-offs (where possible) in order to safeguard vegetation adjacent to the site; and
- Avoidance where possible of security and task lighting during construction.

8 Predicted Residual Landscape Impacts

Having assessed the landscape baseline for the proposed residential development on land at Red House Farm, Outwoods, Burton upon Trent and identified the potential elements of the development likely to cause change to that baseline, a detailed assessment of the magnitude of impact can be made, taking into account the proposed mitigation.

8.1 Impacts on Natural Characteristics

The construction of the proposed residential development will result in localised alteration to the overall landscape character of the application site. The proposed development would provide a new area of built form within the surrounding landscape, which currently consists of agricultural, cultivation, light industrial and residential buildings, with relatively open irregular field patterns and strong mature treed hedgerows. There would be a change in character to the application site itself, from commercial cultivation and light industry to provide a residential link between existing residential areas.

The relatively exposed plateau between residential areas would be altered by the proposed development; replacing the bright green turfed area with residential units and associated landscaping.

The greatest change to the natural characteristics of the application site and immediate surroundings will occur during the construction phase as land is removed, services are laid, highways infrastructure developed and foundations and buildings are constructed. This will require the removal of the large area of turf, and the associated agricultural buildings.

There will be little to no impact to nearby vegetation as vehicles and machinery will use existing access roads, tracks and entrance ways. Trees along the western site boundary will be retained and further woodland planting will be established on the western slope of the application site, in line with National Forest planting requirements. This tree planting will be extended through the site to provide physical and visual green links through from the countryside to the urban edge and trees along the A38 corridor.

Existing gappy and species poor hedgerows will be enhanced; planted with recommended species and retained along the application site boundaries.

Improvements to the PRoWs 10 and 11 along the northern site boundary will include the provision new habitats to create a physical green link for wildlife, as well as providing green open space within the proposed development.

8.2 Impacts on Cultural and Social Factors

The principal alteration to the cultural and social factors of the application site and surroundings will be the commencement of construction activities on site; altering the use of the local landscape from cultivation and light industry, to more industrial with heavy machinery and vehicles in place. This will be short to medium term only.

Throughout the construction phases the primary land use will alter, and the existing industrial and commercial practices will cease as the demolition and excavation phases start. The adjoining landscape would not be directly altered. The existing site use requires the movement of large, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) up and down Lower Outwoods Road. This vehicular movement will increase slightly during the construction phases and include a wider variety of machinery. The large vehicles will also use the Reservoir Road access, having a temporary adverse impact. Upon completion the permanent change in use of the land will be from existing turf growing horticultural and agricultural land activities to a residential development with associated transport links and landscaping.

There will be no impact to the surrounding land use. The PRoWs (10 and 11) that pass along the north of the application site will be opened up and improved through proposed planting schemes, to provide a green link from the countryside into Burton upon Trent.

There will be no direct or indirect impact on the surrounding conservation areas, due to the distance of the application site in relation to them. Nor will there be any direct or indirect

impact to the scheduled ancient monuments identified in the baseline, or to the listed buildings within the surrounding villages due to their containment within the village setting and distance from the application site.

The proposed development will have a direct impact to PRowS 10 and 11 along the northern site boundary; the footpath will be opened up and improved through proposed planting schemes, to provide a green link from the countryside into Burton upon Trent. The proposed development will be a dominant feature on the plateau, as seen by walkers along the nearby PRowS 4, 5, 6, 8,9,10 and 11 to the north and northwest, and through glimpse views from PRowS 14, 16 and 17 to the west.

The proposed development will have an impact on users of the nearby PRowS (as identified above) and alter the characteristics of the adjacent residential area of Outwoods and extension of Shobnall, due to an increase traffic using Reservoir Road, less traffic using Lower Outwoods Road, the extension of housing across the plateau and removal of industrial and commercial practices.

The proposed development is within the urban fringe of Burton upon Trent and forms a connection between existing residential suburbs to the west of the A38 corridor. The proposed development will be viewed in context with the built form landscape from the majority of viewpoints and will beneficially alter the land use of the existing site.

8.3 Impacts on Aesthetics and Perceptual Aspects

During construction the application site will be more enclosed due to the presence of construction equipment and materials, machinery, vehicles, fencing used to protect vegetation in close proximity of the application site and site hoarding to restrict site access.

