APPENDIX 10.1
METHODOLOGY

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This assessment is prepared in accordance with the guidelines as set out in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition', (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. However, given the urban nature of the context of the Site, the GLVIA3 approach is applied with reference to townscape impact rather than landscape impact. The term townscape is in fact use to encompass all the urban and landscape characteristic of the Site and its context.

The 'Design Manual for Roads and Bridges: Volume 11' (DMRB), Section 3 Environmental Assessment Techniques (August 2009) is also considered where appropriate. Particularly, reference is made to Chapter 8 'Variation for Urban Scheme' which emphasises the assessment of impact on townscape features.

Similarly, the 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment' (RVAA), Technical Guidance Note 2/19, and the 'Townscape Character Assessment', Technical Information Note 05/2017, by the Landscape Institute have been considered in the definition of the assessment criteria presented in Table 1 and 2.

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.

Effects are assessed on townscape receptors, (townscape impact assessment) and visual receptors (visual impact assessment). The significance of effect on a receptor is a function of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change caused by the proposed development.

Given the urban context, the density of development may restrict the geographical scope for the townscape effects; the definition of the study area is based on the Townscape Character Assessment and field study. However, the area within which significant effects on view and visual amenity are predicted to occur may be larger, the study area for visual effects is informed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility mapping.

Viewpoints photography and visualisations

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 townscape characteristics and relevant townscape or landscape policies. The baseline survey will inform the value of the townscape and visual resources within the study area.

The baseline survey includes:

- Desk study to identify the landscape character and likely Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV);
- Research to establish the townscape context including nature conservation interest;
- Site visit/s; and
- An analysis of 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 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 considered due to the urban nature of the Site's context. The baseline survey informs the identification of sensitive receptors.

In both 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 townscape receptor value is a complex task often subjective to the individual due to perception and experience. Box 5.1 of the GLVIA3 provides useful parameters to aid the identification of the value of landscape; some of these factors are also applicable to townscape value. The DMRB guidance also lists a series of parameters that should be taken into consideration to assess the character and quality of the townscape. It is noted that, while the presence of designations and their hierarchy is an important factor to define the 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.

Tranquillity is also considered, as per GLVIA guidance, to define the townscape receptors value. According to the 'Tranquillity – an Overview' Technical Information Note 01/2017 by the Landscape Institute '*The interpretation of tranquillity is often linked to an association or engagement with the natural environment and it is this interpretation that places the term within the realms of landscape related study and research. Tranquillity is commonly associated with 'wildness' and 'remoteness' but it is widely recognised that none of these terms is synonymous.'* Although the definition seems to contradict the typical characteristics of a townscape (i.e. not remote or wild, but crowded and urbanised) the '*relative tranquillity in an urban greenspace may be very high, despite intrusion from background traffic noise or the presence of many other people.'* Therefore, tranquillity should be considered and valued where appropriate, considering also that planning policies typically encourage development to maintain or improve the existing level of tranquillity. For the purpose of this TVIA the following criteria are to be considered to establish whether tranquillity is a factor that raises value of the townscape receptors or not:

- Proximity to urban greenspace or countryside;
- Traffic disturbance;

- Noise disturbance;
- Existing uses (i.e. residential, commercial, educational, recreational, etc);
- Tranquillity maps, if available (i.e. CPRE and The Countryside Agency mapping); and
- Hard and softworks balance.

Finally, with regard to the value of 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 well-being, 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 within the TVIA.

The principles to identify visual and townscape receptors sensitivities are set out in Table A.

