

7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Introduction

- 7.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been carried out for the Proposed Development by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR).
- 7.2 FPCR is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy established over 60 years, with expertise in architecture, landscape, ecology, arboriculture, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and are frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.
- 7.3 In accordance with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (2017) the LVIA and ESA chapter have been carried out by Claire Heeks who is a Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute with 20 years experience. Claire has carried out numerous LVIA's and has authored a number of ES Chapters for large scale residential and mixed-use developments. The LVIA methodology is in accordance with guidance of the professional institution, the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013.
- 7.4 The purpose of this LVIA study is to provide an update to the Original ES of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application Parameters Plans and Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 7.5 A full description of the site location and Proposed Development is included in **Chapter 4**.

Potential Effects

- 7.6 Whilst the detail of the development proposals have changed slightly since the previous application, the overall proposal for a residential scheme with associated access, landscape including open space and drainage remains the same. The potential effects of the Proposed Development are as noted within the **Original ES Chapter 7 (para. 7.7-7.9)**.

Assessment Methodology

Study Area

- 7.7 The Study Area is illustrated on the figures included within this Chapter (**Figures 7.1 – 7.6**) and within the Original ES chapter (see **2018 Figures 7.1 – 7.9**). An initial extent of around 3km from the Site was reviewed in order to identify National Landscape designations such as the Blackdown Hills, Dorset and East Devon National Landscapes (NL) and National Character Areas. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was produced to identify potential

visibility within this area (**Figure 7.6 Visual Appraisal**). The ZTV and initial desk study and field evaluation work confirmed the Study Area as that represented by mapped extents shown on the figures within this report.

Scoping

- 7.8 A Scoping Opinion was received from EDDC on 10th September 2018 (**Technical Appendix 1.3**). With regard to Landscape and Visual, the report stated:

“Our landscape officer has nothing to add to your propose work on this matter. Natural England has also provide advice but this does not build on what you are already proposing either. Therefore the work identified in sections 5.13 to 5.30 of the EIASS is considered appropriate for the ES.”

- 7.9 The scope of this ESA follows the scope of the original LVIA as set out in the EIA Scoping Study, July 2018 but with updates to baseline information and judgements where relevant.
- 7.10 Further consultation has been carried out with East Devon District Council (EDDC) Landscape Officer to confirm viewpoints to be included within the ESA to address comments received on the previous LVIA. To date no response has been received.

Legislation and Policy

- 7.11 The following provides a summary of updated Planning Policy relevant to Landscape and Visual issues.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024)¹

- 7.12 Since the previous ES, the NPPF has been updated. The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 7.13 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 7.14 Paragraph 187 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”.

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

7.15 Paragraph 188 advises that:

“Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries”.

7.16 Paragraph 189 goes on to add:

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues”, and

“The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”

7.17 The Site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected status although is in proximity to three National Landscapes; Blackdown Hills, East Devon and Dorset NL and is considered to be in the setting of these nationally designated landscapes. The character of the Site and its immediate context is assessed within this report to help inform decisions regarding “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”. The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

7.18 The PPG was first published on the 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.

East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 (Adopted 28 Jan 2016)²

7.19 The following planning policies continue to be a material consideration to landscape and visual matters for the Proposed Development:

Strategy 3 - Sustainable Development

“The objective of ensuring sustainable development is central to our thinking. We interpret sustainable development in East Devon to mean that the following issues and their inter-relationships are taken fully into account when considering development:

- a) Conserving and Enhancing the Environment - which includes ensuring development is undertaken in a way that minimises harm and enhances biodiversity and the quality and character of the landscape. This includes reducing the risk of flooding by incorporating

² East Devon District Council, East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 (Adopted 28 Jan 2016)

measures such as sustainable drainage systems. Developers should maximise the proportion of their developments that take place on previously developed land

- b) Prudent natural resource use - which includes minimising fossil fuel use therefore reducing carbon dioxide emissions. It also includes minimising resource consumption, reusing materials and recycling. Renewable energy development will be encouraged
- c) Promoting social wellbeing - which includes providing facilities to meet people's needs such as health care, affordable housing, recreation space and village halls."

Strategy 7 - Development in the Countryside

"The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area that are outside the Built-up Area Boundaries and outside of Site specific allocations shown on the Proposals Map. Development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located, including:

- 1. Land form and patterns of settlement.*
- 2. Important natural and manmade features which contribute to the local landscape character, including topography, traditional field boundaries, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings.*
- 3. The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusions."*

Strategic Policy 20 Development in Axminster

- 7.20 The Site is mostly included within the Mixed-Use allocation E105 within the built-up area of Axminster, although the north eastern extent is outside of the boundary.

Strategy 46 - Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONBs

"Development will need to be undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic to and helps conserve and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of, the natural and historic landscape character of East Devon, in particular in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Development will only be permitted where it:

- 1. conserves and enhances the landscape character of the area;
- 2. does not undermine landscape quality; and
- 3. is appropriate to the economic, social and well being of the area..."

- 7.21 The policy puts great weight on conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the ANOB's (now National Landscapes) when considering developing in or affecting AONB's.

D1 - Design and Local Distinctiveness

- 7.22 This policy seeks to ensure new development is of a high quality design and locally distinctive. A number of criteria for new development proposals are listed, including the following of relevance to landscape and visual matters:

“1. Respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed...”

3. Do not adversely affect:

...c) Important landscape characteristics, prominent topographical features and important ecological features.

d) Trees worthy of retention.

e) The amenity of occupiers of adjoining residential properties...

...6. Green Infrastructure and open spaces should be designed and located in a way that will minimise any potential security concerns for users...”

Policy D2 - Landscape Requirements

- 7.23 This policy outlines details and information which should be included with landscape proposals and states “Existing features of landscape or nature conservation value should be incorporated into the landscaping proposals”...“Where appropriate, existing habitat should be improved and where possible new areas of nature conservation value should be created...”

Policy D3 – Trees and Development Sites

- 7.24 This policy highlights the need to protect existing trees and provide new tree planting associated with new development proposals. Development proposals will need to show no net loss in the quality of trees or hedgerows and to deliver a ‘harmonious and sustainable relationship between structures and trees’. BS 5837 will be taken into account when addressing Proposed Development.

Emerging Local Plan 2020-2042³

- 7.25 EDDC are currently producing their new Local Plan. The Site is still identified as a preferred allocation for residential use under reference Axmi_22.
- 7.26 The following emerging policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the Proposed Development:

³ East Devon District Council, East Devon Emerging Local Plan 2020-2042

Policy 74 - Landscape Features

- 7.27 This policy highlights the importance of protecting the landscape, countryside and rural areas against harmful development and outlines features that contribute to the nature and quality of the landscape which should be protected.

Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents*Devon County Council Green Infrastructure Strategy⁴*

- 7.28 The Green Infrastructure Strategy encompasses a series of overarching design principles. Those that are considered to be particularly relevant to landscape matters are Guiding Principle 1 and Guiding Principle 4. These are described below:

“Guiding principle 1: Planning for green infrastructure at the outset;

Ensure that the planning, delivery and management of green infrastructure in, around and between settlements in Devon is a primary consideration and taken into account at the earliest stage when making sustainable development and land management decisions.

Specifically:

- take opportunities to engage communities in the planning, creation, enhancement, delivery and maintenance of green infrastructure, and maximise the health and education benefits of green infrastructure assets
- recognise the economic value, benefits and potential of green infrastructure assets and functions alongside other infrastructure, allowing consideration of natural as well as built solutions to infrastructure needs
- recognise, protect and manage green infrastructure assets to help sustain environmental quality and support ecosystem services and take opportunities to maximise the connectivity and function of the green infrastructure network, providing new assets and enhancing or extending existing assets where appropriate
- maximise the potential of green infrastructure in helping us adapt to climate change
- ensure the need for future green infrastructure assets is based on up to date evidence and analysis, taking opportunities to share evidence bases and approaches across administrative boundaries, particularly in areas of active landscape change.

Guiding principle 4: Conserving, enhancing and strengthening links with Devon’s landscape;

To protect, manage and plan an attractive green infrastructure network that conserves and enhances:

- the distinctive character, special qualities and features of Devon’s landscapes

⁴ Devon County Council, Green Infrastructure Strategy

- the distinct identity, character and landscape setting of settlements
- the cultural ecosystem services provided by green infrastructure
- access to and enjoyment of valued landscapes for recreation, education and lifelong learning

actions that strengthen the connections between people and their neighbourhood are to be supported.”

Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan 2019-2024⁵

- 7.29 The Blackdown Hills Management Plan is currently under review, however, the Introduction to managing Blackdown Hills AONB document provides information regarding the Special Qualities of the designated landscape. The special qualities relate to 6 main themes including Landscape Quality, Scenic Quality, Relative Wildness, Relative Tranquillity, Cultural Heritage and Natural Heritage Features. The special qualities of most relevance to this LVIA include qualities relating to Landscape Quality, Scenic Quality, Relative Wildness and Relative Tranquillity as follows:

Landscape quality

- A managed landscape sculpted and maintained by the stewardship of generations of those who work the land
- Undeveloped skyline of the northern scarp slope is a prominent feature in views from the Vale of Taunton and beyond
- A rich mosaic of diverse and inter connected semi-natural habitats; a patchwork of woodland, heathland, meadow and mire linked by hedgerows
- Clear, unpolluted streams that meander down the valleys to feed the Yarty, Otter and Culm rivers
- Ancient and veteran trees in hedgerows, fields and woodland
- A settled landscape with a strong sense of time-depth containing farms and small scattered villages well related to the landscape

Scenic quality

- The elevation and long, panoramic views out from the Blackdown Hills create a sense of detachment from surrounding towns and transport corridors
- Unspoilt, panoramic views across flat-topped plateau and straight undisturbed ridge tops and over hidden valleys
- A well-wooded pastoral landscape with a strong pattern of hedges and hedgerow trees

⁵ Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Management Plan 2019-2024

- The pattern of regular, large-scale enclosure fields on the plateau contrasts with the smaller, curving medieval fields on the valley slopes
- Majestic avenues of beech trees along northern ridges
- Long straight roads across the plateau with verges and low, neat hedges give way to narrow, enclosed, high-hedged winding single-tracked lanes in the valleys
- Wellington Monument is a key landscape feature identifying the Blackdown Hills over a very wide area in all directions

Relative wildness

- A sense of remoteness enhanced by the exposure of the plateau and more intimate extensive woodland of the upper slopes and hidden valleys
- Wide-open spaces provide exposure to the elements; big sky, windswept places, contrasts of sunlight and shadow

Relative tranquillity

- Areas of high tranquillity spared many of the intrusions of modern life
- Places to enjoy natural sounds; the melody of the song thrush and skylark, the call of buzzards
- Dark night-time star-filled skies contrasting with the light pollution of the surrounding towns

7.30 The following policies within the Management Plan (2019-2024) are of relevance to landscape and visual matters:

Landscape character (LC) management objective and policies

Objective LC To ensure that the distinctive character and qualities of the Blackdown Hills landscape are understood, conserved, enhanced and restored

- LC1 Approach the conservation and enhancement of the AONB based on landscape character underpinned by comprehensive and up-to-date evidence bases that are also made widely available to decision makers and others
- LC2 Understand clearly the social, environmental and economic benefits of landscape and natural beauty and ensure this is reflected in decision making at every level, supported by sound evidence
- LC3 Promote high levels of peace and tranquillity with dark night skies by minimising noise, intrusive development and light pollution
- LC4 Support local distinctiveness

- LC5 The character of skylines and open views into, within and out of the AONB will be protected
- LC6 The deeply rural setting of much of the land adjoining the AONB boundary forms an essential setting for the AONB and care will be taken to maintain its quality and character
- LC7 Opportunities will be sought to strengthen landscape character by improving the condition of landscape features in poor condition and reinstating landscape features identified as missing or fragmented

Biodiversity and geodiversity (BG) management objective and policies

- BG1 Take a strategic landscape-scale based approach to the creation, restoration and maintenance of habitats within the AONB (focussing on designated and undesignated priority Sites) in order to ensure resilience to climate change and other pressures
- BG2 Connect habitats at a landscape scale and ensure permeability for species movement within coherent and resilient ecological networks

Blackdown Hills National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030, Pre-Consultation draft (October 2024)

- 7.31 This draft issue of the Blackdown Hills NL Management Plan is currently under consultation. The Special Qualities of the NL still refer to Landscape Quality, Scenic quality, Relative wildness, Relative tranquillity, Natural heritage features and Cultural heritage with each special quality summarised as in the previous version.
- 7.32 The following policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters:

Landscape, natural resources and natural capital

“PL1 Approach the conservation and enhancement of the National Landscape according to landscape-led principles, based on landscape character, underpinned by a sound understanding of the area’s rich stock of natural and cultural capital assets and its value to society in terms of the flow of goods and services.”

