

Rule 6 Landscape Evidence – Section F

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (INQUIRIES PROCEDURE)
(ENGLAND) RULES 2000**

Rule 6 Party: Saffron Walden Town Council & Swards End Parish Council

Landscape and Visual Issues EVIDENCE

Document B:

(CDF6 - Appendix i) Views of Site

- Figure 1 – Photograph Views 1 and 2
- Figure 2 – Photograph Views 3 and 4
- Figure 3 – Photograph Views 5 and 6
- Figure 4 – Photograph View 7
- Figure 5 – Photograph Views 8 and 9
- Figure 6 – Tripod positions
- Figure 7 – Viewpoint positions

Richard Morrish CMLI

**On behalf of Saffron Walden Town Council and Swards End Parish
Council in respect of planning application called in by the
Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government**

Section 78 Appeal by Rosconn Strategic Land and Thomas Eric Baker and
Sally Rose Hall, the Executors of Mr E C Baker and Mrs J Baker
Appeal against refusal of Planning Permission for 233 homes at Land
south of (east of Griffin Place) Radwinter Road, Saffron Walden

Inspectorate Reference: APP/C1570/W/22/3296426

Local Planning Authority Reference: UTT/21/2509/OP

Date: August 2022



View 1 – Looking south-east from Harcamlow Way (PROW 44), approximately 230m north of Sheds Lane and 1300m from the study site. The proposed development would create a substantial urban extension to the town in this view. Pounce Hall and neighbouring ‘Spruce Lodge’ at Swards End are also visible in this view.



View 2 – View looking south-east from further along Harcamlow Way, near the Cadent gas enclosure. From this position the proposed development will be seen alongside existing new housing at the Linden Homes (Saffron View) site and the Ashdon Road development site – creating notable cumulative effects to the rural setting of the town.



View 3 – View looking south from Harcamlow Way around 800m north east of Sheds Lane. At this point the Ashdon Road housing is very evident in the foreground so the effect of the proposed development will be to extend settlement across the valley.



View 4 – View looking south-east from Miller Street / Hawkins Place, approximately 700m from the study site. The proposed development will create a prominent urban extension beyond the Saffron Walden petroleum storage site, as seen from this new housing and public amenity area.



View 5 – Looking west from a footpath at Swards End (PROW 315), approximately 800m from the study site. The proposed development is expected to be visible above trees, extending the existing view of new housing at the Linden Homes Saffron View development. (Note ‘Spruce Lodge’ at Swards End in trees at left).



View 6 – Looking west from further along PROW 315, approximately 500m from the study site. The development will become a prominent addition to this view – extending settlement into open countryside.



View 7 – Looking west from a position further down PROW 315, approximately 150m from the study site. Although trees along Radwinter Road are expected to filter views of the development from this section of the path, there are already glimpses of the new housing at Saffron View. With tree removals likely for highways works, it is expected that the presence of the new development will be very evident, intruding into the current strongly rural setting.



View 8 – Looking west on Radwinter Road. The ancient and strongly rural character of the road between Swards End and Saffron Walden will be substantially altered by the new entrance to the proposed development. It is not clear how sustainable the proposed retention of roadside vegetation will be when highways design, sight line and drainage requirements are finalised.



View 9 – Looking west from Pounce Hall Farm, approximately 340m from the study site. The rooftops of new housing at Saffron View are partially visible and it is anticipated that the new development will be similarly visible from some ground level positions. More prominent views of the development are anticipated from the west-facing upper floor windows of Pounce Hall.



