APPENDIX 12.1
METHODOLOGY

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is either carried out formally as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process or informally as a contribution to a planning application to provide a general understanding of the environmental effects of a development. In both cases the general principles and approach remain the same, although the approach for a non EIA development may be simplified and classification of significance is not a requirement.

It is important to note that there is a distinction to be made between landscape/townscape and visual effects:

- Landscape/townscape effects are the result of a change to the fabric, character or quality of the landscape/townscape as a result of development. They do not have to be seen, but are often the result of visual charges; and
- Visual effects result from a change in views and the visual amenity experienced by people.

In response to the particular urban nature of the site and its context, this LVIA considered also townscape impacts where appropriate. GLVIA3 defines the term 'townscape' as:

'*the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings and the relationship between them, the different type of urban spaces, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open spaces'.*

This assessment methodology has been developed from the guidance provided in the following publications:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA), Third Edition Landscape Institute & Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013;
- 'Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations' Technical Guidance Note 02/21, by the Landscape Institute;
- 'Townscape Character Assessment', Technical Information Note 05/2017, by the Landscape Institute (5 December 2017); and
- 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' Christine Tudor and Natural England, October 2014.

It should be noted that the above guidance does not dictate a prescriptive methodology, instead it encourages practitioners to develop transparent and logical methods, using standardised terminology and which are proportionate the type and size of development proposed.

Preparation of this assessment involves the following key stages:

- Baseline survey;
- Identification of sensitive townscape and visual receptors;
- Description and quantification of the changes to the baseline;
- Identification of potential effects;
- Evaluation of the predicted effects; and
- Identification of mitigation measures.

<u>Viewpoints photography and visualisations</u>

Consultation with the Local Authority is undertaken to decide the appropriate technical visualisation Types. Unless otherwise stated in the relevant Appendix, appropriate Visualisation Type and AVR have been prepared as per the Landscape Institute guidance (Visual

Representation of Development Proposals, Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note, 06/19 (TGN 06/19)).

It should be noted that the images taken from the viewpoints illustrate the views from these locations, but there is no substitute for visiting the Site personally to ascertain the views and potential impacts.

Baseline Survey

The baseline survey is carried out to record and analyse the existing landscape/townscape characteristics and relevant townscape or landscape policies. The baseline survey will inform the value of the landscape/townscape and visual resources within the study area.

The baseline survey includes:

- Desk study to identify the local character and likely Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV);
- Research to establish the landscape/townscape context including nature conservation interest;
- Site visit/s; and
- An analysis of landscape/townscape characteristics in order to understand how they are made up and experienced as well as ascertaining their relative sensitivity.

Assessment of potential effects

The development effects are considered for both landscape/townscape and visual receptors. The term 'receptor' is used in landscape and visual impact assessments to mean an element or assemblage of elements that will be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed development. In this instance, townscape receptors are also considered due to the urban nature of the Site's context. The baseline survey informs the identification of sensitive receptors.

In both landscape/townscape or visual terms, the sensitivity of the receptor is a function of the value and susceptibility to change.

Identification of the value attached to the views is dependent upon the location and context of the viewpoint and viewing opportunities, as illustrated by the viewpoints. Key consideration is the presence of designations or recognition of the particular value of the view in relation to heritage assets, guided books or touristic maps, etc. Visual susceptibility is defined by the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the views at particular locations and by the extent to which their attention or interest may be focused on the views.

Assessing landscape/townscape receptor value is a complex task often subjective to the individual due to perception and experience. This includes understanding the value of the receptors for which box 5.1 of the GLVIA3 and TGN 02/21 provide useful parameters to aid the identification of the value of landscape; some of these factors are also applicable to townscape value, which if further defined in TIN 05/17. It is noted that, while the presence of designations and their hierarchy is an important factor to define the landscape and townscape value, this is also dependent on the perceived scenic quality of the area, its distinctiveness, historical and cultural association. Therefore, the absence of designations does not equate to a low value.

Finally, with regard to the value of landscape/townscape receptors, it is considered that recent positions adopted nationally and locally by several public and government bodies declaring the climate change emergency urges assessment works to cautiously include this as a criterion to define receptor values. With the rise of literary evidence supporting the role of green spaces in

relation to public health and wellbeing, it appears sensible to consider this parameter as an indicator of the value and distinctiveness of landscape elements within an urban context.