The proposed residential development will connect exiting residential areas to the west of Burton upon Trent. The built form will connect across the plateau along the urban edge of the town and contrast with the rural agricultural land to the west. However, the proposed planting as part of the proposed development will significantly enhance the existing landscape and ecological value of the application site. Proposed woodland planting on the western slopes of the application site will provide a visual link with the wooded landscape of the surrounding countryside. Enhanced hedgerows and tree planting through the proposed development will further assimilate the built form into the landscape to the west and provide green visual links through to the A38 corridor and towards the town centre.

The proposed landscape strategy and planting as part of the proposed development will accord with National Forest requirements and policies within the *ESLP*. The planting combined with the built form, will change the character of the application site from open to become tighter and correspond with the surrounding landscape.

8.4 Classification and Evaluation

The application site is located to the south of Outwoods and to the north of Shobnall, in the western suburbs of Burton upon Trent. It is located within the 'Needwood Claylands' RCA, as part of the wider 'Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands' NCA, and within the local LCT 'settled farmland plateau slopes'. The regional characteristics are partially reflected in the characteristics of the application site, with good quality hedgerows but gappy in places, rolling plateaued land form and remnant woodland planting. The local character description provides a brief but generally accurate reflection of the character of the application site and designates the site as part of the 'landscape enhancement' policy zone.

During construction the application site will be changed to become a more industrial landscape due to earthwork and clearance activities, appropriate excavation of the ground for the highways, foundations and service infrastructure, the movement of heavy vehicles and the partially built form with scaffolding and site hoarding. The overall construction phase will have a medium term impact.

Following completion of the proposed development, the character of the application site will be altered. However, in the context of the adjacent and surrounding urban land uses this impact will be reduced and the proposed development will form part of the wider, diverse

landscape; combining rural urban features. The proposed development and the immediate surroundings will be enhanced with new planting and ground cover once completed.

The immediate landscape character will be altered as the view of the open plateau from nearby PRoWs and as glimpsed from longer distances, will be replaced by the vertical structure and massing of the built form. However, the enhanced hedgerow boundaries and tree planting across the site will assimilate this and connect with the surrounding landscape to form part of the existing character.

There will be minimal impact to the landscape character as a whole due to the generally concentrated nature of the proposed development, on commercial and industrial land that is within the urban fringe of Burton upon Trent. The PRoWs (10 and 11) along the northern site boundary will be directly impacted during construction but improved from the existing state once the development is completed. There will be impact on the views from other nearby PRoWs, although this will be minimised through the landscape proposals.

8.5 Residual Magnitude of Landscape Impacts – Summary

The predicted residual landscape impacts are predominantly localised in scale and restricted to the application site, access routes, adjacent PRoWs and the adjacent residential areas.

The landscape impact arising due to the proposed development of the application site will generally be contained by fencing during construction and is within a focussed area. Due to the size of the machinery and vehicles required for the earthworks and preparation of the land for the highways, foundations and necessary services, as well as those required for the delivery of materials and construction there will be a change in landscape character. The application site will become a more industrial small-scale landscape during the construction phase which has been identified as being of medium term (one to four years).

There will be no direct impact to the surrounding landscape, environmental, historical or cultural designations.

Once the proposed development is complete there will be a localised change to the land use and marginal change in landscape character due to the newly built residential units that may be experienced in longer distance views. Key characteristics of the LCT will not be altered and the buildings will add to the described 'diverse landscape'. The landscape proposals, as part of the proposed development, will assimilate the built form into the existing landscape character; providing both physical and visual green links through and around the site.

It is, therefore, concluded that the residual magnitude of the landscape impacts will be **medium** during construction and **low** on completion.

8.6 Significance of Residual Landscape Impacts

The landscape sensitivity of the application site and environs was assessed as being **low**. Combining this with the assessed **medium** magnitude of impact during construction and **low** magnitude of impact on completion of the proposed development, gives a significance of impact of **minor / moderate** during construction and **minor** on completion of the proposed development.

The overall significance and nature of the residual impact is, therefore, **minor / moderate** and **adverse** during construction and **minor** and **beneficial** once the development is complete.

9 Residual Visual Impacts

The potential visual impacts of the proposed residential development on the surrounding landscape, from the identified Principal and Secondary Viewpoints, have been assessed with the aid of mapping, ZTV, field assessment and analysis of panoramas taken in the field, and are described below.

