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Land to the North of Rebecca Road, Persnore

Lioncourt Homes Limited and Touch Developments
Limited

Landscape & Visual Impact Appraisal

240274-RAPP-XX-XX-R-L-9501-LVIA





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1 Introduction

General

- 1.1 Lioncourt Homes Ltd and Touch Developments Ltd, have instructed Rappor to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA), with respect to a site on the edge of Pershore. This report has been based on a site visit, together with an analysis of environmental databases and relevant landscape character assessments. The purpose of this report is to comment upon the suitability of the Site to accommodate a residential development; from a landscape and visual perspective. It also provides guidance concerning the potential development layout, as well as any necessary mitigation measures to help assimilate it within the surrounding environment.
- 1.2 Rappor have a wide experience in the preparation of landscape appraisals, and the development of both design criteria and detailed designs on a variety of sites. The LVIA considers the potential effects of the Proposed Development upon:
- a) Landscape character of the local area;
 - b) Landscape elements and features associated with the Site, such as vegetation and topography; and
 - c) Visual amenity associated with local receptors.
- 1.3 The Site is located to the north of Rebecca Road on the western side of Pershore, a town located approximately 10 kilometres to the southeast of Worcester. It lies wholly within the administrative boundary of Wychavon District Council and within Worcestershire County. The Site is currently accessed off of Rebecca Road by way of an agricultural access point at the southwest corner of the Site; see **Appendix 1: Site Location Plan**.
- 1.4 An initial desk-top study was carried out to review a range of published information relating to the Site and its context, including landscape designations and published landscape character assessments with the accompanying guidance. A site visit was carried out on 2nd November 2023 and again on the 26th June 2024, to review the findings of the desk-top study and to determine the extent of the visual influence of the Site.
- 1.5 The main objectives of the LVIA are as follows:
- a) To identify, evaluate and describe the current landscape character of the Site and its surroundings, and also any notable individual landscape elements and features within the Site.
 - b) To determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed.
 - c) To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the development) and evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed.
 - d) To identify and describe any effects of the development in so far as they affect the landscape and/or views of it and to evaluate the magnitude of change due to these effects.

Predicted Effects

- 1.6 At the outset, after initial desk-top studies and Site visits, it is considered that the development could have the potential to result in the following effects:
- a) Extend the edge of the settlement further west, into the adjacent countryside;



- b) Affect the rural aspect along footpaths to the west;
- c) Loss of the semi-rural character and visual environment along Rebecca Road;
- d) Diminish the perceived rural edge to the town when viewed from the elevated ground to the west.

Cumulative Effects

- 1.7 An adjacent development was recently allowed at appeal, for demolition of existing modern farm buildings, removal of hardstanding and erection of 27 no dwellings with associated landscaping enhancements at Allesborough Farm, Allesborough Hill; application, ref 17/00432/FUL. As the development has now been built out, it was considered as part of the baseline for this appraisal and as such has not been considered as a cumulative effect.
- 1.8 There are no other recently approved planning applications (that are yet to be built out), in the surrounding area that are of relevance for this proposal, as such no cumulative effects have been considered further within this appraisal.



2 Methodology

Guidance

- 2.1 The LVIA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice:
- a) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) – Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013),
 - b) GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13, 2/13, 1/14, and 2/14 – Landscape Institute,
 - c) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment – Natural England, October 2014,
 - d) An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management, June 2019,
 - e) Visual Representation of Development Proposals Technical Guidance Note 06/19, September 2019; and
 - f) Assessing landscape value outside national designations, Technical Guidance Note 02/21.
- 2.2 In accordance with the published guidance, landscape (resource and character) and visual impacts are assessed separately. The detailed methodology is outlined in **Appendix 2**. As the proposals do not constitute development that requires an environmental impact assessment, this document is titled a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal; the term Landscape and Visual impact assessment, being reserved for an Environmental Statement as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 2.3 A preliminary study area was initially defined as a 3km radii from the Site's boundaries. Following the desktop studies and Site visit, it transpired that a more focused approach was required with the visual appraisal, concentrating on the immediate areas surrounding the Site, with only a handful of locations from further afield, requiring further consideration. This reflects the presence of vegetative screening, changes in landform and the Site's location on the southwestern edge of the town. This is further explained in **Section 9** of this assessment.

Nature of Effect

- 2.4 The degree of landscape or visual effect is identified by means of a descriptive scale as per the GLVIA 3rd Edition guidance. However, it is also necessary to consider the nature of the landscape and visual effects. GLVIA 3 assists on this point in paragraph 5.37 concerning landscape effects which states that:

“One of the more challenging issues is deciding whether the landscape effects should be categorised as positive or negative. It is also possible for effects to be neutral in their consequences for the landscape. An informed professional judgement should be made about this and the criteria used in reaching the judgement should be clearly stated. They might include, but should not be restricted to:

- *The degree to which the proposal fits with existing character;*
- *The contribution to the landscape that the development may make in its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character.*



The importance of perceptions of landscape is emphasised by the European Landscape Convention, and others may of course hold different opinions on whether the effects are positive or negative, but this is not a reason to avoid making this judgement, which will ultimately be weighed against the opinions of others in the decision making process.”

Planning Context

2.5 This LVIA has been produced to assess and evaluate the potential landscape and visual impact of the proposed development on the surrounding landscape. It will consider factors such as the scale, design, and location of the development and examines how it may alter or affect the views and visual character of the area.

2.6 As the scope of this study is limited to an LVIA, an analysis of local planning policy is not included. However, it is important to note that Policy SWDP 25: Landscape Character, of The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) puts a requirement on Local planning authorities to ensure developers demonstrate proposed developments that comply with the relevant planning policies and guidelines.

2.7 Policy SWDP 25: Landscape Character of the SWDP states the following:

“A. Development proposals and their associated landscaping schemes must demonstrate the following:

i. That they take into account the latest Landscape Character Assessment and its guidelines; and

ii. That they are appropriate to, and integrate with, the character of the landscape setting; and

iii. That they conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the primary characteristics defined in character assessments and important features of the Land Cover Parcel, and have taken any available opportunity to enhance the landscape.

B. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA will be required for all major development proposals and for other proposals where they are likely to have a detrimental impact upon:

i. A significant landscape attribute;

ii. An irreplaceable landscape feature; or

iii. The landscape as a resource. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should include proposals to protect and conserve key landscape features and attributes and, where appropriate, enhance landscape quality.

2.8 Also of relevance, is Policy SWDP 21: Design, Criterion A of this policy states the following:

“All development will be expected to be of a high design quality. It will need to integrate effectively with its surroundings, in terms of form and function, reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve, and where appropriate, enhance cultural and heritage assets and their settings. New and innovative designs will be encouraged and supported where they enhance the overall quality of the built environment.”



- 2.9 Through a landscape led approach to this development and carefully considered design principles, the proposals will be able to comply at the reserved matters stage, with the objectives outlined in Criterion A.



3 Site Context

Site Description

- 3.1 The Site is located on the immediate edge of the town of Pershore, Worcestershire and is situated to the south of the B4084 Worcester Road, which connects with Drakes Broughton to the northwest. The centre of Evesham is approximately 7 kilometres to the east, connected by the A44 Worcester Road to the north side of the town; see **Appendix 3: Site Context Plan**. The Site measures approximately 4.9 hectares.
- 3.2 The Site is formed by a single agricultural field currently used for arable crops. It is broadly rectangular and bounded along its north and south sides by the B4084 Worcester Road and Rebecca Road respectively and both are well vegetated. The majority of its western side is defined by a ditch with well-established riparian vegetation. A collection of traditional and modern housing associated with Allesborough Farm and a reservoir, are situated along the eastern edge, the boundary fences of which define the Site's eastern boundary. Housing is also present to the south side of Rebecca Road.

Topography

- 3.3 The topography of the study area is typical of the Vale of Evesham in which it is located. Allesborough Hill and Broad Hill define the north and south sides of an elevated ridgeline that defines the southwest portion of Pershore. The landform comprises a relatively flat plateau, situated on part of a crest in the local topography at the edge of the settlement. This plateau is largely occupied by settlement before it falls away to the west and down into a localised valley, where it continues as gently rolling ground beyond; see **Appendix 4: Topography**.
- 3.4 The topography of the Site itself, is positioned on this relatively flat plateau, gently sloping from east to west from around 54.85m AOD to around 46.00m AOD; its western edge positioned on this crest, at the point where the land falls away to the valley beyond.

Land Cover

- 3.5 This is a semi-rural landscape, typical of the surrounding area. The landcover being a mixture of agricultural land interspersed with pockets of woodland and well-defined irregular field boundary hedges. Of note is Tiddesley Wood to the southwest of the Site, that extends across both high and low ground and the orchard area at Stoken Orchard adjacent. These, along with areas of pastoral land, combine to punctuate the otherwise arable landscape and create a varied mosaic across it.
- 3.6 The Site itself is agricultural land currently in use for arable crops.

Settlement Pattern

- 3.7 The settlement pattern of the landscape in which the Site is located is one of small villages and hamlets. That said, due to its location, the prevailing settlement pattern of Pershore is of more relevance. Relative to the Site, the town is at its widest point and has a tendency towards a nucleated pattern, centres on formerly wayside development that has extended along the key transport networks that provide access to the settlement.



- 3.8 Positioned between the B4084 and Rebecca Road, the Site adjoins a short spear of development that extends out west from the town in a manner typical of the historic expansion of the town.
- 3.9 The Site enjoys well defined boundaries in the form of the two roads to the north and south, the existing edge of development to the east and the well-vegetated ditch line to the west. These, along with the housing to the south, that also lie at a similar level of the Site, provide it with well-defined boundaries and associate it more readily with the town than that of the surrounding rural landscape.