“PL2 The special qualities, distinctive character and key features of the Blackdown Hills National Landscape will be conserved and enhanced, and opportunities will be sought to strengthen or restore landscape character where landscape features are in poor condition, missing or fragmented.”

Planning, development and infrastructure

“PL18 The character of skylines and open views into, within and out of the National Landscape will be protected and enhanced.

PL19 The deeply rural character of much of the land adjoining the National Landscape boundary forms an essential setting for the Blackdown Hills and care will be taken to maintain its quality and character.”

- 7.33 The Management Plan includes appendices of further detailed information and data with Appendix A providing further detail regarding the Special Qualities and Appendix B on Planning which includes General Principles of Development Proposals and on Major Development.

East Devon National Landscape Management Plan⁶

- 7.34 The 2019-24 Management Plan has been renamed a the 'Partnership Plan'. The Special Qualities of the East Devon NL are summarised within the Partnership Plan document (Appendix 1) in association with the Devon Character Areas.
- 7.35 Special qualities associated with the Axe Valley DCA include the following:
- High degree of tranquillity and remoteness in the tributary valleys.
 - River Axe SSSI and SAC;
 - Estuary habitats valued for their salt marshes, mudflats and waders (e.g. Seaton Marshes).
 - Ancient woodlands, many of which are CWSs
 - County Geological Site on former sand and gravel workings at Kilminster (terrace gravels containing exotic pebbles)
 - 87th and 88th country houses including Stedcombe House; and Woodend Park which contains notable veteran trees of national importance for their wood decay invertebrates and lichens.
 - Vernacular buildings of cob and thatch and village church towers that add to the picturesque qualities of the area.
 - Cultural associations with WG Hoskins who described Colyton as "singularly beautiful, with rolling green hills and deep combs".
 - Second World War pillboxes within flood plain form a distinctive landscape feature.
 - Important area for recreation including walking and horse riding – area includes the East Devon Way long distance footpath which runs through the valley.
- 7.36 Special qualities associated with the Wootton Hills DCA include the following:
- Distinctive, unspoilt, and exposed skylines.
 - Outstanding views across East Devon, mainly southwards to the coast but also northwards into the Blackdowns and across the Axe Valley.

⁶ East Devon AONB, Partnership Plan 2019-24, Management Framework for the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- Bronze Age barrows in elevated positions on ridges; setting to and site of Musbury Castle hill fort.
- Many CWSs designated for unimproved neutral grassland and broadleaved woodland; and SSSI designations at Park Farm Meadows and Bulmoor Pastures and Coppice.
- Notable areas of ancient semi-natural woodland in the north e.g. New Park Coppice.
- Contains the East Devon Way long distance path.
- Picturesque historic villages with traditional buildings linked by narrow winding lanes crossing historic stone bridges; many listed buildings

7.37 The following policies within the Management Plan are of relevance to landscape and visual matters:

Landscape character and historic environment

- L1 Support the development and delivery of environmental schemes and projects aimed at maintaining and improving the landscape character, historic environment and local distinctiveness of the AONB.
- L2 Develop methods that enable effective and targeted management and monitoring of the AONB's natural, historic and cultural landscape

Biodiversity and geodiversity

- BG1 In partnership with others, support and encourage conservation and enhancement actions for key habitat and species within the AONB that maintain and enhance landscape character and the historic environment.

Baseline Data Collection and Assessment Criteria

7.38 This LVIA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3)⁷, published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013. The assessment of Landscape Value also takes account of guidance in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02-21 "Assessing landscape value outside national designations".

7.39 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:

"Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity."
(GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)

7.40 There are two components of LVIA:

⁷ Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3) (2013)

- “Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;
- Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.” (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)

- 7.41 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; identification and description of likely effects arising from the Proposed Development; and an assessment of the significance of these effects.
- 7.42 In terms of baseline studies the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 7.43 GLVIA3 states that “An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource” (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).
- 7.44 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the Site and its context.
- 7.45 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:
- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - Combined effects of these changes.
- 7.46 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered.
- 7.47 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale of change, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements. Geographical extent is considered by reference to the extent of the area over which there will be a change. Duration is considered for the landscape effects, with short term effects being defined as those lasting less than 5 years, medium term effects lasting between 5 and 10 years and long-term effects being defined as anything over 10 years in duration.
- 7.48 The level of effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects

are drawn from the assessment components described. This assessment describes the nature of the landscape effects, and whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1) and longer term (year 15).

- 7.49 The criteria used in the assessment are set out in **Technical Appendix 7.1**.

Assessment of Visual Effects

- 7.50 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This assessment describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1 winter) and longer term (year 15 summer).
- 7.51 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the Site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the Site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the Site's landscape and visual characteristics.
- 7.52 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.
- 7.53 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint the assessment considers both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

"The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:

- Residents at home;
- People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views;
- Visitors to heritage assets or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;
- Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;
- Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of moderate susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high." (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.33.)

"Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:

- People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;

- People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life(although there may be on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life.” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.34.)
- 7.54 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.
- 7.55 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:
- The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the Proposed Development;
 - The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture;
 - The nature of the view of the Proposed Development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses. (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.39)
- 7.56 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:
- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
 - The distance of the viewpoint from the Proposed Development;
 - The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.
- 7.57 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply. The criteria used in this assessment are set out in Appendix 7.A.

Overall Landscape and Visual Effects

- 7.58 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 7.59 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following descriptive thresholds have been used for this appraisal:
- Major;
 - Moderate;
 - Minor;

- Negligible.

7.60 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

Judging Overall Significance

7.61 A judgement is reached, based on the assessment, as to whether an effect is significant or not. Those degrees of effects that are considered to be significant by the assessor for this LVIA are judged to be effects that are either Major or Major/ Moderate.

7.62 GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13 (2013) notes that:

"Concerning 'significance', it is for the assessor to define what the assessor considers significant... Depending on the means of judgment and terminology (which should be explicitly set out), effects of varying degrees of change (or levels of change), may be derived. The assessor should then establish (and it is for the assessor to decide and explain) the degree or level of change that is considered to be significant." (GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification, § 3.)

Significance of Landscape Effects

7.63 GLVIA3 states, at paragraph 5.56, that:

"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal. At opposite ends of the spectrum it is reasonable to say that:

- Major loss or irreversible negative effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/ or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes are likely to be of the greatest significance;
- Reversible negative effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/ or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value are likely to be of the least significance and may, depending on the circumstances, be judged as not significant;
- Where assessments of significance place landscape effects between these extremes, judgements must be made about whether or not they are significant, with full explanations of why these conclusions have been reached." (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.56.)

Significance of Visual Effects

7.64 GLVIA3 states, at paragraph 6.44, that:

"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the

type of proposal. In making a judgement about the significance of visual effects the following points should be noted:

- Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant;
- Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant;
- Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view.“ (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.44.)

Assumptions and Limitation

- 7.65 The assessment process considers the likely effects of the Proposed Development using the current knowledge of the Site and its context; Site surveys and investigation; and desktop analysis which includes publicly accessible information. Appropriate regard has been made to national and local planning policy, and relevant legislation, guidance and best practice current at the time of preparing the LVIA.

Baseline Conditions

- 7.66 Baseline information and data has been reviewed against the previous ES LVIA and updates are noted below where necessary.

Summary of Baseline Conditions

- 7.67 The landuse and management of the Site has not changed since the previous LVIA and the description of the Site (Application Site B – Southern Development Area, para 7.17 – 7.18) remains as previously described in the previous ES Chapter. Please see **Figure 7.5 Topography** which illustrates the topography and landform of the Site and wider context which remains unchanged from the previous ES Site description.

Environmental Designations

- 7.68 The current landscape and other relevant designations are shown on **Figure 7.2 Designations**. There have been no changes to designations within the Study Area since the previous ES Chapter and the previous summary still applies. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are now however referred to as National Landscapes (NL). This applies to the Blackdown Hills NL, Dorset NL and East Devon NL.

Landscape Character

- 7.69 Please see the previous ES Chapter, there have been some changes to the published Landscape Character Assessments (LCA) and those noted in the previous ES Chapter. The LCA areas are shown in **Figure 7.1 Landscape Character** and descriptions for the following Landscape Character Areas remain unchanged:

- National Character Area 147: Blackdown Hills⁸
- Devon County, Axe Valley: DCA 1⁹
- Devon County, Wootton Hills: DCA 13

7.70 The East Devon and Blackdown Hills LCA and Management Guidelines (2019)¹⁰ undertaken by Fiona Fyfe Associates has since been adopted. Within this LCA the Site is identified as being located within the Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes Landscape Character Type (LCT 3B) and adjacent to the Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes (LCT 2A).

7.71 LCT 3B Covers the Site and surrounding area and extends into the East Devon NL to the south west. A further area of LCT 3B covers the landscape on the north western side of the valley which extends into the Blackdown Hills NL as well as the East Devon NL to the south west. LCT 3B has the following Key Characteristics:

- Gently rolling landform, sloping up from valley floor. Numerous shallow valleys contain small streams. Red sandstone geology apparent in cuttings and soils in west of the Study Area.
- Many hedgerow trees, copses and streamside tree rows. Oak and ash predominate, and there are small blocks of woodland.
- Predominantly pastoral farmland, often with a wooded appearance. Variable sized fields with wide, low hedged boundaries and a mostly irregular pattern, reflecting different phases of enclosure.
- Semi-natural habitats include streams and ditches, grassland, woodland and trees.
- Numerous historic landscape features including farmsteads, lanes, villages and churches. Concentrations of Roman Sites.
- Settled, with various settlement sizes, building ages, patterns and styles. Various building materials, including stone, cob, whitewash/ render, slate, thatch and tile.
- Winding, often narrow sunken lanes, with tall earth banks. Local examples of deep cuttings through sandstone, particularly at entrances to settlements.
- A relatively enclosed and sheltered landscape. Some parts of the LCT feel well settled, whilst others feel exceptionally remote, with very little traffic.
- Views tend to occur across valleys, rather from within them. Higher land in other LCTs forms the backdrop to views.
- Often strong colours within the landscape, influenced by underlying geology, season and choice of crops.

⁸ Natural England National Character Area (NCA) Profile 147: Blackdown Hills

⁹ Devon County Council, Devon's landscape character assessment

¹⁰ East Devon and Blackdown Hills Landscape Character Assessment, Fiona Fyfe Associates, 2019

7.72 With regard to 'What makes this Landscape Special' the description states the following:

"An extensive LCT which forms the setting for many settlements, and also contributes to many expansive views from higher ground.

A productive, working but still attractive landscape containing numerous historic and archaeological features.

A diversity of settlements, with building materials and settlement pattern reflecting local geology."

7.73 Landscape Aims for the LCT are:

"The landscape remains productive whilst retaining its landscape structure of hedgerows, woodland and farms. Alternative uses should be found for redundant farm buildings, and land uses should take place within the existing field patterns. Settlements thrive, and where they expand, this is done in a way which enhances their character and setting."