Based on the visual assessment of the selected receptors, **Figure INCLA_N0131 PL04** illustrates the areas of the surrounding landscape that are likely to experience views of the proposed development. This is shown on the figure by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), which demonstrates the area of the surrounding landscape that will potentially experience views of the proposed development. The ZTV has been created using digital models based upon the topography of the land; it does not consider vegetation blocks, settlements, and other intervening elements.

Using the identified viewpoints previously described, and having carried out the field study, an assessment can be made of the potential magnitude of impact likely to be caused by the proposed residential development, both during construction and on completion. For each of the viewpoints the residual visual impacts have been assessed and the potential magnitude determined for each phase of the proposed development.

The location of the viewpoints, panorama of the existing view and a description are included in **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP08**.

9.1 Principal Viewpoints

The location of the Principal Viewpoints, a panoramic photograph of the existing view and a description are included on **Figures INCLA_N0131 VP01 to INCLA_N0131 VP05**.

Principal Viewpoint 1 – Denton Road, looking southwest towards the application site

Construction

Views of the application site are restricted by the residential built form and vegetation along the roadside. Due to these intervening features combined with the plateaued topography of the application site there will be no views of ground level construction works. However, the elevated position of this viewpoint will enable views of associated tall cranes and machinery over the existing properties on Lower Outwoods Road. Scaffolding and partially built form may also be glimpsed in places. Task lighting associated with construction activities will also be seen from this viewpoint.

Completion

Upon completion of the proposed development a continuation of the built form from lower Outwoods will be seen on the ridgeline. This will be seen as an increased massing of built form between foreground vegetation, but much of the proposed development will be screened by intervening features. As proposed landscape mitigation matures views of the built form on the ridgeline will reduce over time.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **low** during construction and **low** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 2 – Reservoir Road, looking north towards the site

Construction

Due to the immediate proximity of the application site to the view, the majority of construction activities will be visible from this location. This site entrance will be used by construction vehicles and machinery. Task lighting associated with the construction of the proposed development will also be clearly visible.

Completion

Following completion the existing view will be completely changed and permanently altered by the proposed development. The new housing will extend beyond the existing Reservoir Road properties into the site, with tree planting and green open space proposed to the east of the access. The view will become enclosed. Landscape mitigation will soften the views into the proposed development.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is therefore assessed as being **high** during construction and **medium** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 3 – On PRoW 5, looking southeast towards the application site

Construction

Due to the relative proximity to the application site there will be clear views of the majority of the construction activities, predominantly the use of tall machinery and cranes, as well as scaffolding and partially built form in the later stages. Views of ground level construction works will be limited by site hoarding and as the early phases of the landscape strategy mature. Task lighting associated with the development will be visible due to proximity.

Completion

Upon completion of the massing of the proposed development will be clearly visible in place of existing Red House Farm buildings. As the proposed landscape strategy matures, the built form will be assimilated into the surrounding landscape with green links through the site to existing tree belts.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **medium** during construction and **medium** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 4 – Outwoods Lane, looking southeast towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening vegetation, the majority of construction activities and lighting impacts associated with the development will be contained from this view. There may be glimpse views of tall cranes between the vegetation around Bungalow Farm, but distance and undulating topography will mitigate this impact. There will be no lighting impact.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 5 – From PRoW 17 on Outwoods Lane, looking southeast towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening mature vegetation in the fore and mid-ground there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is therefore assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 6 – On PRoW 4 from Hopley Road, Looking east towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening mature vegetation in the fore and mid-ground there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 7 – Looking across the Trent Washlands park from a footpath, looking northwest towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening mature vegetation and built form in the fore and mid-ground there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 8 – From residential properties on Beaufort Road, Winshill, looking west towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening built form combined with vegetation in the mid distance there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 9 – In front of All Saints Church on Tattenhill Lane, Rangemore, looking northeast towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening built form and vegetation across the landscape there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed

development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Principal Viewpoint 10 – On PRow 7 adjacent to Shobnall Grange, northeast of Sinai Park SAM, looking north towards the application site

Construction

During construction views of construction activities predominantly associated with cranes will be visible on the ridgeline above the tree canopy. Lighting impacts associated with the construction activities will be predominantly contained by intervening built form, vegetation and topography.

Completion

Upon completion of the proposed development it will be possible to see glimpsed views of a continued roofline to the east of Reservoir Road. New National Forest planting will be seen to the west of the application site, beyond existing hedgerows.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **medium** during construction and **low** on completion.