Built Heritage

- 3.10 There are no listed buildings associated with the Site itself but two listed properties exist within its immediate context to the west, and comprise of Allesborough Farmhouse (Grade II #1386896) and Allesborough Farmhouse Barn (Grade II #1386897). Following development of the planning application (ref 17/00432/FUL), within this area, these buildings now form part of a residential development rather than being within a farmstead setting. Within the wider context of the area, there are a number of listed features within Pershore but which are generally detached both physically and visually by the intervening built form of the town and as such have not been considered further within this appraisal.
- 3.11 Two listed properties do exist in Ramsden (Wolhuter and Besford Bridge House) to the west but due to distance and enclosure by associated vegetation, their setting is not influenced by the wider context of settlement within Pershore as such have not been considered further within this appraisal.

Transport Infrastructure

- 3.12 Transport infrastructure in the area is primarily defined by the A4104 that runs north to south through the town and connecting with the A44 on the north side of the town as it travels east to west, providing connections between Worcester in the west and Evesham in the east. The A44 also runs consistent with that of the railway line between Worcester and Evesham, with Pershore Railway Station also positioned at the northern end of the town.
- 3.13 Relative to the Site, the B4084 Worcester Road and Rebecca Road run to the north and south sides of the Site, providing connections with the A4104 in the east and the wider context of settlements that exist to the west.
- 3.14 A number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW's) create permeability within the wider setting of the town and with the surrounding rural landscape. Many of the PRoW's in the local landscape generally follow old field boundaries, hedges and ditches; providing connections between the town of Pershore and outlier villages and hamlets.
- 3.15 Within the immediate context of the Site there are a number of PRoW's that are relevant to this assessment, and which appear regularly used. Of particular note are the following routes which exist to the north, south and west of the Site, beyond the extent of the town:
 - a) Footpath PS-504 to the north
 - b) Footpath PS-505 to the northwest
 - c) Footpath BQ-506 on the elevated ground to the west
 - d) Footpath PS-513 on the low-lying ground to the west
 - e) Footpath PS-515 & 516 to the south of the Site



- 3.16 It should be noted that at the time of writing this appraisal, the Footpath BP-508 (part of the Millenium Way), was temporarily closed due to a weak bridge.
- 3.17 In addition to the adopted footpaths noted above, and additional permissive path is currently in use to the north of the A4104 and creates a circular route around an existing arable field on Allesborough Hill, connecting with footpath PS-504.

Environmental Designations

- 3.18 The Site is not subject to any landscape designations, at either a national or local level, see **Appendix 5: Environmental Designations Plan.**



4 Published Landscape Character Assessments

General

- 4.1 Landscape character assessment is a descriptive approach that seeks to identify and define the distinct character of landscapes that make up the countryside. This approach recognises the intrinsic value of all landscapes, not just 'special' landscapes, as contributing factors in people's quality of life, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention. It also ensures that account is taken of the different roles and character of different areas, in accordance with the NPPF Core Principles.
- 4.2 The description of each landscape is used as a basis for evaluation, to make judgements to guide, for example, development or landscape management.
- 4.3 The landscape within the area has been subject to several separate landscape assessments, undertaken at a range of differing scales. Those which apply to the Site and the surrounding area are as follows:
- a) At a **National Level**: National Character Assessment (NCA) by Natural England – NCA 106. Severn and Avon Vales
 - b) At a **District Level**: Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment – MW78 Wadborough Wooded Estatelands Landscape Description Unit (LDU) within Wooded Estatelands Landscape Character Type (LCT)

National Landscape Character

- 4.4 At a national level, the landscape character of the study area has been described and documented in Natural England's 'National Character Assessments' (NCA); the landscape is described within **NCA 106. Severn and Avon Vales**
- 4.5 The key characteristics of NCA 106 that are of relevance to the Site include:
- a) A diverse range of flat and gently undulating landscapes strongly influenced and united by the Severn and Avon rivers which meet at Tewkesbury.
 - b) Prominent oolitic limestone outliers of the Cotswold Hills break up the low-lying landscape in the south-east of the area at Bredon Hill, Robinswood Hill, Churchdown Hill and Dumbleton Hill.
 - c) Woodland is sparsely distributed across this landscape but a well wooded impression is provided by frequent hedgerow trees, parkland and surviving traditional orchards. Remnants of formerly extensive Chases and Royal Forests, centred around Malvern, Feckenham and Ombersley still survive.
 - d) Small pasture fields and commons are prevalent in the west with a regular pattern of parliamentary enclosure in the east. Fields on the floodplains are divided by ditches (called rhines south of Gloucester) fringed by willow pollards and alders.
 - e) Pasture and stock rearing predominate on the floodplain and on steeper slopes, with a mixture of livestock rearing, arable, market gardening and hop growing elsewhere.
- 4.6 Despite the broad coverage of the NCA relative to the Site, the study area in which the Site is located is generally representative of the Severn and Avon Vales. The study area being positioned within a vale landscape and exhibiting a number of key characteristics identified above.



District Landscape Character Area

4.7 At a district level, the Site is identified and documented by Worcestershire County Council as part of the MW78 Wadborough Wooded Estatelands Landscape Description Unit (LDU), within the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Character Type (LCT).

4.8 The LCT is described as follows:

“A large-scale, wooded agricultural landscape of isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Key visual elements in this landscape are the many large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands, often prominently situated on low crests. It is a landscape that, due to its scale, lacks intimacy and can appear rather functional.”

4.9 Key characteristics of the LCT, are described as follows:

Primary

- a) Large discrete blocks of irregularly-shaped woodland
- b) Mixed farming land use

Secondary

- a) Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpment
- b) Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields
- c) Woodland of ancient character
- d) Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages
- e) Medium distance framed views
- f) Large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds

Current Concerns

4.10 Despite the broad coverage of the LCT relative to the Site, the study area in which the Site is located is generally representative of the Wooded Estatelands. The study area being positioned within a vale landscape and exhibiting a number of key characteristics identified above. The Site itself, is less representative of the more rural aspects of the LCT due to its close proximity and association with the suburbanising elements of the adjacent settlement of Pershore, in particular the hard urban edge presented by the recent development at Allesborough Farm.

4.11 At a finer grain of detail to the landscape character type, the landscape in which the site is located is further described within the landscape description unit LDU MW78 Wadborough Wooded Estatelands. The LDU is described as follows:

“An area of lias clay with poorly draining soils and an intermediate, rolling topography. The settlement pattern is one of small villages and hamlets, associated with a low level of dispersal and a sub-regular pattern of fields derived mainly from arable origins. The land use is mixed farming and the tree cover comprises interlocking, or frequent, discrete, usually large blocks of ancient woodland.”

4.12 The following characteristics describe the LDU:

- a) relic deer park
Condition (updated 2010)



- b) generally arable cropping of high intensity with localised areas of more
- c) pastoral land use
- d) generally intact field pattern becoming fragmented in places
- e) generally poor condition of field boundaries
- f) poor representation of hedgerow trees, with poor age structure
- g) throughout
- h) uneven distribution of woodland, combined with above, giving
- i) interrupted tree cover pattern
- j) localised damage to ancient woodlands due to conifer planting and
- k) loss of understorey
- l) localised moderate impact of new dwellings.

4.13 It is noted that the Site lies adjacent to LDU MW79 Pershore and in close proximity to LDU VE12 Pershore but both these LDU's are defined as 'Urban' and no further information is given regarding their specific character.

Local Landscape and Settlement Character

- 4.14 The published landscape character assessments provide a useful overview of the landscape character at a national and county scale. However, due to the nature of the proposals and the localised effects that they will have, it is useful to assess the landscape character around the Site in more detail. This helps to identify any relevant features or characteristics that may be different or more localised.
- 4.15 The local landscape character of the study area is typical of that identified within the LCT and exhibits defined features, consistent with those identified within the national and district level landscape character assessments. The Site's position on the edge of the town, combined with the degree of existing enclosure provided by the Site boundary vegetation and landform, combines with the hard built edge of the neighbouring development to diminish its quality and lend it a character that is more closely associated with the suburban extent of Pershore.
- 4.16 A defining characteristic of the Site is the topography, being positioned on a relatively flat piece of ground at the top of the hill which is consistent with the landform of the surrounding residential development centred on Allesborough Farm and housing to the south of Rebecca Road.



5 Landscape Value

Introduction

- 5.1 GLVIA3 recommends that the value of a landscape is identified at the baseline stage. The sensitivity of a landscape is judged at the assessment stage as a combination of the value of the landscape and its susceptibility. Landscape susceptibility is development specific and is only assessed once the potential impacts of a development are known. Landscape value is inherent.
- 5.2 Whilst it is clear that the site does not form part of a valued landscape for the purposes of NPPF Para 170, it is important that the features of importance/value within the landscape in which the site is located are identified. The assessment of landscape effects must consider how these features are impacted by the development.
- 5.3 In 2021 the Landscape Institute issued a Technical Guidance Note (TGN 2/21), about assessing landscape value outside national designations. It is the preferred methodology for identifying the special landscape qualities in the landscape that includes the site. TGN 2/21 builds on the assessment of value as set out in GLVIA3 Box 5.1 and supersedes that assessment.