7.74 Landscape Guidelines include the following under 'Plan':

- The location and form of any settlement expansion to be sensitive to existing road patterns and settlement form. For example, avoid ribbon development on the edges of nucleated villages.
- Retain distinctive entrances to villages (e.g. cuttings through sandstone banks) and consider how village approaches and entrances could be enhanced.
- Choose building materials which fit with the existing palette, taking particular care if considering bright or reflective surfaces.
- Consider settlements within their wider landscape settings. Ensure that appropriate measures to soften the settlement edge, and to integrate development into the landscape, are incorporated into any settlement expansion plans. Screening should enhance landscape character, for example through using fruit trees in traditional orchard areas, and avoiding stark lines of planting which do not respect the existing landscape pattern.
- Create stronger habitat links, particularly between woodland areas through additional woodland and hedgerow planting.
- Develop Natural Flood Management techniques to control water run-off.
- Where appropriate, look to enhance the Public Rights of Way network in order to connect existing routes and create circular trails.
- Consider the role of this LCT in wider views. It is often seen from above, so any developments spread over a large area (such as solar farms) are likely to be very apparent.

7.75 The adjacent LCT 2A has the following Key Characteristics:

- A narrow band of steeply sloping land immediately below the plateau edges. Underlying greensand geology contains springlines.
- Extensive woodland, both deciduous and coniferous. Trees and hedgerows increase its wooded appearance. Notable mature oak and ash trees, with beech in the north.
- Land use of mixed woodland and semi improved or unimproved pasture. Small scale, irregular field pattern.
- Many patches of semi-natural habitats, including springline mires, scrub, grassland and woodland.
- Concentration of Iron Age hillforts in prominent locations. Also Roman and medieval ironworking Sites, and medieval farmsteads, banks, fields and lanes.
- Lightly settled, with occasional scattered farms, often nestled in folds of the scarp.
- Narrow winding lanes with well-treed banks. Lanes often run at an angle to the slope. Some green lanes and footpaths, but much of the LCT is inaccessible.
- Strong sense of enclosure in wooded areas, and a contrast of light and darkness. Irregular fields create varied and distinctive patterns.
- Seasonal contrasts in colour, particularly in deciduous woodlands, including spring bluebell woods and autumn leaves.
- From less wooded areas, and openings in trees, there are sudden and spectacular views over surrounding landscapes.
- Strong sense of tranquillity over much of the LCT, particularly away from roads and settlements.

7.76 With regard to 'What Makes this Landscape Special', the description state the following:

"A rich diversity of woodland, grassland and springline habitats, within an historic landscape pattern.

Its dramatic appearance as a steep ridge at the tops of the valley Sites, creating a seasonally-changing backdrop to the valleys below.

Outstanding prehistoric archaeology, with numerous Iron Age Sites on prominent spurs of land.

A strong sense of tranquillity, and magnificent views over surrounding valleys and across to scarps."

7.77 Landscape Aims for this LCT are:

"Retain the wooded appearance of the landscape, and the distinctive and attractive pattern of irregular fields which provide a dramatic but soft backdrop for the valleys below. The wide range of habitats, including woodlands, grasslands and mires should be managed in an

integrated way. The rich archaeology should be well protected and researched, with non-damaging access encouraged. Views should be celebrated and accessible.”

7.78 Landscape Guidelines include reference to ‘Plan’ for the following:

- Retain the overall undeveloped character of the LCT.
- Retain undeveloped horizons at the top of the scarp. These often form the skyline in views from below, and any development here would be very prominent.
- Support traditional farms and farming techniques, for example by identifying and supporting new product markets and providing grants for projects which enhance landscape character.
- Develop Natural Flood Management techniques to control water run-off.
- Record and photograph ash trees (particularly veteran trees) before ash dieback disease takes a greater hold.
- Promote habitat links between discrete areas of woodland and between grassland sites.
- Develop a long-term plan for conifer plantations reaching maturity, identifying areas suitable for replanting as deciduous woodland (including former ancient woodland sites), or reversion to grassland or heathland habitat.
- Ameliorate impacts of future tree loss, including on recreation sites/routes.
- Undertake LiDAR surveys of archaeological sites within woodland/ scrub to better understand the rich archaeology of this LCT.
- Develop and promote a trail between the many prehistoric hillforts within this LCT, providing safe and non-damaging access, interpretation and viewpoints.
- Consider the visual impacts of any new development on lower ground in views out from this LCT.

Landscape Value

7.79 Since the previous ES Chapter, the Landscape Institute have issued guidance for assessing landscape value outside of national designations (LI TGN 02-21)¹¹. It is therefore appropriate to examine the role of the Site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in TGN 02-21 within the ESA. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.

7.80 **Landscape Designations:** The Site is not subject to any national, local or other landscape designations. Part of the wider landscape context (including its Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (**Figure 7.6 Visual Appraisal**)) includes the East Devon NL around 1.6km to the south/south west, the Dorset NL around 2.3km to the south east and the Blackdown Hills NL

¹¹ Landscape Institute, Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing landscape value outside national designations, 2019

around 1.8km to the north west with the ZTV extending slightly into the East Devon and Blackdown Hills NL's.

- 7.81 **Natural Heritage:** The Site consists of arable fields with features of natural heritage limited to the boundary hedgerows and trees. An updated ecological appraisal (**Technical Appendix 6.1** Addendum Ecological Baseline Report, GE Consulting, April 2025) has identified habitats including modified grassland fields with a strip of Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland on the south western boundary which is species poor. Broadleaved mixed deciduous woodland which is a Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) is found along the northern boundary with native hedgerows along the eastern south western and northern boundaries as well as a central hedgerow through the site. A number of mature trees are located within the western half of the central hedgerow. Some hedgerows are species rich, with most located on banks. The hedgerows, trees and woodland and Holcus-Juncus grassland are considered to be of Local importance while the modified grassland is of Site level importance..
- 7.82 **Cultural Heritage:** The **Cultural Heritage Chapter 8** identifies no designated heritage assets directly related to the Site with a low number in the immediate context. Loup House is the nearest listed building located around 50m to the west of the Site but intervisibility is restricted by housing within Loup Court and on the B3261. Sec Tor is a Grade II listed building located around 475m to the north east. The house is set at quite a low level within the valley, comparable with the lower levels of the Site, however it is noted within Chapter 8 as having intervisibility with the Site but also being associated with other buildings and a small landscaped park and it is described as '*an enclosed area of private, historic properties situated within their own grounds*'. Please refer to **Chapter 8** for a detailed assessment of effects on built heritage and archaeology.
- 7.83 **Landscape Condition:** The landscape of the Site consists of arable fields which are managed with boundary hedgerows with some hedgerow trees. The boundary hedgerows are low and wide and show signs of management with them also being generally intact around the Site.
- 7.84 **Associations:** The Site itself is not known to have any direct associations with any particular people e.g. artists or writers, or historic events that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.
- 7.85 **Distinctiveness:** The Site consists of arable fields located within the LCT Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes and reflects some of the descriptions of the LCT such as being located within a shallow valley with wide hedgerows and hedgerow trees with nearby winding sunken lanes and tall earth banks.
- 7.86 **Recreational Value:** The Site is in private ownership and has no direct recreational value. Two public rights of way pass through the Site and views across the Site are possible from these routes.
- 7.87 **Perceptual (Scenic):** Views across the Site are possible, although partially limited by the slightly mounded landform at the centre of the Site and falling landform towards the east. Views to the south and west are limited by the existing edge of the settlement and the

landform along the B3261 Lyme Road while longer views are possible across the valley to the north east. Long distance views are however limited by the rising landform across the valley to the north east.

- 7.88 **Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity):** The Site is located adjacent to the settlement edge and is influenced by the adjacent residential area. The Site is not wild or particularly tranquil due to some noise disturbance from the adjacent roads.
- 7.89 **Functional aspects:** The Site is managed as arable farmland. Other than the local level green infrastructure connections via the boundary hedgerows, the Site does not form any particular function within a strategic GI corridor. The Site does not form any particular function with regard to flooding as it is located within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low risk of flooding. The Site is considered to be located within the setting of the surrounding NL's although is associated with the existing settlement of Axminster.
- 7.90 In conclusion and having appraised the above factors it is judged that the Site and the immediate landscape is of **Medium landscape value**.

Visual Receptors

- 7.91 As this ESA applies to the southern Site only, only some of the visual receptors identified in the previous ES Chapter are relevant. Visual receptors for the southern Site have been confirmed through additional field work. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the Site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.
- 7.92 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs may demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short and long range views. The photographs were taken on the 13th January 2025 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors.
- 7.93 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19)¹².
- 7.94 Following comments and further consultation with EDDC Landscape Officers, the photo viewpoints are presented as A1 panoramas with A3 single frame views.
- 7.95 Some viewpoints are the same as previously identified although some additional views have been included as requested by EDDC. Views are summarised as below:
- Viewpoint 1 - View south from Sector Lane (see **previous viewpoint S1**)

¹² Landscape Institute, Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals, 17 September 2019

- Viewpoint 2 - View west from public footpath Axminster 73 close to Sector Lane (see **previous viewpoint S2**)
- Viewpoint 3 - View west from Coles Lane at junction with public footpath Axminster 18 (see **previous viewpoint S3?**)
- Viewpoint 4 - View north from public footpath Axminster 73 (see **previous viewpoint S4**)
- Viewpoint 5 - View east from public footpath Axminster 72 (see **previous viewpoint S5**)
- Viewpoint 6 - View north from B3261 (see **previous viewpoint S6**)
- Viewpoint 7 - View south west from Evil Lane/bridleway Axminster 55 – This is a new viewpoint from Evil Lane illustrating the setting of the listed building at Sec Tor with the Site visible to the south. (Note - The viewpoint is taken through the vegetation on the embankment adjacent to the bridleway and is not strictly a publicly accessible viewpoint).
- Viewpoint 8 - View west from public footpath Axminster 17 (see **previous viewpoint WV4**)
- Viewpoint 9 - View south west from public footpath Axminster 5 (similar to **previous viewpoint WV2** although from slightly nearer Lodge Lane and directed more to the south west)
- Viewpoint 10 - View north west from public footpath Axminster 21 – This is a new viewpoint illustrating views for users of the public footpath. The Site is just visible in the middle distance with the higher landform of the Blackdown Hills beyond.
- Viewpoint 11 - View east from public footpath Kilminster 1 - This is a new viewpoint illustrating views for users of the public footpath. The Site is not discernible within the wide views possible which feature the town and raised landform of the Dorset National Landscape beyond.
- Viewpoint 12 - View south east from bridleway Axminster 46 (similar to previous viewpoint WV5 although from slightly higher up the hill and from the bridleway from within the Blackdown Hills NL)
- Viewpoint 13 - View south east from public footpath Axminster 45 – This is a new viewpoint illustrating views possible for users of the footpath on the edge of the Blackdown Hills NL. The Site is not discernible within the wide views possible which feature the town and raised landform of the Dorset National Landscape beyond.
- Viewpoint 14 - View south from Smallridge Road (see **previous viewpoint WV1**)

7.96 Visual receptors for the southern development only are identified as follows:

Residential

- Properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court
- Properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road

- Properties to the east on Coles Lane
- Other properties to the north on Sector Lane at lower levels
- Sec Tor house
- Beulah Farm
- The Old Lodge
- Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages

Public Rights of Way

- Users of public footpath Axminster 72 through Site
- Users of public footpath Axminster 73 through Site
- Users of public footpath Axminster 18
- Users of public footpath Axminster 17
- Users of public footpath Axminster 19
- Users of bridleway Axminster 55
- Users of public footpath Axminster 5
- Users of public footpath Axminster 21
- Users of public footpath Axminster 45
- Users of bridleway Axminster 46
- Users of public footpath Kilminster 1

Road Users

- Users of B3261 Lyme Road
- Users of Sector Lane
- Users of Lodge Lane
- Users of Smallridge Road
- Users of Watery Lane
- Users of Fourcross Hill

Baseline Conditions (incorporating a Future Baseline)

- 7.97 The likely evolving and future baseline of the Site - as can reasonably be expected - in the event that no development comes forward on the Site has been evaluated. The future baseline conditions for the Site will remain as existing baseline conditions described. In the

event that the Proposed Development does not come forward, the assumption is that the Site will continue to be farmed in a similar way to how it currently operates and that the various features and habitats within the Site will remain and are managed appropriately. The landscape pattern of the Site could change if internal hedgerows were to be removed and the Site character could alter if the Site ceased to be farmed and was left to colonise naturally or, as a result of climate change, certain species may become dominant and outcompete other less robust species or alternative crops may be grown to better suit the change in temperatures.

