



Brinsham Lane-Gravel Hill Haul Road, Chipping Sodbury

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Heidelberg Materials

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Drawings

Appendix A:

- CHR-001: Illustrative Landscape Strategy during Operation
- CHR-002: Illustrative Landscape Strategy after Restoration
- CHR -003: Landscape Planning Context
- CHR-004: Landscape Character Plan
- CHR-005: Landscape Constraints and Opportunities Plan
- CHR-006: Illustrative Cross Sections

Appendix B:



PH-01-PH-10 – Type 1 Photosheets



1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Heidelberg Materials Limited (HML) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to accompany a detailed planning application for proposed construction of a temporary haul road to link Southfields and Brinsham West Quarries, Yate (planning ref. P22/02019/F), referred to as 'Proposed Development'.

The Site amounts to approximately 1.25ha, and is situated between Brinsham Lane and Gravel Hill Road, Chipping Sodbury, South Gloucestershire, comprising development associated with construction of a haul road between the two lanes and extending north and south across the lanes, associated landform and landscape and biodiversity proposals.

The LVA does takes into account and references the previously submitted Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS), produced by TetraTech, March 2022, and is submitted to accompany the planning application (ref. P22/02019/F) (see Appendix F for information relating to this application).

Details of the Proposed Development have been included in a separate Planning Statement Addendum and are outlined in paragraph 1.1 of this LVA.

The main objectives of this report are to identify and assess the potential landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual resource of the Study Area.

1.1 The Proposals

As mentioned above, the Proposed Development which includes the haul road alignment, associated landform and landscape mitigation proposals, have been illustrated in Drawing CHR-001 – entitled 'Illustrative Landscape Strategy During Operation', Drawing CHR-002 – entitled 'Illustrative Landscape Strategy After Restoration' and Drawing CHR-006 – Illustrative Cross Sections (Appendix A).

As mentioned above, the Proposed Development comprises the construction of a temporary haul road to link Southfields and Brinsham West Quarries, utilising the existing landform profile as far as possible.

The proposals included and assessed within this LVA differ from the proposals, as identified and assessed in the Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS) previously. These proposals have been developed as part of a carefully considered design process, in response to comments received from the Landscape Officer¹ on the previously submitted scheme.

The Proposed Development will be implemented in phases and have been assessed accordingly, to include Construction phase, Operational phase and post Restoration phase. The details of the phases and elements assessed as part of these phases have been outlined in Section 4.0.

The proposals associated with the operational phase of the temporary haul road, as illustrated on Drawing CHR-001, include:

- Modified landform profile associated with the haul road with the alignment and design of landform modification to follow the existing profile and line of the existing holloway².
- Existing vegetation retained and protected as far as possible. Veteran ash tree retained and protected;

¹ Received on 14 April 2022 (screening opinion P22/011/SCR and pre-application advice PRE20/0702), and 14 June 2023.

² A holloway, hollow-way, or hollow way, is defined within the Oxford Dictionary as a 'way, road, or path, through a defile or cutting', and within the Cambridge Dictionary as 'a walking path or road that is much lower than the land on either side of it, because the ground has eroded over time'.



- New stone retaining wall (built as vernacular stone wall) proposed along the periphery of the root protection area of the veteran tree. The retaining wall ensures any reprofiling to the bank here can be minimised;
- Screening bund landform along the southeastern edge of the Site, which has been greatly reduced from the previous scheme; and
- Planting proposals to include reseeded of modified landform areas, new native scrub planting along screening bund and native species rich hedgerow mix planting to infill gaps around proposals where vegetation was lost as a result of the construction activities.

The proposals associated with the restoration phase after removal of the temporary haul road, as illustrated on Drawing CHR-002, include:

- Modified landform profile associated with restoration process, regrading of the holloway to its existing profile. The retaining wall will be retained taking into account an established habitat around the wall, over the operational period of the haul road;
- Mature established screening vegetation translocated to reinstate gaps in existing hedgerows after removal of the haul road; and
- Planting proposals to include reseeded of modified landform areas, new hedgerow and tree planting to reinstate any additional gaps in planting.

1.2 Content of the Appraisal

This LVA contains the following sections:

- Introduction: setting out the content of the LVA, the approach taken, the description of the location and nature of the Proposed Development and extent of the Study Area;
- Planning context: outlining the key policies of relevance to the assessment;
- Development design and mitigation: summary of the design and measures taken to avoid or minimise the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development through the phases identified in paragraph 1.1;
- Assessment of effects on landscape character, designations and elements =: describes the landscape character of the Proposed Development Site and Study Area based on desktop reviews, site visits and consultations and identifies the residual effects of the Proposed Development on landscape receptors and landscape designations;
- Assessment of effects on visual amenity: describes the visual amenity of the Proposed Development Site and Study Area based on desktop reviews, site visits and consultations and identifies the residual effects of the Proposed Development on representative viewpoints and principal visual receptors; and
- Summary of findings.

1.3 Approach

Whilst there is no requirement for a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to support this application for development, this LVA follows best practice guidance produced by the Landscape Institute's 'Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (3rd Edition 2013) (GLVIA3)³ and evaluates the likely effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character, designations and elements and visual amenity of the Site and its surroundings.

³ Including Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 Published August 2024



This LVA has been carried out by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect in accordance with the recommendations of GLVIA3⁴, and TGN 02/21⁵. The full methodology is provided in Appendix A. All judgements have been discussed and agreed with another Chartered Landscape Architect in accordance with best practice and reviewed by another experienced Landscape Architect.

The LVA is based upon a desk top assessment of relevant plans, guidance and character assessments, as well as a thorough site assessment carried out in June 2024, and evaluates the likely effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character, designations and elements and visual amenity of the Site and its surroundings.

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*”, (Council of Europe, 2000). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside. Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the Proposed Development.

It is important to note that it is best practice in landscape and visual appraisal to conclude that the introduction of development to a green field site will result in negative landscape and visual effects. However, it is possible for good landscape design principles to be established to create successful places “*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting*”⁶. It is therefore important to consider the design principles and strategy alongside the conclusions of the LVA. Therefore, the landscape strategy has been carefully designed keeping in mind the built components of the proposed development and the response to the built and landscape setting.

1.4 The Site, Context and Project Description

The Site comprises gently sloping pastoral land, located between Brinsham Lane and Gravel Hill Road, within an enclosed landscape bounded by native hedgerows along the southern edge of the Site and mature trees/vegetation along the northern edge of the Site.

The Site occupies land within a localised bowl landform ‘historical holloway feature’⁷ sloping from approximately 94m AOD on the southern end along Gravel Hill Road, sloping to 86.0m AOD at the northern end along Brinsham Lane. It lies within the eastern part of a wider field, which rises to a ridgeline at approximately 103m AOD, about 140m west of the Site boundary. The field extends about 250m from the edge of the eastern site boundary, and slopes down to the edge bounded by vegetation and development along Yate Rocks. To the east of the Site, the field rises to about 94m AOD, towards a farm complex, known as Little Brinsham Farm, a Grade II listed building.

The southern boundary follows the north side of Gravel Hill Road, with a short extension to its south side to link with the adjacent quarry. Gravel Hill Road is bounded by two mixed mature hedgerows. To its north, the Site crosses over Brinsham Lane to extend into the woodland alongside a stream.

As mentioned above, the Site is located within an area of pastoral land, circa 2km to the north of Chipping Sodbury, about 2km to the northeast of Yate, and about 3km to the south of Wickwar. The B4060, Wickwar Road, connects these towns and runs north – south through the centre of the study area and just to the east of the site.

⁴ Including Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 Published August 2024

⁵ Technical Guidance Note - TGN 02-21 Assessing landscape value outside national designations) The Landscape Institute (2019).

⁶ Paragraph 135, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Dec 2023)

⁷ Refer to Heritage Statement, produced by SLR, June 2024



To the south, southeast and northeast of the site and on either side of the B4060 are the existing quarries of the Chipping Sodbury complex. Approximately 500m to the west is a strategic development site where approximately 2000 homes are currently under construction. To the southeast is Chipping Sodbury golf course, with its tree lined fairways forming a distinctive character.

The local landscape around the site is defined by the pattern of small-scale fields, in agricultural or pastoral use, with irregular hedgerow boundaries, and copses/woodland belts around the quarries and in the golf course. Escarpment associated with the quarries to the east, are defined by bank of trees along Wickwar Road. The quarry landscape and landform and development within the north-eastern edge of Yate form key features in the landscape to the south, east and west. A major power line crosses the study area, running east-west about 500m north of the site.



Figure 1-1-1: Local landscape pattern

1.5 Study Area

GLVIA 3 clarifies how study areas should be determined on a project specific basis. Paragraph 5.2 states that the Study Area extent should be: “... based on the extent of Landscape Character Areas likely to be significantly affected either directly or indirectly” or “on the extent of the area from which the development is potentially visible, defined as the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, or a combination of the two.”

The Study Area, as previously defined within the previously undertaken LVS (2022), was reviewed through aerial photographs and desktop analysis and site surveys. The Study Area extending to 2km radius from the centre of the Site, as indicated on Drawing CHR-005, was assumed for the purpose of the desk-based review of the Site’s context, published landscape character information, designations and relevant policy.

The Study Area was further refined following site visits in March and June 2024, undertaken to review the extent of actual visibility, the baseline conditions of the Site, identify potential landscape and visual receptors, take representative viewpoint photographs, and carry out and review the appraisal of effects. As mentioned earlier, the Site is visually enclosed by



mature vegetation along Gravel Hill Road and Brinsham Lane. Therefore, the Study Area was reduced to be 1.0km radius of the site for visual effects.

The proposed change in the extent of the Study Area has been based on knowledge of the potential characteristics of the proposed development, the local landscape, the key changes that are likely to occur in views from the selected local, mid-range and long-distance views.

1.6 Viewpoints

The viewpoints are based on the previously undertaken LVS (2022). Additional viewpoints 1 2 and 10 have been included to address comments received from Landscape Officer, as part of the previously submitted LVA and based on recent consultations with the Landscape Officer in June and August 2024.

The likely visibility of the Proposed Development was verified during a site visit in March and June 2024.

Photography was undertaken to demonstrate the landscape and views visible from the representative viewpoints is illustrated in Appendix B. These are non-verified Type 1 photographs informed by Landscape Institute guidance⁸.

1.7 Consultation

Responses received from the Landscape Officer in April 2022 and June 2023 were reviewed and the design development of the landscape strategy and mitigation proposals during operation and restoration phases have been carefully considered to address the comments received.

The Landscape Officer and the Case Officer has been consulted throughout the LVA process with email correspondence in May, June, July and August 2024.⁹

1.8 Assumptions and Limitations

No technical difficulties or practical problems were encountered in carrying out the LVA presented in this document.

Owing to the LVA approach adopted (see paragraph 1.3), a Cumulative Assessment of similar development in the vicinity of the Site has not been undertaken.

No Residential Visual Amenity Assessment was undertaken. It is noted that residents of Grade II Listed Little Brinsham Farm are the immediate receptors and have been a key consideration in the design of the Proposed Development.

A separate Heritage Statement and Ecology Report has been produced to support this application and has informed this LVA.

No night-time assessment has been undertaken as the Site and the proposed development will not introduce any additional source of light within the landscape.

GLVIA3 suggests that consideration be given to seasonal variation in effects where appropriate but acknowledges that the timing of the assessment may mean that this is not practical. The recently released LITGN-2024-01 (August 2024) states that: “...it is within the competence of a landscape professional to be able to describe how the landscape and views would vary with the seasons, and to take account of these changes in assessment.”

⁸Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Landscape Institute (September 2019)

⁹ correspondence with Landscape Officer dated 21 May 2024, 11 and 12 June 2024, 21 June 2024, 02 July 2024, and 14 August 2024, and correspondence with Case Officer dated 07 June 2024, 11 July 2024 and 13 August 2024



The site visit was conducted during March and June 2024 when general climatic conditions were dry and relatively mild, and visibility was good.