Landscape Value Assessment

- 5.4 The following assessment is based on the factors and indicators identified in Table 1 of TGN 02/21:

Factor	Description	Value
Natural Heritage	The Site holds some ecological interest given the mature hedgerows along three of its boundaries and the ditch line that runs along its western boundary. The Site has little geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest beyond its agricultural uses.	Medium
Cultural Heritage	There is no clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest to the landscape.	Low
Landscape Condition	The Site is in fair condition and its boundaries are well maintained.	Medium
Associations	This Site has no known associations.	Low
Distinctiveness	There are few features of the Site to create a sense of distinctiveness. The Site does meet the description of the character type Estate Farmlands but is abundant and more closely associated with the suburban aspect of the town. The Site adds little to the distinctiveness of the local landscape character other than its agricultural use.	Low



Recreational	There are no recreational activities within the Site. The PRow's are relatively nearby, but do not enter the Site or run along the Site's boundary.	Low
Perceptual (Scenic)	Views into the Site are occasionally filtered by vegetation along the boundaries and are generally seen against the backdrop of the built form already present within Pershore, the hard built edge of the properties associated with Allesborough Farm diminishing the quality of these views.	Medium
Perceptual (Wildness & Tranquillity)	The Site is located within close proximity to the town and experiences medium levels of traffic due to the roads along its north and south boundaries. This combines with the surrounding built form reduce the the tranquillity levels of the Site.	Medium
Functional	The Site has little functionality beyond the existing land use of an agricultural field.	Low

Conclusion

- 5.5 Overall, the value of the immediate landscape in which the site is located is Medium/Low It is not considered to be a valued landscape for the purposes of the NPPF, however it does offer opportunity to reinforce several landscape characteristics that are valued and that have been identified within the relevant character assessments, as valued features and characteristics to be retained/enhanced.



6 Proposed Development

Generally

- 6.1 The project description is as follows:

“Outline permission for the erection of up to 115 dwellings with all matters reserved with the exception of access, including open space, landscaping, drainage and associated works.”

Strategy for Development

- 6.2 Following on from the initial site and desk-based assessments, a landscape strategy was put forward that sought to ensure the proposals could be successfully integrated into the surrounding environment and Landscape Character Type. The Site layout was developed through an iterative design process and prepared to include measures that allow suitable strategic planting to be accommodated. The position of the built form was also considered to limit their impact on the surrounding landscape; see **Appendix 6: Illustrative Masterplan** and **Appendix 7: Landscape Strategy**.
- 6.3 These measures work towards strengthening key characteristics of the surrounding landscape and integrating the proposals with the prevailing characteristics of the local landscape, as well as those of the NCA and LCT's.
- 6.4 Specific design measures are detailed below, that reflect the planning and development guidance detailed within the relevant NCA and LCT.

NCA Statements of Environmental Opportunity

- 6.5 In addition to defining the character of the existing landscape, the NCA, it also makes 'Statements of Environmental Opportunity', some of which identify opportunities in line with future development, to preserve and enhance the local landscape character; those of relevance to the Site are as follows:

“SEO 2: Seek to safeguard and enhance this area's distinctive patterns of field boundaries, ancient hedgerows, settlements, orchards, parkland, small woodlands, chases, commons and floodplain management with their strong links to past land use and settlement history, and for the benefits this will bring to soil erosion, soil quality and biodiversity.”

“SEO 3: Reinforce the existing landscape structure as part of any identified growth of urban areas, hard infrastructure and other settlements ensuring quality green infrastructure is incorporated enhancing health, access, recreation, landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity.”

“Additional Opportunity - 1. Enhance and manage the relationship between access to the natural environment and conservation of the landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and historic qualities of this popular area.”

- 6.6 In response to this opportunity, the proposals incorporate structured landscape measures that provide opportunity for creation of biodiversity within the Site. This will be achieved through strengthening of the existing boundary vegetation associated with the site as well as integration of green corridors through the internal layout. Additional habitats will also be



introduced to enhance biodiversity and ensuring that the Site integrates with and strengthens the wider green infrastructure network.

Building Particulars

- 6.7 The proposed development consists of 115 dwellings of varying sizes and types. The ridge heights of the buildings will be a maximum of 9.5m above FFL, as illustrated on the Building Heights Parameter Plan: PERE-PLA-03 that accompanies this application. Building heights have been arranged to position the taller buildings (with a maximum ridge height of 9.5m), to the eastern and least visible side, with the shorter built form (with a maximum ridge height of 9.5m), located on its western and more visible side.

Landscape Strategy

- 6.8 The Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type Information Sheet provides 'Landscape Guidelines' to guide future development and identify potential interventions so that the structure and form of the landscape can be conserved, enhanced and/or restored. Those that apply to this area are summarised as follows:

- a) conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with locally occurring native species
- b) promote new large scale woodland planting
- c) new woodland planting should be of native broadleaved species, favouring oak as the dominant species and relate to the scale and spatial pattern of the Landscape Type
- d) conserve and restore the hedgerow pattern, with particular attention given to primary hedgerows
- e) seek to ensure hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks, for visual cohesion and wildlife benefit
- f) conserve and restore parkland
- g) conserve the integrity of estate villages

- 6.9 In addition to providing landscape guidelines on the landscape type information sheets for the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type (LCT), the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment, also provides advice sheets for both Land Management and Planning and Development. These identify potential interventions to repair or improve the existing landscape, mindful that both landscape management practices and development, can play a positive role in landscape repair and the ongoing success of the natural environment.

- 6.10 These advice sheets are important in that they propose measures that are specific to the landscape in which the Site is located, ensuring that new development can be accommodated in a locally typical way. They also promote enhancements to the landscape as a resource looking strengthen its fabric and promote appropriate management regimes in a locally typical way to help reinforce the existing landscape character of the relevant landscape character type.

Land Management

Woodland

"The general guidelines for woodland in Wooded Estatelands are to:

- *Conserve all ancient woodland sites*



- *restore woodland character by restocking with locally occurring native species encourage the creation of large-scale woodlands, reflecting the scale and shape of existing woods and favouring oak as the dominant species.”*

6.11 Due to the nature of the proposals, large scale woodland planting does not form part of the proposed development. However, new woodland blocks are proposed to the northwest and southwest sides of the proposed development. This will supplement the existing and proposed hedgerow provision on the western edge of the Site, which relates to the scale and spatial pattern of the Wooded Estatelands.

Hedgerows

“The general guideline for hedgerows in Wooded Estatelands is to:

- *conserve and restore the hedgerow pattern, with particular attention given to primary hedgerows and hedgerow tree cover*
- *seek to ensure hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks, for visual cohesion and wildlife benefit.”*

6.12 A small section of existing hedgerow is being removed on the southern boundary of the Site, to accommodate the proposed development. This loss will be mitigated through creation of new hedgerow planting as well as enhanced maintenance of that existing, with suitable interplanting of native species where necessary. Underplanting of the hedgerows to improve species diversity will also be incorporated.

Parkland

The general guidelines for Parkland in Wooded Estatelands are to:

- *conserve and restore existing parkland areas*

6.13 Given the rural nature of the site, its position adjacent to the settlement of Pershore and the lack of any parkland in this location, this guideline is not of relevance to the proposed development.

Planning and Development

Current Concerns

6.14 Current concerns in respect of planning and development within the Wooded Estatelands are identified as follows:

“The large woodland blocks tend to be discrete units but rely on the presence of hedgerows to achieve a sense of visual cohesion within the landscape. Hedgerow loss and deterioration is evident, particularly in areas where intensive arable farming is dominant, resulting in isolation of the woodlands. Some dilution of the ancient character of the woodlands has taken place, largely through coniferisation. The extent of many of the parklands has been severely reduced, with former parkland trees now standing amidst arable cropping.

There is a need to conserve and restore the hedgerow fabric as well as the mixed broadleaf composition of the existing woodlands. New woodland planting would also strengthen and enhance the character. Parkland restoration initiatives should be



promoted widely, particularly to reunite the original scale and conceptual framework of parkland by encouraging the conversion of arable land back to permanent pasture.”

- 6.15 In order to remedy these current concerns, Opportunities for Landscape Gain are identified within the Planning and Development Landscape Type Advice Sheet as follows:

Woodland Pattern - Large, Discrete Blocks

“There may be opportunities to strengthen the pattern of discrete woodland blocks by planting new large woodland blocks and by replanting and restoring appropriate management to existing neglected woodland. Inappropriate small woodlands could be removed or enlarged as appropriate to best effect.”

- 6.16 Due to the nature of the proposals, large scale woodland planting does not form part of the proposed development.

Woodland Character – Ancient

“There may be opportunities to create new woodlands. Whilst ancient woodland itself cannot simply be created, from the landscape perspective new woodland can at least reflect ancient characteristics in terms of shape/outline and species composition. There may be opportunities to restore areas of ancient woodland through the introduction of appropriate management, or the removal of alien species and appropriate replanting. Development sites themselves may not always offer the best location to accommodate new woodland planting and to achieve its full potential. These opportunities cited above may be best realised on land elsewhere in the vicinity, by private agreement between the developer and landowner.”

- 6.17 Due to the nature of the proposals, large scale woodland planting does not form part of the proposed development.

Land Use - Mixed Farming

“Opportunities may arise, to promote Stewardship and other agri-environment funding incentives to encourage a more mixed land use, particularly if arable land uses appear to be dominating. The retention/ restoration of permanent pasture in areas of parkland should be considered a priority.”

- 6.18 Due to the nature of the proposals, and virtue of the Site currently being used for arable farming, it would not be possible to accommodate this guideline within the proposal.

Hedgerows

“There may be opportunities to plant new hedgerows, restore, strengthen or protect existing hedgerows and their patterns, and promote appropriate management – in terms of maintenance regimes and protection from stock. The species composition of existing long established hedgerows should guide the composition of new hedgerow planting. Fencing and other uncharacteristic boundary treatments could be removed and replaced by hedgerows.”

- 6.19 As identified within the Land Management section above, a small section of existing hedgerow is being removed to accommodate the proposed development. This loss will be mitigated through creation of new hedgerow planting as well as enhanced maintenance of



that existing. Suitable interplanting of native species where necessary and underplanting of the hedgerows to improve species diversity will also be incorporated.

Settlement Pattern

“In order to perpetuate the characteristic clustered settlement pattern, new development should avoid dispersal away from existing clusters. Design details of existing estate buildings should be reflected in new design.”

- 6.20 The Proposed development will create a considered addition to the existing settlement of Pershore. This will result in the loss of land from the Wooded Estatelands and their conversion to an area of urban character, as well as bring it to within the fold of the town. While this will extend the footprint of the settlement, this will be in a manner that is consistent with the settlement pattern of the town and will not extend development further west than the extent of development that exists on the south side of Rebecca Road. This will perpetuate characteristic clustered settlement pattern of the area, albeit in the context of the urban area of Pershore.