Table A - Receptors value and susceptibility

SCALE	RECEPTOR	VALUE/SUSCEPTIBILITY
HIGH	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). There are strong historic and cultural associations and the receptor makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, if any. Distinctive urban landscape features, nationally designated areas as well as Site of Scientific Interest, National Parks, and Scheduled Ancient Monuments with no or limited potential for substitution. The value of such townscape is usually well recognised due to high aesthetic appeal and intact townscape features, with particular consideration for award-winning architecture or landscapes. There is a distinctive and strong sense of place. The buildings' materiality and streetscape are coherent and make an important contribution to the local character. This townscape makes a large contribution to the public's recreational experience and health/wellbeing of the relevant community. Tranquillity is an important feature of the receptor's context and qualities. This receptor or elements of it greatly contribute to mitigating climate change.

SCALE	RECEPTOR	VALUE/SUSCEPTIBILITY
		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. It is a visitor destination, or heritage asset, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. The townscape 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 townscape, or on particular views.
MEDIUM	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. Limited historic and/or cultural associations. The condition of this 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 such as main transport infrastructure or industrial areas.

SCALE	RECEPTOR	VALUE/SUSCEPTIBILITY
		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 and value. This receptor or elements of it contribute moderately to mitigating climate change. **Susceptibility:** The receptor has some ability to accommodate the Proposed Development. There would be some consequences for the maintenance of the baseline and/or landscape 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 receptor	**Value:** Components of the townscape with limited interest, weak or discordant elements and elements of distraction that interfere with the quality of the area. The townscape/features are 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. Makes little or no contribution to the public's recreational experience and health/wellbeing of the relevant community. Tranquillity does not contribute to the quality of the receptor and its context. This receptor or elements of it make little to no contribution to mitigating climate change. **Susceptibility:** The receptor has the ability to readily accommodate the Proposed Development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline and/or landscape planning policy.

SCALE	RECEPTOR	VALUE/SUSCEPTIBILITY
	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. 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 on the townscape and the visual receptors.

The magnitude of change on townscape features and characters includes consideration of the scale and nature of features either removed or introduced, the extent of loss of vegetation and other urban features and the degree to which the townscape character may be altered. The magnitude of 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 townscape effect considers the size and scale of the change, the geographical extent over which each townscape effects 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.

The magnitude of visual and townscape effects is generally assessed in relation to size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced, and duration and reversibility.

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

Table B - Magnitude of effects

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
HIGH	Townscape receptor	**Size and/or scale:** The extent and relative proportion of the urban element(s) to be lost/added would be large and/or the lost/added element(s) make a key contribution to townscape character and/or value.

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

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		The proposal is in contrast with some of the receptor key qualities. **Geographical extent:** Effects would be discernible across a moderate proportion of the townscape 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 townscape elements 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 urban element(s) to be lost/added would be minor and/or any lost/added elements make only a minor contribution to townscape character and/or value. Introduction of new elements that would be likely to be perceived to be a small-scale townscape characteristic. Small scale alteration to the aesthetic and perceptual characteristics of the townscape.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		The proposal is only partially in contrast with the receptor key qualities. **Geographical extent:** Effects would be discernible across a small proportion of the townscape 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	Townscape receptor	**Size and/or scale:** The extent and relative proportion of the urban element(s) to be lost/added would be barely perceptible and/or any lost/added elements make a minimal or no contribution to townscape 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.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	RECEPTOR	CHARACTERISTICS
		Duration and reversibility of effects: Effects of the introduction of new built elements would last for less than a year. Any loss of townscape elements 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 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 TVIA 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 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. Such loss compromises the integrity of the townscape character and designations. An adverse effect could also be caused by means of great contrast between the qualities of the proposal and a valued townscape. However, sometimes architecture of the greatest quality can mitigate the changes.

Instead, **beneficial** effects enhance the townscape character and contribute to the value of the Site's context at various scales. In this instance, the contrast with a valued 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**. High-quality design is therefore also considered positively where it contributes to the visual amenity without interference with distinctive features.

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 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 (ES) a 'Major', 'Major/Moderate' or 'Moderate' (Table C) level of effect (townscape or visual) is considered to be a 'Significant Effect'.

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 - Level of landscape/townscape and visual effects