Landscape susceptibility is defined as "*the ability of the landscape (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies"* (Paragraph 5.40 of GLVIA3). Such definition applies to townscape susceptibility too.

Table A - Receptors value and susceptibility

SCALE	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
HIGH	Landscape/townscape receptor	**Value:** Internationally or nationally designated resource. Resources of national importance or protected by an Act of Parliament or the NPPF policies (i.e. AONB, National Parks, Conservation Areas, etc). Distinctive urban or landscape features with no potential for substitution. The receptor affords high aesthetic appeal and intact landscape/townscape features, with particular consideration for award-winning architecture or landscapes. The considered resource is intact and/or in good condition. There is a distinctive and strong sense of place. The townscape materiality and streetscape are coherent and make an important contribution to the local character. The landscape makes a large contribution to the public's recreational experience and health/wellbeing of the relevant community. There is high level of wilderness. Tranquillity is an important feature of the receptor's qualities. There are strong historic and cultural associations and the receptor makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, if any. This receptor or elements of it greatly contribute to mitigating climate change. **Susceptibility:** The receptor cannot accommodate the Proposed Development without notable consequences for the maintenance of the baseline and/or relevant planning policy
	Visual receptors	**Value:** The view is valued at a national or regional level. The view is of high scenic quality, often protected by planning designations.

SCALE	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		It is a visitor destination, or heritage asset, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. The townscape/landscape aesthetic is visually intact and coherent, there are no detracting/deteriorated features. There are references to the view in literature or art, or the view appears in guidebooks or on tourist maps. It is a strategic location or viewpoint which may attract a large number of viewers. **Susceptibility:** Communities or residents at home, where views contribute to the setting or visual amenity (primary/main view) of the house or settlement. Ramblers on recreational or scenic routes, (including public rights of way) where awareness of views is likely to be high. People who are engaged in outdoor recreation, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape/townscape, or on particular views.
MEDIUM	Landscape/Townscape receptor	**Value:** Locally designated resources. Components of the landscape which are of regional or local importance such as Regional and County Parks or Wildlife Sites; townscape with elements which are protected or valued through local or neighbourhood planning policies, such as locally listed buildings, protected open space or group of listed buildings. The resource has limited potential for substitution. The condition of this landscape/townscape is of moderate aesthetic appeal and distinctive features are replicated elsewhere in the local or regional context (i.e. they are not unique). There are detractive elements as such degraded landscapes, main transport infrastructure or industrial areas. It makes a moderate contribution to the public's recreational experience and health/wellbeing of the relevant community. Tranquillity is not a prevailing feature of the receptor's character. Wilderness is limited. Limited historic and/or cultural associations. This receptor or elements of it contribute moderately to mitigating climate change. The landscape include some signs of degradation. **Susceptibility:**

SCALE	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		The receptor has some ability to accommodate the Proposed Development. There would be some consequences for the maintenance of the baseline and/or relevant planning policy.
	Visual receptors	**Value**: The view is valued at a local level. It is mostly frequented by local people. The view is not publicised or signposted. It is reasonably attractive but otherwise unremarkable. There are some detracting features in the views. **Susceptibility:** Travellers on road, rail, or local paths for which views are not the primary focus, although they do contribute to the setting of the route. In residential visual amenity terms, it is a secondary/periphery view.
LOW	Landscape/Townscape receptor	**Value:** Components of the landscape/townscape with limited interest, weak or discordant elements and elements of distraction that interfere with the quality of the area. The receptor is rarely intact and/or in poor condition, with little or no aesthetic appeal. Lack of designations or distinctive elements. Without historic/cultural association. Resources of local importance with potential for substitution or common in the regional/national context. Makes little or no contribution to the public's recreational experience and health/wellbeing of the relevant community. Little or no level of wildness and/or tranquillity. This receptor or elements of it make little to no contribution to mitigating climate change. It is associated to degraded landscape. **Susceptibility:** The receptor has the ability to readily accommodate the Proposed Development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline and/or relevant planning policy.
	Visual receptors	**Value:** The view is not valued, or is of limited local value. The view is of low aesthetic quality and may detract from the surroundings.

SCALE	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		It is not a publicly accessible location. **Susceptibility:** People engaged in activities which do not involve or depend upon the appreciation of views of the surrounding townscape. People at their place of work, whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of life.

The effects of the proposal are quantified by identifying the magnitude of the change.