Medium-distance Framed Views

“Opportunities may arise to remove subdivisions of formerly larger fields or parcels of land. There may be opportunities for new woodland planting, and this, and any new landscaping associated with new development should reflect the particular scale of these landscapes. There may be opportunities to reinforce the woodland structure to frame views.

- 6.21 New woodland blocks are proposed to the northeast and southwest sides of the proposed development. This will supplement the existing and proposed hedgerow provision on the western edge of the Site that relates to the scale and spatial pattern of the Wooded Estatelands.
- 6.22 Additionally, this will help to maintain and enhance the well wooded appearance of the settlement edge to Pershore, on this elevated ground.

Parkland

“Opportunities may arise to restore areas of parkland, particularly those that have been ploughed for arable land uses. New generations of tree planting can be encouraged together with the restoration of other ornamental plantings, garden buildings and water features – specialist advice should be sought for such restoration work and reference should be made to the original designs. The status of any historic park or garden must be established - significant parks and gardens may be registered. Contact English Heritage for advice/approval for any proposed works. The Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust will also provide a useful source of contact for advice. The preparation and implementation of long-term management plans should be sought for all parkland areas.”

- 6.23 Due to the Site currently being used for arable farming and having no known associations with historic parkland, it would not be possible to accommodate this guideline within the proposal.



7 Effects on Landscape Resource

General

- 7.1 Landscape resource is a factual element of the landscape, it considers the features that make up its fabric and ultimately determine its character. Landscape resource comprises the physical attributes of the Site.
- 7.2 The proposed development, as part of its landscape proposals, provide opportunities for hedgerow shrub and tree planting. This would have beneficial effects upon the visual amenity and most importantly would enhance the character of the local landscape and indeed that of the Site.
- 7.3 However, it is noted that whilst landscape resource can generate beneficial effects in terms of quantum of enhancements, these enhancements need to be in keeping with the existing character of the Site and the wider landscape if they are to bring benefit forward as part of the proposals.

Topography

- 7.4 The Site is positioned on ground that is gradually falling in a westerly direction from around 54.85m AOD at its eastern side to around 46.00m AOD at its western side. The overall perception of the landform of the Site, is that of low lying, gently sloping ground, consistent with the localised plateau of the elevated ridgeline on which it is located.
- 7.5 The **Value** of the Site's landform is **Low**, given that the landform of the Site is consistent with that of the surrounding area and is relatively abundant. Landform is identified as a key characteristic within the LCA, however given the scale and nature of the proposals, the smooth and simple contours of the Site would have a **Low Susceptibility** to the proposed development. On this basis, the **Sensitivity** of the Site's landform being considered for development is assessed as **Low** overall.
- 7.6 Development of the Site would only require minor ground modelling to provide pedestrian and vehicular access and create building platforms, whereas the SuDS feature will require slightly more developed ground modelling. Overall, there would be no need for substantial ground modelling or retention features to accommodate the proposals. On that basis, the proposals would bring about a **Low Magnitude of Change** to the Site. This change would be permanent. This in turn would result in **Minor Scale of Effect** upon the topography of the Site.
- 7.7 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, this change would be Adverse disrupt the smooth contours of the Site by the creation of formation levels, building platforms and roads; this **Minor Scale of Effect** is Adverse.
- 7.8 It is considered that the proposed development would result in **Minor (Adverse) Effects** on the topography of the Site.

Trees and Hedgerows

- 7.9 Vegetation associated with the Site, is confined to its boundaries as well as that associated with the ditch line along part of its western boundary. Vegetation associated with its north



and south boundary is also of importance, due to its relationship with the A4104 and Rebecca Road respectively.

- 7.10 The tree and hedge resource is considered to be of **High Value** due to it being a fundamental characteristic of the landscape and representative of the LCT. It has a **Medium Susceptibility**, reflecting the time needed for these landscape elements to mature, and their current condition which is fair but in need of suitable management. Overall, the tree and hedge resource is of **High Sensitivity**.
- 7.11 A small proportion of the hedgerow/scrub planting along the southern boundary is to be removed to accommodate the proposals, this would not result in any notable changes to the overall tree and hedgerow resource of the Site. Change would be brought about by opportunities to plant new native vegetation as part of the proposals. In particular, that within the western portion of the Site which is to remain free from development and would be enhanced through suitable green infrastructure measures.
- 7.12 The proposed planting would result in a net gain to the tree and hedgerow resource. These proposals would bring about a **Medium Magnitude of Change**. This would translate to **Moderate/Major Scale of Effect** upon the tree and hedgerow resource⁸ within the Site.
- 7.13 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, this change would bring forward positive landscape features and would complement the character of the landscape as well as maintain characteristic features; this **Moderate/Major Scale of Effect** is Beneficial.
- 7.14 It is considered that the proposed development would result in **Moderate/Major (Beneficial) Effect** on Trees and Hedgerows.

Land Cover

- 7.15 The Site comprises a single arable field within a rural agricultural setting. It has been assessed as **low** value as a landscape element, given that the agricultural field is abundant within the area and is ultimately replaceable. The Susceptibility is **medium** due to the degree of enclosure created by the surrounding built form to the east and the Site boundary vegetation. This translates into a **Low Sensitivity**.
- 7.16 The proposed development would inevitably change the character of the Site, with the residential properties and roads being the most evident features. Whilst the physical change would be localised and contained within the boundaries of the Site, the proposed areas of hardstanding and built form would convert an area of agricultural land to residential development; this change would be permanent. On balance, this would bring about a **High Magnitude of Change** as the development will bring about a partial loss of this landscape element within the Site. This would result in a **Moderate Scale of Effect**.
- 7.17 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, given that this change would result in the loss of a characteristic feature within the landscape, this **Moderate Scale of Effect** is Adverse.
- 7.18 It is considered that the proposed development would result in **Moderate (Adverse) Effect** on the Land Cover of the Site.

Watercourses and Waterbodies

- 7.19 There is an existing ditch line that runs the majority of the Site's western boundary. There would be no direct impacts on this landscape feature. The watercourse resource is of **High**



Value with a **High Susceptibility** to change. Overall, the Sensitivity of the watercourse resource is of **High Sensitivity**.

- 7.20 The proposals look to create a single waterbody in the form of a surface water attenuation feature located at the western end of the Site with additional swales and other smaller scale SuDS features within the fabric of the proposed housing layout. The banks to these features will be planted and formed of smooth and varied contours to give them a natural appearance and promote opportunity for biodiversity.
- 7.21 New surface water conveyance and attenuation features will be introduced as part of the proposals, these would bring about a net beneficial effect to this resource.
- 7.22 These proposals would bring about **Medium Magnitude of Change**. This would translate to **Moderate/Major effect** upon the waterbody resource of the Site.
- 7.23 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, this change would bring forward positive landscape features and would complement the character of the landscape as well as maintain characteristic features; this **Moderate/Major Scale of Effect** is Beneficial.
- 7.24 It is considered that the proposed development would result in **Moderate/Major (Beneficial) Effect** on the Watercourses and Waterbodies.

Public Rights of Way

- 7.25 A number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW's) connect the residential areas of Pershore with the surrounding rural landscape. There are no PRoW's within the Site itself, but several are located in close proximity to it. The footpath resource has a **Medium Value** with a **Medium Susceptibility** to change. Overall, the Sensitivity of the footpath resource is of **Medium Sensitivity**.
- 7.26 As part of the proposal, it is intended to create a number of formal and informal pedestrian routes that run through the Site and which will allow circulation throughout the Site, these will have no effect on the existing PRoW network, resulting in **No Change** to the current PRoW network within the area. This would translate to **No Change** upon the public rights of way within the Site and the wider area.

Conclusion

- 7.27 It is considered that on balance, the proposals would result in **Minor to Moderate (Beneficial) Effects** on the landscape resources of the Site. This considers the adverse effects on the land use of the Site, against the beneficial effects of the proposals, created by the improved boundary hedgerow planting, surface water drainage features, tree planting and general improvements to the Green Infrastructure of the Site.



8 Effects on Landscape Character

Generally

- 8.1 The effects on landscape character consider how the introduction of new elements may change the attributes of the landscape such as its scale and sense of enclosure but also the landscape pattern, and perceptual attributes or how visibility of the proposals changes the way in which landscape character is perceived. Landscape character is defined as the:

“Distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.”

- 8.2 The Proposed Development may give rise to effects within the landscape by virtue of attributes specific to both its individual form and to the location, and mass of the built form. These attributes include:

- a) strong geometric form, particularly visible in the form of rooftops and repetitive arrangement of built form;
- b) layout of access roads and their influence over the layout of the development;
- c) lighting associated with the built form and street/footway lighting; and
- d) relationship to the scale and nature of the existing landscape / townscape.

- 8.3 In addition, there are a number of elements of the proposals which would need to be considered and these are as follows:

- a) Site clearance, removal of non-retained vegetation;
- b) limited ground modelling to establish development platforms;
- c) provision of access infrastructure, drainage, services and other ancillary works; and
- d) construction of new buildings.

National Landscape Character

NCA 106: Severn and Avon Vales

Landscape Sensitivity

- 8.4 At a national level, the Site is located within NCA 106. Severn and Avon Vales, which has been assigned a **Medium Value**. While the Cotswold Hills and the Malvern Hills AONB do reside within this NCA, the area of the NCA in which the Site is located is not a designated landscape. The condition is fair and the landscape elements are generally well-maintained. It is somewhat representative of the characteristics of the national character area, particularly the following points:

- a) A diverse range of flat and gently undulating landscapes strongly influenced and united by the Severn and Avon rivers which meet at Tewkesbury.
- b) Prominent oolitic limestone outliers of the Cotswold Hills break up the low-lying landscape in the south-east of the area at Bredon Hill, Robinswood Hill, Churchdown Hill and Dumbleton Hill.
- c) Woodland is sparsely distributed across this landscape but a well wooded impression is provided by frequent hedgerow trees, parkland and surviving traditional orchards. Remnants of formerly extensive Chases and Royal Forests, centred around Malvern, Feckenham and Ombersley still survive.