- 7.98 It is anticipated that none of the receptors identified are any more or less sensitive to the potential change in future baseline conditions should the Proposed Development not be delivered.

Inherent and Standard Mitigation

- 7.99 Since the previous ES Chapter was prepared, the design proposals for the Southern Parcel have changed. The spine road now leads through the middle of the development area connecting between the B3261 Lyme Road in the south and Sector Lane to the north with residential parcels located either side of the spine road.
- 7.100 Inherent and Standard mitigation measures are described in full in Chapter 4. Design and mitigation measures that are adopted and embedded within the revised scheme are identified by the EIA Parameters Plans. The proposals include design measures in terms of the layout of development parcels, and application of a building height parameters, as well as landscape strategies (e.g. a green infrastructure framework) to minimise the level of adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity.

Construction

- 7.101 The Construction Programme and Methods of Construction are outlined in Chapter X. All construction works would be carried out in accordance with best practice procedures to include BS 5837, to minimise any adverse impact on landscape character. Appropriate methods will be adopted to protect trees and vegetation during the construction phase.
- 7.102 Site hoarding could be used where possible to screen activities and the location of Site huts and plant will be considered with regard to local sensitive visual receptors.
- 7.103 Routes of existing PROW through the Site will be protected during the construction phase with any diversions clearly signposted.

Operation

Landscape Design and GI Objectives

- 7.104 The landscape context of the Proposed Development has been considered in the progression of the design proposals including consideration in relation to the landscape strategies of the Axe Valley and Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes landscape character areas...

7.105 The key objectives of the landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are to:

- Have consideration for strategies and guidelines in LCA documents,
- Retention of existing landscape features including the hedgerow structure, existing trees and woodland with minimal removal to accommodate new accesses and circulation through the Site.
- Retention and enhancement of existing public footpaths through the Site to maintain connectivity to the wider landscape.
- Provide habitat enhancement through retention and enhancement of existing habitats and provision of new habitats.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure Proposals

7.106 The landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are detailed in the Landscape Strategy and Green Infrastructure Plan which accompany the application. In summary these proposals include the following:

- The provision of c. 2.02ha of land dedicated to landscape, GI, public open space, play and habitat related proposals, representing approximately 44% of the total Site area.
- Built development located on the western part of the Site to relate to the existing residential edge of the settlement. The layout includes a number of development parcels which are broken up by incidental green spaces to allow areas of planting to soften and break up the built form within views.
- The retention of existing public footpaths through the development, although Route 72 is to be re-routed to lead through the development to avoid passing through a corridor to the rear of the development plots which could create an unpleasant route. Route 73 will broadly be retained along its existing route through a green corridor with tree planting to soften views of the development although will also partially lead along a shared drive close to the site boundary.
- Additional pedestrian links to be provided to allow good circulation through the areas of open space and connectivity to the surrounding routes.
- The provision of new habitat areas in the form of grasslands, wetland habitats, native shrub and tree planting.
- Incorporation of SuDs features into the scheme within the lower landform to the north east with planting to soften the structures and help incorporate these into the landscape context.
- Provision of a range of POS areas to provide formal play areas for children and teens with other more incidental spaces to allow informal recreation. A main central area will provide focus for recreation with play space for younger ages, a community orchard with nearby provision for older children with covered seating as a place to meet. This will be

located adjacent to an informal open grassed area for informal activities. Further small scale play features will be provided along the main connecting footpaths as a play trail.

- Tree and vegetation planting on the perimeter of development blocks, particularly the north eastern edge of the southern block to soften the development in views across the valley from the north east.
- Structural planting around the edge of the development area to soften landform necessary to accommodate development plots.

7.107 The landscape and GI proposals will establish an extensive and attractive green structure for the proposed built development with green corridors and open areas throughout the development.

Secondary Mitigation

CEMP

- 7.108 To provide appropriate mitigation during the construction phases all works would be carried out in accordance with best practice procedures to minimise impacts on landscape character and visual amenity. This will be set out within a Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP will include measures and protocols to minimise impacts on the environment during the construction stage. This will be prepared as part of a planning condition and will be subject to agreement by EDDC. The CEMP will include methods in which to protect the retained vegetation within the Site. This also includes appropriate 'stand offs' from woodland to ensure that there is no impact upon these elements. The CEMP will be prepared in accordance with the information contained within BS 5837 Trees in Relation to Construction.
- 7.109 With regards to visual amenity mitigation measures are expected to include the use of perimeter hoardings and fencing to screen construction activities, whilst appropriate locations for Site huts and compounds will be located away from more sensitive landscape and visual receptors.

LEMP

- 7.110 Through the planning process, measures will be put in place with regard to the on-going management of the green infrastructure. This will be through a Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). This will set out various long term management regimes for all green infrastructure (e.g. existing woodland areas and new habitats and areas of green space). For new habitats, this will set out process for establishment. and their on-going maintenance and aftercare. This will be prepared as part of a planning condition and subject to agreement with EDDC.

Assessment of Environmental Impacts

Construction Phase Assessment

- 7.111 The following section outlines the likely landscape and visual effects that would arise from the Proposed Development on the Site. Effects are assessed during the construction phase and on completion, when mitigation in the form of new planting will be implemented but will be immature and relatively small scale in relation to existing mature landscape features of trees and hedges. Tables detailing these likely landscape and visual effects for the receptors are included in Appendices 7.2 and 7.3 respectively. Please refer to these in conjunction with the following descriptions.

Landscape Effects

- 7.112 The assessment process takes into account the susceptibility to change, landscape value, overall landscape sensitivity and the magnitude of change on landscape receptors.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 7.113 The susceptibility to change is the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate change arising from the specific development proposal, in this case, the proposed residential development of 80 units with associated access and landscape. In all landscapes, there will be variances in susceptibility to change depending on the type of change and/or development that is proposed.
- 7.114 The baseline process has explored the landscape character of the receiving landscape. The change that is proposed has been evaluated and it is concluded that the Site and the immediate landscape is tolerant of change and has the capacity to accommodate well designed and well planned development as presented by the Proposed Development.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

- 7.115 As a consequence of the overall scale of the NCA 147 Blackdown Hills and Devon County Axe Valley and Wootton Hills DCA's, the level of change, and the retention of key landscape features such as hedgerows, woodland and trees, the level of effect arising from the Proposed Development upon these landscape receptors as a whole would be localised only and negligible or low level only.
- 7.116 At a local level, the Proposed Development would result in alteration to some of the characteristics and features of the Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes LCT as the open fields would be replaced by built development and open space/habitat creation. The new access and road would create a new feature within the landscape, however these changes would be localised only and would reflect existing residential development with access points already present in the adjacent settlement edge to the west of the Site. The generally sloping landform would be altered to some degree in order to accommodate development platforms and to create the attenuation features, however, the overall sloping nature of the Site would be retained. The development proposals would however introduce

new features such as a new boundary hedgebank along the south eastern boundary, new wet grassland and scrub habitat and tree planting including orchards. It is judged that the degree of landscape change on this landscape receptor would be **Medium** and that change would be within a comparatively **localised area** and would be perceived within the existing context which includes the existing adjacent residential edge.

- 7.117 It is judged that the magnitude of change arising for the Site within its **immediate context** would be **High** (i.e. Total loss of or major alteration to key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be fundamentally changed). Although the Site would evidently be altered, and there would be a marked degree of change, this would be balanced by the fact that the Proposed Development would be located and observed within the wider context of existing residential development and urbanising features that are an inherent part of this landscape in which the Site is located.

Construction Effects

- 7.118 During the construction phase, some short term reversible adverse effects upon the landscape will occur. Anticipated effects during the developments construction phase will primarily be caused by:-
- Clearance of the Site and set up of compound areas,
 - Vegetation removal to accommodate the new accesses off the B3261 Lyme Road and Sector Lane',
 - Earthworks required to accommodate the development areas and SuDs,
 - Building works; and
 - Construction traffic, including HGVs and staff cars travelling to and from Site.
- 7.119 Appropriate mitigation during the construction phases will be implemented to minimise impacts on surrounding receptors. The construction phase is likely to be over a period of 26 months, and, consequently, effects would be temporary in nature.
- 7.120 The Blackdown Hills NCA and Axe Valley DCA's are of large scale and cover Axminster and the surrounding areas. The adjacent Wootton Hills DCA is also of large scale covering the adjacent landscape. As a result of the small scale of the Site in the context of these extensive areas, as well as the retention of existing landscape features, the magnitude of change resulting from the construction phase of the development on these published LCA's is considered to be **Negligible**. The landscape sensitivity of these character areas varies with higher sensitivity areas associated with the NL's, however at the local level, outside of the NL's is considered to be Medium and Construction effects are assessed as **Negligible** and **not significant**.
- 7.121 The Blackdown Hills and East Devon NL's are located 1.8 km and 1.6 km from the Site and share very limited intervisibility with the Site. Whilst there will be some disturbance during

construction, this will be at the local scale and hard to perceive from both NL's. The sensitivity of the designated landscapes is high while the magnitude of change resulting from the construction stage is considered to be **Negligible or Negligible/None** with Construction effects assessed as **Negligible** for the Blackdown Hills NL and **Negligible/ None** on the East Devon NL.

- 7.122 At a more local scale, the Site is located within the smaller scale LCT 3B Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes and reflects some of the key characteristics and is adjacent to the Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes LCT. Whilst the level of effects on these smaller areas will be greater, these will still be localised and relatively short term in nature with existing landscape features retained as far as possible with effects being indirect on the adjacent LCT. The value of the LCT's are considered to be **medium** at the local level. The construction of the Proposed Development will result in a Medium magnitude of change on the Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes and construction effects are assessed as **Moderate Adverse**. For the adjacent Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes LCT, there will be a Low magnitude of change and construction effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.
- 7.123 With regard to the Site and immediate context, construction of the Proposed Development will result in some progressive changes to the landscape character. The construction works will result in the active presence of plant and machinery, Site compounds, access routes and the increasing visual presence of the proposed buildings as they are constructed. The construction landscape effect upon the Site will be direct. The existing fields will be progressively replaced by construction of the built development and green infrastructure, initially comprising earthworks and the formation of access arrangements and subsequently by the construction of buildings. Retention of the existing woodland on the northern boundary and existing hedgerows will assist in limiting some of the more indirect influences arising from construction.
- 7.124 Changes to the landform of the Site will include some 'cut and fill' earthworks to lower and raise different parts of the Site to accommodate the development parcels with embankments falling into the adjacent open space. SuDs basins will also be excavated within the lower levels of the Site to the east. The western part of the Site will progressively change from open fields to built form while the eastern part of the Site will include the attenuation features, creation of areas of open space and associated tree and shrub planting. A new boundary hedgebank will be created along the south eastern boundary with further structural planting around the development areas and on the Site boundaries.
- 7.125 Beyond the Site boundaries, the construction effects upon local landscape character will be contained by the existing development to the north and west and by existing mature trees to the south. Effects will generally dissipate with distance to the north and east.
- 7.126 Overall, the magnitude of landscape change arising from construction of the Proposed Development upon the landscape of the Site and its immediate context will be high with the value of the landscape considered to be medium, resulting in a **Major/ Moderate Adverse** construction landscape effect. This overall level of construction effect on the landscape is temporary.