View 1



View 2



View 3



View 4



View 5



View 6



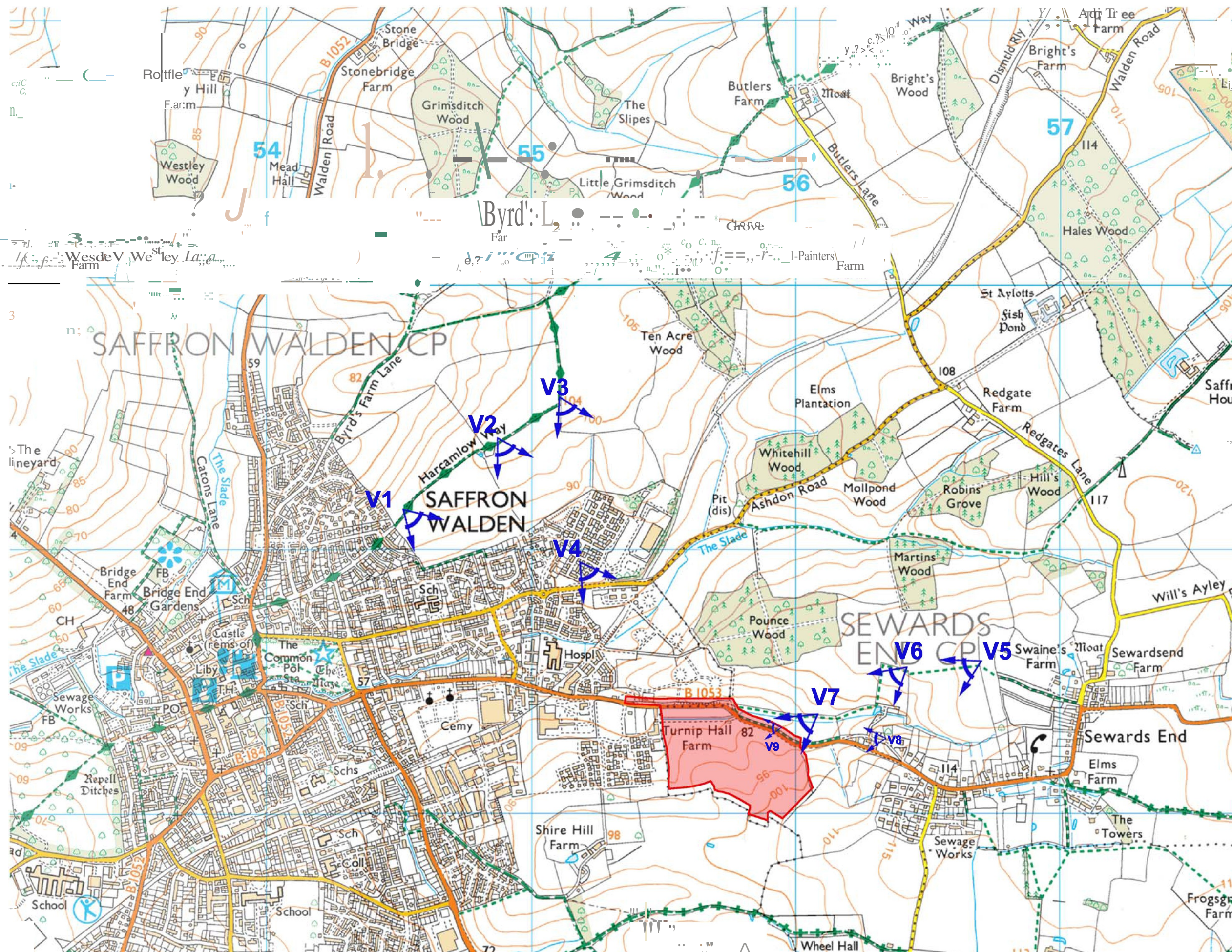
View 7



View 8



View 9



CD
NORTH

0 500

Scale in metres.

LEGEND

[22] Study Site

< Photography Positions

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Landscape and Visual Issues EVIDENCE

Document C:

(CDF6 - Appendix ii) Local Site Context

- Figure 8 – Photographs – Views A, B, C.
- Figure 9 – Photographs – Local Photographs.

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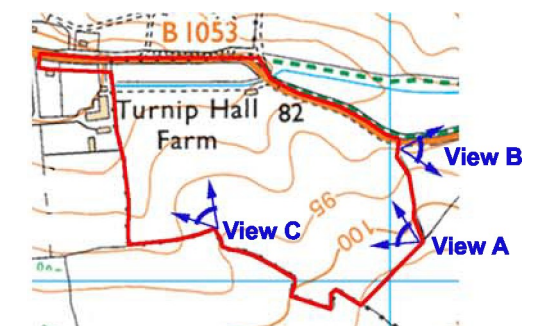
Date: August 2022



View A. Panoramic view looking west from the east end of the appeal site. The site will be intervisible with much of north-east Saffron Walden. The inset indicates that the valley beyond the town, including some of the parkland at Audley End will also be distantly intervisible.