- d) Small pasture fields and commons are prevalent in the west with a regular pattern of parliamentary enclosure in the east. Fields on the floodplains are divided by ditches (called rhines south of Gloucester) fringed by willow pollards and alders.
 - e) Pasture and stock rearing predominate on the floodplain and on steeper slopes, with a mixture of livestock rearing, arable, market gardening and hop growing elsewhere.
- 8.5 The Susceptibility is considered to be **Low** as the landscape is considered to have a good capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed, owing to interactions between topography, vegetation cover and built form. A **Medium Value** and a **Low Susceptibility** to change would result in a **Low Sensitivity**.
- 8.6 Overall, the Severn and Avon Vales NCA is of **Low Sensitivity**.

Magnitude of Change

- 8.7 The proposed development would result in the loss of an area of agricultural land on the edge of a town and result in the increase in settlement area in place of agricultural land. Areas at the western end of the Site for SuDS and biodiversity features, will bring improvements to the wider green infrastructure of the area and will contribute towards the fabric of the town and the well wooded aspect of the settlement edge.
- 8.8 Comparing the scale of the proposed development to that of the NCA, it is considered that the proposal would bring about a **Low Magnitude of Change**. Development of the Site would only introduce elements that are already present within the landscape, and which are in keeping with the prevailing characteristics of the area, namely a residential area positioned on the elevated ground within a well-defined agricultural landscape. The settlement would continue to village nuclei and maintain a well-defined edge between the town and the working rural landscape beyond.
- 8.9 The character of the wider landscape beyond the Site would remain unchanged and the key characteristics of the NCA would remain and prevail. The landscape proposals across the Site, such as the creation of a SuDS feature and woodland planting, as well as tree and hedgerow enhancements throughout, would help to manage, enhance and expand the network of green infrastructure, would help support the aspirations of:
- f) SEO 2, which seeks to safeguard and enhance the areas distinctive patterns of field boundaries;
 - g) SEO 3, which seeks to ensure quality green infrastructure is incorporated, enhancing health, access, recreation, landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity; and
 - h) Additional Opportunity 1, which seeks Enhance and manage the relationship between access to the natural environment and conservation of the landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and historic qualities of this area.
- 8.10 The **Low Sensitivity** of the NCA combined with a **Low Magnitude of Change**, results in a **Minor Scale of Effect** upon the character of the NCA 106. Severn and Avon Vales.
- 8.11 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, when considered against the typical landscape descriptors in table 6.1 of the methodology, this **Minor Scale of Effect** is Beneficial, given that the proposed changes would complement the character of the landscape and maintain its characteristic features.



- 8.12 It is considered that the proposed development would result in a **Minor (Beneficial) Effect** on the NCA 106 Severn and Avon Vales.

District Landscape Character

Worcester Landscape Character Assessment: LCT Wooded Estatelands

- 8.13 At a District Level the Site has been identified within Worcestershire County Council as part of the MW78 Wadborough Wooded Estatelands Landscape Description Unit (LDU), within the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Character Type (LCT).
- 8.14 The condition is fair and the landscape elements are generally well maintained. It is somewhat representative of the characteristics of the landscape character type. The value of Wooded Estatelands LCT, is **Medium**.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 8.15 The Susceptibility of the LCT to the proposed development is **Low**. This is due to the degree of existing enclosure provided by the site's well-defined boundaries (despite its elevated nature) and its position on the edge of an existing settlement. By virtue of its position on the edge of the town, the landscape has existing reference to the type of development being proposed and the presence of existing built form adjacent to the Site and the residential development to the south of Rebecca Road.
- 8.16 A **Medium Value** and **Low Susceptibility** translate into a **Low Sensitivity**.
- 8.17 Overall, the Wooded Estatelands LCT is of **Low Sensitivity**.

Nature of Change

- 8.18 The proposed development would appear contiguous with the residential housing of the town and create a considered addition to it. In addition to the built form, change will also be brought about in the form of landscape enhancements to the Site which will in turn, help to reinforce and enhance key characteristics of the landscape in this location. The measures proposed are derived from the Landscape Type Advice Sheets for both Land Management and Planning and Development. These landscape guidelines are generally summarised within The Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type, Information Sheet as follows:

Conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with locally occurring native species

- 8.19 Given that the site is positioned on the edge of the town of Pershore and comprises agricultural land, this guideline does not apply to the Site. However, any tree planting proposed within the development, will be predominantly native species; ornamental tree planting only occurring within the 'on-plot' areas of the Proposed Development.

Promote new large scale woodland planting

- 8.20 Due to the nature of the proposals, large scale woodland planting does not form part of the proposed development.



New woodland planting should be of native broadleaved species, favouring oak as the dominant species and relate to the scale and spatial pattern of the Landscape Type

- 8.21 New woodland blocks are proposed to the northeast and southwest sides of the proposed development. This will supplement the existing and proposed hedgerow provision on the western edge of the Site that relates to the scale and spatial pattern of the Wooded Estatelands.

Conserve and restore the hedgerow pattern, with particular attention given to primary hedgerows

- 8.22 All hedgerows within the Site will benefit from improved management and where practicable will be reinforced with additional infill planting and hedgerow trees.

Seek to ensure hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks, for visual cohesion and wildlife benefit

- 8.23 Currently the Site's western boundary hedge only extends part way down the Site and does not connect with the roadside hedge along Rebecca Road, the proposed development would fill this gap with a native hedgerow and allow a more cohesive green infrastructure network to be created.

Conserve and restore parkland

- 8.24 Given the Site's position on the edge of the town of Pershore, this guideline does not apply to the Site.

Conserve the integrity of estate villages

- 8.25 Given the Site's position on the edge of the town of Pershore, this guideline does not apply to the Site.

Magnitude of Change

- 8.26 Comparing the scale of the proposed development to the LCT it is considered that the proposal would bring about a **Medium Magnitude of Change**, given that it would result in the introduction of elements that are already within the landscape, and which are a defining characteristic of the landscape within this part of the LCA. The character of the wider landscape beyond the Site, would be unchanged and the key characteristics of the LCA would remain and prevail.

- 8.27 The **Low Sensitivity** of the LCA combined with a **Medium Magnitude of Change**, results in a **Minor/Moderate Scale of Effect** upon the character of the Estatelands LCT, as a host landscape character area.

- 8.28 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, when considered against the typical landscape descriptors in table 6.1 of the methodology, and whilst a number of aspects of the proposed development would complement the character of the landscape and maintain characteristic features this **Minor/Moderate Scale of Effect** is Adverse, given that the proposed changes would result in the loss of agricultural land for housing.

- 8.29 It is considered that the proposed development would result in a **Minor/Moderate (Adverse) Effect** on the Wooded Estatelands.



Worcester Landscape Character Assessment: LDU MW78 Wadborough Wooded Estatelands

- 8.30 The condition is fair and the landscape elements are generally well maintained. It is somewhat representative of the characteristics of the landscape description unit. The value of Wadborough Wooded Estatelands LDU, is **Medium**.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 8.31 The Susceptibility of the LDU to the proposed development is **Low**. This is due to the degree of existing enclosure provided by the site's well-defined boundaries (despite its elevated nature) and its position on the edge of an existing settlement. By virtue of its position on the edge of the town, the landscape has existing reference to the type of development being proposed and the presence of existing built form adjacent to the Site and the residential development to the south of Rebecca Road.
- 8.32 A **Medium Value** and **Low Susceptibility** translate into a **Low Sensitivity**.
- 8.33 Overall, the Wadborough Wooded Estatelands LDU is of **Low Sensitivity**.

Nature of Change

- 8.34 The proposed development would appear contiguous with the residential housing of the town and create a considered addition to it. In addition to the built form, change will also be brought about in the form of landscape enhancements to the Site which will in turn, help to reinforce and enhance key characteristics of the landscape in this location. The following characteristics described within the LDU have therefore been addressed in response to the change brought about by the proposed development.:

Relic deer park

- 8.35 Relative to the Site, no elements of relic deer park are associated with the Site or its immediate surroundings. These elements within the wider LDU will remain and prevail with the proposed development in place.

Generally arable cropping of high intensity with localised areas of more pastoral land use

- 8.36 An arable field will be lost to accommodate the proposed development.

Generally intact field pattern becoming fragmented in places

- 8.37 Beyond the change of land use to residential development, the proposed scheme will not result in further fragmentation of the existing field pattern and will reinforce the vegetated boundary edge to the settlement at this end.

Generally poor condition of field boundaries

- 8.38 All hedgerows within the Site will benefit from improved management and where practicable will be reinforced with additional infill planting and hedgerow trees. This will improve the condition of the existing field boundaries.



Poor representation of hedgerow trees, with poor age structure throughout

- 8.39 New hedgerow trees will be planted as part of the proposals. These will be native and aim to support succession planting of ageing hedgerow tree stock.

Uneven distribution of woodland, combined with above, giving interrupted tree cover pattern

- 8.40 Proposed woodland blocks at the western edge of the development will help to reinforce tree cover on the edge of Pershore and allow it to maintain its well wooded appearance at this end.

Localised damage to ancient woodlands due to conifer planting and loss of understorey

- 8.41 There are no known associations with the Site and areas of ancient woodland. This development will not result in localised damage to ancient woodlands.

Localised moderate impact of new dwellings

- 8.42 Localised effects would result from the proposed development, however the site's position on the edge of the settlement and its position on the plateau of the elevated ground at this end of Pershore would be consistent with the adjacent areas of housing and would not materially extend the settlement further west. In addition, the reinforcement of vegetation along the Site's western side would allow a more defined and verdant edge to the settlement to be created and improve upon the current hard built edge that exists at the moment.