Visual Effects

- 7.127 A comprehensive visual impact assessment of the Proposed Development has been undertaken to determine the potential effects upon surrounding receptors. This has considered the specific effects arising during the construction stage. A series of Photo Viewpoints (**Figures 7.7 – 7.34**), related plans and a Visual Effects Table (**Technical Appendix 7.3**) are included and collectively detail and support the following description of the likely visual effects arising from construction of the Proposed Development.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- 7.128 The ZTV (Figure 7.6) of the Proposed Development identifies the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the Proposed Development are likely to be possible. The ZTV is not however, an indicator of the effect of the Proposed Development on the view but simply, its visible extent in the surrounding landscape.
- 7.129 A computer modelled ZTV for the Proposed Development was initially prepared based upon landform data and proposed building heights. This has then been reviewed on Site and refined to take account of the visual 'screening' provided by buildings, trees, hedgerows and other features.
- 7.130 The ZTV of the Proposed Development is contained to the south west and west due to landform and the existing urban development of the town, however there is some visibility beyond the town on the higher ground to the north west and north. There is greater visibility to the north and east due to the undeveloped nature of the landscape, although visibility is limited in some areas by existing mature hedges and the undulating landform.
- 7.131 There could be some limited locations (beyond the extent of the ZTV shown) that could have a potential distant or very limited view to a part of the development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the ZTV that would not experience any views to the resultant development.

Construction Effects

- 7.132 During the construction phase, adverse effects upon the local visual resource that have views of the Site will occur, however, the magnitude will depend on the actual extent of visibility of the Site for the receptor. Inevitably, those visual receptors within the Site such as users of public footpath routes 72 and 73 which lead through the Site and those in closest proximity to the Site for example, residents on B3261 Lyme Road to the west and Salway Gardens and Loup Court to the north who overlook the Site as well as users of the B3261 Lyme Road which passes adjacent to the Site boundary will experience views of construction activity to include vehicles and associated machinery, site compounds, and earthworks/ground modelling.
- 7.133 It is assessed that the overall visual effects during the construction phase would be over a comparatively short duration (c. 3 years) and consequently, effects would be temporary. Receptors of high sensitivity include users of the public footpath network and local residents

while road users are considered to be of medium sensitivity. The construction of the development is considered to result in a high magnitude of change for adjacent residents and users of the public footpaths through the Site with a medium magnitude of change for road users of the B3261 Lyme Road. Other receptors including users of the public right of way network, residents and road users at a distance to the Site to are considered to experience a medium – negligible magnitude of change to views.

- 7.134 Construction effects for receptors using the public footpaths Axminster 72 and Axminster 73 within the Site are assessed as **Major Adverse** due to the full nature of views and changes in views as a result of disturbance within the Site. Effects for users of public footpath Axminster 18 outside of the Site are assessed as **Major/Moderate Adverse** due to the slight distance and partial nature of views. Effects for users of bridleway Axminster 17 to the east are assessed **Moderate Adverse** and effects for users of other footpaths/bridleways at a greater distance to the Site or with less visibility of the Site are assessed as **Minor Adverse** to **Negligible**.
- 7.135 Effects for residents adjacent to the Site at Salway Gardens, Loup Court and on Lyme Road are assessed as **Major Adverse** due to the close proximity and full nature of the views. Effects for residents on Coles Lane to the east, Sector Lane to the north and residents of Sec Tor House are assessed as **Moderate Adverse**. For residents at a greater distance to the Site with lower levels of visibility of the Site, effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse** or **Minor Adverse/ Negligible**.
- 7.136 Effects for road user receptors of Sector Lane to the north and the B3261 Lyme Road to the south are assessed as **Moderate Adverse** due to the changes in view, but which will be limited to short sections of the road and transient in nature. Effects for other road users in the wider area are assessed as **Negligible**.

Operational Phase Assessment

- 7.137 The operational effects of the Proposed Development are based upon full completion of the Proposed Development and do not take into account the subsequent management and maturing of the existing and new landscape and planting proposals. It does however include consideration of the proposed 'embedded' mitigation measures which form part of the development proposals, such as the new and retained trees and other planting.
- 7.138 The subsequent effects which also consider the growth and management of the trees and planting over 15 years are considered and outlined in the Residual Effects section.

Landscape Effects

- 7.139 The impacts of the Proposed Development on the landscape and the resulting landscape effects have been assessed. The following provides a summary of the landscape effects assessment included at **Technical Appendix 7.2**.

National Character Area

- 7.140 The Site is located within the extensive 147 Blackdown Hills NCA and only reflects some of the key characteristics relating to the pastoral landscape with small irregular fields of medieval origin in smaller valleys and presence of Devon hedgebanks and narrow lanes in the local area. The development is designed to be incorporated into the existing landscape structure of the Site with some strengthening of structural landscape through additional hedgebank and hedgerow planting and tree planting. The landscape proposals respond to Statement of Environmental Opportunity (SEO4) which refers to reflecting the local vernacular in new development and encouraging provision of high-quality green infrastructure through the inclusion of new landscape and habitat features. The completed development will result in a Negligible magnitude of change on the NCA and landscape effects at completion are assessed as **Negligible**.

National Landscapes

- 7.141 The Site is located outside of the boundaries of the Blackdown Hills and East Devon NL's and only shares some very limited intervisibility from some locations towards the edges of the NL's. The Site is hard to perceive in views as is associated with the edge of the settlement of Axminster. On completion, the development will result in a slight extension of the existing settlement, with some very limited views from within the NL. The landscape proposals will help the development integrate with the edge of settlement character with the development resulting in a **Negligible or Negligible/None Magnitude of change**. Effects will be indirect and very low level only with no changes to the wider description and special qualities of the NL's and effects at completion are assessed as **Negligible** for the Blackdown Hills NL and **Negligible/ None** on the East Devon NL.

Devon Character Areas

- 7.142 The Site occupies a small part of the wider Axe Valley character area and reflects some of the distinctive characteristics referring to a strong hedgerow pattern with hedgerow trees with some woodland with some views across the small valley. The Proposed Development seeks to respond to the overall landscape strategy by being Sited adjacent to the existing settlement edge with green infrastructure proposals in the form of new structural planting and habitat creation to help integrate it into the existing context.
- 7.143 There is some limited intervisibility between the Site and the adjacent Wootton Hills DCA. On completion, the development will be perceived in the context of the existing settlement edge with limited indirect effects only which will reduce as the development matures.
- 7.144 The completed development will result in a Negligible or Negligible/None magnitude of change on the DCA's and landscape effects on the Axe Valley and adjacent Wootton Hills are assessed as **Negligible**.

East Devon and Blackdown Hills LCT's

- 7.145 The Site forms a small part of the linear Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes LCT which covers Axminster and the adjacent landscape. The Site reflects some of the key characteristics as it is on the side of a valley with hedgerows with some hedgerow trees and a small area of woodland. Boundary hedges are low and wide with farmsteads in the wider area and narrow sunken lanes passing the Site. On completion, the new built development will be located adjacent to the existing settlement edge, set within the existing landscape structure in accordance with the landscape aims and guidelines. Structural landscape proposals are designed to help soften the settlement edge and integrate into the existing landscape context with habitat links enhanced through new hedgebank provision. Existing PROW are incorporated with new linkages through the POS areas with consideration of the development within views across the LCT. The completed development will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change and the LCT and landscape effects on completion are assessed as **Moderate/ Minor Adverse**.
- 7.146 There is some limited intervisibility between the Site and the adjacent Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes LCT from the south and also the north west, although the Site is hard to perceive within views across the town. Effects will be indirect and localised only with the development perceived as an extension to the existing settlement resulting in a Low magnitude of change and landscape effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.

Site and immediate context

- 7.147 The Site consists of two field parcels in agricultural use located adjacent to and influenced by the existing residential edge of Axminster. The gently sloping landform and presence of hedgerows with some hedgerow trees is typical of the local landscape character. On completion, new built form will be located adjacent to the existing residential edge and set within the existing landscape structure. New hedgerow planting including a hedgebank on the south eastern boundary will enhance habitat connectivity. New tree planting on the edges of the development areas will help to soften the built form with wet grassland habitat associated with the suds features. The existing sloping landform of the Site will still be evident overall, although with some changes to accommodate the buildings and basins with embankments created from the development area. These will be located within the lower levels of the Site and integrated through native shrub planting to soften the form. Existing public footpaths will be retained with the southern route maintained through a partial green corridor and through the perimeter of the development. The northern route is to be re-routed to pass through the development but will connect to Sector Lane to the north. There are no water features within the Site, however new attenuation features will feature wet grassland and scrub habitat. New play provision will be included through an equipped play area located centrally within the development and an informal area catering for older children located within the northern open space area. Informal footpath routes are also created linking around the open spaces to allow for informal recreation such as dog walking etc. The completed development will result in a Medium magnitude of change and landscape effects at completion are assessed as **Moderate Adverse** as a result of the change in character

from open fields to built development, but with the landscape and open space enhancements in the immediate context of the residential edge of the settlement.

Visual Effects

- 7.148 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at **Technical Appendix 7.3**.

Residential

- 7.149 A number of properties are located adjacent to the Site to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court. Residents of these properties are likely to experience some rear views towards the new development although some will be limited by garden boundaries and existing vegetation on the northern Site boundary. On completion, new houses will be set back from the north western boundary with new houses backing or siding onto the existing rear gardens. Existing hedge and tree vegetation on the boundary will be retained with new planting to replace vegetation removed.
- 7.150 A number of properties are also adjacent or close to the Site to the south west on the B3261 Lyme Road. Residents of these properties are likely to experience some rear views and some partial side or front views for properties on the south western side of the road. On completion, new dwellings will back onto existing rear gardens with some set back from the boundary with new structural native planting. Towards the south, either side of the entrance, new houses will front onto the retained hedgerow along the B3261. New tree planting within frontages and around the new access will provide some softening.
- 7.151 The completed development will result in a High/Medium magnitude of change to views for these residents and visual effects at completion are assessed as **Major/Moderate Adverse** and significant.
- 7.152 A number of properties are located to the east along Coles Lane on the raised landform. Partial views are possible across the valley, although restricted by gardens and associated structures and vegetation. The Site is seen in the context of existing adjacent dwellings. On completion, new houses will be visible although views will be partially filtered by existing vegetation. Clusters of new tree planting within the open spaces close to the edges of the houses and new planting on the embankments will filter views. The completed development will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change to views for these residents and visual effects at completion are assessed as **Moderate/ Minor Adverse**.
- 7.153 A low number of properties are scattered along Sector Lane to the north east set at lower levels. Properties are generally set amongst mature vegetation which will limit views for residents although some partial or glimpsed views are likely. On completion, new development is likely to be visible within the southern and eastern parts of the Site with new tree planting on boundaries and around the development edge.
- 7.154 Sec Tor house is a Grade II listed building located across the valley set at a lower level than the majority of the Site. The Cultural Heritage Chapter (**Chapter 8**), describes the setting of

the house off a long driveway off Sector Lane and located amongst other buildings surrounded by rolling countryside as creating a '*sense of an enclosed area of private, historic properties situated within their own grounds*'. The chapter also notes '*excellent visibility between the asset and the Site*'. The assessment of effects on Sec Tor within **Chapter 8** identified minor negative residual operation effects subject to appropriate mitigation in the form of structural planting around the new houses within the northern part of the Site.

- 7.155 Residents of the property are likely to have some views towards the Site although views will be partly filtered by existing vegetation on field boundaries and within the grounds of the house. On completion, new dwellings will be visible, but will be seen in the context of existing dwellings adjacent to the Site. New planting within property frontages will help to break up the built form with planting within the open spaces also softening views. The completed development will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change to views for these residents and visual effects at completion are assessed as **Moderate/ Minor Adverse**.
- 7.156 Beulah Farm is located across the valley to the north of the Site on slightly raised ground. Views to the Site will be heavily filtered by intervening vegetation. The new development will be visible on completion but will be heavily filtered by existing vegetation. Some very limited views are likely from the Old Lodge located at a distance on high ground to the north east. The new development will be seen in the context of the existing settlement edge. The completed development will result in a Low/Negligible magnitude of change to views for these residents and visual effects on completion are assessed as **Minor Adverse/ Negligible**.
- 7.157 Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages are likely to experience some very limited views towards the Site with views heavily filtered by vegetation around the property boundaries. Once complete, the development will be hard to discern due to intervening vegetation resulting in a Negligible magnitude of change to views and visual effects on completion are assessed as **Negligible**.