View B - looking east from eastern appeal site boundary at existing field gateway. A couple of neighbouring paddocks appear to be fallow (?). The rooftops of some dwellings at Swards End are visible - and intervisibility is likely to be more evident in wintertime.



View C - looking north-west from the southern boundary of the appeal site - at around 94m AOD. It is evident that parts of central Saffron Walden will also be intervisible with the study site from this position.



Views, east and west of the narrow paddock at the northern edge of the appeal site - proposed for the entrance road and drainage attenuation basins. The road front vegetation presently provides a mature site boundary.



Photographs along Radwinter Road (81053) showing the strong rural character, banks and mature vegetation that characterise the present corridor.



Evidence of existing 'urban fringe' pressures on local farmland. Such issues can undermine the viability of small pockets of retained farmland next to urban areas.

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Document D:

(CDF6 - Appendix iii)

Methodology for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

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Methodology for Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is now accepted as an important aspect of a sustainable planning process when the impacts of a project are considered likely to have effects on the environment¹ (where *impacts* are defined as the action being taken and *effects* are defined as the change resulting from that action). The need for environmental impact assessment in the UK has been borne out of European and national legislation.
- 1.2 Richard Morrish Associates use a methodology in accordance with the published *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA) produced by the Landscape Institute in conjunction with the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (first published in 1995, and now in the third edition (GLVIA3), published 2013). This is practitioner-led guidance and is not a mandatory process. The process uses desk-top studies (using where possible other studies and landscape planning guidance relevant to the locality) and field survey to establish 'baseline' data about the nature of existing landscape character and visual amenity in the proximity of the proposed development. The likely changes to the study landscape resulting from the proposed development are then assessed. The process requires a combination of objective analysis and subjective professional judgement.
- 1.3 Where the scale of proposed development is deemed not to require an Environmental Impact Assessment (as defined in the schedules of the EIA Regulations 2011, updated 2015 and 2017), it is accepted that a simplified approach to the LVIA process is appropriate and acceptable. This is generally referred to as a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA). In an LVA, an assessment of the *significance* of effects is not normally included as this can cause confusion with the criteria for EIA projects (GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13). The objectives of the LVIA and LVA process are however similar.

2.0 Baseline Studies

- 2.1 The 'baseline' studies allow description of the landscape setting and identification of potential *landscape receptors* that might be affected by the proposed development or landscape change. This involves identification of the local landscape character which derives from the geology, topography, features, pattern and land use of the setting. The term 'landscape' can be applied to rural and urban contexts and 'seascapes'. *Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and or human factors* (Council of Europe, 2000). Desk-top studies are used to ascertain local planning designations and policies that might influence landscape management and strategic development. Most local authorities now have landscape character assessments for their own areas and across the UK there is generally national and local published data to reference in baseline studies.
- 2.2 The baseline studies will also include identification of *visual receptors* and the views and visual amenity resources as experienced by people. This is undertaken with a combination of desk-top studies and fieldwork to identify local views and viewpoints where the development may be seen. The activity of potential observers and the extent, duration and nature of the potential view must be established so that any perceived changes to the existing outlook can be assessed.
- 2.3 As part of the analysis of landscape and visual receptors, an evaluation of their *sensitivity* to change must be established. The nature of the development will influence the evaluation of sensitivity of both landscape and visual receptors and in this respect assessments and appraisals must be tailored to the particular project and setting, based on professional judgement.

¹ Good design should minimise landscape impacts. The key to impact mitigation should be *avoid, reduce, remediate, compensate*.

3.0 Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 3.1 Landscape impact assessments are derived from analysis of physical geography, landcover patterns, cultural influence, aesthetic and perceptual characteristics, and 'sense of place'. The particular components that make a landscape more or less susceptible to change include topography, land use, settlement pattern, level of enclosure, skylines, views, extent of human activity, 'tranquillity' and the presence of landmarks, including perceived detractors.