2.0 Relevant Landscape Planning Context

2.1 National Policy: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Dec 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) as first published in 2012 and the most recent revision issued in December 2023 includes the following relevant policies:

- Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to “contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”. Paragraph 8 states that to achieve sustainable development the planning system has economic, social and environmental objectives. At paragraph 8(c), under environmental objective, it is stated that the planning system should “protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment”.
- NPPF paragraph 10 states that “at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**” (bold text as per NPPF).
- Paragraph 11 sets out the fundamental principle of this document: that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All development that is in accordance with the development plan should be approved “*without delay*” and that “*where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date*” permission should be granted for development “*unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.*”

In relation to landscape, the NPPF defines sustainability as including the protection and enhancement of the “*natural, built and historic environment*” (paragraph 8).

- Paragraph 135 states that developments should, at (c), be “*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting*”, whilst also at (d) “*establish or maintain a strong sense of place*”.
- Paragraph 136 states that “*Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments*” and notes that “*Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible*”.
- Paragraph 180 in Section 15 “*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*” states that the planning system, “*should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] ...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*” and by “*recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*”. Paragraph 181 states that the planning system should “*distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites*”.
- Paragraph 186 states that where development results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees), the development should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy introduced.

2.2 Local Planning Policy

The Site and Study Area lie within South Gloucestershire Council’s administrative boundary. The development plan for this site includes the following documents:



- South Gloucestershire Local Plan – Core Strategy, 2006 – 2027 (adopted December 2013);
- South Gloucestershire Local Plan – Policies, Sites and Places Plan (adopted November 2017); and
- West Of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (adopted March 2011).

Additional documents which have informed this LVA include the

- Biodiversity and Planning Guidance for New Developments (March 2023);
- Green Infrastructure (April 2021);
- Trees and Development Sites (April 2021)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance: Biodiversity and the Planning Process (2007 – 2009);
- New Local Plan Phase 3 Consultation Document (December 2023); and
- Strategic GI Corridor Mapping Project, December 2023.

2.2.1 South Gloucestershire Core Strategy (Adopted December 2013)

Policy CS1 – High Quality Design states that *“Development will only be permitted where the highest possible standards of design and site planning are achieved. Information submitted with an application should be proportionate to the scale, significance and impact of the proposal.”* The policy goes on to state that proposals will be required to demonstrate *“siting, form, [and] scale”, an “overall layout [that] is well integrated with existing adjacent development” and “how the development contributes towards the vision and strategic objectives of the locality”.*

Policy CS2 – Green Infrastructure states that *“existing and new Green Infrastructure (GI) is planned, delivered and managed as an integral part of creating sustainable communities and enhancing quality of life, considering the following GI objectives:*

1. *realising the potential of Green Infrastructure to assist with mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change*
2. *delivering high quality multi-functional and connected open spaces (including Green and Blue Infrastructure)*
3. *protecting, creating and improving recreational, play, access and local food cultivation opportunities*
4. *protecting and enhancing species and habitats, and creating new habitats and wildlife linkages between them*
5. *conserving and enhancing landscape character, historical, natural, built and cultural heritage features*
6. *securing ongoing management and maintenance and creation of GI assets*
7. *joint working with partners, including neighbouring local authorities.”*

Policy CS5 – Location of Development states that *“At Yate/Chipping Sodbury, new development will be of a scale appropriate to achieve greater self-containment and to improve the separate but inter-related roles and functions of the towns, focusing on investment in the town centres and improving the range and type of jobs”.*

Policy CS9 – Managing the Environment and Heritage sets out the general approach to environmental resources and heritage assets and states that new development will be expected to:

1. *“ensure that heritage assts are conserved, respected and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance*
2. *conserve and enhance the natural environment, avoiding or minimising impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity*



3. *conserve and enhance the character, quality, distinctiveness and amenity of the landscape be located away from areas of flood risk*
4. *reduce and manage the impact of flood risk through location, layout, design, choice of materials and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)*
5. *protect the quality and quantity of the water environment and its margins*
6. *avoid the undeveloped coastal area*
7. *utilise natural resources, including minerals, soils and water, in an efficient and sustainable way*
8. *maximise opportunities for local food cultivation by (a) avoiding the best and most versatile agricultural land and; (b) safeguarding allotment sites*
9. *promote the re-use of contaminated land with appropriate remediation*
10. *protect land, air and aqueous environments, buildings and people from pollution and avoid unstable land unless appropriate mitigation or remediation measures can be taken.”*

Paragraph 8.5 page 66 states *“There is an extensive portfolio of areas of nature and biodiversity importance in South Gloucestershire, many of which are protected by local, regional, national or international designations. South Gloucestershire has a predominantly rural and agricultural landscape greatly influenced by large scale scarps, ridges, vales, levels and estuary landforms overlain by a variety of land cover, in places comprising unique natural or historic features. The importance of the diversity, character, natural beauty and amenity of the district’s landscapes is recognised and will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. The Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document provides detailed analysis to support this.”*

Paragraph 8.6 goes on to state that *“The landscapes of South Gloucestershire, both outstanding and everyday, contribute to the wellbeing and sustainability of its neighbourhoods and should be protected for its own sake. In order to conserve the character, distinctiveness, quality and amenity of the landscape, new development should identify and retain those site attributes and features which contribute to the landscape character. Landscape features, such as woodland (including ancient woodland), trees and hedgerows should be incorporated into new development and given sufficient space for their longevity. These site features and attributes should be managed and where appropriate enhanced with new landscape.”*

Paragraph 8.19 states *“Tranquil and peaceful environments have been found to be good for people’s health, so development should not give rise to high levels of noise in the vicinity of residential areas and areas of high landscape or ecological value.”*

Policy CS24 - Green Infrastructure, Sport And Recreation Standards states that

“Green Infrastructure assets are integral to sustainable communities. Where existing Green Infrastructure provision, including informal recreational open space, outdoor sports facilities, playspace, allotments, and natural/semi-natural spaces are inadequate in terms of providing for the quantity, quality and accessibility to meet the projected needs arising from the future occupiers of new development, those occupiers’ needs must be met by the new development, together with provision for subsequent management and maintenance... A new neighbourhood to the north of Yate, will accommodate around 3,000 new homes (2,700 up to 2027), employment and community uses.”

Chapter 14 Yate and Chipping Sodbury outlines the vision for these towns stating that

“Yate and Chipping Sodbury will build upon their distinct yet complementary heritage, character and roles to develop a coherent sense of place, and provide a richer mix of social, cultural and economic opportunities. The towns will develop as a popular destination and a more attractive service centre for their surrounding villages and farming communities.”



The associated illustrative plan highlights the significant green infrastructure areas around Chipping Sodbury Quarry, the location of the new town north of Yate, Visually Important Hillside and Long-Distance Path in the area.

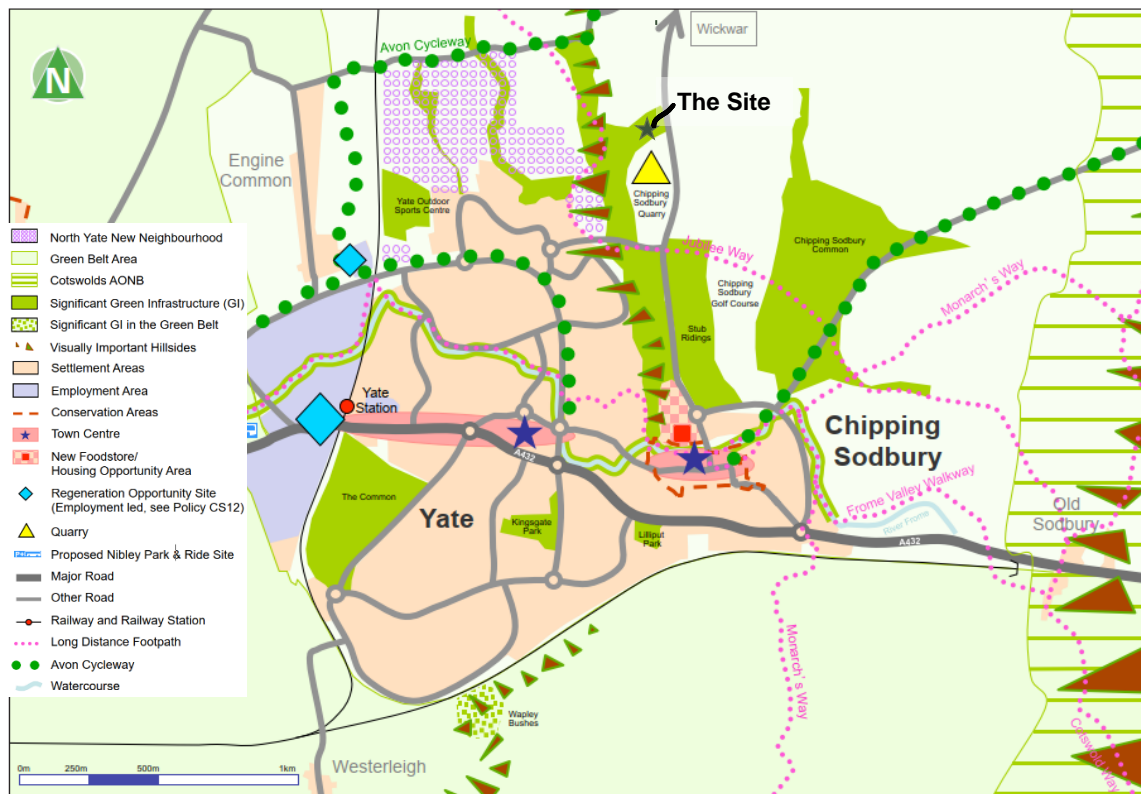


Figure 2-1-1: Extracts from Figure 11 – Yate and Chipping Sodbury

Policy CS34 – Rural Areas, states that,

“Development plan documents and development proposals will take into account of the vision for the rural areas and partnership priorities, accord with Neighbourhood Plan initiatives and will:

1. *protect, conserve and enhance the rural areas’ distinctive character, beauty, wildlife, landscape, biodiversity and heritage*
2. *protect the best and most versatile agricultural land and opportunities for local food production and cultivation to provide for nearby urban areas and settlements*
3. *protect the unique and valuable setting provided by the rural areas to the urban areas and other settlements in South Gloucestershire, which contributes to the district’s distinctive sense of place and identity*
4. *protect the designated Green Belt and the Cotswolds AONB from inappropriate development*
- 5. *maintain the settlement boundaries defined on the Policies Map around rural settlements until they are reviewed either through Neighbourhood Plans, the Policies, Sites and Places DPD or a replacement Local Plan following engagement with local communities and other stakeholders/partners...”*

2.2.2 West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (Adopted March 2011)

Owing to the broad scope of the document, there was nothing of relevance to the site.



2.2.3 Policies, Sites and Places Plan (Adopted November 2017)

Policy PSP1 – Local Distinctiveness states that *“Development proposal(s) will be acceptable where the proposals demonstrate an understanding of, and respond constructively to the buildings and characteristics that make a particularly positive contribution to the distinctiveness of the area / locality. Innovative architectural responses will be favourably considered, where this would result in a high-quality design that would in itself contribute positively to the distinctiveness of a place.”*

Policy PSP2 – Landscape states that *“Development proposals will be acceptable where they conserve and where appropriate enhance the quality, amenity, distinctiveness and special character of the landscape (defined by the Landscape Character Assessment). This includes, but is not limited to:*

- *landscape attributes which define the inherent character of an area, such as: landscape patterns arising from roads, paths, hedges, waterways and buildings; designed and natural landscapes, which include elements of natural beauty, historical or cultural importance and ecological features;*
- *the tranquillity of a landscape, sense of place and setting;*
- *landscape features, such as trees, hedgerows, woodlands, views, banks, walls, ponds and waterways;*
- *distinctive or characteristic topography and landforms.*

Where development proposals would result in harm to the landscape, it must be clearly demonstrated that:

- *the proposal results in benefits that outweigh the harm; and*
- *any harm to the landscape is minimised and mitigated through the form of the development and where reasonable the provision of landscape enhancements.*

Amenity space, hard and soft landscape works and open space provision will be required to be of a high standard of design, appropriate to the use and character of the development and its location; and designed as an integral part of the development, incorporating existing landscape features where appropriate, for the benefit of the development proposal.

Landscape features which contribute to landscape character, quality, amenity or local distinctiveness are to be retained and protected, and along with new landscape features, managed in a manner which ensures their long-term health and viability.