The magnitude of change on landscape/townscape features and characters includes consideration of the scale and nature of features either removed or introduced, the extent of loss of vegetation and urban features and the degree to which the baseline character may be altered. The magnitude of landscape/townscape effects resulting from the construction and/or the operation of a particular development is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. In accordance with the approach advocated in Paragraphs 5.48 – 5.52 of GLVIA3, the magnitude of landscape/townscape effect considers the size and scale of the change, the geographical extent over which each effect would be felt and their duration and reversibility.

The magnitude of visual effect is gauged by the degree to which specific views would change with the development and the type of viewer. The magnitude of visual effect is categorised as high, medium, low, or negligible which is in accordance with the guidance on the use of word scales that is provided in Paragraph 3.27 of GLVIA3. The magnitude of visual change takes into account possible changes in a receptor's view caused by the construction and/or operation of the development. This would also depend upon distance, for example, on views of increasing distance the effect becomes less.

Table B defines the magnitude of effects on the townscape and visual receptors.

Table B - Magnitude of effects

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
HIGH	Landscape/Townscape receptor	**Size and/or scale:** The extent and relative proportion of the landscape/urban element(s) to be lost/added would be large and/or the lost/added element(s) make a key contribution to the baseline character and/or value. Introduction of new built elements that would be likely to be perceived to be a dominant feature. Large scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape/townscape. The proposal is in great contrast with the receptor key qualities.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		Geographical extent: Effects would be discernible across a large majority or the entirety of the designation or character area associated to the receptor. **Duration and reversibility of effects:** Effects of the introduction of new features would be long-term i.e. will last for over 15 years or will be permanent. Loss of landscape/townscape features that are irreplaceable or can only be replaced in the long-term.
	Visual receptors	**Size and/or scale:** A major change or obstruction of a view appearing as a dominant or prominent feature. If effects on the residential visual amenity are considered, the proposal is blocking the only available view from the property or a main/primary view and/or it is overwhelming in all the directions. The proposal causes a substantial change in the skyline introducing a contrasting feature in the otherwise open and/or uninterrupted horizon. The additional feature contrasts with a strong/characteristic urban skyline and detracts from existing landmark buildings. **Geographical extent:** The receptor is located in close proximity of the development (i.e. the development is visible in the foreground) and therefore this is directly/centrally visible and takes a large portion of the view. The view is experience at slow speed (i.e. by pedestrians or cyclists). **Duration and reversibility of effects:** Effects of the introduction of new features would be long-term i.e. will last for over 15 years or will be permanent.
MEDIUM	Landscape/Townscape receptor	**Size and/or scale:** The extent and relative proportion of the landscape/urban element(s) to be lost/added would be moderate and/or any lost/added elements make a moderate contribution to the baseline character and/or value. Introduction of new built elements that would be likely to be perceived to be a feature. Moderate scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape/townscape. The proposal is in contrast with some of the receptor key qualities.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		Geographical extent: Effects would be discernible across a moderate proportion of the designation or character area associated with the receptor. **Duration and reversibility of effects:** Effects of the introduction of new features would be medium-term i.e. will last for between five and fifteen years. Loss of features that can be fully replaced within the same period.
	Visual receptors	**Size and/or scale:** A moderate change or partial view of a new element within the view that may be readily noticed. The change is partly screened, or glimpsed views are available. If effects on the residential visual amenity are considered, the proposal is blocking a secondary view. The proposal causes a noticeable change in the skyline introducing a contrasting feature in the largely uniform horizon. The additional feature contrasts with the urban skyline and detracts from some of the existing landmark buildings. **Geographical extent:** The receptor is located at some distance from the development which will be visible within a portion of the view. The change is obliquely visible and/or appearing as a noticeable feature in the middle ground. The view is intermittent or experienced from a vehicle moving at moderate speed (i.e. speed controlled areas). **Duration and reversibility of effects:** Effects of the introduction of new features would be medium-term i.e. will last for between five and fifteen years.
LOW	Townscape receptor	**Size and/or scale**: The extent and relative proportion of the landscape/urban element(s) to be lost/added would be minor and/or any lost/added elements make only a minor contribution to the baseline character and/or value. Introduction of new elements that would be likely to be perceived to be a small-scale feature or quality. Small scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the landscape/townscape. The proposal is only partially in contrast with the receptor key qualities.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		Geographical extent: Effects would be discernible across a small proportion of the designation or character area associated to the receptor. Effects are restricted to the close vicinity of the development site. **Duration and reversibility of effects:** Effects of the introduction of newly built features would be short-term i.e. will last for between one and five years. Loss of townscape elements that can be fully replaced within the same period.
	Visual receptors	**Size and/or scale:** A low level of change, affecting a small part of the view. The change is largely screened, or few glimpsed views are available. If effects on the residential visual amenity are considered, the proposal is blocking a peripheral view. The proposal causes a small change in the skyline and it is largely integrated with the horizon. **Geographical extent:** The receptor is located at a considerable distance from the development which will be visible within a limited portion of the view. The changes are obliquely visible and/or appearing in the background. The view changes rapidly, i.e. from fast-moving road vehicles or trains. **Duration and reversibility of effects:** Effects of the introduction of newly built features would be short-term i.e. will last for between one and five years.
NEGLIGIBLE	Landscape/Townscape receptor	**Size and/or scale:** The extent and relative proportion of the landscape/urban element(s) to be lost/added would be barely perceptible and/or any lost/added elements make a minimal or no contribution to the baseline character and/or value. Introduction of new built elements that will be likely to be imperceptible. Minimal alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the townscape. The proposal largely fits within or is in keeping of the receptor key qualities. **Geographical extent**: Effects would only be discernible within the development site or immediately alongside it. **Duration and reversibility of effects**: Effects of the introduction of new elements would last for less than