Landscape sensitivity

- 3.2 A key aspect of landscape appraisal considers the *sensitivity* of the landscape – the landscape's ability to accommodate change or development without detrimental effects on its character. Factors that are considered when assessing this matter include the perceived value of the landscape, the context of the landscape and the scale of the landscape – where example criteria are set out below.

Table 1.0 Establishing susceptibility to landscape change

Value:	The 'importance' of the landscape, as indicated by, for example, international, national or local designations, or the perceived value of the landscape to users or consultees. These might include intrinsic aesthetic characteristics, such as scenic quality or sense of place, or its role in providing a landscape setting to other places, or as a venue for popular use of the area, or in cultural associations (e.g. as established in the arts, or civic events). Examples are as follow: <u>High Value</u> : Designated landscapes (e.g. National Park or AONB, registered parks and gardens) or landscapes managed for the community – e.g. National Trust land, protected heritage sites. <u>Medium Value</u> : Landscapes apparently in good or reasonable condition and with scenic quality but undesignated. Value demonstrable through use (e.g. footpaths and recreational sites), rare features or established associations (e.g. with artists, historic events). <u>Low Value</u> : Landscapes apparently in poor condition (with limited recognisable elements of the landscape type) but may have some redeeming features or opportunities for improvement.
Context:	The importance of the landscape elements in the landscape character of the area or in their contribution to the landscape setting of other areas; presence of rare or unique features; the presence and scale of detractors in the landscape or existing development within the area. Landscapes which are already influenced by development may be less sensitive to the proposed changes, while those not subject to built development or other human activities may be more sensitive to the changes associated with the development.
Scale:	A large-scale, simple landscape may have a greater capacity to absorb a large-scale development than a smaller-scale, complex setting where development may seem out of scale or in conflict. However, an open large-scale landscape may enable wider visibility of a structure – and this must also be considered in appraising sensitivity.

- 3.3 As well as regional and sub-regional landscape character assessments, local authorities may have also commissioned studies that consider the sensitivity of different landscape types for particular types of development (e.g. renewable energy projects or urban expansion). Reference to planning policy may also be relevant as it may reflect previous consensus on local landscape value.
- 3.4 This evaluation of the identified landscape receptors then allows an assessment of sensitivity relative to the development proposals. The following typical criteria allow the assessor to establish a relative scale of *High*, *Medium* and *Low* sensitivity.

Table 2.0 Establishing the scale of sensitivity for landscape receptors

High	A landscape of particularly distinctive characteristics, maintained in a good condition or one that is particularly valued for its scenic quality. It may have particular recreational or cultural/historical associations. The landscape may be a good example of a locally scarce landscape type. Nationally designated landscapes reflecting special landscape values. The character of the landscape, existing land use, landscape features, pattern and scale would be susceptible to change from the proposed development and the loss of key features will result in a substantial change to that character. There would be few opportunities for successful mitigation or landscape enhancement.
Medium	A landscape that exhibits some distinctive characteristics but may have been slightly degraded or one that is moderately valued despite alteration/loss of features.

	The landscape may be a poor example of a locally scarce landscape type or a good example of a locally abundant landscape type. Locally designated landscapes. The character of the landscape, land use, pattern and scale offers some opportunities for successful mitigation of the type of development proposed and landscape enhancement.
Low	A landscape with few positive characteristics, poor condition or one that is not particularly valued for its scenic quality, or has lost many features. No local designations. The landscape may be a poor example of a locally abundant landscape type. The character of the landscape, existing land use, pattern and scale are tolerant of change and loss of further features would not cause substantial alteration. The landscape may be well enclosed and have little inter-visibility with adjacent landscapes. There are considerable opportunities for successful mitigation and landscape enhancement.

- 3.5 The type of development or landscape change being assessed is likely to influence the determination of the landscape sensitivity. Details of the development, its construction and its operation must be established. The extent or scale of the expected changes to the identified landscape receptors can then be assessed. This is generally referred to as an assessment of the *magnitude of change*.