Where landscape character has been degraded or eroded, development will be expected to contribute to the restoration of landscape character and distinctiveness.”

Paragraph 3.16: *“The Landscape Character Assessment provides a statement of the existing landscape character features and attributes which make up the 21 distinctive areas within South Gloucestershire.”*

Paragraph 3.18: *“Inherent characteristics of the locality or attributes may include openness or enclosure, key views or wide vistas, landscape patterns such as roads, waterways, rights of way and hedgerows. These characteristics in combination with individual features of the landscape, such as woods, ponds and walls, are the particular combination of attributes and features which makes one locality different and distinct from another.”*

Paragraph 3.21: *“The definition of tranquillity arises from a combination of elements. The Council uses the criteria devised by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE). Tranquillity is an important element in people’s experience and enjoyment of the countryside, as well as for wildlife, and it contributes to local character and distinctiveness.”*



Policy PSP3 – Trees And Woodland states that “Development proposals should minimise the loss of existing vegetation on a site that is of importance in terms of ecological, recreational, historical or landscape value.

Development proposals which would result in the loss of, or damage (directly or indirectly) to, existing mature or ancient woodland, veteran trees, ancient or species-rich hedgerows will only be acceptable where the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss or damage.

Development proposals should, where appropriate, include:

- *the protection of trees; and*
- *replacement trees, of an appropriate size and species, where tree loss or damage is essential to allow for development; and*
- *additional tree planting, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS1 and the Landscape Character Assessment SPD’s, including, but not limited to, planting along arterial roads, in car parks and in the public realm; and*
- *new planting schemes that retain and integrate healthy, mature trees and hedgerows, and include native species.”*

Paragraph 3.37: “The Council will encourage new woodland creation as a positive Green Infrastructure requirement for development schemes. In accordance with the NPPF, the Council will promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity.”

Policy PSP8 – Residential Amenity states that “Development proposal(s) will be acceptable provided that they do not create unacceptable living conditions or have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of occupiers of the development or of nearby properties. Unacceptable impacts could result from (but are not restricted to):

- a) *loss of privacy and overlooking;*
- b) *overbearing and dominant impact;*
- c) *loss of light (daylight/sunlight);*
- d) *noise or disturbance; and*
- e) *odours, fumes or vibration.”*

Policy PSP19 – Wider Biodiversity states that “Development Proposals resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including unimproved grassland (lowland hay meadows), ancient woodland, and ancient trees will be refused unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

Where appropriate, biodiversity gain will be sought from development proposals. The gain will be proportionate to the size of the scheme and be secured through an appropriate planning condition or legal undertaking. This will include sites of low nature conservation interest (for example, intensive agricultural land) where new semi-natural habitat (green infrastructure) would provide opportunities and gains for local wildlife.

Development proposals, where they would result in significant harm to sites of value for local biodiversity, which cannot be avoided by locating it on an alternative site with less harmful impacts, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, will be refused. Sites of value for local biodiversity include (but are not limited to):

- *local sites (Sites of Nature Conservation Interest or Regionally Important Geological Sites);*



- sites supporting species of fauna or flora protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 or Habitat Regulations 2010;
- sites supporting species and habitats listed on the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP);
- sites supporting species and habitats listed by the Government as being of Principle Importance for Biological Diversity in Britain under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Priority Species and Habitats);
- sites supporting birds listed on the Red, Amber or Green Lists of Species of Conservation Concern;
- wildlife corridors or new green infrastructure, which enable the dispersal and favourable status of flora and fauna species; and
- brownfield sites supporting notable assemblages of invertebrates.”

The area in green in the extract below is Site of Nature Conservation Interest (PSP 19).

The area in brown is Regionally Important Geological Sites.



Figure 2-2: Extract taken from the Interactive Policies Map <https://map.n-somerset.gov.uk/southglos.html>

Policy PSP23 – Mineral Working And Restoration references the Chipping Sodbury Quarry at paragraph 6.89 and 6.90 stating that “Chipping Sodbury Quarry is situated immediately to the north of Chipping Sodbury on the B4060. The old quarry area (Barnhill) and the plant site (Southfields) lie to the west of the B4060. Current extraction is proceeding on the east side of the B4060, in the Hampstead Farm and East Brinsham Farm phases. Access to the plant site from the excavation area is through a road tunnel beneath the B4060. In the longer term, working is likely to progress by crossing the B4060 into the West Brinsham Farm area.



The Preferred Area lies to the east of East Brinsham Farm. Due to the topography of the surrounding land, existing hedgerows and advance planting, it is well screened from public view. The main constraint to working the Preferred Area is the need to maintain the integrity of the Brinsham Stream water corridor. However, this constraint has been resolved through the review of conditions for the IDO permission which covers most of the area east of the B4060.”

Supplementary Planning Guidance

2.2.4 Green Infrastructure (April 2021)

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides information to support existing Local Plan policies which seek to ensure that green and blue infrastructure (GI) is adequately conserved and enhanced throughout the development process. The document mostly relates to housing development, stating that *“Every effort should be made to retain existing trees and hedgerows within a layout as they form vital biodiversity and GI connectivity and constitute an intrinsic characteristic of the landscape.”*

2.2.5 Trees and Development Sites (April 2021)

Aim of this document is to ensure an integrated approach to the planning for trees, hedgerows and woodlands in new developments across South Gloucestershire. This builds on the Core Strategy policies such as CS1, CS2, CS9, PSP1 and PSP2.

2.2.6 New Local Plan Phase 3 Consultation Document (December 2023)

*“National guidance advises that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans. The weight to be attached to such policies depends upon the stage of preparation or review, increasing as successive stages are reached, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. Accordingly, the **South Gloucestershire Local Plan Phase 3 is a material consideration for the purposes of exercising the council’s development management functions and can be given weight that is appropriate for the early stage the Local Plan has reached.** The weight that can be given to the Plan will increase as it progresses through its preparation and examination stages.”*

New Local Plan evidence base

To support the production of the new 2020 Local Plan A range of evidence and technical documents have been produced. These are located on the South Gloucestershire New Local Plan evidence base web page.

<https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/local-plan-2020-evidence-base/>

2.2.7 Strategic GI Corridor Mapping Project, 2023

The haul road is located within Corridor D: Wickwar-Westerleigh-Biton, the primary function and purpose is noted as *“a mosaic of strategic woodland and grassland habitat associated with Visually Important Hillside / ridge landform features within its southern part. It takes in the strategic grassland network principally associated with common land (which are concentrated in its central part), and the strategic woodland network within its northern part.”*



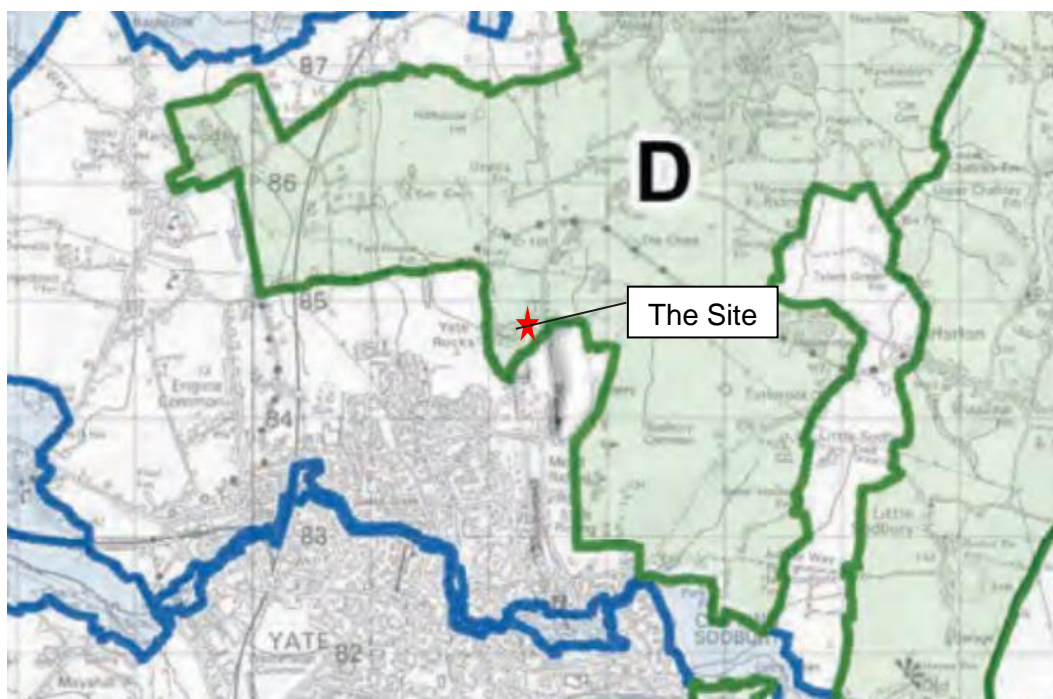


Figure 2-3: Extract taken from Figure 4.1: Strategic Green and Blue-Green Infrastructure Corridors, Strategic Green Infrastructure Corridor Mapping Project
Methodology and Audit Report South Gloucestershire Council Draft final report Prepared by LUC July 2023

Visually Important Hillside: Wickwar Ridge

“The Wickwar Ridge VIH comprises a north-south linear steep ridge, comparatively narrow in width, with the notable inclusion of Bury Hill in its centre and interspersed with small-scale stream valleys. The VIH is located within the centre of South Gloucestershire, where it defines part of the western and eastern boundaries of the Wickwar Ridge and Vale (LCA 5) and Yate Vale (LCA 8) landscape character areas respectively. The southern extent of the VIH spans into the town of Yate and therefore no longer presents as a green, undeveloped hillside. The Wickwar Ridge forms a distinctive landscape feature in views and is emphasised by the surrounding lower-lying vale landscape to the west.”

Character and value are described as being

- *“The character and appearance of the VIH is partly unspoilt by visual detractors within its northern and central parts, with some small, fragmented blocks of woodland around the central area. However, an existing turbine at Oxwick Farm (46m tip height) is relatively prominent as it lies at the top of the ridge (just outside of the VIH). The southern part of the VIH encroaches into Yate and contains a large number of existing houses, and with substantial housing development likely to increase housing numbers in the future. Additionally, several active and disused quarries are present along the southeasterly boundary.*
- *The VIH provides the opportunity for expansive westward views with Bristol, Purdown ridge and South Wales, forming distant features.*

The VIH has a role in the landscape by providing containment to the eastern edge of LCA 8: Yate Vale, and providing visual separation between the settlements of Chipping Sodbury and Yate. It also forms a prominent backdrop to the surrounding lower-lying landscape.



2.2.8 South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment Annex II: Strategic Viewpoints, November 2023

The document was reviewed as part of the desktop review. However, owing to the high degree of visual enclosure with and in the area around the Site and lack of invisibility with the surrounding landscapes, none of the Strategic Viewpoints were found to be relevant.

2.2.9 Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025 (Adopted February 2023)

The Site and the Study Area is located outside the boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape, located approximately 3.1km to the east of the Site at its closest point. Owing to the lack of intervisibility and the distance to the National Landscape boundary, it has been scoped out for the purpose of this LVA.

2.3 Relevant Planning History

An application for the development for this Site was submitted in 2022. Details of the planning history and background of the Site have been included in a separate Planning Statement Addendum.

2.4 Designations

Relevant planning designations are shown on Drawing CHR-005 (Appendix E). The Site is not located within any national or local landscape-related designations. The closest landscape designations are as follows:

- National: The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)¹⁰ is located approximately 3.1km to the east of the Site at its closest point, beyond both the Study Area and the extent of the map included in Drawing CHR-005.
- National: The Site lies outside the Green Belt which wraps around the western and southern edges of Yate, approximately 2.5km to the north-west of the Site at its closest point, as shown on Drawing CHR-005.
- Local: The Site is part of a larger area identified as ‘Significant Green Infrastructure’ in the Adopted Local Plan¹¹ (policy CS30). Consultation for the South Gloucestershire New Local Plan is under way. Within the evidence base for this new Local Plan, the area to the west of the Site has been identified as one of nine Strategic Green Corridors (Corridor D: Wickwar-Westerleigh-Biton)¹².