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		a year. Any loss of landscape/townscape features that can be fully replaced immediately.
	Visual receptors	**Size and/or scale:** A small change to the view. The proposal is substantially screened by intervening features. The proposal has minimal effects on residential visual amenity. The proposal fits within the skyline and/or doesn't introduce prominent features. **Geographical extent:** The receptor is located at a far distance from the development which will be barely visible within the view. A change to the view that may be obliquely viewed and/or viewed at high speed over short periods and capable of being missed by the casual observer. **Duration and reversibility of effects**: Effects of the introduction of new built elements would last for less than a year.

The significance of effects on a landscape/townscape or visual receptor is a function of the magnitude of the effect and the sensitivity of the receptor. The relationship between the two factors is portrayed in Table C. The potential impacts identified in the LVIA help inform the mitigation measures to be incorporated into the design.

The effects can be beneficial or adverse. Table C sets out the level of effects, which are described as beneficial, neutral, or adverse. These are largely professional judgments drawn from the assessment process.

In landscape/townscape terms, **adverse** effects may be the result of direct loss of essential/distinctive elements that contribute to the characterisation of the site's context. An adverse townscape effect could also be caused by means of great contrast between the qualities of the proposal and a valued feature. However, sometimes architecture of the greatest quality can mitigate the changes.

Instead, **beneficial** effects enhance the landscape/townscape character and contribute to the value of the site's context at various scales. In this instance, the contrast with a valued landscape/townscape is considered positively as the result of a high-quality design.

In visual terms, the effect is considered **adverse** if there is a loss of visual amenity or a distinctive feature/landmark; visual competition that will diminish the appreciation of the existing asset is also considered negatively. On the other hand, should the proposal produce an enhancement or improvement of the visual amenity then the impact is considered **beneficial**.

A **neutral** effect would be the result of a development that does not worsen the baseline condition, nor it causes the loss of visual amenity or valued landscape/townscape features. This would certainly be the case of development that replaces 'like for like' the existing built form.

In line with GLVIA3, the assessment considers possible landscape/townscape and visual effects at three stages, which will be included as appropriate based on the case-by-case approach and consultation with the Local Authority:

- During demolition and construction;
- Opening Year (Year 1); and
- Following 15 years of occupation (Year 15).

For the purpose of the Environmental Statement, a 'Major' or 'Major/Moderate' (Table C) level of effect (landscape/townscape or visual) is considered to be a 'Significant Effect'. It should be noted that other disciplines within the ES would consider significant also effects that score a 'Moderate' level.

In the case of significant adverse effects, efforts will be made to appropriately design the proposal so that the significance of such effects will be prevented or avoided. If the significant adverse effects cannot be completely extinguished at Year 1, then all reasonable efforts should be made to mitigate the remaining townscape or visual effects at Year 15 or pursue off-setting measures.

Table C - Significance of landscape/townscape and visual effects