Magnitude of landscape change

- 3.6 The *magnitude of change* is defined by assessing the scale or extent of expected changes to the landscape resource with the following considerations: the geographical extent of the area that will be influenced; the amount/proportion of landscape elements that will be lost; the contribution those elements make to the existing landscape; assessing whether such changes alter the perceived character of the landscape; and establishing the duration of the changes and whether they can be reversed over time.
- 3.7 Regarding duration of change, it is useful to establish a timeframe. RMA have adopted the following guidance:
- Short term: 0–2 years (an indicative construction contract)
 - Medium term: 2–15 years (an indicative timescale for mitigation planting to achieve notable screening benefits)
 - Long term: effects lasting longer than 15 years.
- 3.8 Where a development has a limited life and could eventually be removed and the original landscape situation reinstated, the scheme can be considered ‘reversible’. Most urban development would be considered ‘irreversible’.
- 3.9 The following table is used to determine the order of magnitude for landscape change.

Table 3.0 Criteria for the assessment of magnitude of landscape change

Magnitude of Change	Criteria
High	Total loss of or major alteration to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape. Introduction of highly unnatural or unsympathetic features into the landscape which do not fit well with the existing character. Major alteration or removal of several notable existing features or characteristics that substantially detract from the existing character. Introduction of major new features or elements into the landscape which leaves the original landscape fundamentally changed. The effects would be of a large scale, influencing a large part of a landscape character type/area or several landscape character types/areas. The effects would be long term or irreversible.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape. Introduction of some unnatural features into the landscape that may be accommodated without major detriment to the existing character. Moderate alteration or removal of some existing features or characteristics that contribute (beneficially or adversely) to the existing character.

	Introduction of some new features or elements into the landscape which leaves the original landscape noticeably changed. The effects would be at a scale confined locally within the landscape type/area. The effects would be only medium term or reversible.
Low	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key characteristics, feature or elements of the landscape. Loss of recent, uniform or untypical features. Introduction of minor unnatural features into the landscape which do not detract substantially from the existing character. Minor alteration or removal of small existing features or characteristics that contribute (beneficially or adversely) to the existing character. Introduction of minor new features or elements into the landscape which leaves it mainly unchanged with some perceptible differences. The effects would be confined to the development site. The effects would be short term or reversible.
Negligible	No notable loss or alteration of any key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape. Minor alterations to the landscape leaving it with barely perceptible differences. Effects at site level only and short term.

- 3.10 The predicted level of effect to the landscape resource is derived from combining the assessed sensitivity of the landscape resource with the magnitude of change (refer also to Table 6 below). This is frequently referred to as the *significance* of the predicted effects, although, as noted in paragraph 1.3, to avoid confusion in non-EIA projects, the term ‘significance’ is now generally avoided. RMA generally use the terminology of a low, medium or high *level of effect*.

4.0 **Assessment of Visual Effects**

- 4.1 A study site will have a surrounding setting from which it can be seen. This is usually called the ‘Zone of Visual Influence’ (ZVI) defined by ‘viewsheds’ where topography, buildings or vegetation define the extent of views. Within this area, the study subject may be visible to a range of potential observers or ‘*visual receptors*’. The study site may be seen from defined viewpoints, and vice versa – i.e. the positions are ‘*intervisible*’. Visual receptors are normally split into two types – ‘static’ or ‘fixed’ receptors (e.g. residents of a house with a view of the study subject, or visitors to a viewpoint in a public space) and ‘transient’ or ‘moving’ receptors (e.g. passing motorists on a road or ramblers on a footpath).
- 4.2 Static receptors are sometimes considered more sensitive to changes to views (as they may perceive a permanent change in outlook), whereas transient receptors may be considered less sensitive to change as they are already experiencing constant change in their outlook as they pass through a landscape. However, judgement is required. ‘Transient’ ramblers out to enjoy the countryside may be considered more sensitive to visual effects than ‘static’ office workers in a nearby building.
- 4.3 The ZVI may alter over time, throughout the year (vegetation cover) and according to different atmospheric and light conditions. However, in most cases an experienced practitioner can plot the likely ZVI for a proposed development through desk-top studies and field survey. RMA LVA reports generally include an ‘Indicative ZVI’ illustrating the extent of the area from which views of the development can be expected, with annotation identifying likely visual receptors and other visual issues in sections of the landscape around the study site.
- 4.4 Where a large development or change to the landscape is proposed (e.g. a very tall object such as a wind turbine or a chimney flue stack) the ZVI may not be easily defined by field survey alone. Here a ‘Zone of Theoretical Visibility’ (ZTV) plan is sometimes generated using specialist computer software. Such plans are especially helpful in countryside with a varied topography. However, it is typically too complicated for such models to include all the local features that could influence local visibility (trees, buildings, minor topographic features), and therefore such plans are only theoretical. They may not be especially useful in an appraisal of visual influence in open, low-lying landscapes.
- 4.5 Establishing viewpoints from which the scale of expected visual effects can be assessed is an essential part of visual impact assessment. Fieldwork will establish relevant viewpoints. These might be from