PROW users

- 7.158 Public footpath Axminster 72 leads along the northern Site boundary with views partially limited by the small woodland in the north but with wide views possible across the Site from the majority of the route. On completion, the route is to be realigned to lead through the development area which will result in a change in character of views from open fields to residential development. Tree and shrub planting within incidental green spaces and property frontages will however help to create an attractive route.
- 7.159 Public footpath Axminster 73 leads through the south eastern part of the Site along part of the south eastern Site boundary before following the field boundary hedge. Views are possible across the Site from along the route. On completion, the route will be retained, partially leading through the development and partially through green space and along the new embankment. Close views of the new houses will be visible from the section of the route that leads through the Site. Views will be softened by some degree by frontage with

views from the route outside of the Site being partially filtered by retained hedgerow and tree vegetation.

- 7.160 The completed development will result in a High/Medium magnitude of change to views for users of these routes and visual effects are assessed as **Major/Moderate Adverse** and significant.
- 7.161 Public footpath Axminster 18 leads along a rising landform to the east with views possible across the valley. On completion, the new houses will be seen in the foreground of existing dwellings already visible on the B3261 Lyme Road bringing the residential edge further north. The new attenuation features within the northern open space will also be visible on the lower landform, although will be partially softened by the new native planting. The completed development will result in a Medium magnitude of change to views for users of the route and visual effects are assessed as **Moderate Adverse**.
- 7.162 Some more distant views are possible for users of public footpath Axminster 17 with the higher parts of the Site more visible. On completion, the new development will be visible, but seen in the context of the existing settlement edge with the development forming a small part of wide views possible along the route. The completed development will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change to views for users of the route and visual effects are assessed as **Moderate/Minor Adverse**.
- 7.163 Public footpath Axminster 19 leads along a lower landform to the north of the Site with very limited visibility of the Site due to intervening vegetation. On completion, built form will be located behind the retained northern boundary woodland and will be hard to discern within views.
- 7.164 Bridleway Axminster 55 follows a mature tree line and hedge to the north of the Site. Some glimpsed views are only possible between the mature vegetation. Once complete, the new development will be hard to discern with visibility reducing further in summer months with increased leaf cover.
- 7.165 The completed development will result in a Negligible or Negligible/None magnitude of change to views for users of these routes and visual effects are assessed as **Negligible**.
- 7.166 Public footpath Axminster 5 leads along a rising landform at a distance to the north of the Site with some views possible from the higher ground. Views to the Site are heavily filtered by existing trees. On completion, the new houses will be visible but will be seen in the context of the existing dwellings already visible, and will be filtered by the existing trees. The completed development will result in a Low/Negligible magnitude of change to views for users of the route and visual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse/ Negligible**.
- 7.167 Some views towards the Site are possible from the open section of public footpath Axminster 21 to the south east of the Site, although views are heavily filtered by existing vegetation. On completion, the new dwellings will be visible in the foreground of the existing settlement edge but will be hard to discern and seen in the context of other development already visible within

views. The completed development will result in a Negligible/None magnitude of change to views for users of the route and visual effects are assessed as **Negligible/ None**.

- 7.168 A number of public footpaths cross through the landscape to the north west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilminster 1. Wide views are possible for users of these routes which feature the town of Axminster. The Site is locatable by existing trees but not visible within views. On completion, the new development is unlikely to be discernible through existing vegetation and beyond the town although some additional roofscape may just be visible. The completed development will result in a Negligible/None magnitude of change to views for users of the route and visual effects are assessed as **Negligible/ None**.

Road Users

- 7.169 Views are possible for users of the B3261 Lyme Road as it passes adjacent to the Site boundary, with views partially limited by the roadside hedgerow. On completion, the new access with footpaths and cycleway will create a new feature within views however this will not be out of context with the adjacent urban character along the road. New houses will be set back from the south western boundary with the existing hedge retained and with the houses seen in the context of other housing along the road. The completed development will result in a Low magnitude of change and visual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.
- 7.170 Sector Lane leads past the north eastern Site boundary with views into the Site limited to within close proximity of the Site. Views are limited by the existing mature trees along the boundary. On completion, views of new houses will be visible on the approach from the east but these will be set back from the lane. The new access with cycleway will create a new feature within the views along the lane but won't be out of character with the residential area adjacent to the north west. The completed development will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change and visual effects are assessed as **Moderate/ Minor Adverse**.
- 7.171 Some distant views towards the Site are possible for users of Lodge Lane from the length of lane which leads along the raised landform to the north east. Views are distant and filtered by existing vegetation and development. On completion, the new dwellings will be visible but will be seen in the context of existing development already visible within views. Views will be transient in nature with the development resulting in a negligible magnitude of change. Visual effects are assessed as **Negligible**.
- 7.172 Some limited views are possible for users of lanes to the north west including Smallridge Road, Watery Lane and Fourcross Hill although the Site is hard to discern within the wider views across Axminster. The new development will be hard to discern within the transient views resulting in a Negligible/ None magnitude of change and visual effects are assessed as **Negligible/ None**.

Actionable Mitigation

- 7.173 The development proposals include a number of inherent mitigation features and there is no further actionable mitigation identified.

Residual Impacts Assessment

- 7.174 The residual effects consider the effects after the incorporation of the mitigation measures. In the context of this landscape and visual impact assessment, primary mitigation measures and considerations have been incorporated as an integral (or 'embedded') part of the design and layout of the Proposed Development. This has included attention to the siting, layout and heights of the proposed buildings.
- 7.175 All of these aspects and features have been considered in the design of the Proposed Development and the development parameters and have therefore been assessed as part of the construction and operational stages.

Construction Phase Assessment

- 7.176 The construction phase assessment includes consideration of the construction inherent and secondary mitigation and there are no changes to the levels of residual construction effects to those already assessed.

Operational Phase Assessment

- 7.177 Consideration of the likely residual effects appraises the Proposed Development 15 years after completion and takes into account the growth and management of the proposed and conserved planting over this time. These residual effects are detailed in the Landscape and Visual Effects Tables at **Appendices 7.2 and 7.3** and described below.

Landscape Effects

- 7.178 With the associated landscape proposals effectively managed and maturing, the development will mature and assimilate into the landscape context. This will be perceived at a lesser degree within the wider NCA and DCA's as well as within the Blackdown Hills and East Devon NL's resulting in a Negligible magnitude of change and residual effects for the NCA 147 Blackdown Hills National, Blackdown Hills and East Devon NL's and Axe Valley and adjacent Wootton Hills DCA's are assessed as **Negligible or Negligible/None**.
- 7.179 With regard to the more local scale, the structural landscape proposals will help soften the development and enable it to assimilate into the edge of settlement context resulting in a Low magnitude of change and residual effects on the Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes LCT are assessed as **Minor Adverse** and not significant and **Minor Adverse/ Negligible** and not significant for the adjacent Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes LCT.
- 7.180 With regard to the Site and immediate context, effects will reduce over time as the landscape proposals mature with tree cover softening the development edge and structural planting integrating with the existing landscape structure with a Low magnitude of change and residual effects are assessed as **Moderate/ Minor Adverse**.

Visual Effects

- 7.181 For properties on the edges of the Site including to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court and south west on B3261 Lyme Road, views will be partially filtered by retained

vegetation with new planting providing further filtering over time as it matures. Views will however be permanently shortened with a Medium magnitude of change and residual effects are assessed as **Moderate Adverse** for these receptors.

- 7.182 For other properties to the east on Coles Lane and to the north on Sector Lane, the development will be viewed at a distance with views partially obscured by existing vegetation. Clusters of new tree planting within the open space close to the edge of the houses will filter views of the houses fronting out onto the open space with views softening increasingly over time as the landscape proposals mature. This will result in a Low magnitude of change and residual visual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.
- 7.183 Views for residents of Sec Tor House will include the new housing but seen in the context of existing development adjacent to the Site. Planting along the new spine road, within frontages and within the open space will provide further filtering as it matures. The magnitude of change will be Low and residual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.
- 7.184 Some limited views will be possible for properties at a greater distance to the Site including Beulah Farm, The Old Lodge and Mount Carmel and Olcote cottages. Where visible, the new development will be seen in the context of the existing settlement edge with planting within the open space and within property frontages helping to soften views as it matures. At year 15 there will be a Negligible magnitude of change and residual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse/Negligible** for residents of Beulah Farm and The Old Lodge and **Negligible** for residents of Mount Carmel and Olcote cottages.
- 7.185 Views for users of the footpaths which lead through the Site, Axminster 72 and 73 will be permanently changed. Route 72 is to be re-routed through the development area and whilst planting will soften views of the new houses over time, the character of the route will be permanently changed. Route 73 will partially lead through greenspace but partly through the development area resulting in a permanent change to the character. The route will lead along the new embankment and will follow a new hedgebank with trees with further planting within the open space and within frontages softening views of the houses over time. At year 15 there will be a Medium magnitude of change and residual visual effects are assessed as **Moderate Adverse**.
- 7.186 Views for users of footpath Axminster 18 will soften over time with ongoing management ensuring the proposed tree cover establishes. The planting on the perimeter of the built areas will soften the views of the houses resulting in a softer edge than currently experienced in views. The proposals will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change and residual effects are assessed as **Moderate/Minor Adverse**.
- 7.187 Users of footpath Axminster 17 are located at a greater distance to the Site with the new development viewed in the foreground of the existing settlement edge. At year 15 the established planting will add to the overlaying vegetation providing further filtering resulting in a Low magnitude of change and residual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.
- 7.188 Footpath Axminster 19 leads through lower landform with limited views of the new development likely. Users of bridleway route Axminster 55 to the north would also

experience only very limited views through the existing vegetation. As the planting within the development matures, this would add to the intervening layers of vegetation adding to filtering of views with the changes hard to discern within views. The magnitude of change would be Negligible/None at year 15 and residual effects for users of these routes are assessed as **Negligible/None**.

- 7.189 Views for users of footpath Axminster 5 to the north would be increasingly filtered as the proposed planting matures, adding to the overlapping vegetation. The magnitude of change would be Negligible at year 15 and residual effects for users of the route are assessed as **Negligible**.
- 7.190 Some limited views are possible from footpath Axminster 21 to the south east as well as footpaths to the west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilminster 1. As the proposed mitigation planting matures, the planting would add to the existing overlapping vegetation which will help to assimilate the built form into existing views which feature buildings set amongst mature trees. At year 15, there would be a Negligible/None magnitude of change and residual effects are assessed as **Negligible/None**.
- 7.191 Views for road users passing the Site along the B3261 Lyme Road will change as a result of the creation of a new access and new housing, however this will fit with the urban context already present along the road as it approaches the town. At year 15, the proposed planting around the new access and tree planting along the new spine road will mature and within frontages will mature with the new houses seen behind the retained roadside hedge. The magnitude of change at year 15 will be Low/Negligible with views being transient in nature and residual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse/Negligible**.
- 7.192 Views for users of Sector Lane will permanently change due to the creation of the new access although the road already runs into the edge of the residential area. The majority of the existing trees and woodland belt along the northwestern boundary will be retained with new planting around the access maturing over time to help integrate the development into the existing context. The magnitude of change at year 15 will be Low with views being transient in nature and residual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse**.
- 7.193 Views for users of roads at a greater distance to the Site including Lodge Lane and routes to the west including Smallridge Road, Watery Lane and Fourcross Hill will change to a limited degree with the new development blending into views of the existing settlement as the planting matures over time. The magnitude of change at year 15 will be Negligible/None with views being transient in nature and residual effects are assessed as **Negligible/None**.