The land to the north of the site is identified as ‘Visually Important Hillside’ in Policy CS30 the Adopted Local Plan and South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment¹³, which extends north to south, about 250m west of the Site, along Yate Rocks.

- Access and Recreation:
 - Public Rights of Way (PROW) include long distance footpath, Jubilee Way LYA/42/30 runs north south, to the west of the site, closest along Yate Rocks and

¹⁰ On 26th December 2023, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty also became known as ‘National Landscapes’ to place them alongside their larger and more well-known counterpart National Parks, to highlight their equal place in the country’s aims around health, wellbeing, sustainable public access, climate change and nature recovery. However, the legal designation remains Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

¹¹ South Gloucestershire Local Plan – Core Strategy, 2006 – 2027 (adopted December 2013)

¹² Strategic GI Corridor Mapping Project, December 2023

¹³South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment Annex I: Visually Important Hillside South Gloucestershire Council Draft November 2023



PRoW (LYA/37/10) north of the Site connecting to B4060 Wickwar road at Brinsham Farm.

- There is a limited network of PRoW in the immediate vicinity of the Site, within the 1km radius of the Site, to the south and east.
- Cultural Heritage:
 - Conservation Areas: Chipping Sodbury Conservation Area is located approximately 2.4km to the south of the Site.
 - There are three Grade II listed buildings within a radius of 1km from the Site., the closest being Little Brinsham Farm which lies along the eastern edge of the Site. Brinsham Farm lies to the north, located about 200m from the northern edge of the Site. Lattimore Farm also lies about 750m from the Site to the north.

A separate Heritage Statement has been undertaken to assess the effects on heritage features in the vicinity of the Proposed Development.

2.5 Summary of Planning Context

The Site is not located within any national or locally designated landscape areas. The Site lies outside the Yate Settlement boundary.

There are no PRoW within the Site, or adjacent to the Site.

The Grade II listed Little Brinsham Farm and associated farm buildings are located along the eastern boundary of the Site.

The Site is part of a larger area identified as 'Significant Green Infrastructure' in the Adopted Local Plan¹⁴ (policy CS30).

¹⁴ South Gloucestershire Local Plan – Core Strategy, 2006 – 2027 (adopted December 2013)



3.0 Aspects of the Development Which Have the Potential to Cause Landscape and Visual Effects

The following attributes of the Proposed Development are those which are the most likely to result in landscape and visual effects. The nature of proposal is described alongside the loss of landscape elements and proposed mitigation measures. Potential impacts resulting from the Proposed Development are also summarised below and are considered in relation to the assessment of effects.

3.1 Nature of Proposals and Proposed Mitigation

As outlined in Section 1.0, the proposals primarily comprise construction of temporary haul road to provide connection between the Southfields Quarry to the south and Brinsham West Quarry to the north.

The proposals as submitted previously¹⁵ have been reviewed and revised to respond to the comments received from the Landscape Officer¹⁶. The proposals, outlined below, have been developed as part of a carefully considered design process and part of a collaborative approach with the ecologists, engineers, heritage consultants and the client team.

The landform and existing vegetation being the key features within the Site, were main design drivers. The proposals associated with the operational phase of the temporary haul road have been illustrated on Drawing CHR-001- Landscape Strategy during Operation and Drawing CHR-006- Cross Sections. The main differences from the previous scheme and key design objectives are as outlined below:

- Alignment of the haul road has been revised to align with the profile and line of the holloway, which have been detailed in the Planning Statement. Two passing spaces are proposed. The northern of these has been moved to the east to minimise impacts to the western bank of the holloway.
- Existing vegetation has been retained, as far as possible, and protected during construction. Veteran ash tree retained and protected. Landform modifications have been designed to avoid infringement of RPAs of retained vegetation;
- Landform modifications along the length of the haul road have been designed to minimise the changes to the existing holloway profile, as far as possible, and provide screening in views from the east within the building curtilage. The profile of the road is designed to sit within the holloway, creating a 'ha-ha wall' effect, thereby maintaining visual connections from the adjacent development to the land to the west (see Illustrative Cross Sections CHR-006).

¹⁵ Landscape and Visual Statement, as submitted previously, [P22/02019/F | Construction of Temporary Haul Road to link Southfields and Brinsham West Quarries with subsequent restoration. | Land Between Gravel Hill Road And Brinsham Lane Yate South Gloucestershire BS37 7BT \(southglos.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁶ Received on 14 April 2022 (screening opinion P22/011/SCR and pre-application advice PRE20/0702), and 14 June 2023.



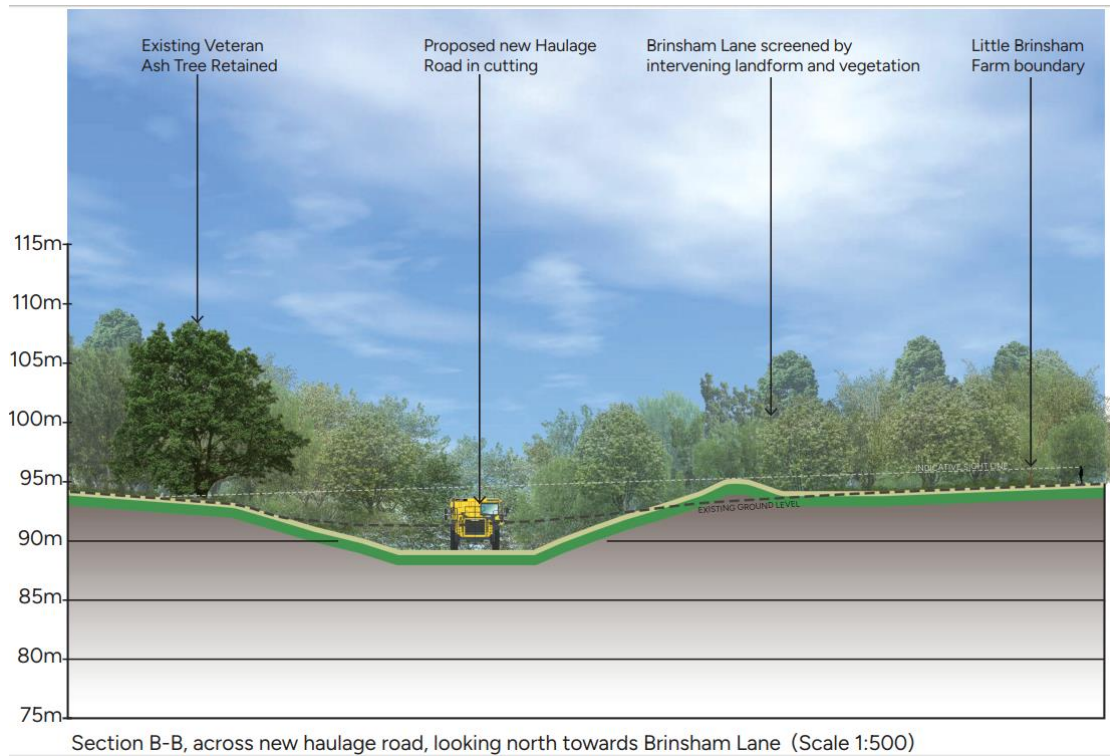


Figure 3-1: Extract from Drawing CHR-006 Illustrative Cross Sections (Appendix A)

'Sketch' models were prepared to inform the profile of the screening 'bund' landform along the south-eastern edge of the site, to minimise the extent of bunding, and to ensure it is aligned in with the existing landform profile. The profile informed by the modelling extends as shallow slope in the north-south direction. As illustrated in **Figure 3-2** below, the haul road and associated vehicular movement is largely screened by landform, with the vehicular movement glimpsed along the southern edge of the haul road where it meets Gravel Hill. Therefore, the screening bund landform along the southeastern edge of the Site, which has been greatly reduced from the previous scheme.



Figure 3-2: Plan showing profile of modified landform (extract from Drawing CHR-001)



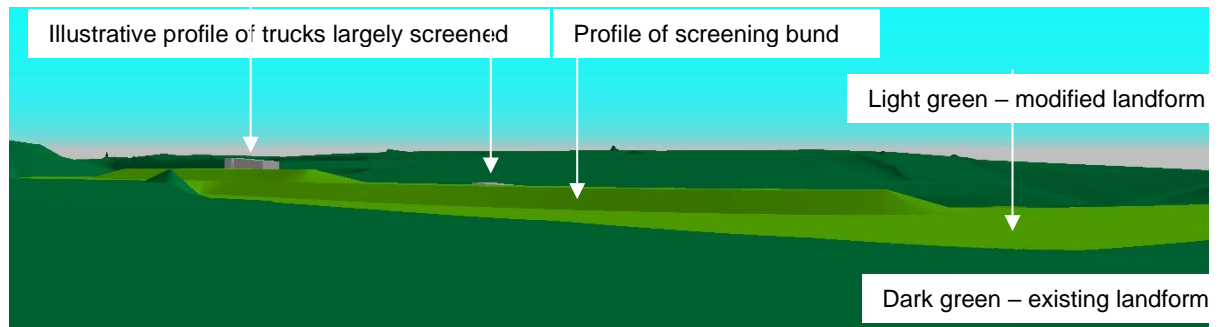


Figure 3-3: Illustrative study model to inform landform modification design – haul road and screening landform. Illustrative view as seen from the location indicated as white dot in the plan in Figure 3-2 above.

- New native scrub planting has been proposed along the south-eastern edge of the Site, along the screening 'bund' to provide additional screening for the visible section of the haul road and associated activities. The planting has been undertaken to align with the existing landscape pattern. The vegetation is a native mix and confined to a short area at the southern end of the Site, which would naturalise and form part of the wider landscape context, as illustrated in **Figure 3-4** below.
- Other planting proposals to include reseeding of modified landform areas and native species rich hedgerow mix planting to infill gaps around proposals where vegetation was lost as a result of the construction activities.
- New stone retaining wall (built as vernacular stone wall), no higher than 1.5m (in a small section of the wall), has been proposed along the periphery of the root protection area of the veteran tree to ensure any reprofiling to the bank here can be minimised and avoids infringement of RPA of retained tree.



Figure 3-4: Sketch showing profile of new scrub planting (green colour) contextually indicated along with existing vegetation pattern around the Site

For the restoration phase, the design intent is that the landscape is reinstated back to its baseline condition. The proposals, as outlined below, have been illustrated on Drawing CHR-002.



- Modified landform profile associated with restoration process, regrading of the holloway to its existing profile. The retaining wall will be retained taking into account an established habitat around the wall, over the operational period of the haul road;
- The mitigation proposals implemented at the start of the operational phase, lasting about 11-12 years, would be mature and naturalised at this stage. Therefore, this vegetation would be translocated to reinstate gaps in existing hedgerows/vegetation after removal of the haul road to provide potential for immediate reinstatement of baseline condition, where possible. A worst case medium-term 5-10 years has been used for assessment purposes; and
- Planting proposals to include reseeding of modified landform areas, new species rich hedgerow mix and native woodland including wet woodland tree planting to reinstate any additional gaps in planting.

3.2 Loss of Landscape Elements

The development of the Site would require the loss of a small-scale pastoral field. There would be some loss of existing vegetation along Gravel Hill and Brinsham Lane and also some woodland vegetation to the north and south. There would be a reversible change to the baseline landform within the Site.

3.3 Potential Impacts (Landscape and Visual)

Despite the extent of mitigation, potential remains for potential landscape and visual effects to arise in relation to the development during construction and operation and post restoration. Potential impacts or effects may result from the following:

3.3.1 Potential Impacts During Construction (Short-term Reversible)

- Site preparation and earthworks including the presence of compounds / temporary spoil heaps;
- Presence of moving construction vehicles and machinery, including cranes;
- Presence of disturbed land;
- Active change in the landscape / land use as development progresses;
- Translation of some existing hedgerow vegetation along Gravel Hill Road (to be lost) outside of landform modification area (along the south-western edge of the Site);
- Views of construction process and extensive areas of bare earth; and
- Views of construction traffic.

3.3.2 Potential Impacts During Operation (11-12 year operational period) (Long term Reversible)

- Introduction of new haul road in a rural landscape;
- Loss of existing landscape resource – land use and landcover;
- Creation of new landscape elements – landform and planting proposals;
- Maturing of mitigation planting;
- Presence of new built haul road and retaining and landscape elements in the local landscape;
- Indirect changes on existing adjacent landscape character areas; and
- Changes to views appreciated by surrounding visual receptors.