- 8.43 Comparing the scale of the proposed development to the LDU it is considered that the proposal would bring about a **Medium Magnitude of Change**, given that it would result in the introduction of elements that are already within the landscape, and which are a defining characteristic of the landscape within this part of the LDU. The character of the wider landscape beyond the Site, would be unchanged and the key characteristics of the LDU would remain and prevail.

- 8.44 The **Low Sensitivity** of the LCA combined with a **Medium Magnitude of Change**, results in a **Minor/Moderate Scale of Effect** upon the character of the Estatelands LCT, as a host landscape character area.

- 8.45 As to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, when considered against the typical landscape descriptors in table 6.1 of the methodology, and whilst a number of aspects of the proposed development would complement the character of the landscape and maintain characteristic features this **Minor/Moderate Scale of Effect** is Adverse, given that the proposed changes would result in the loss of agricultural land for housing.

- 8.46 It is considered that the proposed development would result in a **Minor/Moderate (Adverse) Effect** on the Wooded Estatelands.

Local Landscape Character

Landscape Sensitivity

- 8.47 The value of the local landscape is **Medium**. The area exhibiting strongly defined features that are consistent with those identified within the national and district level landscape character assessments. The Site's position on the edge of the town, combined with the degree of existing enclosure provided by the Site boundary vegetation and landform,



combines with the hard built edge of the neighbouring development to diminish its quality and lend it a character that is more closely associated with the suburban extent of Pershore.

- 8.48 A defining characteristic of the Site is the topography, being positioned on a relatively flat piece of ground at the top of the hill, which is consistent with the landform of the surrounding residential development centred on Allesborough Farm and housing on the south side of Rebecca Road. The landform then falls at a quicker pace beyond the Sites's western side as it descends into the localised valley further west.
- 8.49 The susceptibility of the local landscape character the proposed development is **Low**, there being existing reference to the style of development being proposed, combines with the well-defined boundary vegetation to visually and physically contain the Site. These elements combine with a considered site layout and effective landscape mitigation measures to allow the Site to be developed in a locally typical way and limit the extent to which it would have an influence on the surrounding landscape. A **Medium Value** and **Medium Susceptibility** translates into a **Medium Sensitivity**.
- 8.50 Overall, the local landscape is of **Medium Sensitivity**.

Magnitude of Change

- 8.51 As with the LCT and given the degree of physical enclosure to the east, the proposed development would create a considered and logical addition to the existing town and introduce built form that is consistent with the pattern of existing development. Furthermore, the green infrastructure enhancements to the western section of the Site and north/south boundaries, would ensure the development could be assimilated into the landscape on the edge of the village in a locally typical way as well as maintain a strong degree of enclosure on all sides. The development would lead to the loss of the isolated portion of the character area and bring it to within the fold of the town.
- 8.52 Overall, the **Magnitude of Change is Medium**, in landscape character terms.
- 8.53 Comparing the scale of the proposed development to the local landscape, the proposal would bring about a **Medium Magnitude of Change**, given that it would result in the introduction of new elements within the landscape. The character of the wider landscape beyond the Site, would remain unchanged.
- 8.54 The **Medium Sensitivity** of the local landscape, combined with a **Medium Magnitude of Change**, results in a **Moderate Scale of Effect** upon the character of the local landscape, as a host landscape character area.
- 8.55 With regards to whether this change would be beneficial or adverse, the improvements to the current condition of the transition between the residential area and surrounding landscape, need to be balanced against the loss of the agricultural land of the Site, the introduction of suburban elements and the enhanced green infrastructure elements throughout the scheme, that would reinforce the structure of the landscape in a locally typical way.
- 8.56 When considered against the typical landscape descriptors in table 6.1 of the methodology, and whilst a number of aspects of the proposed development would complement the character of the landscape and maintain characteristic features this **Moderate Scale of Effect is Adverse**, given that the proposed changes would result in the loss of agricultural land for housing, extending the footprint of the town.



8.57 It is considered that the proposed development would result in a **Moderate (Adverse) Effect** on the local landscape.

Conclusion

8.58 This is a landscape that has elements consistent with the various published landscape character assessments for the area: a landscape defined by its undulating topography and characterised by the agricultural land uses and woodland blocks.

8.59 The Site itself is a single agricultural field in arable use. Due to its position on the edge of the town and the nature of the settlement in this area, the Site is more closely associated with the suburban extent of Pershore that lies on its eastern side.

8.60 The proposed development would result in the loss of an agricultural field in place of residential development, with associated areas of open space managed for biodiversity. The position of the Site would allow built form to create a considered addition to the town and soften the existing hard-built edge that defines the edge of the settlement (in this location) at present.

8.61 This should also be balanced against the fact that the development has been scaled and massed accordingly, to ensure that it can be assimilated within its surroundings in a locally typical way. Beneficial effects on the landscape that will be brought about by the development, namely improvements to the Site's boundaries, SuDS feature and green infrastructure improvements, would create a more defined transition between the village and the wider agricultural landscape.

8.62 It is considered that on balance, the proposals would result in **Moderate to Minor (Adverse) Effects** on the landscape character of the site. This is reflective of the development having a greater impact on the landscape character at a local level and which is less pronounced as you move up to district and national level character areas.



9 Effects on Visual Amenity

Representative Viewpoints

- 9.1 For the purposes of this LVIA, a series of representative publicly accessible views from the area surrounding the Site have been identified through desktop and field studies. These Viewpoints are not intended to cover every possible view of the Site and the proposed development but rather they are representative of a range of receptor types at varying distances and orientations to the Site.
- 9.2 The effect on visual amenity considers the changes in views arising from the proposals in relation to visual receptors from publicly accessible locations and the effect on these receptors by consideration of representative viewpoints; see **Appendix 8: Viewpoint Location Plan** and **Appendix 9: Context Baseline Views**.
- 9.3 The construction stage would be of short duration and, although relevant, any potential effects would be similar or lower to those identified during the long-term occupational phase of the Proposed Development. Therefore, this appraisal focuses on the long-term operational stage of the proposals and considers these effects after both 1 year and 15 years, to fully consider the proposals in respect of any landscape mitigation, once any tree and shrub planting has become established.

Visual Effects

- 9.4 A precautionary approach is applied to this LVIA, that assumes all landscape and visual effects are negative or adverse unless otherwise stated.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 9.5 In order to assist with understanding the potential visibility of the Proposed Development, a digital Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (SZTV) has been generated. This provides a starting point for visual investigation to illustrate the geographical area within which views of development would be theoretically possible. The models are based on a 'screened' scenario whereby the existing screening effect of substantive areas of existing vegetation or built features in the landscape are taken into account (assuming a height of 15m for woodland and 9.5m for buildings). However, the screening effect provided by small blocks of woodland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees have not been taken into account, and consequently the actual extent of the area from which the proposed development is visible (the visual envelope) is likely to be much more limited than that illustrated; see **Appendix 10: Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)**.
- 9.6 In respect of the ZTV produced for the proposed development, visibility was also mapped for the recently constructed development at Allesborough Farm. This allows a comparative ZTV to be created to demonstrate the additionality of built form being visible within the landscape, brought about by the proposed development.

General Visibility

- 9.7 Due to the Site's position on the western edge of Pershore, the visual envelope is generally contained to locations adjacent to the Site and to within the shallow valley that exists on the western side of the town. Due to the undulating nature of the topography combined with well vegetated field boundaries and woodland blocks, visibility can vary greatly with the



visual envelope of the Site largely contained to the localised valley to the west. Generally, more elevated viewing positions allow views of the landform within the Site, while from the lower lying ground, views are largely restricted to the upper canopies of the Site boundary vegetation. Where visible the Site is seen within the context of houses on Holloway/Rebecca Road and the buildings of Allesborough Farm, including the tall chimneys on the farmhouse.

Views from the Local Road Network

- 9.8 As part of the desktop research and Site assessment, the nearby road network has been visited and investigated to confirm whether views of the Proposed Development could be experienced.
- 9.9 From the surrounding road network, views towards the Site are limited and largely restricted to the section of Rebecca Road where it passes adjacent to the Site's southern boundary and from discreet sections of the A4104 and Rebecca Road where they travel along the more elevated ground to the West. Given that Rebecca Road provides pedestrian with the surrounding suburban environment, this appraisal considers a worst-case scenario with the visual environment of the local road network being assessed in the following section.

Views from the Public Rights of Way Network

- 9.10 As part of the desktop research and Site assessment, the nearby pedestrian areas and public rights of way (PRoW) have been visited and investigated to confirm whether views of the Proposed Development could be experienced.
- 9.11 From the surrounding roads and PRoW network, views towards the Site are varied and range from the close quarter views where views of the landform within it are heavily filtered by intervening vegetation. Further afield, views are generally contained by the elevated ground to the north and west where it is seen within the context of the residential development that exists on its south and western sides and it generally appears as part of a wider panorama. Views towards the Site from the lower lying ground along the valley floor are limited to views of the canopies of the vegetation along the Site boundaries, due to the angle of view.
- 9.12 Generally, views towards the site fall into the following categories:
- a) View from Rebecca Road (Viewpoint 1 & 2)
 - b) Views from Allesborough Hill (Viewpoints 3 & 4)
 - c) Views from South of Rebecca/Holloway Road (Viewpoints 5 & 6)
 - d) Views from Elevated Ground to the West (Viewpoint 7)

Views from Rebecca Road

- 9.13 Generally, views from along Rebecca Road are focussed along its length with the well vegetated verges creating a good degree of enclosure along its length up until the junction with Holloway Road. Housing to the south side of the road is largely secluded behind associated vegetation, while the built form associated with Allesborough Farm is more prominent and lacks enclosure by surrounding vegetation.