specific viewpoints (e.g. a lookout in a national park); representative viewpoints (e.g. from one section of an open road) or illustrative (e.g. to demonstrate how local vegetation prevents or filters a potential view).

- 4.6 Annotated photographs or photomontage views are prepared to illustrate and assess views. Issues to consider at each viewpoint would include:
- Extent of view (wide panorama, glimpse or partial view of study site)
 - Quality of view (filtered through vegetation; influenced by foreground detractors or activities)
 - Expected viewing experience (e.g. static view, sequential views, duration of view)
 - Anticipated type and number of visual receptors
 - Designations: A view from a designated public-right-of-way or promoted trail may be given more weight in assessment than from an informally used route.
 - Seasonal issues (including vegetation cover, day length and light quality).
- 4.7 It should be noted that LVIA and LVA visual assessment primarily addresses public amenity and public access viewpoints. Private visual amenity (ie from within dwellings or private gardens) is sometimes addressed in a general sense - but would normally require a separate and specific evaluation as part of a *Residential Amenity Assessment*.

Sensitivity of visual receptors

- 4.8 Visual receptors can be more or less susceptible to visual effects depending on their location, activity and attention to the landscape around them. The following table assists in establishing the relative sensitivity of receptors.

Table 4.0 The scale of sensitivity for visual receptors

High	<p>People with a particular interest in their surroundings or with prolonged viewing opportunities, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitors to promoted scenic viewpoints, outlooks or spaces or places with cultural and historic significance where the landscape setting is important. - People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is focused on the landscape. - Occupiers of residential properties with direct views of the study site and/or where through design or orientation they have maximised potential for views of the landscape from principal living areas. - Residents/visitors to settings where views and landscape setting are particularly valued. - Tourists, particularly slower moving ones such as walkers, travelling along routes valued for their setting and views.
Medium	<p>People with a general interest in their surroundings or with some viewing opportunities, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaged in outdoor recreation but not focused on the landscape (eg golfers). - People experiencing the setting but mainly focussed on an activity and moving through the landscape relatively quickly (eg cyclists, equestrians) - Occupiers of residential properties with indirect views of the study site and/or where through design or orientation they have reduced the potential for views of the surrounding landscape from principal living areas (eg with fences/hedges etc). - Travellers on roads and railways in predominantly rural landscapes
Low	<p>People with a limited interest in their surroundings or with limited viewing opportunities, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaged in recreation not related to the landscape (eg ball courts). - People in the workplace where views and setting are not relevant - Travellers on roads and railways in predominantly built-up landscapes

- 4.9 Once the viewpoints and visual receptors have been identified, an assessment of the magnitude of change to views can be undertaken. This necessarily considers the scale and proximity of development and how it will alter the existing scene. Photomontage work can be a very useful tool for this stage of the assessment – although in smaller-scale projects, identifying key views and using professional judgement and reference to existing features (e.g. trees and buildings) can often be used to identify the likely position and height of new features in the landscape. Other matters to be considered include whether visual receptors will have direct or oblique views; the likely extent of available views; the

distance of the observer from the study subject; the presence of foreground detractors (e.g. busy roads) and the likely duration and reversibility of the change. The following table is used to determine the order of magnitude for visual change.