The construction period assessment considers the temporary short-term effects of the construction activities.

The operational effects of the Proposed Development are considered as long-term reversible impacts, as the haul road will be removed after 12 years of operation and the landscape would be restored back to baseline condition.

Off-site mitigation planting, as indicated on Drawing CHR-007, has not been included as part of this assessment; indicated for information only.

3.3.3 Potential Impacts post Restoration (Long-term Permanent Irreversible)

The following permanent impacts would be experienced:

- Removal of built elements - haul road;
- Landform returned to baseline condition;
- Grassland reinstated on disturbed landform restored back to baseline;
- Translocated mature established 'mitigation' planting (from operational phase) into locations required to infill gaps as result of vegetation lost to accommodate proposals;
- New planting to infill additional gaps as result of vegetation lost to accommodate proposals.



4.0 Potential Landscape Effects

4.1 Introduction

This section describes the landscape character of the Proposed Development Site and Study Area based on desktop reviews, site visits and consultations. It identifies the potential residual effects of the Proposed Development on landscape receptors and landscape designations following Construction and during Operation and post Restoration.

The following landscape assessment is based upon both a desk top assessment of published character assessments and plans as well as a site-based survey. In accordance with GLVIA3 the main landscape receptors, (individual landscape elements, aesthetic characteristics, overall character), which have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development, have been identified and their sensitivity to the Proposed Development has been assessed by considering their value and susceptibility. The magnitude of change which would be experienced by each of these receptors has then been assessed by determining the size and scale of change, the geographical extent of the change, and the duration and reversibility of the change.

By combining the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of effect, the potential for notable landscape effects has been assessed.

Detailed aspects of the landscape impact assessment are included in Appendix C, but the key themes and overall judgements are explained within this section of the report.

4.2 Existing Landscape Character Assessments

There is a nested series of existing character assessments which provide a useful context to the character of the Site. Drawing CHR-008 summarises the classification provided by these assessments, but further details of each are set out below.

4.2.1 National Landscape Character

4.2.1.1 Natural England National Character Areas (2014)

At a national scale the site is within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 118: Bristol, Avon Valleys and Ridges. The key characteristics of NCA 118, of relevance to the application site, include the following:

- *“Low-lying, shallow vales that contrast sharply with high, open downland ridges...”*
- *“Agriculture is predominantly livestock rearing, with arable in the flatter land to the north-east, with larger field sizes and infrequent hedgerow trees...”*

This LVA concentrates on the local published landscape character assessments. The NCAPs are more generic and cover a considerable area. It is considered that for this scale of assessment the local landscape character assessment is a more appropriate tool by which to assess landscape character and the potential effects of the Proposed Development. Therefore, the NCAs have been scoped out for the purpose of this appraisal.



4.2.2 Landscape Character – Local – County Level

4.2.2.1 South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment (November 2014)

At a district scale the site lies within the area covered by the South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment SPD (November 2014). The site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 5: “Wickwar Ridge and Vale”.

The main characteristics of LCA 5 “Wickwar Ridge and Vale” are:

- *“Large scale undulating landscape with small and medium scale Little Avon River valley. The Cotswold Scarp to the east forms a significant backcloth and provides extensive views over the area. The Wickwar Ridge to the west forms a distinctive landscape feature in views across the adjacent Yate Vale character area and provides for expansive westward views across the landscapes to the north of Yate;*
- *A rural, and in places relatively remote landscape, characterised by varied land cover of irregular, small to medium mixed pasture and arable fields defined by hedgerows (clipped, thick and intermittent) trees & small areas of woodland interspersed with commons. The hedgerows provide important connectivity between the areas of woodland;*
- *Tranquillity is a particular characteristic of the landscapes of the northern and northeastern half of this character area;*
- *The extensive Lower Woods complex includes one of the largest areas of ancient woodland in the southwest of England and is of significant landscape and ecological importance within this area and the South Gloucestershire area as a whole, and provides habitat for a range of notable species including European Protected Species. These woodlands have a close interrelationship with the adjoining common land;*
- *A number of commons of varying sizes have distinct land use types of rough grassland and scrub make a significant contribution to the character and distinctiveness of this area;*
- *There is an extensive mosaic of calcareous grassland present across the Wickwar Ridge and Valley, supporting a diverse range of flora including areas of species rich grassland;*
- *Areas of arable farming provide nesting opportunities in the spring and foraging potential in the winter for farmland birds including Amber and Red listed species.*
- *Settlement pattern is generally very limited, concentrated in one small town, two villages and scattered elsewhere;*
- *Views are expansive particularly from commons, more elevated locations, the edges of Churchend and Charfield and elsewhere largely contained by landform, woodland and hedgerows; and*
- *Two quarries, two golf courses, ‘B’ roads, small settlements, a railway line and powerlines, largely have a local influence on character.”*

Under landscape character it is stated that the “combination of woodland and strong hedgerow boundaries along fields and lanes creates a sense of enclosure, with a relatively remote and tranquil character”, “the extension of horse keep in the vicinity of Chipping Sodbury and extending towards Wickwar has impacted on the rural character of the locality” and that “Set within this mixed landscape and enclosed by a combination of woodland, hedges and gently undulating topography, the smaller settlements, roads and lanes have little direct impact on the surrounding landscape character.” Regarding the linear quarries at



Chipping Sodbury it notes that *“The linear pattern of screen vegetation along the edges of roads is of a bold and regular form, which is visually different to the adjacent, irregular rural field pattern”* and *“Despite the size of the quarry the effects upon the landscape are largely local”*.

Under the changing landscape, it is noted that linear tree screens associated with quarries have little relationship with local field patterns. This section goes on to state that *“Quarrying of the western site [at Brinsham West] could potentially result in the removal of existing farm buildings at Brinsham Farm and the excavation of a small hill at Wickwar Ridge. The final restoration of the quarries to water will significantly alter the character of the ridge.”* The Wickwar Ridge is noted to form *“a natural, largely undeveloped landform and visible backdrop to views from the adjacent character area. The impact of quarrying therefore has the potential to be visually prominent locally and physically erode the natural skyline of the ridge and existing strong woodland framework.”*

The landscape strategy for the area states *“that future quarrying, landfill and restoration proposals take account of the need to protect the landscape character, amenity and distinctiveness of the local and wider landscape. Quarrying should avoid breaching the slopes of the Wickwar Ridge and enhance habitat diversity through woodland planting and limestone grassland creation”*.

The location of the Site lying below the ridgeline to the east, would not have any physically and visually effects on this important landscape feature.

LCA 8: Yate Vale bounds LCA 5 to the west of the Site, within the Study Area. Owing to the strong physical separation associated with the Wickwar Ridgeline, and the lack of intervisibility with the Ste, this LCA has been scoped out, for the purpose of this appraisal.

4.2.2.2 South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment Update (December 2023)

The New Local Plan evidence base includes an update to the South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment. This was produced in December 2023 but has yet to be formally adopted. Due to the advanced consultations stage of the Local Plan, the policies within this Landscape Character Assessment have been considered below.

This update to 2014 Landscape Character Assessment notes that *“the boundaries of the LCTs and LCAs are unchanged from the 2014 Landscape Character Assessment. It is considered that the boundaries remain ‘fit for purpose’ as there has not been any substantial changes to land use or landscape character to require boundary alterations”*. Therefore, the site is still located within LCA 5: *“Warwick Ridge and Vale”*, part of the *“Shallow Ridge”* Landscape Character Type (LCT).

The main characteristics of LCA 5 *“Wickwar Ridge and Vale”* in this update are as follows:

- *“A large-scale undulating landscape characterises much of the LCA, with the small to medium-scale Little Avon River valley in the north.*
- *The LCA is enclosed by the LCA 4: Cotswold Scarp to the east, which forms a significant backcloth and provides extensive views over the area.*
- *The Wickwar Ridge in the west forms a distinctive landscape feature, particularly in views from LCA 8: Yate Vale and provides expansive westward views across the landscape north of Yate.*
- *The varied rural landscape is characterised by irregular, small to medium mixed pasture and arable fields defined by hedgerows, with trees and small areas of woodland interspersed with commons.*



- *Rural tranquillity and dark night skies are strongly experienced, particularly in the north and north-east of the LCA.*
- *The extensive Lower Woods complex forms one of the largest areas of ancient woodland in the south-west of England and has a close interrelationship with the adjoining common land.*
- *Commons of varying sizes, characterised by rough grassland and scrub, contribute to the distinctiveness of the landscape.*
- *An extensive mosaic of calcareous grassland is present across the LCA, supporting a diverse range of flora and species-rich grassland.*
- *Watercourses and associated tributaries of Little Avon River, River Frome and Ladden Brook form sinuous and wooded small-scale features within the LCA.*
- *The limited settlement pattern is concentrated in one historic small town (Chipping Sodbury), the historic village of Wickwar and the village of Charfield, and is scattered elsewhere.*
- *Views are expansive, particularly from commons, more elevated locations and the edges of Churchend and Charfield. Elsewhere, views are largely contained by landform, woodland and hedgerows.*
- *Tranquillity and dark night skies are experienced across much of the LCA, particularly in the north and north-east.*
- *Two quarries, two golf courses, 'B' roads, small settlements, a railway line and powerlines have a local influence on landscape character."*

The perceptual influences are assessed and it is stated under the sub-heading visual character that *"Set within this mixed landscape and enclosed by a combination of woodland, hedges and gently undulating topography, the smaller settlements, roads and lanes have little direct visual impact on the surrounding landscape character."*

The tranquillity of the landscape is influenced by Chipping Sodbury and Southfields Quarry, as illustrated in Figure 4-1, which identifies that the Site lies within an area identified as moderate tranquillity. The description states that *"Whilst the active quarries... are relatively well-screened, dynamic and noise-creating activities associated with their works influence tranquillity locally. These include frequent blasting operations, lorry movements along the road network (particularly the B4060 and B4509) and tailings mounds formed on adjacent land. Despite the size of the quarry the effects on the landscape are generally localised."*



Figure 4-1: Extract taken from Figure 3.9 -Tranquillity (page 47 of South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment Update (December 2023))



The ridgeline at Wickwar Ridge is noted to “*make an important visual contribution to views from the edge of Yate, particularly from slightly elevated open ground within Yate, such as at Tyler’s Field and from the Yate Vale (LCA 8) generally. This landform is sensitive to change, especially built forms along its slopes or crest, where these have the potential to be visually prominent, break the skyline, or physically limit views from the ridgeline over lower areas to the west.*”

As mentioned above, the location of the Site lying below the ridgeline to the east, would not have any physically and visually effects on this important landscape feature.

It references the potential change associated with Brinsham West as outlined in the 2014 assessment.

It is stated under development management on page 41 to “*Ensure that future quarrying, landfill, and restoration proposals take account of the need to protect the landscape character, amenity, distinctiveness, and biodiversity of the area. Quarrying should avoid breaching the slopes of the Wick war Ridge and Churchend Ridge.*”



4.3 The Landscape of the Site and its Context

GLVIA3 recommends that a landscape character assessment should be carried out as part of the baseline study (paragraph 5.4). This should consider:

- The elements that make up the landscape (physical, land cover and the influence of human activity);
- Aesthetic and perceptual aspects; and
- The overall character of the area.

An assessment of the landscape baseline is set out in the following paragraphs.