From Pavement on Rebecca Road to the east of the Site; see viewpoint 1

- 9.14 Views from the pavement along Rebecca Road facing northwest towards the Site. They are semi-rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 1. From the eastern section of



Rebecca Road, this view looks northwest across the Site in the general direction of Drakes Broughton. Prominent in the foreground is the recent development of Allesborough Farm and the close board fencing that presents a hard built edge on the edge of the settlement. Views look out across the where clear but partial views of the landform within it are seen against the vegetation along the Site's western boundary and elevated ground that defines the horizon in the far distance.

- 9.15 The **value** of Viewpoint 1 is **medium** given the moderate scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape on the fringe of the town.
- 9.16 The **susceptibility** of the view is **medium**, with the visual receptor being people travelling through the landscape on pavements associated with minor roads.
- 9.17 A **medium value** and **medium susceptibility** would result in the view having a **medium sensitivity**.
- 9.18 Views across the Site towards the vegetation on its western side and the elevated ground to the northwest would be lost and replaced with housing, which itself will be set back away from the roadside to reduce its visual presence. The existing vegetation along the Site's southern boundary would be reinforced and supplemented with additional planting in the southeast corner of the Site which in time will help to screen and filter views into the Site and help preserve the verdant character along Rebecca Road.
- 9.19 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Medium**, with clear views of the proposed development being possible, along with the associated external works forming a defining element within the view. Views of the existing trees to the west of the Site and the elevated ground in the background would be lost. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **Low**, the proposed tree planting associated with the development is expected to mature, filtering views of the built-form and increasing tree cover along Rebecca Road.
- 9.20 A **Medium Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1. A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Minor/Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at year 15.

From the Junction of Rebecca/Holloway Road to the southwest of the Site; see viewpoint 2

- 9.21 Views from the junction of Rebecca Road And Holloway Road facing north towards the Site. They are semi-rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 2. Close to the southwest corner of the Site, this view looks north towards its southern boundary where the existing vegetation precludes views of the landform within the Site and the landscape beyond. In winter it would be expected to open filtered views into the Site, seen against filtered views of the northern boundary vegetation and built form associated with Allesborough Farm.
- 9.22 The **value** of Viewpoint 2 is **medium** given the moderate scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape on the fringe of the town.
- 9.23 The **susceptibility** of the view is **medium**, with the visual receptor being people travelling through the landscape on pavements associated with minor roads.
- 9.24 A **medium value** and **medium susceptibility** would result in the view having a **medium sensitivity**.



- 9.25 Views across the Site towards the vegetation on its northern side would be lost and replaced with housing, which itself will be set back away from the roadside to reduce its visual presence. The existing vegetation along the Site's southern boundary would be reinforced and supplemented with additional planting in the southwest corner of the Site which in time will help to screen and filter views into the Site and help preserve the verdant character along Rebecca Road. Vegetation along the Site's western boundary will remain and be reinforced, creating a defined transition between the edge of Pershore and the open rural landscape beyond.
- 9.26 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Medium**, with clear views of the proposed development being possible, along with the associated external works forming a defining element within the view. Views of the existing trees to the north of the Site. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **Low**, the proposed tree planting associated with the development is expected to mature, filtering views of the built-form and increasing tree cover along Rebecca Road.
- 9.27 A **Medium Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1. A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Minor/Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at year 15.

Views from Allesborough Hill

- 9.28 Generally elevated positions, that do allow some views of the landform within the Site but for the most part views are restricted to the Site's north and west boundary vegetation, where it is seen in the context of the built form already present on this side of Pershore.

From Allesborough Hill to the north of the Site; see viewpoint 3

- 9.29 From the permissive path that runs the perimeter of the arable field atop Allesborough Hill, to the north of the Site, views look southwest across an open pastoral field towards the Site's northern boundary. They are semi-rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 3. From this location, views of the landform within the Site are not possible, due to the screening effect of the vegetation that exists along the Site's northern boundary and the built form associated with Allesborough Farm. This built form generally lies below the tree line that defines the horizon in the midground of the view. Whilst views of the A4104 or the traffic are not possible from this location, views of the two telecommunication towers along with lower-level telegraph poles are clearly visible and diminish the quality of the view from this end.
- 9.30 The **value** of Viewpoint 3 is **Low** given the unremarkable scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape and has a partly degraded visual quality due to the presence of the telecommunication towers.
- 9.31 The **susceptibility** of the view is **high**, with the visual receptor being people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside.
- 9.32 A **low value** and **high susceptibility** would result in the view having a **medium sensitivity**.
- 9.33 Views of the proposed development would be possible but limited to the rooftops and upper floors of the proposed built form, seen above the intervening vegetation associated with the Site's northern boundary. Where visible, the rooftops will be seen as a continuation of the existing built form associated with Allesborough Farm.



- 9.34 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Medium**, with clear but partial views of the proposed development being possible, resulting in some change in the view that is clearly visible and forming an important but not defining element within it. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **Low**, the proposed tree planting associated with the development is expected to mature, further filtering views of the built-form in a locally typical way and increasing tree cover within the view.
- 9.35 A **Medium Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1. A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Minor/Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at year 15.

From Allesborough Hill to the northwest of the Site; see viewpoint 4

- 9.36 From the lower lying and undulating ground to the west of Allesborough Hill, views look southeast towards the Site. They are rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 4. From this location, partial and intermittent views of the landform within it are possible, seen through gaps in the intervening vegetation and against the built form associated with Allesborough Farm.
- 9.37 Generally, this is an open, midrange view where vegetation along the ridgeline (on the western edge of Pershore), defines the horizon and which is interspersed with built form associated this side of the town, in particular Allesborough Cottage, Allesborough Farm and housing on the south side of Rebecca Road. Telecommunications masts are also present within the view and detract from an otherwise well composed wooded appearance on the edge of Pershore.
- 9.38 The **value** of Viewpoint 4 is **medium** given the moderate scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape on the fringe of the town.
- 9.39 The **susceptibility** of the view is **high**, with the visual receptor being people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside.
- 9.40 A **medium value** and **high susceptibility** would result in the view having a **high sensitivity**.
- 9.41 Views of the proposed development would be possible but largely limited to the rooftops and upper floors of the proposed built form, seen above the intervening vegetation associated with the Site's western boundary. Where visible, the built form will replace views of that existing within Allesborough Farm and that south of Rebecca Road, with the well vegetated appearance at this end of Pershore remaining intact.
- 9.42 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Medium**, with clear but partial views of the proposed development being possible, resulting in some change in the view that is clearly visible and forming an important but not defining element within it. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **Low**, the proposed tree planting associated with the development is expected to mature, further filtering views of the built-form in a locally typical way and increasing tree cover within the view.
- 9.43 A **Medium Magnitude of Change** on a **High Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate/Major (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1. A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **High Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at year 15.



Views from South of Rebecca/Holloway Road

9.44 South of Holloway and Rebecca Road, elevations vary and

From the elevated ground to the south side of Holloway and Rebecca Road; see viewpoint 5

9.45 From the elevated ground to the south side of Holloway and Rebecca Road, views look northeast across an open arable field towards the Site. They are rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 5. Views of the landform within the Site are not possible due to the screening effect of intervening vegetation, which also screens views of built form on the western edge of Pershore. This limits the receptor's ability to differentiate the vegetation that borders the Site's boundaries.

9.46 Generally, this is a short to medium range, open view, that is contained by the intervening field boundary vegetation, although where gaps and thinning in leaf cover occur, views through to the more elevated ground in the northeast are possible in the far distance

9.47 The **value** of Viewpoint 5 is **medium** given the moderate scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape on the fringe of the town.

9.48 The **susceptibility** of the view is **high**, with the visual receptor being people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside.

9.49 A **medium value** and **high susceptibility** would result in the view having a **high sensitivity**.

9.50 Views of the proposed development would be possible but largely limited to heavily filtered views of the rooftops, seen above and through the intervening vegetation. Where visible, the built form would not redefine the horizon and the well vegetated appearance at this end of Pershore remaining intact. Views would open out more in the winter although due to the multiple layers of intervening vegetation this would not be to any great extent and would be seen within the context of the existing built form on this side of Pershore.

9.51 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Low**, with some change in the view being appreciable but in keeping with the existing elements within it. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **Low**, the proposed tree planting associated with the development is expected to mature, however it would not provide any substantive addition to the existing level of tree cover present within the view.

9.52 A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **High Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1 and Year 15.

From the Lower Lying Ground around Stoken Orchard; see viewpoint 6

9.53 From the low-lying ground of the valley floor to the west, views look east across a flat pastoral field and up the valley side, towards the Site and the western edge of Pershore. They are semi-rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 6. From this location views towards the landform within the Site are not possible due to the intervening ridgeline that extends north to south along the western edge of Pershore. Intervening vegetation also has a pronounced effect on the visual environment and largely contains views to the midground and defines the horizon.



- 9.54 Generally, this is a semi-rural view set within the context of Stoken Orchard and dotted with agricultural barns, fencing and paraphernalia associated with the orchard, which lend the view a domestic quality.
- 9.55 The **value** of Viewpoint 6 is **medium** given the moderate scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape that has a domestic quality due to paraphernalia associated with the orchard.
- 9.56 The **susceptibility** of the view is **high**, with the visual receptor being people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside.
- 9.57 A **medium value** and **high susceptibility** would result in the view having a **high sensitivity**.
- 9.58 Views of the proposed development would be possible but largely limited to the rooftops and upper floors of the proposed built form, seen above the intervening vegetation associated with the Site's south and west boundaries and above the intervening ridgeline. Where visible, the built form will redefine a short section of the horizon, with the well vegetated appearance at this end of Pershore remaining intact.
- 9.59 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Medium**, with clear but partial views of the proposed development being possible, resulting in some change in the view that is clearly visible and forming an important but not defining element within it. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **Low**, the proposed tree planting along the Site's western boundary, further filtering views of the built-form in a locally typical way and increasing tree cover within the view.
- 9.60 A **Medium Magnitude of Change** on a **High Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate/Major (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1. A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **High Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at year 15.