Table 5.0 Criteria for the assessment of magnitude of visual change

Magnitude of Change	Criteria
High	Total loss of or major alteration to views, and/or the addition of new features in the view that will be very prominent or will greatly contrast from the existing view. The new elements become a dominant or defining element of the view or views. Full, open views of new elements will be experienced over a wide area. Views are likely to be from close quarters. The effects will be long term or irreversible.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to the views, and/or the addition of new features in the view that will be notable or will contrast from the existing view. The new elements become a noticeable addition to a particular view or views. Partial or short duration views of new elements will be experienced from different viewpoints Views are likely to be from middle distance locations. The effects will be medium term and/or partially reversible.
Low	Minor loss of or alteration to the views, and/or the addition of new features in the view that will be apparent but will not contrast greatly from the existing view The new elements will result in a perceptible change to a particular view or views Only glimpsed, partial or long-distance views of new elements are likely The effects will be short term and/or reversible
Negligible	Very minor changes to views the majority of people would not notice with the naked eye. New elements will not result in an easily discerned change to a view or views Only briefly glimpsed or very distant views are likely The effects will be short term and/or reversible

- 4.10 As with landscape effects, the degree of visual impact is derived from combining the assessed sensitivity of the receptor with the assessed magnitude of visual change, and can be referred to as the *level of visual effect* (refer to Table 6 below).

5.0 Predicted Level of Effects

- 5.1 Generally the effects of a development proposal are assessed for the point at which it is completed. However, the effects during construction stages should also be considered – and these might be particularly relevant in long-term or large-scale development proposals – such as mineral extraction projects.
- 5.2 The design development process will ideally be *iterative* – allowing for a final design that has considered potential adverse effects and has avoided them through design, e.g. with refinements to the site plan, the design of structures or through the introduction of additional works such as landscape screen planting. Such measures can *avoid* potential adverse effects, or *reduce* the scale of unavoidable effects. Mitigation which is built into the design process is often called ‘embedded mitigation’. There may still be ‘residual impacts’. Over time it may be possible to also **mitigate** these remaining landscape and visual effects. In projects where a development may be decommissioned and removed, there may also be residual effects (see also Section 7.0 below). If landscape mitigation works are possible they may take some years to establish. It is usually appropriate to assess the scale of effects at completion of the development and then after mitigation works have had time to establish (normally 15 years).
- 5.3 The predicted level of landscape and visual effect is assessed by considering the sensitivity of the identified landscape or visual receptor, the magnitude of change anticipated from the proposed development (including duration and reversibility) and professional judgement at varied stages through the process. Descriptions can be used, but a matrix, as set out below, supports a simplified conclusion.

Table 6.0 Assessed Level of Landscape / Visual Effects

	Magnitude of Change in the Landscape / View			
Sensitivity of the Landscape / View	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Substantial	Substantial/Moderate	Moderate / Slight	Neutral
Medium	Substantial / Moderate	Moderate	Slight	Neutral
Low	Moderate / Slight	Slight	Slight	Neutral

- 5.4 The effects of development on a landscape or visual resource can be considered *beneficial, neutral or adverse*² and may vary over time – but as this judgement is in itself subjective, it is not always useful or necessary to include these definitions in an assessment conclusion.

Some example definitions of landscape effects are provided as follow:

Substantial adverse: where the proposed changes cannot be mitigated; will be completely uncharacteristic and will substantially damage the integrity of a valued and important landscape.

Moderate adverse: where the proposed changes cannot be fully mitigated; will be uncharacteristic and will damage a valued aspect of the landscape.

Slight adverse: where some elements of the proposed changes will be out of scale or uncharacteristic of the study area.

Neutral: where the development will be in keeping with the character of the area and/or will maintain the existing value or where on balance it will maintain landscape value (e.g. where on balance the adverse effects of the development are offset by beneficial effects).

Slight beneficial: where the proposed changes will fit in well with the existing character and will improve the character and value of the landscape.

Moderate beneficial: where the proposed changes will not only fit in well with the existing character of the surrounding landscape, but will greatly improve the value of the resource through the removal of detracting features.