Cumulative Impacts

- 7.194 This section assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development when considered in the context of other future projects within close proximity. GLVIA3 recognises that cumulative assessment should be reasonable and in proportion to the nature of the Proposed Development under consideration (**GLVIA3 paragraph 7.5**). It also advises that in most cases the focus of the cumulative assessment will be on the additional effect of the

Proposed Development in conjunction with other developments of the same type and in some cases, development of another type will be relevant (GLVIA3 paragraph 7.10).

- 7.195 The cumulative Sites are identified within the ESA Chapter 15 as part of a cumulative process.
- 7.196 The cumulative Sites included within the ESA have been agreed with EDDC and include Sites included as draft allocations within the emerging local plan. The allocations are for employment, housing or mixed use (employment and housing). In summary these include the following:
- a) Land off Musbury Road, Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_01a)
 - b) Land North of Shoals, Musbury Road, Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_02)
 - c) Axminster Carpets Factory Site, Woodmead Road, Axminster (HELAA Ref Axmi_07)
 - d) Land off Wyke Lane, Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_08)
 - e) Great Jackleigh Farm, Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_09)
 - f) Scott Rowe Building, Axminster Hospital, Chard Street, Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_10)
 - g) Land on the Southeast side of Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_11c)
 - h) Land at Lea Combe, Field End, Axminster, (HELAA Ref Axmi_12)
 - i) Land at Millwey, Chard Road, (HELAA Ref Axmi_17)
 - j) Millwey Garages, St Andrews Drive, (HELAA Ref Axmi_18)
 - k) Websters Garage, 9 Lyme Street, (HELAA Ref Axmi_23)
 - l) Land West of Prestaller Farm, Beavor Lane, (HELAA Ref Axmi_24)
 - m) Prestaller Farm, Beavor Lane, Axminster, (HELAA Ref GH/ED/80)
 - n) Land at Chard Road, Axminster, (HELAA Ref GH/ED/83)

Construction Phase Assessment

Landscape Effects

- 7.197 The cumulative Sites vary in size however are all located within the town (Sites c, f, l, j, k) or close to the existing edge of the settlement (Sites a, b, d, e, g, l, m, n). The Sites are all located outside of the National Landscapes and within the context of the Axe Valley DCA and Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes LCT. In the event of all Sites coming forward together, there would inevitable be an additional level of change and effect on the local landscape character during the construction stage.

- 7.198 It is assumed that the developments would come forward with associated landscape strategies to minimise effects on the local landscape and to include for example, retention and protection of existing landscape features (watercourses, vegetation, landform etc) with effects being short to medium term only due to the overall relatively small scale of each of the developments proposed.
- 7.199 The smaller developments within the settlement would be perceived within the existing urban context, while those on the edge, would be perceived within the context of the existing settlement edge with some peripheral developments contained by landform, existing vegetation or transport infrastructure such as the mainline railway and A35.
- 7.200 Although the developments of all Sites would create change in the local landscape, these would be partly within the existing urban context. Proposals on the edges of the settlement to the south would be within the A35 corridor while those to the east located on the locally undulating landform with existing vegetation along Evil Lane/Axminster 55 bridleway and woodland to the east providing some containment to Site GH/ED/80 etc.
- 7.201 Development of site m will require a bridge across Sector Lane which would require additional tree removal along the lane, the construction of embankments either side and a new structure implemented across the lane. This will result in localised changes to the landscape character.
- 7.202 Effects will generally be relatively localised although the changes associated with the construction of a bridge across Sector Lane will result in a High magnitude of change within the Medium sensitivity landscape of the Site in the immediate context. The resulting cumulative effect will increase the judgement of effects to **Major Adverse** at the construction stage.

Visual Effects

- 7.203 The Sites are generally associated with the existing settlement and would be viewed to different degrees by local visual receptors depending on the location. During construction, some disturbance and changes in views would be likely with Sites grouped on the eastern edge of the town (l, m and the application Site) likely to be viewed together by receptors including nearby residential receptors, road users of the B3261 Lyme Road, Sector Lane and Lodge Lane and users of the nearby public rights of way. Similarly for receptors located to the west, Sites on the northern edge (Site n) and Sites on the southern edge of the town (Sites a, b, d and e) likely to be viewed together with Sites to the east (l and m) visible beyond on the higher landform. The construction related disturbance and activity would be viewed against the existing edges of the town which already feature a mix of urban features with some areas of general disturbance. Cumulative visual effects are likely to result in an increase in magnitude of change for some more sensitive receptors located in close proximity to the Site who will perceive changes to the Site and adjacent Sites (Site l and m), mainly associated with the construction of a bridge across Sector Lane for the development of Site m. Construction effects are assessed as slightly higher than previously for these receptors as follows:

- Residents of properties on Sector Lane would likely experience disturbance and changes in views to the proposal Site as well as Site m, including additional tree removal and earth works with the bridge creating a new feature within views. This will result in a High magnitude of change. Cumulative effects are assessed as **Major Adverse**.
- Residents of Sec Tor House would likely experience disturbance and changes in views to the proposal Site as well as Site m. Whilst the bridge may not be visible, additional tree removal may result in increased views across the valley resulting in a High magnitude of change. Cumulative effects are assessed as **Major Adverse**.
- Residents of Beulah Farm are likely to experience changes in views during the construction stage with views of the proposal Site and Sites l and m. This would result in a high magnitude of change (largely as a result of changes in views to Site m). Cumulative effects would be assessed as **Major Adverse**.
- Residents of the Old Lodge and of Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages are likely to experience views of construction of the development Site as well as Sites l, m and n resulting in a Medium magnitude of change. Cumulative effects are assessed as **Moderate Adverse**.
- Public footpath Axminster 19 leads through Site m and users are likely to experience changes in views of development of this Site in combination with the development Site. This would result in a high magnitude of change and **Major Adverse** visual effects.
- Evil Lane/ bridleway Axminster 55 leads through Site m with views likely to the north and south through the mature hedgeline. Development of this Site is likely to result in a High/medium magnitude of change resulting in a **Major/Moderate Adverse** effect but this will be largely due to the construction related disturbance within Site m rather than the application Site.
- Public footpath route Axminster 5 leads through Site n with views also likely to be possible of activity within Site m from along the route, as well as the application Site. This is likely to result in a Medium magnitude of change resulting in **Moderate Adverse** effects.
- Users of public footpaths to the north west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilmington 1 are likely to experience some limited views with the cumulative Sites being seen at varying degrees. These will be viewed at a distance with the developments visible in the context of the town resulting overall in a Low magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse** effects.
- Sector Lane leads between the application Site and Site m. During construction views will be changed due to the removal of trees along the lane, the creation of embankments and the implementation of a bridge which will create a new feature within views.. Dependent on the extent of vegetation removal required along the lane, this could result in a High magnitude of change and **Major Adverse** effects.

- Some views are likely to be possible of Sites n and m in conjunction with the application Site for users of Lodge Lane, although views will be fleeting and distant. The magnitude of change would be Medium resulting in **Moderate Adverse** effects.
- Some limited views are likely for road users from lanes to the west including Smallridge Road, Watery Lane and Fourcross Hill with the cumulative Sites being seen at varying degrees. These will be viewed at a distance and transient in nature with the Sites visible in the context of the town resulting overall in a Low magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse** effects.

7.204 Receptors with judgements unlikely to change as a result of cumulative Sites all coming forward include residents of properties to the east on Coles Lane and users of Axminster 17 and Axminster 21 public footpaths due to the lack of intervisibility of the application Site and the other cumulative Sites. Residents of properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court as well as residents of properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road are likely to experience changes in views with development m and the Site seen in conjunction. Effects are already assessed as Major Adverse and significant at the construction stage. Similarly, users of public footpaths 72 and 73 which lead through the Site are likely to experience changes in views to the development Site and Site m to the north. Effects are already assessed as **Major Adverse** at the construction stage.

Operational Phase Assessment

Landscape Effects

- 7.205 Once the developments are all complete, there would be some expansion to the town, mainly on the southern edge and eastern side. Developments to the south would be contained by the A35 with most developments being perceived as clusters i.e. Sites a, b, d, e to the south and Sites l, m and the application Site to the east. The group of developments on the eastern edge of Axminster will result in some extension of the urban extent of the town.
- 7.206 It is anticipated that all developments would come forward with appropriate landscape schemes which would incorporate existing landscape features with further open spaces and habitat creation proposals to enhance the landscape character and provide recreation and biodiversity enhancements. The proposed bridge across Sector Lane is likely to include landscape proposals for planting to soften the structure and provide some landscape mitigation.
- 7.207 Whilst there will inevitably be some increase in landscape effects as a result of all Sites coming forward together, it is considered that the associated GI proposals will help to integrate the developments into their context resulting in a Medium – Low magnitude of change at Operation resulting in **Moderate or Minor Adverse** effects which would decrease over time as associated landscape proposals matured.

Visual Effects

- 7.208 With regard to visual effects, the combination of all developments coming forward in conjunction with the proposed application, would have some increase in effects on some key receptors although these would generally be limited to those in close proximity to the application Site. As the greater proportion of development Sites are located on the southern and eastern sides of the town, receptors in these locations would experience greater effects than those located to the north and west, who are likely to experience less visual change as a result of the developments.
- 7.209 It is anticipated that all developments would come forward with appropriate landscape schemes which would incorporate existing landscape features with further open spaces and habitat creation proposals with planting which would help to soften views of built form. Of the cumulative Sites identified, planning applications have been submitted for Sites k, l and m. The submissions for Sites l and m include green infrastructure proposals which show the structural landscape proposals including tree and shrub planting as well as play and SuDs features where required. It is however understood that a bridge link across Sector Lane will be required which will result in changes to views for receptors in close proximity.
- 7.210 Visual receptors likely to experience cumulative effects at the operation stage include the following:
- Residents of properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court who are likely to experience changes in views on the application Site and Site m. Residents are likely to experience views of the new bridge connection and also built form to the north as well as within the application Site, although views to the north will be softened where vegetation can be retained along Sector Lane. This will result in a High magnitude of change and **Major Adverse** effects.
 - Residents of properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road who are likely to experience changes in views with development m and the Site seen in conjunction. Residents are likely to experience some filtered views of the housing within Site m and the main access road, with some possible views of the new bridge to the north, although views would be filtered by trees along Sector Lane. This will result in a High/Medium magnitude of change and **Major/Moderate Adverse** effects.
 - Residents of properties at lower levels on Sector Lane likely to experience changes in views of the application Site in conjunction with Site m. Residents are likely to experience some views of the housing within Site m on the higher landform as well as the new bridge, although views would be filtered by existing trees and vegetation and limited by the undulating landform. This will result in a Medium/Low magnitude of change and **Moderate/Minor Adverse** effects.
 - Residents of Sec Tor house may experience changes in views with the application Site visible in conjunction with Site m. Some glimpsed views of new houses and employment units within Site m are likely to be possible on the higher ground, although will be set back from the edge of the Site by greenspace with additional boundary planting. New

buildings will be seen in the context of existing development and will result in a Medium magnitude of change and **Moderate Adverse** effects.