9.2 Secondary Viewpoints

For each of the viewpoints the residual visual impacts have been assessed and the potential magnitude determined for each phase of the proposed development.

The location of the Secondary Viewpoints, a panoramic photography of the existing view and a description are included on **Figures INCLA_N131 VP06 to INCLA_N0131 VP08**.

Secondary Viewpoint A – Open access land on Battlestead Hill, looking northeast towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening built form combined with vegetation in the foreground there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Secondary Viewpoint B – On a public footpath adjacent to the former Drakelow Power Station site on Walton Road, looking north towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening built form and vegetation in the foreground there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Secondary Viewpoint C – On a public footpath to the west of Newton Solney looking southwest towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and intervening vegetation in the mid-ground there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as being **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Secondary Viewpoint D – From PRoW 14 on Belmont Road, Tutbury, looking southeast towards the application site

Construction

It is possible to distinguish a variety of features across the landscape including the water tower at Winshill and farms in the mid-ground. However, due to the distance, topography and intervening vegetation across the landscape, all views of construction activities and lighting impacts will be contained.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is therefore assessed as being adverse **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

Secondary Viewpoint E – From the entrance to the monument at the National Memorial Arboretum looking northeast towards the application site

Construction

Due to a combination of distance, topography and vegetation across the landscape there will be no views of construction activities. There will be no impact from the associated task lighting.

Completion

This view will be unaltered and there will be no views of the completed development and associated lighting.

The magnitude of impact of the development on this viewpoint is, therefore, assessed as **negligible** during construction and **negligible** on completion.

9.3 Residual Magnitude of Visual Impacts - Summary

Viewpoint locations that would experience impacts both during construction and once the proposed development is complete, include Principal Viewpoints 1 (Denton Road), 2 (Reservoir Road), 3 (PRoW 5) and 10 (PRoW 7 adjacent to Shobnall Grange). Principal Viewpoint 2 (Reservoir Road) will experience the greatest magnitude of impact during construction and once the development is complete due to its close proximity to the application site.

Impacts during construction on a number of viewpoints would be predominantly

associated with the use of large cranes as well as impacts from larger construction vehicles, scaffolding and partially built form. Lower level construction activities including ground excavation works and the creation of foundations will be predominantly contained from the majority of viewpoints due to a combination of topography and existing intervening vegetation and built form. The landscape strategy for the proposed development will also reduce visual impact as it matures.

Once the proposed development is complete, an extension to the existing residential areas on Lower Outwoods Road and Reservoir Road will have been added to the diverse landscape surrounding the site, with improvements to the existing quality of the application site. The proposed development will be visible from a limited number of receptors. In the majority of the views assessed the proposed development will be absorbed by existing features such as built form, woodland, mature trees and hedgerows, and undulating topography. Although the application site is on a high plateau the visual envelope of the surrounding landscape is limited.

Based upon the individual magnitude of impact for each viewpoint it is concluded that the residual magnitude of the visual impacts upon those viewpoints in close proximity to the application site (1, 2, 3 and 10) will be **medium** during construction and **low** on completion. Due to the undulating topography, existing built form and mature tree and hedgerow vegetation across the surrounding landscape, the overall residual magnitude of the visual impact to the wider viewpoints will be **negligible** during construction and on completion.

9.4 Significance of Residual Visual Impacts

Table 6 shows the sensitivity and the magnitude of impact predicted for each viewpoint, and the resultant significance and nature (adverse, beneficial or no impact) of the residual visual impact; having been assessed using the matrix set out in the methodology.

As indicated in the table, the significance of the potential visual impacts varies from viewpoint to viewpoint according to each viewpoint's sensitivity and the potential magnitude of impact as assessed within the report. The significance of visual impacts will change over time, i.e. the most significant and adverse generally being during construction. A significance of 'no impact' relates to the fact that the proposed development will not be visible or would only be glimpsed on a clear day, thus there is no impact to the receptor.