Substantial beneficial: where the proposed changes will substantially improve character and value, e.g. through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far-reaching enhancements.

- 5.5 Some example definitions of visual effects are provided as follow:

Substantial adverse: where the proposed changes will form the dominant feature, will be completely uncharacteristic and substantially change the scene in valued views.

Moderate adverse: where the proposed changes will form a notable part of the view, will be uncharacteristic, and will alter valued views.

Slight adverse: where the proposed changes to views will be perceptible and potentially uncharacteristic in the existing view.

Neutral: where the project will be imperceptible or will be in keeping with and will maintain the existing views or where on balance the development will maintain the value of the views (which may include adverse effects of the development offset by beneficial effects for the same receptor).

Slight beneficial: where the proposed changes to the existing view will be in keeping with and will improve the value of the existing view.

Moderate beneficial: where the proposed changes to the existing view will not only be in keeping with, but will greatly improve the value of the scene through the removal of visually detracting features.

Substantial beneficial: where the proposed changes to existing views will substantially improve the character and value through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far reaching enhancements.

² Where perceptions of the ‘acceptability’ of development are very varied, applying these descriptions may be problematic. Wind turbines are an example – where visual perceptions are framed by many different factors.

- 5.6 In EIA projects there is no fixed criteria defining ‘significant’ effects – but they are usually considered to be higher scale (substantial) or effects that are influential on rare or sensitive receptors.

6.0 Cumulative Effects

- 6.1 Where several developments are influencing the same landscape, an assessment of cumulative effects may be required. It is often necessary to consider direct and indirect effects. In assessing cumulative landscape/visual effects for multiple projects the following issues should be considered:
- Will cumulative landscape effects lead to the complete loss of elements, features or aesthetic aspects of the landscape?
 - Will a combination of developments result in new structures or relationships that influence perceptions of local landscape character?
 - Will different projects be seen in the same views from selected viewpoints (combined views or succeeding views if the viewer is turning at the same spot), or consecutively along the same linear routes (sequential views)?
 - Will developments be intervisible with overlapping ZTVs (theoretical visibility), even if individually not considered to have notable landscape effects?
- 6.2 Cumulative effects are likely to change seasonally and over longer periods of time. Other factors acting on the landscape may also have an influence on cumulative effects (e.g. climate change factors). It is therefore important to adopt a reasonable and proportionate approach to the scope of cumulative effect studies – but they should follow the same principles as for the main project. It is useful to determine the number of other developments to be considered and the size of the study area with the planning authority.
- 6.3 Identified receptors may experience increased landscape or visual effects due to the combination of developments - and this will be reflected in the final assessed scale of effects.

7.0 Mitigation

- 7.1 As noted above, it may be possible to **mitigate** potential landscape and visual effects. Ideally, mitigation works might also enhance a landscape – providing benefits to landscape character, biodiversity and amenity. A measure of landscape and visual effects expected from development usually considers the final **residual effects** that will remain after mitigation works have been included in the design. Where mitigation works include landscape planting (requiring time to grow and fulfil their function, and where appropriate ongoing management and maintenance will be instrumental in measuring the long-term success of such works), it is appropriate to highlight these matters in any conclusions about the extent of landscape and visual effects over time.
- 7.1 Mitigation planning should be an integral part of the design process from the feasibility stages. Adverse effects might be addressed through design details, e.g. building design, site layout, materials and colour specification, earthworks, and landscape planting. The design and specification of such details will ideally utilise elements present in local landscape character and architectural vernacular to create complementary components over time. Boundary details – such as fencing types, planting mixes and the finished contours of earthworks – are often key to the successful integration of new works to an existing landscape.
- 7.2 Appropriate ongoing management and maintenance of mitigation works – especially soft landscape works – are also an essential part of successful long-term mitigation works. It is therefore important that management considerations are designed into mitigation works – considering, for example, maintenance vehicle access and working areas for woodland management, hedge cutting, pond and ditch maintenance. The viability of long-term management must also be a criterion of successful design solutions. The preparation of long-term management plans at the time of development can greatly assist in guiding future site management personnel and ensuring the success of landscape mitigation works.