4.3.1 Individual Elements and Features

4.3.1.1 Landform

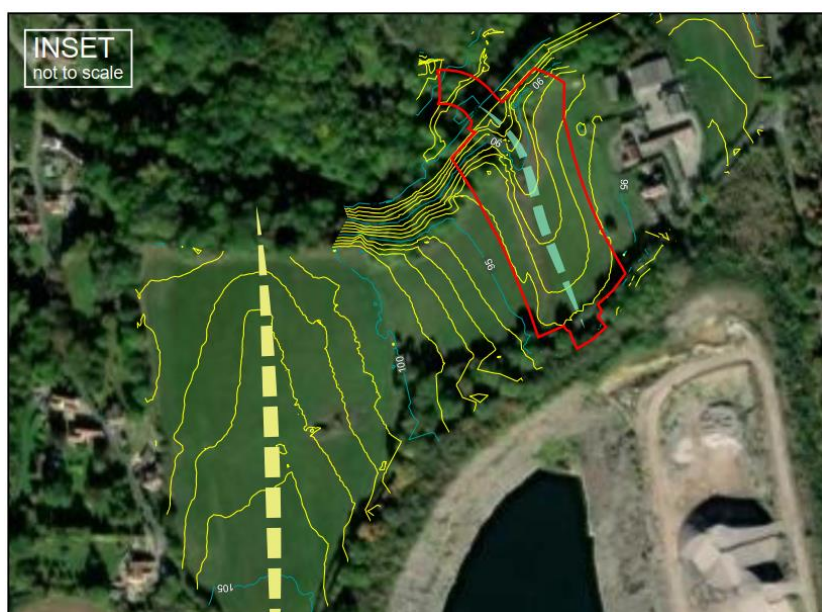


Figure 4-2: Extract of Drawing CHR-005, showing topographical context of the Site and its immediate surroundings

The Site slopes down from south to north, from 95m AOD to 85m AOD, with a gradual slope along the southern section, getting steeper moving north, and sloping up relatively steeply east to west, creating a distinctive holloway landform feature within the Site. In the immediate context to the west, land rises steeply to a ridgeline at approximately 103m AOD about 140m to the west of the Site. Brinsham Lane to the north sits in a cutting with steep vegetated embankments along its southern edge. This elevated landform - ridgeline to the north and west forms part of Wickwar Ridge - Visually Important Hillside¹⁷.

4.3.1.2 Land Use and Settlement Pattern

The Site, itself, is small-scale rectangular in shape, but forms part of a medium scale irregular shaped field. The Site is currently in pastoral use. It is noted from the Heritage Statement that the holloway within the Site remained in use as a footpath, and latterly a farm track, through the 20th century, though the 21st century Google Earth imagery indicates that

¹⁷ South Gloucestershire Council, Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document, Draft Report November 2023.



it had gone out of use; certainly, as existing, the gate and track at Brinsham Lane is overgrown and very much disused.

To the south, east and west, landscape context within the Study Area is dominated by man-made influences associated with the presence of the quarry activities, heavy traffic along B4060, manicured landscape of the golf course, development along the northern edge of Yate and a new strategic development site (2000 homes) that is currently under construction. The LCA description also recognises the influence of built development within the western edge of the LCA, where the site is located, as *“This is evident along the area’s western boundary, where large scale quarrying follows the line of the Wickwar Ridge... Noise and visual activity, associated with the quarries, principal roads and railway within the area, locally erode the perception of tranquillity within this character area... To the west new neighbourhood will result in a northerly extension of the urban influence of Yate.”*

To the north, planning permission has been granted for quarrying within Brinsham West, which will form part of the future baseline (Planning application ref. PK11/0612/M).



Figure 4-3: Extract from Google Earth, showing the landscape context around the Site, looking south.

4.3.1.3 Boundary Treatment and Existing Vegetation

The Site is bounded by vehicular corridors associated with Brinsham Lane (to the north) and Gravel Hill Road (to the south). The Site is bounded by native hedgerows and vegetation along the northern and southern edges along Brinsham Lane and Gravel Hill.

To the north, it is bounded by dense mature (unmanaged) hedgerow vegetation, modern post-and-wire fencing and a metal gate. The northern edge of the Site, north of Brinsham Lane, comprises dense wet woodland in a small valley containing Ladden Brook. There is a veteran ash tree that forms part of the group of vegetation along north-western edge of the Site.

To the south, the hedgerow vegetation is relatively well managed and forms a strong boundary along Gravel Hill. Mature tree belt along the northern edge of Southfields Quarry flanks the southern edge of Gravel Hill.



To the east of the Site, the field rises towards a farm complex, known as Little Brinsham Farm. Rising to the west of the Site is a continuation of the field, for about 250 metres.

4.3.1.4 Views

As illustrated in Figure 4-2, the Site's immediate context is defined by topography, vegetation and built development (Little Brinsham Farm) which creates a well-defined sense of physical and visual enclosure. There is no intervisibility with the wider context beyond the localised ridgeline in the field to the west. Boundary vegetation along Brinsham Lane and Gravel Hill Road limit intervisibility to the north and south. Little Brinsham Farm and associated buildings terminate easterly views.

4.3.1.5 Access

There are no PRow in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the wider context include long distance footpath, Jubilee Way LYA/42/30 runs north south, to the west of the site, closest along Yate Rocks and PRow (LYA/37/10) north of the Site connecting to B4060 Wickwar road at Brinsham Farm.

There is a limited network of PRow in the immediate vicinity of the Site, within the 1km radius of the Site, to the south and east.

4.3.2 Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects

As outlined above, the Site is well enclosed visually and physically with a pastoral character and is moderately tranquil. The visual character can be defined as *“Set within this mixed landscape and enclosed by a combination of woodland, hedges and gently undulating topography, the smaller settlements, roads and lanes have little direct visual impact on the surrounding landscape character.”*¹⁸

The key characteristics of the landscape context are aligned as outlined in the LCA description, *“The combination of woodland and strong hedgerow boundaries along fields and lanes creates a sense of enclosure, with a relatively remote and tranquil character”*. To the north, along Brinsham Lane, which has rural country lane character and the adjoining woodland along Ladden Brook, there is increased perception of wildness/naturalness.

However, the built context, as outlined in paragraph 4.3.1.2, within the Study Area exerts some influence on the perceptual qualities of the Site. The tranquillity of the wider landscape is influenced by Chipping Sodbury and Southfields Quarry, and owing to the Site's proximity to active quarries, this is a factor in understanding the perceptual influences on the Site. As illustrated in Figure 4-1, the Site lies within an area identified as of moderate tranquillity. The LCA description also alludes to these influences as, *“Whilst the active quarries... are relatively well-screened, dynamic and noise-creating activities associated with their works influence tranquillity locally. These include frequent blasting operations, lorry movements along the road network (particularly the B4060 and B4509) and tailings mounds formed on adjacent land. Despite the size of the quarry the effects on the landscape are generally localised.”*

Road noise along B4060, Wickwar Road, and vehicular movement along Gravel Hill, and the man-made influences associated with the quarrying activities and development to the south, further affect the perception of tranquillity.

A review of the interactive “England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies” map provided by the CPRE. These interactive maps were produced with satellite images captured at 1.30 am throughout September 2015. The detailed map, extract of which has been reproduced in

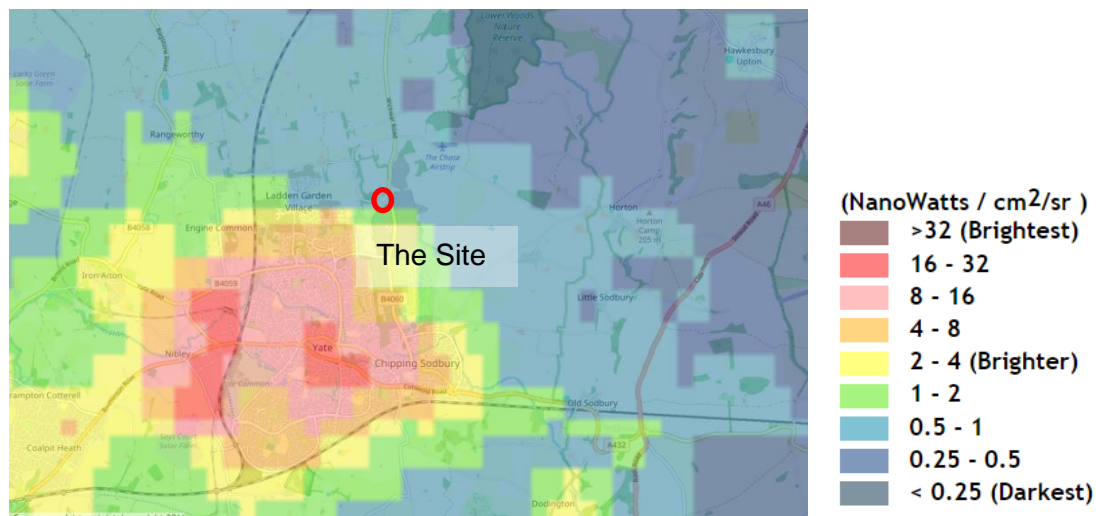
¹⁸ Area 5 – Wickwar Ridge and Vale, South Gloucestershire Council, Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Document, Draft Report, November 2023.



Figure 4-4 below, illustrates the level of lighting across 9 colour bands: <0.25 NanoWatts/cm²/sr identifying the darkest skies, and >32 NanoWatts/cm²/sr identifying the brightest level of lighting. The darkest areas grade from dark blue through to green, whereas the brightest areas grade from yellow through to dark red.

Figure 4-4 illustrates the baseline level of light across the majority of the Site and its immediate context is between 0.5-2 NanoWatts/cm²/sr. These represent the third and fourth darkest bands recorded by the CPRE. Light intensity increases in parts of the surrounding area, towards Yate and Chipping Sodbury to the south and west, as the wider landscape to the south and west is influenced by existing light emissions within Yate and Chipping Sodbury. The Site, itself, is within lower light emissions category of 0.5-1 NanoWatts/cm²/sr. This will not change as a result of the Proposed Development.

Figure 4-4: Extract from CPRE’s Dark Skies map



4.3.3 Overall Character

The Site is entirely located within *LCA 5: Wickwar Ridge and Vale*. The Site displays some of the typical characteristics of the landscape character as outlined in the LCA description such as “*rural, and in places relatively remote landscape, characterised by varied land cover of irregular, small to medium mixed pasture and arable fields defined by hedgerows (clipped, thick and intermittent) trees & small areas of woodland...*” The LCA description also identifies that the “*...active quarries have dynamic, visible and noise creating activities associated with their works. These include frequent blasting operations, lorry movements along the road network and tailings mounds formed on adjacent land. Despite the size of the quarry the effects upon the landscape are largely local.*”

Therefore, the Site’s character is influenced by its location within the relatively rural edge to the settlement of Yate and its location within an active working landscape associated with the quarrying activities around it.

4.3.4 The Changing Landscape

GLVIA3 recommends that consideration should be given to the Site not only as it is, but also as it would become.

The quarrying activities to the north of the Site, around Brinsham Farm have been approved. The development within the northern edge of Yate has been approved and is currently under development. For the purposes of this application, it been assumed to be part of this settlement edge baseline.



4.4 Landscape Receptors

The main landscape receptors which are likely to be affected by the development include the following individual elements and features:

- Landform;
- Land use;
- Hedgerows and vegetation along field boundaries and within Site; and
- Designated Heritage features.

As well as the following aesthetic and perceptual aspects

- Sense of physical and visual enclosure provided by existing vegetation/ woodland and landform;
- Rural character and perceptual connectivity to surrounding countryside; and
- Influence of development.

The relevant character area assessed is:

- LCA 5 Wickwar Ridge and Vale.

The 2km Study Area, as defined in paragraph 1.5 has been assessed.

4.4.1 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

In accordance with GLVIA3 the sensitivity of landscape receptors is determined by combining their value with their susceptibility to the type of development proposed.

4.4.2 Value of the Landscape

In determining the value of landscapes, GLVIA3 recommends that the starting point should be to consider landscape-related designations. As GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.24) notes, at the local scale of an LVA Study Area it may be found that the landscape value of a specific area may be different to that suggested by the formal designation.

GLVIA3 states that the value of undesignated sites should also be considered. Table 1 of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/21 supersedes Box 5.1 of GLVIA3 and provides a helpful guide for assessing these sites. A full assessment against these criteria is included in Table C1, Appendix C.

Using these criteria (see Table C1 in Appendix C), it has been concluded that the value of the Site and its immediate context is generally **Community**.

The Site is not covered by any landscape designations. The Site is partially typical of the local landscape, comprising land in pastoral use, recognising its location within the relatively rural edge to the settlement of Yate and its location within an active working landscape associated with the quarrying activities around it. There are no specific known associations with the Site or its surrounding context. The Site does not make a contribution to local recreation, owing to transport corridors running to the east, north and south, restricting connections across to the wider landscape. Though the Site is influenced by the road noise along B4060, Wickwar Road, it is moderately tranquil and has a high degree of physical and visual enclosure owing to its context - topography, vegetation and built development.