Views from Elevated Ground to the West

- 9.61 Where the ground rises up to the west around Besford, footpaths located on the east facing slopes of the rising ground, offer opportunity for expansive views that
- 9.62 From the elevated ground to the west on the opposing side of the valley, views look east towards the Site and the western edge of Pershore. They are rural in character and are represented by Viewpoint 7. From this location views of the landform within the Site are possible but partial and filtered, seen through breaks or thinning in the vegetation that defines the Site's western boundary. Where visible, it is seen against the backdrop of built form and vegetation associated with Allesborough Farm, forming a small part of a much wider panorama.
- 9.63 Generally, this is a wide-open rural view that extends out into the far distance further east, the elevated ground that defines the western edge of Pershore, having a well wooded appearance that is dotted with elements of built form and small-scale infrastructure.
- 9.64 The **value** of Viewpoint 7 is **medium** given the moderate scenic value of the view that lies within an undesignated landscape.
- 9.65 The **susceptibility** of the view is **high**, with the visual receptor being people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside.



- 9.66 A **medium value** and **high susceptibility** would result in the view having a **high sensitivity**.
- 9.67 Clear and partial views of the proposed development will be possible and will replace the views of existing built form at Allesborough Farm within the view. Proposed planting on the western side of the Site will begin to mature and allow the proposed development to be assimilated within the view in a locally typical way, allowing the well wooded appearance of the western edge of Pershore to be retained and enhanced.
- 9.68 The Magnitude of Change for Year 1 is assessed as **Low**, with some change in the view that is appreciable and is in keeping with the existing elements within it. By Year 15 the Magnitude of Change is assessed as **negligible**, the proposed tree planting associated with the development is expected to mature, resulting in a barely perceptible degree of deterioration in the view and improvement in the fact that it will remove the existing hard built edge to Allesborough Farm and creating improvement to the view.
- 9.69 A **Low Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Minor/Moderate (adverse) Scale of Effect** at Year 1. A **Negligible Magnitude of Change** on a **Medium Sensitivity Receptor** would result in a **Negligible Scale of Effect** at year 15.

Conclusion

- 9.70 As demonstrated by the ZTV, interactions between topography, built form and vegetation combine to limit the visibility of the site to the west where elevated views generally allow views of the landform within the Site while lower elevation tend to limit visibility to the canopies of trees that make up the Site boundary vegetation. In all instances, vegetation associated with the Site boundaries, limit views into the Site and where visible, is generally seen within the context of the existing housing on this side of Pershore.
- 9.71 As is illustrated by the ZTV, the proposed development will only result in a modest increase in visibility of built form within the wider landscape to the west over that currently existing. It should also be noted that the ZTV reflects a hard built edge that is currently resented by the built form at Allesborough Farm. At year 15, planting to the Site's western boundary and the built form being set back from this edge and fronting positively onto it would allow the visibility of the Site to be greatly reduced and where visible be seen within a wooded context in a locally typical way.
- 9.72 Development of the Site for housing will result in visual change, however where visible, this change will result in the replacement of existing built form in a manner that is more in keeping with the existing developed edge of Pershore, being that of a well wooded edge populated with built form on elevated ground. This would be consistent with the objectives within SWDP 25 in that the proposed development would introduce features that are in character with the LCT.



10 Conclusion

Summary

- 10.1 The site has been assessed in terms of its landscape character and visibility within the landscape, with reference to national and district level character assessments, to identify the key landscape elements within the Site, and the visual impact of the site on the surrounding landscape. A summary of the findings within this assessment can be found within **Appendix 11: Landscape & Visual Effects Table**.
- 10.2 The Site is located to the north of Rebecca Road on the southwestern side of Pershore, a town located to the southwest of Worcester. It lies wholly within the administrative boundary of Wychavon District Council. The Site is currently accessed off Rebecca Road by an agricultural access point at its southwest corner.
- 10.3 The Site is formed by a single agricultural field currently used for arable crops. It is broadly rectangular and bounded along its north and south sides by the B4084 Worcester Road and Rebecca Road respectively and both are well vegetated. The majority of its western side is defined by a ditch with well-established riparian vegetation. A collection of traditional and modern housing associated with Allesborough Farm and a reservoir, are situated along the eastern edge, the boundary fences of which define the Site's eastern boundary. Housing is also present to the south side of Rebecca Road
- 10.4 The project description is as follows:
- “Outline permission for the erection of up to 115 dwellings with all matters reserved with the exception of access, including open space, landscaping, drainage and associated works.”*
- 10.5 In accordance with SWDP 21 and 25, this scheme has been landscape led and a landscape measure proposed, which work towards strengthening key characteristics of the surrounding landscape and integrating the proposals with the prevailing characteristics of the local landscape, as well as those of the NCA and LCT's.

Conclusion

- 10.6 From the constraints identified within this study, the Site would be able to accommodate residential development of the type proposed, with suitable measures taken to preserve its key characteristics, maximise opportunities for biodiversity enhancements and incorporate suitable open 'Sustainable Drainage Systems' (SuDS) into the final design.
- 10.7 The proposed development would result in the loss of agricultural land in place of residential development. The position of the Site adjacent to the existing settlement edge of the town and the degree of enclosure created by the surrounding landscape would allow the built form to create a considered addition to the settlement, with a new natural line of delineation between rural and suburban strongly defined by the vegetation that exists along the Site's western boundary and aligns with the western most point of the domestic curtilage associated with housing on the south side of Rebecca Road.



Predicted Effects

10.8 At the outset, after initial desk-top studies and Site visits, it is considered that the development could have the potential to create the following effects:

- a) Extend the edge of the settlement further west, into the adjacent countryside;
- b) Affect the rural aspect along footpaths to the west;
- c) Diminish the semi-rural character and visual environment along Rebecca Road;
- d) Diminish the perceived rural edge to the town when viewed from the elevated ground to the west.

10.9 In response to the predicted effects outlined in the introduction of this report and in the above paragraph.

- a) Development will not extend the settlement edge further west than currently exists and will lie contiguous with the existing residential development to the east and that which lies to the south of Rebecca Road.
- b) The rural aspect to the footpaths in the north and west will remain, the development resulting in only moderate to minor effects on the existing edge of the settlement and working to better define the settlement edge in a locally typical way through composing the views of built form within a well wooded context to the edge of the settlement.
- c) Retention and enhancement of the roadside vegetation along Rebecca road will allow the semi-rural aspect along this section of the road to be retained. This will further be supported through setting back of built form from the road to ensure this semi-rural aspect is maintained. Furthermore, the transition from urban to rural between Pershore and the wider rural landscape to the west, will continue be defined by this short section of Rebecca Road and punctuated by the edge of the development at the point where you descend down the valley side beyond the western edge of the Site at the junction between Rebecca Road and Holloway Road.
- d) Development of the Site for housing will result in visual change, however where visible, this change will result in the replacement of existing built form in a manner that is more in keeping with the existing developed edge of Pershore, being that of a well wooded edge populated with built form on elevated ground.

10.10 The study area would be capable of accommodating the residential development on this Site. It is physically well-contained and provides a good opportunity to locate built form in a way that responds positively to the existing settlement pattern of Pershore.

10.11 While the Site's character will change from agricultural land to of residential development, the landscape is suitably robust to accommodate this change which will be localised. The Site is well positioned within the landscape to create a logical addition to the existing settlement pattern, without substantially diminishing any of the key characteristics of the relevant character assessments or conflicting with any of the key objectives set out within the LCT.

10.12 Visually, adverse effects have largely been mitigated through the layout of housing, positioning it close to the existing built form that is present on its eastern side and the use of landscaping to screen and soften built form in a locally typical way and consistent with the character of the LCT. The main elements within the landscape proposals that provide mitigation to the proposed built form are:



- a) Woodland tree blocks
- b) Native tree planting
- c) Native hedge planting
- d) Native scrub planting
- e) Areas of wildflower grass

10.13 This should also be balanced against the fact that the development has been scaled and massed accordingly, to ensure that it can be assimilated within its surroundings in a locally typical way. Beneficial effects on the landscape that will be brought about by the development, namely improvements to the Site's boundaries and creation of a native woodland pockets, would create a more defined transition between the village and the wider open landscape beyond.

10.14 This is consistent with the objectives set out within both Policies SWDP 21: Design and SWDP 25: Landscape Character

Policies SWDP 21: Design

10.15 In respect of Policies SWDP 21: Design, the design of the proposals has been carefully considered through a landscape led approach to development and presents a suitably robust design structure, that will allow the development to comply with the objectives set out within Criterion A at the reserved matters stage.

Policy SWDP 25: Landscape Character

10.16 In respect Policy SWDP 25: Landscape Character this landscape appraisal demonstrates consideration of the latest Landscape Character Assessment and its guidelines, the proposal is appropriate to, and integrates with, the character of the LCT and that it conserves (and where appropriate), enhances the primary characteristics defined in character assessments and important features of the Land Cover Parcel, and has taken opportunity to enhance the landscape where practicable.

10.17 In line with Criterion B of SWDP 25, it has also been demonstrated that any detrimental impacts on significant landscape attributes, irreplaceable landscape features or the landscape as a resource, have been carefully considered suitably mitigated.

10.18 Furthermore, this appraisal demonstrates that the proposed development includes proposals that both protects and conserves key landscape features and attributes and, where appropriate, enhances landscape quality.



Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan



Appendix 2 – Detailed Methodology



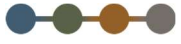
Appendix 3 – Site Context Plan



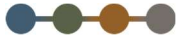
Appendix 4 – Topography Plan



Appendix 5 – Environmental Designations Plan



Appendix 6 – Illustrative Masterplan



Appendix 7 – Landscape Strategy Plan



Appendix 8 – Viewpoint Location Plan



Appendix 9 – Context Baseline Views



Appendix 10 – Zone of Theoretical Visibility



Appendix 11 – Landscape and Visual Effects Tables

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