- Residents of Beulah Farm are likely to experience views of the application Site and Sites l and m. New housing within Site m will be close to the west side of the property while development including employment uses and some residential properties are likely to be visible on the southern side of Evil Lane is also likely to be visible, although partially filtered by retained boundary vegetation. New housing within Site l is also likely to be visible, although set back behind retained boundary vegetation. Residential development is already visible within views from Beulah Farm however development will be brought closer to the property resulting in a Medium magnitude of change and **Moderate Adverse** effects.
- Residents of The Old Lodge, Mount Carmel and Olcote cottages are likely to experience views of development within Sites l, m and n as well as the application Site. New housing and employment units are likely to be visible within Sites l and m but partially filtered by retained and reinforced boundary planting and seen at a distance and in the context of existing development on the edge of Axminster. This will result in a Low magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse** effects.
- Users of public footpaths 72 and 73 which lead through the Site are likely to experience changes in views of the application Site as well as Site m to the north. Some views will be possible to the new development within Site m as well as the new connecting bridge although will be partially restricted by the development within application Site. Views will be softened by planting resulting in a High/Medium magnitude of change and **Major/Moderate Adverse** effects.
- Users of Axminster 19 are likely to experience views of development with Site m in conjunction with the application Site as the route leads through Site m. New housing will be visible on the rising landform either side of the valley set back from the path by open greenspace with suds and new planting with only some views of the application Site possible as well as the new bridge. This will result in a Medium magnitude of change and **Moderate Adverse** effects. This is as a result of the development within Site m.
- Users of Evil Lane/ bridleway Axminster 55 are likely to experience views of development within Site m in conjunction with the application Site as the lane leads through Site m. The new employment will be visible to the south although filtered by retained hedgerow along the route, with new housing then visible to the north to the west of the route. Only some very glimpsed views of the application Site are likely to be possible. This will result in a High/Medium magnitude of change and **Major/Moderate Adverse** effects. This is as a result of the development within Site m.
- Users of Axminster 5 are likely to experience views of development in Site n and m in conjunction with the application Site, although development will be partially filtered by retained and reinforced boundary planting and seen at a distance and in the context of

existing development on the edge of Axminster. This will result in a Low magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse** effects.

- Some minimal cumulative effects likely for users of public footpaths north west including 45, 46 & Kilmington 1 as cumulative Sites located on the eastern side of the town including l and m are likely to be visible on the rising landform above town, with these developments viewed in conjunction with those to the north including Site n and south including Sites a – e. The developments will however be viewed at a distance and as part of the wider settlement of the town with a Low magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse** effects.
- Road users of Sector Lane are likely to experience views of development within Site m in conjunction with the application Site as well as the new bridge connection. Embankments will be softened by planting although the bridge will result in a new feature within views. This will result in a **Medium** magnitude of change and Moderate Adverse effects.
- Road users of Lodge Lane are likely to experience views of development within Sites n and m in conjunction with the application Site although views will be fleeting and developments will be viewed at a distance. This will result in a Low/negligible magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse/Negligible** effects.
- Some limited cumulative effects likely for road users of lanes to the west including Smallridge Roda, Watery Lane and Fourcross Hill although the cumulative developments will be seen in the context of the town and will be viewed at a distance and transient in nature. The developments will however be viewed at a distance and as part of the wider settlement of the town with a Low/negligible magnitude of change and **Minor Adverse/Negligible** effects.

Limitations and Assumptions

- 7.211 Every reasonable effort has been made to obtain baseline information and to accurately predict the effects of the Proposed Development. The baseline fieldwork analysis was undertaken in January 2025. Baseline Photographs (i.e., Type 1 Annotated Viewpoint Photographs as referred to in TGN 06/19,) from 13th January 2025 are used within the LVIA. As these were taken during the winter months, the photographs demonstrate winter views when vegetation is not in full leaf, thus effectively representing a 'worst case' scenario where there is likely to be greater visibility across the landscape than would be the case during the summer months, when planting provides screening and containment.
- 7.212 Photographs were taken from publicly accessible locations to provide representative views for visual receptors. It was not possible to take photographs from residential properties (such as those at Salway Gardens and Loup Court) as these are private views. However, reasoned assumptions are made on visibility through the fieldwork and, where possible, through the use of photographs from nearby public locations to provide an understanding of visibility.

Summary of Impacts

- 7.213 This LVIA assessment concludes that whilst the Proposed Development will inevitably cause some adverse effects on the local landscape and visual resource, with some significant effects identified during the construction stage, once the proposed landscape and GI proposals have established and matured none of the long term effects on landscape and visual receptors are judged to be 'significant'.

Landscape Effects

- 7.214 The Site forms a very small part of the NCA 147: Blackdown Hills and Axe Valley Devon Character Area and is located adjacent to an existing settlement. Existing landscape features of sloping landform, hedgerows and trees will be retained and incorporated into the landscape proposals which will include further structural planting and habitat creation. The development will not alter the key characteristics of these landscape character areas and long term residual landscape effects are assessed as **Negligible**.
- 7.215 Whilst the Site is not located within the East Devon and Blackdown Hills National Landscape's, there are likely to be some indirect effects as a result of the development as it would be perceived from the NL's. Intervisibility is however limited with the development perceived adjacent to the existing context of the edge of settlement. Existing landscape features will be retained with no changes to the special qualities of the NL's and long term residual effects are assessed as Negligible for the Blackdown Hills NL and None for the East Devon NL.
- 7.216 Effects on the more local Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes are assessed as Minor Adverse due to the changes from open fields to built form, however the development will be set within the existing landscape structure with the wide, low hedges retained and extended through the GI proposals. Existing public footpaths are retained and incorporated into the proposals with new structural planting to soften the settlement edge as it matures.
- 7.217 With regard to the Site and immediate context, there will be initial change and disturbance to the Site however the built development will be associated with the existing settlement edge with existing landscape features retained and incorporated into the wider proposals. Structural planting will help to soften the edge of the built form with new attenuation basins and grasslands creating a variety of habitats. A range of open areas will be provided with formal and informal recreation provision and long term residual effects are assessed as **Moderate/Minor Adverse**.

Visual Effects

- 7.218 Some Moderate Adverse long term residual effects have been identified for sensitive receptors in close proximity to the Site including adjacent residents and users of the footpaths which lead through the Site, as views will change from open fields to built form with open space provision. The development will be softened by the new structural planting with the habitat and POS provision providing biodiversity and recreation enhancements. For

other less sensitive receptors, or those at a distance to the Site, long term residual effects are assessed as **Minor Adverse** or **Negligible**.

7.219 Effects are summarised in Table 7.1 Landscape and Visual Table of Effects below.

Table 7.1 Landscape and Visual Table of Effects

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Construction				
Landscape				
National Character Area Profile (NCA) NCA 147: Blackdown Hills	Temporary	Negligible	- Retention of existing landscape features - CEMP	Negligible
Blackdown Hills National Landscape	Temporary	Negligible	- Retention of existing landscape features - CEMP	Negligible
East Devon National Landscape	Temporary	Negligible/None	- Retention of existing landscape features - CEMP	Negligible/None
Devon Character Area 1: Axe Valley	Temporary	Negligible	- Retention of existing landscape features - CEMP	Negligible
Devon Character Area	Temporary	Negligible	Retention of existing	Negligible

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
13: Wootton Hills			landscape features • CEMP	
LCT 3B: Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• Retention of existing landscape features • CEMP	Moderate Adverse
LCT 2A: Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes	Temporary	Minor Adverse	• Retention of existing landscape features • CEMP	Minor Adverse
Site and Immediate Context	Temporary	Major/ Moderate Adverse	• Retention of existing landscape features • CEMP	Major/ Moderate Adverse
Visual				
Properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Properties to the east on Coles Lane.	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Other properties to the north on Sector Lane at lower levels.	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Sec Tor house	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Beulah Farm	Temporary	Minor Adverse	• CEMP	Minor Adverse
The Old Lodge	Temporary	Minor Adverse	• CEMP	Minor Adverse
Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages	Temporary	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• CEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Users of public footpath Axminster 72 through Site	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 73 through Site	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 18	Temporary	Major / Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Major / Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 17	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 19	Temporary	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• CEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Users of bridleway Axminster 55	Temporary	Negligible	• CEMP	Negligible
Users of public footpath Axminster 5	Temporary	Minor Adverse	• CEMP	Minor Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 21	Temporary	Negligible	• CEMP	Negligible
Users of public footpaths to the north west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilmington 1.	Temporary	Negligible	• CEMP	Negligible
Users of B3261 Lyme Road	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of Sector Lane	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of Lodge Lane	Temporary	Negligible	• CEMP	Negligible
Users of Smallridge Road/Watery Lane/Fourcross Hill	Temporary	Negligible	• CEMP	Negligible
Completed Development				
Landscape				

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
National Character Area Profile (NCA) NCA 147: Blackdown Hills	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
Blackdown Hills National Landscape	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
East Devon National Landscape	Permanent	Negligible/None	• Site layout • LEMP	None
Devon Character Area 1: Axe Valley	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
Devon Character Area 13: Wootton Hills	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
LCT 3B: Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Slopes	Permanent	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse
LCT 2A: Steep Wooded Scarp Slopes	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Site and Immediate Context	Permanent	Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate/ Minor Adverse
Visual				

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court	Permanent	Major/ Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road	Permanent	Major/ Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Properties to the east on Coles Lane.	Permanent	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse
Other properties to the north on Sector Lane at lower levels.	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse
Sec Tor house	Permanent	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse
Beulah Farm	Permanent	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
The Old Lodge	Permanent	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
Users of public footpath Axminster 72 through Site	Permanent	Major / Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Users of public footpath Axminster 73 through Site	Permanent	Major / Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 18	Permanent	Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate / Minor Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 17	Permanent	Moderate / Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 19	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible/ None
Users of bridleway Axminster 55	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible/ None
Users of public footpath Axminster 5	Permanent	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
Users of public footpath Axminster 21	Permanent	Negligible/ None	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible/ None
Users of public footpaths to the north west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilminster 1.	Permanent	Negligible/ None	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible/ None

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Users of B3261 Lyme Road	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Users of Sector Lane	Permanent	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse
Users of Lodge Lane	Permanent	Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible/ None
Users of Smallridge Road/Watery Lane/Fourcross Hill	Permanent	Negligible/ None	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible/ None
Cumulative Effect				
Construction				
Landscape				
Site and Immediate Context	Temporary	MajorAdverse	• Retention of existing landscape features • CEMP	MajorAdverse
Visual				
Properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Properties to the east on Coles Lane.	Temporary	Major/Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Major/Moderate Adverse
Other properties to the north on Sector Lane at lower levels.	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Sec Tor house	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Beulah Farm	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
The Old Lodge	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages	Temporary	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• CEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Users of public footpath Axminster 72 through site	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 73 through site	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 18	Temporary	Major / Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Major / Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 17	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Users of public footpath Axminster 19	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Users of bridleway Axminster 55	Temporary	Major/Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Major/Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 5	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 21	Temporary	Negligible	• CEMP	Negligible
Users of public footpaths to the north west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilminster 1.	Temporary	Minor Adverse	• CEMP	Minor Adverse
Users of B3261 Lyme Road	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of Sector Lane	Temporary	Major Adverse	• CEMP	Major Adverse
Users of Lodge Lane	Temporary	Moderate Adverse	• CEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of Smallridge Road/Watery	Temporary	Minor Adverse	• CEMP	Minor Adverse

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Lane/Fourcross Hill				
Operation				
Landscape				
Site and Immediate Context	Temporary	Moderate/Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate/ Minor Adverse
Visual				
Properties to the north west on Salway Gardens and Loup Court	Permanent	Major Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Properties to the south west on B3261 Lyme Road	Permanent	Major/Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Other properties to the north on Sector Lane at lower levels.	Permanent	Moderate/Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate/Minor Adverse
Sec Tor house	Permanent	Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Beulah Farm	Permanent	Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate/Minor Adverse
The Old Lodge	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Mount Carmel and Olcote Cottages	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Users of public footpath Axminster 72 through site	Permanent	Major/Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 73 through Site	Permanent	Major/Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 19	Permanent	Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate/Minor Adverse
Users of bridleway Axminster 55	Permanent	Major/Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate Adverse
Users of public footpath Axminster 5	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Users of public footpaths to the north west including Axminster 45, Axminster 46 and Kilminster 1.	Permanent	Minor Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Minor Adverse/ Negligible
Users of Sector Lane	Permanent	Moderate Adverse	• Site layout • LEMP	Moderate/ Minor Adverse

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent / Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/ Adverse / Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures & Monitoring (and how these will be secured)	Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial / Adverse / Negligible)
Users of Lodge Lane	Permanent	Minor Adverse/Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible
Users of Smallridge Road/Watery Lane/Fourcross Hill	Permanent	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	• Site layout • LEMP	Negligible