4.4.3 Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to the Proposed Development

The susceptibility of the landscape receptors is assessed within Table C2, Appendix C, and have been outlined below.



The susceptibility of the identified receptors to change is predominantly high, as identified below, owing to the key features and experiential characteristics of the Site.

In overview,

- Landform - **High**, owing to the distinctive landform ‘holloway’ feature.
- Land use - **High**, owing to its pastoral baseline.
- Hedgerows and vegetation along field boundaries and within Site – **High**, distinctive feature within the landscape context - native hedgerows and vegetation along the northern and southern edges along Brinsham Lane and Gravel Hill, and a veteran ash tree that forms part of the group of vegetation along north-western edge of the Site.
- Designated Heritage features¹⁹ - **High**, owing to the adjacency of the Little Brinsham Farm, Grade II Listed Building, is located along the eastern edge of the Site.
- Sense of physical and visual enclosure provided by existing vegetation/ woodland and landform – **High**, as the well-defined sense of enclosure is a key characteristic of the Site, due to the landform context and vegetation along the site boundaries and within the Site.
- Rural character and perceptual connectivity to surrounding countryside – **High**, as the site is influenced by its location within the relatively rural edge to the settlement boundary with Yate, to the south and west.
- Influence of development – **Low**, as a result of the Site’s baseline context of Yate and its location within an active working landscape associated with the quarrying activities around it, as outlined above.
- LCA 5 Wickwar Ridge and Vale - **Medium**, as the site forms a small part of the wider landscape context.

4.4.4 Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

The overall sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed in Table C-2 of Appendix C and have been summarised below.

The overall sensitivity of the individual features within the Site has been assessed to be Medium. Hedgerows and vegetation along the field boundaries and within the Site, including the veteran tree within the northern part of the Site, are key features contributing to the character and sense of enclosure to the Site and have been assessed to be of Medium-High sensitivity along with the designated heritage features. Aesthetic and perceptual features associated with the sense of physical and visual enclosure and the rural character and perceptual connectivity to the countryside have been assessed to be of Medium sensitivity. The sensitivity to change of the receptor associated with the influence of development is Low, as a result of the Site’s baseline context of Yate and its location within an active working landscape associated with the quarrying activities around it, as outlined above.

The key characteristics of the localised area of LCA 5 Wickwar Ridge and Vale are assessed as having a Medium sensitivity, being typical of the area.

4.5 Magnitude of Landscape Change

In accordance with GLVIA3 potential changes to the individual landscape receptors have been assessed in relation to (see also Table C3 in Appendix C):

¹⁹ Details of designated and non-designated heritage features have been discussed in detail in a separate Heritage Statement, produced by SLR Consulting.



- The Size and Scale of Change;
- The Geographical Extent of Change; and
- The Duration and Reversibility of Change.

The Proposed Development would be reversible, with an operational life span of 11-12 years. As noted in paragraph 3.3, there is potential for magnitude of change during construction and operation and restoration phases and has been assessed accordingly, in Table C-3, Appendix C.

The magnitude of change for landform, land use, rural character and perceptual connectivity to the countryside and influence of development has been anticipated to be Medium during construction in the short-term, owing to the introduction of heavy machinery and construction activities associated with the haul road. Hedgerows and vegetation along field boundaries and within Site and sense of physical and visual enclosure would experience a Slight magnitude of change during construction in the short-term, as there would be loss of some boundary vegetation, with hedgerow vegetation along the southern site boundary to be translocated, where possible along the site edge. Veteran tree and existing vegetation would be retained as far as possible and protected during construction. Similarly, the sense of enclosure as a result of the vegetation and landform would also experience a medium magnitude of change, during construction. Designated heritage features would experience a Medium/Slight magnitude of change during construction. The magnitude of change for receptors such as land use, hedgerows and vegetation along the site boundaries, sense of enclosure and influence of settlement edge would remain unchanged during operation phase, due to the introduction of the haul road and operations associated with it, within the site. For other receptors, the magnitude of the identified receptors would reduce in the long-term during operation phase, as a carefully considered design approach to landform modification and mitigation planting proposals. The changes are long-term and reversible in nature, during the operation phase. The magnitude of change during restoration phase has been assessed to be slight for landform and land use, and slight/negligible for all other receptors, as there will be a short-term reversible change as a result of the restoration activities, before the site returns to the baseline condition.

4.5.1 Assessment of Landscape Effects

Table C4 in Appendix C summarises the potential effects on each of the landscape receptors. These have been summarised in the table below.

The landscape effects for landform, land use, hedgerows and vegetation along field boundaries and within Site, designated heritage features and rural character and perceptual connectivity to surrounding countryside has been assessed to be Moderate negative during construction in the short-term. The sense of enclosure, and influence of development, and localised area of LCA 5 Wickwar Ridge and Vale are assessed to be Moderate Minor, in the short-term, during construction. The effects of the Proposed Development for receptors such as land use (Moderate), hedgerows and vegetation along field boundaries and within Site (Slight), influence of development (Medium) and the local LCA (Slight) will remain unchanged from the construction phase and negative in nature in the long-term during operation phase, owing to the change introduced as result of the Proposed Development.

As mentioned above, the restoration phase will result in a short-term change as result of the restoration activities, before returning to baseline condition after 5-10 years. The effects have been assessed to Minor negative for all receptors in the short-term, turning to neutral in the longer term, except for vegetation along the site boundaries and within the site, which has been assessed to be Moderate/Minor, as time required for establishment of translocated/new vegetation.



4.6 Summary of Landscape Appraisal

The landscape appraisal has been based upon a desk top assessment and a site visit carried out in March and June 2024. The Site is classified as “*Wickwar Ridge and Vale*” in the South Gloucestershire Council, Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Document, Draft Report, November 2023m and lies within the south-western edge of the area just outside the settlement boundary of Yate, as adopted Local Plan.

As previously mentioned, the Site’s character is influenced by its location within the relatively rural edge to the settlement of Yate and its location within an active working landscape associated with the quarrying activities around it. As illustrated from the Google Earth image in Figure 4-3, showing the context around the Site.

At a local scale, the Site is moderately tranquil and has a high degree of physical and visual enclosure owing to its context - topography, vegetation and built development. Though the wider context comprises a gently undulating landform, the Site is characterised by a distinctive holloway landform feature within the Site. The Site is bounded by mature hedgerow vegetation on either side of the vehicular corridors – Gravel Hill and Brinsham Lane, that form the northern and southern boundaries. Therefore, landform, existing vegetation and the built context are the key landscape features within the Site.

The appraisal has concluded that the landscape effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be highly localised. The effects would be largely Moderate negative during construction, Moderate and Moderate/Minor negative during the operation phase of the Site and reduce to Moderate/Minor and Minor neutral post restoration. It is accepted that any built development in a greenfield site will result in negative effects. Landscape effects would be localised and focused in the area within and in the immediate vicinity of the Site, and reversible, with the Site returned to baseline condition post restoration.

Also, the location of the Site within the wider context on the edge of a working landscape associated with the quarrying activities and development within the northern edge of Yate also means that the wider baseline landscape context is influenced by development.



5.0 Potential Visual Effects

5.1 Introduction

This section describes the visual amenity of the Proposed Development Site and Study Area based on desktop reviews, site visits and consultations and identifies the residual effects of the Proposed Development on representative viewpoints and principal visual receptors during construction, during operation (11-12 year time period) and post restoration, once the landscape has been restored to baseline condition.

In accordance with the recommendations of GLVIA3, the potential visual effects have been determined by assessing both the sensitivity of visual receptors and the potential magnitude of visual effect.

The following visual assessment is based upon a desk top review and site-based assessment carried out in March and June 2024.

To inform the LVA, initially ten viewpoint locations were identified. The viewpoints are based on the previously undertaken LVS (2022). Additional viewpoints 1, 2 and 10 have been included to address comments received from Landscape Officer, as part of the previously submitted LVA and based on recent consultations with the Landscape Officer in June and August 2024.

The objective is to represent the range of views of the Proposed Development which would be available from publicly accessible viewpoints and capturing the worst case scenarios.

The location of all viewpoints is illustrated on Drawing CHR-005. For each of the viewpoints, photographs of the existing views have been included (see drawings PH-01 to PH-10).

In accordance with the recommendations of GLVIA3 the sensitivity of the potential visual effects has been determined by assessing both the sensitivity of visual receptors and the potential magnitude of visual effects. Full details of the assessment are included in Appendix D, but the results are summarised within this chapter.

5.2 Overall Visibility

As outlined above, the Site enjoys a high degree of physical and visual enclosure owing to

- Landform - the ridgeline to the west (140m from the Site) limiting views beyond to the west;
- Vegetation - mature dense vegetation along Brinsham Lane to the north, and mature hedgerow vegetation along Gravel Hill to the south; and
- Development - Little Brinsham Farm and associated buildings to the east.

The baseline views are limited to the gaps in vegetation/field gates north and south of the Site, along Gravel Hill and Brinsham Lane. There are no views available beyond the immediate vicinity of the Site.

5.2.1 Visual Receptors

Within the visual envelope of the Proposed Development the following types of visual receptors have the potential to experience changes in their views:

- Residential
 - Immediately to the east (Little Brinsham Farm); and
- Road users and train passengers:
 - Immediately south along Gravel Hill; and



- Immediately north along Brinsham Lane.
- Recreational receptors along PRow locally and long distance have been considered, but no views were available for receptors along these routes/locations. The receptors considered are along:
 - long distance footpath, Jubilee Way;
 - PRow (LYA/37/10) to the north; and
 - Sodbury Common.

5.3 Assessment of Sensitivity of Visual Receptors, and the Magnitude of Change, at each Viewpoint

Tables D1, D2 and D3 in Appendix D summarise the sensitivity of the receptors at each of the viewpoints, the magnitude of potential visual effects, and the overall level of effects. The criteria used for this analysis are taken from GLVIA 3 paragraphs 6.31 to 6.41.

Further reference to the effects on individual viewpoints is made in the overall appraisal of visual effects for each receptor group, below.

5.4 Assessment of Potential Visual Effects for Visual Receptors

5.4.1 Recreational Walkers and Pedestrians

Sensitivity of Receptors

These receptors have been grouped together as they have a high susceptibility to the Proposed Development since they are likely to be focused on views of the countryside. In addition, some of these viewpoints are of medium and High/medium value as they are either located along public rights of way or within Sodbury Common. As a consequence, the receptors in these locations are assessed as being of high/medium to high sensitivity.

There are no PRow in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

Magnitude of Change

Viewpoint 7, 8 and 9

For receptors along Jubilee Way, long distance footpath and PRow LYA/42/30 (Viewpoint 8) which lies to northwest and west of the Site, Views would be largely screened by intervening vegetation and landform, and **overall, there would be no change to the view.** PRow (LYA/37/10) (Viewpoint 7) lies to the north of the Site and provides connections between Brinsham Farm, Lattimore Farm and Oxwick Farm. It terminates at B4060, Wickwar Road and does not connect to the Site. Views would be largely screened by intervening vegetation and landform, and **overall, there would be no change to the view.**

There are no views available from Sodbury Common (Viewpoint 9), as views are largely screened by intervening vegetation and landform, and **overall, there would be no change to the view.**

Summary

The roads along the Site – Gravel Hill and Brinsham Lane have no footpaths/paths to walk along, and no obvious links to longer walks. Views from the roads are enclosed with no obvious views out across the wider landscape. It is therefore anticipated that pedestrians along these roads would be very few, and therefore they have not been considered as receptors along these routes.



There are no PRow connections to Gravel Hill Road and Brinsham Lane, and no pavements along these roads, therefore no safe walking areas for pedestrians along the road with vehicles travelling at national speed limit, thereby limiting recreational users along this route. Therefore, pedestrian/walkers have been assessed as receptors along PRow and within Common Land only, and there are no views of the Proposed Development for any of these receptors.

5.4.2 Road Users

Sensitivity of Receptors

Road users are more likely to experience transitional views and are often less focused on views of the countryside: as a consequence, they are less susceptible to visual change (low susceptibility). Within this assessment some views taken on behalf of vehicle users are in context of a Grade II Listed Building (Viewpoint 3 and 10) (Medium/Low), or along Gravel Hill (Viewpoint 1 and 2), Brinsham Lane (Viewpoint 4, 5 and 6) and are of a low value. Therefore, when combined with a low susceptibility, these road users would have a Low sensitivity.