Table 6: Summary of visual sensitivity, magnitude of impact and significance on the impact

Principal Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance and Nature of Residual Impact
1	Medium	Low during construction Low on completion	Low/moderate and adverse during construction Low/moderate and adverse once complete
2	Medium	High during construction Medium on completion	Moderate/major and adverse during construction Moderate and adverse once complete
3	Medium	Medium during construction Medium once complete	Moderate and adverse during construction Moderate and adverse once complete
4	Low	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	Negligible and adverse during construction No impact once complete

5	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
6	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
7	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
8	Low	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
9	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
10	Medium	Medium during construction Low once complete	Moderate and adverse during construction Low/moderate and adverse once complete
Secondary Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance and Nature of Residual Impact
A	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
B	Low	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
C	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
D	Low	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete

E	Medium	Negligible during construction Negligible on completion	No impact during construction No impact once complete
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10 Conclusion

The landscape and visual assessment of the proposed development was completed in accordance with accepted guidance from the Landscape Institute and The Countryside Agency.

A study of the landscape and visual components of the application site and surrounding local area was undertaken through desktop study, computer generated ZTV, consultation with East Staffordshire Borough Council and field survey visits. This identified the main landscape and visual receptors and provided for a baseline appraisal, against which the landscape and visual impacts could be assessed.

The main landscape and visual implications of the proposed development and the potential impacts were then identified, along with any mitigation measures that could minimise these impacts. The magnitude of impact is then assessed for landscape and visual receptors and these results are combined with the sensitivities assessed in the baseline, to assess the significance of the impacts.

10.1 Planning

The application site is within The National Forest on the edge of the current settlement boundary of Burton upon Trent, between two areas of existing residential development. Three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) are also located to the south of the application site; the nearest being Sinai Park moated site approximately 1.5km to the south.

There are several general policies within the *West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Plan*, namely; RR1: Rural Renaissance, QE1: Conserving and Enhancing the Environment, QE3: Creating a High Quality Built Environment, QE4: Greenery, Urban Green space and Public Spaces, QE5: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment, QE7: Protecting, Managing and Enhancing the Regions Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Resources and QE8: Forestry and Woodlands.

Policies of relevance to this report from the *Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011* saved policies Explanatory Memorandum saved policies include; NC1: Protection of the Countryside, NC2: Landscape Protection and Restoration, NC6: Important Semi-Natural Habitats, NC12: National and Community Forests, NC13: Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands, NC14: Sites of Archaeological Importance, NC15: Sites of National Archaeological Importance, NC17A: Historic Parks and Gardens: Protection, NC17B: Historic Parks and Gardens; Management and Regeneration, NC18: Listed Buildings, NC19: Conservation Areas, H11: Housing in Open Countryside, R1: Providing for Recreation and Leisure and R3: Recreational Facilities in the Countryside.

The application is subject to one designation within the *East Staffordshire Local Plan saved policies* 'National Forest' Policies CSP6, NE14 and NE15.

Policies within the *ESLP* saved policies that should be considered within this report include; BE2: Built Development, L2: Landscaping and Green space, Assessment, NE1: Development outside Development Boundaries, H6: Housing Design and Dwelling and BE1: Design.

It is also important to consider the five SPGs, namely *Conservation Areas Appraisals*, *East Staffordshire Design Guide SPG*, *Staffordshire Landscape Character SPG*, *East Staffordshire Green Infrastructure Plan* and *Open Space SPG*.

The above designations and policies mentioned above have been given due consideration within this report and where relevant to the proposed development have been incorporated in the landscape strategy within the *DAS*. In particular active dialogue has been held with the National Forest Company to agree how the National Forest planting requirements can be achieved and how green infrastructure can be integrated throughout the proposed development.

10.2 Landscape Impact

The application site falls within The National Forest designation and there are a number of ancient woodlands in the surrounding area. Within a 5km radius of the site there are several designations including Sinai Park moated site SAM, Scalpcliff Hill LNR and Stapenhill

Cemetery Registered Park and Garden.

The landscape to the north, west and southwest of the application site is dominated by pasture and arable land. The defining rural elements include medium size fields, mature hedgerow boundaries, broadleaf woodland blocks and trees along watercourses, small settlements, and linear settlements along arterial routes; as extensions to the urban area. The application site is located between two residential areas of Outwoods to the north and Shobnall to the south. The overall landscape within which the application site is located, is relatively tight due to undulating topography with a few individual trees and hedgerows, although large scale due to the extensive field network. The application site itself is more open, due to removal of internal hedgerows and location on a plateau.

The application site and its environs lie within the ‘settled farmland plateau slopes’ LCT; part of the ‘Needwoods Claylands’ RCA. There are opportunities for effective landscape enhancement, management, maintenance and preservation of the landscape features which provide the local character.