Magnitude of Change and Levels of Effect.

Viewpoint 1 and 2

For road users along Gravel Hill, depending on the positioning along the road, views of the Proposed Development would vary as one moves east-west along the road. When in close proximity to the main accesses into the Site (Viewpoint 1 and 2), construction activities associated with the Proposed Development would be seen in the foreground and result in the vegetation in the foreground (on both sides of the road) to be removed, allowing open views into the Site. This would cause a complete change in view and a resultant Substantial magnitude of change. Resulting in a Moderate visual effect due to the short duration of the view and low susceptibility of vehicle users.

During operation, vehicular activity associated with haul road would be visible. Some hedgerow planting along the road would be reinstated along the road after cessation of construction activities. In Viewpoint 1, landform modifications associated with haul road, with mature planting proposals along elevated screening landform profile would be visible through gaps in boundary hedgerow planting to the north. Similarly in Viewpoint 2, the haul road would be seen in the foreground. This would substantially alter the composition of the view for both viewpoints, and the resultant magnitude of change would be substantial. Resulting in a Moderate visual effect due to the short duration of the view and low susceptibility of vehicle users.

The restoration phase is likely to have a similar effect as the construction phase in the short-term. However, the landform reinstated to baseline condition, and translocated established landscape planting will reinstate the visual amenity permanently, and the resultant magnitude of change would be slight/negligible. Resulting in a Minor visual effect with restoration re-establishing the baseline views.

Viewpoint 3

Moving further east along Gravel Hill, road users would have glimpsed views of the construction activities from the field gate at the curtilage of Little Brinsham Farm (Viewpoint 3), and vehicular movement associated with the construction activities would be seen over the field gate, and partially filtered through the hedgerow vegetation from this location, and have a resultant medium/slight magnitude of change. During operation phase, mitigation planting would be introduced along the elevated screening landform. Initially, such planting would not be mature enough to provide a visual screen. However, upon establishment along



with the elevated landform profile in this location, views of the Proposed Development would be completely screened, and reducing the magnitude of change to slight.

Viewpoint 10

Further east of the Farm along Gravel Hill, a small proportion of the Site would be visible and construction activities seen along the road, with the majority of the Site screened by intervening vegetation and the building in the foreground along the road. Therefore, magnitude of change would be slight.

During operation, vehicular activity associated with haul road would be seen. Some planting along the road would be reinstated along the road after cessation of construction activities. The Site is largely screened, and the Proposed Development is barely visible. The restoration phase is likely to have a similar effect as the construction phase in the short-term. However, the landscape reinstated to baseline condition, and translocated established landscape planting and new restored planting proposals, upon maturity, will reinstate the visual amenity permanently, and therefore magnitude of change for both phases would be negligible.

Viewpoints 4, 5 and 6

For views along Brinsham Lane (Viewpoint 4 and 5), similar to Viewpoint 1 and 2 along Gravel Hill, construction activities associated with the Proposed Development would be seen in the foreground and result in the vegetation in the foreground to be removed, allowing open views into the Site. This would cause a complete change in view, and the resultant magnitude of change would be substantial. Vehicular activity associated with haul road would be seen in the foreground. Some planting along the road would be reinstated along the road after cessation of construction activities. However, the presence of the haul road seen in the foreground would substantially alter the composition of the view. The restoration phase is likely to have a similar effect as the construction phase in the short-term. However, the landscape reinstated to baseline condition, and translocated established landscape planting and new restored planting proposals, upon maturity, will reinstate the visual amenity permanently, and the resultant magnitude of change would be slight/negligible.

Viewpoint 6

Vegetation along the southern edge of Brinsham Lane (right in view) screens view of the Site. Woodland associated with Ladden Brook is seen to the left in view. Due to the loss of some boundary vegetation, a small proportion of the Site would be visible during construction, with the majority of the Site screened by intervening vegetation along the lane. Vehicular movement associated with the construction activities would be seen in the lane and in gaps as a result of the vegetation lost to accommodate the proposals. The magnitude of change would be slight/medium. Vehicular activity associated with haul road would be seen. Some planting along the road would be reinstated along the road after cessation of construction activities. There is an oblique view of the Site from this location, and the view of the proposals would be largely filtered through the mitigation planting. There would be a resultant slight magnitude of change, which would reduce to negligible, post restoration.

Summary

Most views of the Proposed Development are restricted to receptors along roads on the northern and southern edges of the Site. The effects are, largely, Moderate/Minor and Minor negative during the construction, operation and restoration phases for road users, as identified above. These will be reduce to Minor/Negligible neutral in the long term, after 5-10 years of completion of restoration activities, as the landscape will be returned to baseline condition.



5.4.3 Residents

Sensitivity of Receptors

Residents have a high susceptibility to the Proposed Development. Residents living within the adjacent Listed Building (Little Brinsham Farm) are assessed to be of a medium value. Therefore, when combined with a high susceptibility, these residents would have a high/medium sensitivity.

Owing to its close proximity to the eastern edge of the Site, residents would experience open views of the Proposed Development. Due to there being no public access to the curtilage along the eastern edge of the Site, no viewpoint was taken. However, a view from the access drive further east along Gravel Hill was taken (Viewpoint 10).

In order to inform the design of the proposals, it was important to understand the visual context for this receptor. 'Sketch' models were prepared to inform the profile of the screening 'bund' landform along the south-eastern edge of the site, to minimise the extent of bunding, and to ensure it is aligned in with the existing landform profile. It is anticipated that there would be a substantial magnitude of change for the receptor, during construction. During operation, however, as illustrated in Figure 3-3, the haul road and associated vehicular movement would be largely screened by the carefully designed landform, with the vehicular movement glimpsed along the southern edge of the haul road where it meets Gravel Hill during operation phase. It is noted that in the initially, the planting along the south-eastern edge of the Site would not be mature enough to provide a visual screen, and filtered views would be available. However, upon establishment along with the elevated landform profile in this location, views of the Proposed Development would be largely screened. Therefore, there would be a reduction in the magnitude of change. The restoration phase is likely to have a similar effect as the construction phase in the short-term. However, the reseeded landform reinstated to baseline condition will reinstate the visual amenity permanently, and further reduce the magnitude of change.

Summary

Therefore the effects would be Moderate negative during construction phase in the short-term, reducing to Moderate/Minor negative in the longer term during the operation phase. These would remain Moderate/Minor negative in the short-term as a result of the restoration activities, reducing to Minor/Negligible neutral in the long term, after 5-10 years of completion of restoration activities, as the landscape will be returned to baseline condition.

5.5 Summary of Visual Effect

The appraisal found that negative visual effects would be localised and limited to the Site's immediate context as the landform, vegetation and development associated with Little Brinsham Farm helps to provide a well-defined visual enclosure to the Proposed Development.

At most visual effects would be largely Moderate and negative, during construction and operation phase, for receptors at the entrances to the Site (Viewpoint 1,2,4 and 5). These effects quickly reduce as the receptors moves away from the entrance to the Site along these routes and are anticipated to Moderate/Minor and Minor and negative in nature (Viewpoint 3, 10 and 6), illustrating the localised nature of the effects, limited to the immediate context of the Site.

Post restoration, the effects are Minor and Negligible, negative in nature, to begin with and becoming neutral as the landscape returns back to baseline condition.



6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Heidelberg Materials Limited to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to accompany a detailed planning application for proposed construction of a temporary haul road to link Southfields and Brinsham West Quarries, Yate (planning ref. P22/02019/F), referred to as 'Proposed Development'.

The assessment was carried out by an experienced landscape architect using a method which follows the guidance of GLVIA3²⁰.

The assessment is based upon a desk top assessment of all relevant character assessments, maps and policies and various site visit that were carried out in March and June 2024.

6.2 Planning Context

The Site is not located within any national or locally designated landscape areas. The Site lies outside the Yate Settlement boundary.

There are no PRow within the Site, or adjacent to the Site.

The Grade II listed Little Brinsham Farm and associated farm buildings are located along the eastern boundary of the Site.

The Site is part of a larger area identified as 'Significant Green Infrastructure' in the Adopted Local Plan²¹ (policy CS30).

6.3 The Site and its Context

The key features within the Site comprise **landform**- gently sloping pastoral land, located between Brinsham Lane and Gravel Hill Road, with landform rising to a ridgeline to the west, and land within the Site comprising localised bowl landform 'historical holloway feature'²² sloping from the southern end along Gravel Hill Road to the northern end along Brinsham Lane. It is a visually and physically enclosed landscape bounded by **vegetation** - native hedgerows along the southern edge of the Site and mature trees/vegetation along the northern edge of the Site and **development** - Little Brinsham Farm, a Grade II listed building to the east.

The southern boundary follows the north side of Gravel Hill Road, with a short extension to its south side to link with the adjacent quarry. Gravel Hill Road is bounded by two mixed mature hedgerows. To its north, the Site crosses over Brinsham Lane to extend into the woodland alongside a stream.

6.4 The Proposals

The proposals included and assessed within this LVA, as outlined in paragraph 1.1 and Section 3.0, differ from the proposals identified and assessed in the Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS) previously. These proposals have been developed as part of a carefully

²⁰ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition, April 2013), including Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 Published August 2024

²¹ South Gloucestershire Local Plan – Core Strategy, 2006 – 2027 (adopted December 2013)

²² Refer to Heritage Statement, produced by SLR, June 2024



considered design process, in response to comments received from the Landscape Officer²³ on the previously submitted scheme.

The Proposed Development will be implemented in phases and have been assessed accordingly, to include Construction phase, Operational phase and post Restoration phase. The details of the phases and elements assessed as part of these phases have been outlined in Section 4.0.

6.5 Landscape Effects

The appraisal has concluded that the landscape effects resulting from the Proposed Development would be highly localised. The effects would be largely Moderate negative during construction, Moderate and Moderate/Minor negative during the operation phase of the Site and reduce to Moderate/Minor and Minor neutral post restoration.. It is accepted that any built development in a greenfield site will result in negative effects. Landscape effects would be localised, and focused in the area within and in the immediate vicinity of the Site, and reversible, with the Site returned to baseline condition post restoration.

Also, the location of the Site within the wider context on the edge of a working landscape associated with the quarrying activities and development within the northern edge of Yate also means that the wider baseline landscape context is influenced by existing development.

6.6 Visual Effects

The appraisal found that negative visual effects would be localised and limited to the Site's immediate context as the landform, vegetation and development associated with Little Brinsham Farm helps to provide a well-defined visual enclosure to the Proposed Development.

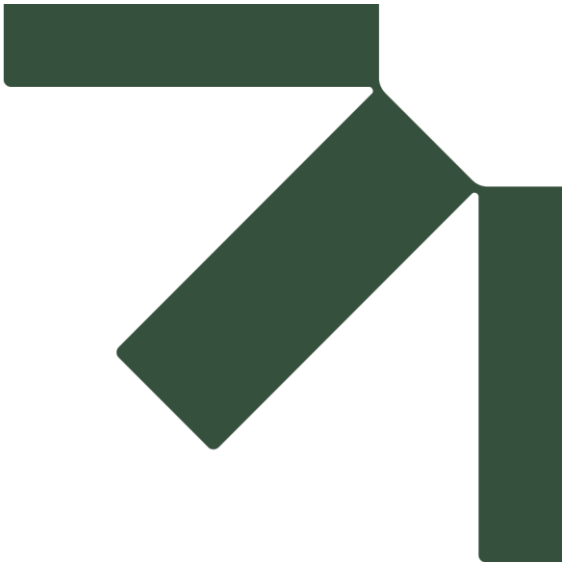
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²³ Received on 14 April 2022 (screening opinion P22/011/SCR and pre-application advice PRE20/0702), and 14 June 2023.



Appendix A LVA Plans





Appendix B Photosheets





Appendix C **Assessment of
Potential Landscape
Effects**

Appendix D

Assessment of Potential Visual Effects





Appendix E **Method used in
Assessing
Landscape and
Visual Effects**

Appendix F

Reference Plans and documents