Overall the application site and its adjacent environs lack a sense of local distinctiveness and as such are considered to have an overall **low** landscape sensitivity.

The predicted residual landscape impacts are predominantly localised in scale and restricted to the application site, access routes, adjacent PRoWs and the adjacent residential areas.

The landscape impact arising due to the proposed development of the application site will generally be contained by fencing during construction and is within a focussed area. Due to the size of the machinery and vehicles required for the earthworks and preparation of the land for the highways, foundations and necessary services, as well as those required for the delivery of materials and construction there will be a change in landscape character. The application site will become a more industrial small-scale landscape during the construction phase which has been identified as being of medium term (one to four years).

There will be no direct impact to the surrounding landscape, environmental, historical or cultural designations.

Once the proposed development is complete there will be a localised change to the land use and marginal change in landscape character due to the newly built residential units that may be experienced in longer distance views. The key characteristics of the LCT will not be altered and the buildings will add to the described ‘diverse landscape’. The landscape proposals, as part of the proposed development, will assimilate the built form into the existing landscape character; providing both physical and visual green links through and around the site.

It is, therefore, concluded that the residual magnitude of the landscape impacts will be **medium** during construction and **low** on completion.

The overall significance and nature of the residual impact is, therefore, **minor / moderate** and **adverse** during construction and **minor** and **beneficial** once the development is complete.

10.3 Visual Impact

The main areas of existing visual impact have been identified as:

The main locations that are visually sensitive can be listed as:

- Residential properties on higher topography within Outwoods on Denton Road;
- Residential properties along Reservoir Road;
- PRoW within Sinai Park (south of Forest Road);
- Users of PRoW on high topography to the north and west; and
- The raised memorial and viewpoint at the National Memorial

Arboretum.

Fieldwork was undertaken to assess the potential views from these areas. In the case of the longer distance views, identification points with clear views towards the application site proved difficult due to the combination of rolling topography, intervening vegetation and existing built form.

Fifteen viewpoints have been recorded to illustrate the general range of visibility across the application site and surroundings, as well as viewpoints with the potential to incur most impact from the proposed development.

Each view illustrates or highlights different aspects of the landscape with regard to views across it that includes a variety of features. In general the landscape surrounding the application site is both urban and rural with a variety of industrial, residential, semi-urban, agricultural and landscape features, which can be seen in a number of the views. Particular screening elements include built form, undulating topography and mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and wooded areas.

The overall sensitivity of the immediate area surrounding the application site to visual impact is considered to be **medium**.

Viewpoint locations that would experience impacts both during construction and once the proposed development is complete, include Principal Viewpoints 1 (Denton Road), 2 (Reservoir Road), 3 (PRoW 5) and 10 (PRoW 7 adjacent to Shobnall Grange). Principal Viewpoint 2 (Reservoir Road) will experience the greatest magnitude of impact during construction and once the development is complete due to its close proximity to the application site. It is important to note that the majority of viewpoints identified within this report have a negligible impact both during construction and once the development is complete.

Impacts during construction on a number of viewpoints would be predominantly associated with the use of large cranes as well as impacts from larger construction vehicles, scaffolding and partially built form. Lower level construction activities including ground excavation works and the creation of foundations will be predominantly contained from the majority of viewpoints due to a combination of topography and existing intervening vegetation and built form. The landscape strategy for the proposed development will also reduce visual impact as it matures.

Once the proposed development is complete, an extension to the existing residential areas on Lower Outwoods Road and Reservoir Road will have been added to the diverse landscape surrounding the site, with improvements to the existing quality of the application site. The proposed development will be visible from a limited number of receptors. In the majority of the views assessed the proposed development will be absorbed by existing features such as built form, woodland, mature trees and hedgerows, and undulating topography.

Despite the application site being located on a high plateau, the visual envelope is limited. The application site has a general lack of distinctiveness and a low landscape value. With good design, and an effective landscape strategy (as shown in the *DAS*) the proposed development of the application site will assimilate into the existing surrounding semi-urban fabric over time.

Based upon the individual magnitude of impact for each viewpoint it is concluded that the residual magnitude of the visual impacts upon those viewpoints in close proximity to the application site (1, 2, 3 and 10) will be **medium** during construction and **low** on completion. Due to the undulating topography, existing built form and mature tree and hedgerow vegetation across the surrounding landscape, the overall residual magnitude of the visual impact to the wider viewpoints will be **negligible** during construction and on completion.