

# **Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal**

Land at Harthill Road

August 2016

**Turley**

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**Client**

Redrow Homes

**Our reference**

REDM3004

05 August 2016

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) has been prepared by Turley VIA on behalf of Redrow Homes Ltd and assesses the effect of application proposals for development of land at Harthill Road, Liverpool. Full planning permission is sought for residential development including the refurbishment and renewal of existing buildings.
- 1.2 This appraisal establishes the baseline situation of the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and its surroundings. The sensitivity of the site and its surroundings to the application proposals is appraised and the potential effects of the proposals considered. Potential mitigation measures are also considered, where relevant.
- 1.3 For the purpose of the LVIA the site is referred to as the 'Application Site' and the application proposals are referred to as the 'Scheme Proposal'. The boundary of the Application Site is set out in **Figure 1** of **Appendix 1**.
- 1.4 The appraisal is set out under six sections. Section two provides a summary and approach of the methodology used for the appraisal, followed by section three which assesses the baseline situation of the Application Site and the surrounding area's landscape character and visual amenity. The fourth section describes the Scheme Proposal and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement, also prepared by Turley to support the planning application.
- 1.5 The penultimate section provides an appraisal of effects of the Scheme Proposal on the identified baseline situation and a summary of findings is set out at the end of the document. The LVIA is supported by a series of figures, which includes photos and can be found within **Appendix 1**.
- 1.6 The relevant planning policy context within which the Scheme Proposal is considered is set out in full at **Appendix 2**.

## 2. Appraisal Methodology

- 2.1 The methodology and approach adopted in undertaking this appraisal uses structured, informed and reasoned professional judgement taking into account a combination of quantitative and qualitative factors.

### Study Area

- 2.2 The Application Site covers an area of approximately 5.24 hectares in extent. It consists of a series of land parcels relating to: a former parks department depot; Beechley, a former care home facility; and, a collection of facilities including Calder Kids adventure, a model railway, Beechley stables and horse paddocks, which all fall to the northwest of Calderstones Park. The study area for this LVIA includes both the Application Site and its local context, which includes the roads fronting on to Calderstones Park and the park itself, as illustrated in **Figure 1 of Appendix 1**. The landscape character assessment considers the Application Site at a local level scale. The visual assessment considers the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) within the immediate context of the Application Site.

### Surveys

- 2.3 A preliminary desk study was undertaken to establish the physical components of the Application Site and its surroundings. Potential visual receptors to the Application Site from the surrounding area were also identified. Ordnance Survey (OS) maps were utilised to identify these features together with aerial photography.
- 2.4 A field study was undertaken by a landscape specialist from Turley VIA on 28 January 2016. The weather was cloudy, the visibility was good. The field study recorded the Application Site and surrounding context's landscape features and verified the visual receptors identified in the desk study. The field study involved travelling throughout the study area and producing a working photographic record.

### Methodology

- 2.5 The appraisal is carried out in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013); and An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014). The methodology is set out in **Appendix 3** of this appraisal and outlined in **Figure 2 of Appendix 1**.
- 2.6 In summary, the approach is to establish the baseline condition of existing landscape character and visual receptors of the Application Site and its surroundings. The Scheme Proposal is then discussed and the potential degree of 'effect' it will have is predicted. Consideration is then given to the 'residual effect' of the Scheme Proposal once the landscape planting has matured.

## 3. Baseline Appraisal

### Landscape Designations

- 3.1 The Application Site is located within the suburb of Allerton, contained in the urban extent of Liverpool. The Application Site and wider Calderstones Park is situated within a designated 'Green Space' (Policies OE11 & OE12) and 'Green Wedge' (Policy OE3) in the adopted Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (2002). These policies aim to preserve the recreational function; visual amenity value; and, the open character of these resources. The Application Site is also located within the Mersey Forest (Policy OE10) with guidance provided by the Mersey Forest Plan (2013).
- 3.2 In the Core Strategy DPD 2012 (not submitted) which will form the framework for the emerging Local Plan for Liverpool, the Application Site is also falls under Green Wedge policy to protect the predominantly open character and function.

### Landscape Elements

- 3.3 The following features have been identified as contributing to both the landscape character of the Application Site and its surrounding area. They will also influence the visibility of the Application Site.

#### Application Site Features

- 3.4 The Application Site forms the north western edge to the adjacent Calderstones Park, fronting Harthill Road, between Calderstones Road and Allerton Road. It can be broadly split into three land parcels, set out in **Figure 3** and based on their associated land use:
1. To the north is a former parks department depot;
  2. To the south is Beechley, a former care home facility and riding stables; and
  3. In between these areas is a collection of facilities including Calder Kids adventure playground; a model railway; and horse paddocks.
- 3.5 The former depot site (Parcel 1) has a metal rail to its perimeter and a mixture of informal and formal park paths encircle it. A low stone wall runs alongside the footway to both sides of Harthill Road. The wall enclosing the northern boundary of Beechley is slightly higher, preventing views into Parcel 2 from the pavement. Parcel 2 is accessed via a carriage drive enclosed by mature trees. Parcel 3, has a timber post and rail fence to its eastern boundary and a path within Calderstones Park follows the route of the boundary. A line of trees and shrubs outside of the Application Site filter views out to the park. The timber fence continues on the western boundary and this and a line of mature trees separates Parcels 2 and 3. Parts of the Parcels are visible from adjacent paths but none of them are accessible to the public

#### Land Use

- 3.6 The Application Site is predominantly surrounded by residential development associated with Mossley Hill, Allerton and Woolton. These residential areas are punctuated by open space and recreation grounds, including Calderstones Park. The park originated from

the amalgamation of the grounds of two large merchants houses, Calderstone and Hart Hill, by the City Corporation during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Directly adjacent to the Application Site to the northern side of Harthill Road is Calderstones School and associated playing fields. The Grade I listed building, All Hallows Church, is located to the west of the Application Site within a triangle formed by Greenhill Road; Allerton Road; and Harthill Road.

### **Topography and Drainage**

- 3.7 The landform within the Application Site is gently undulating between approximately 45 metres and 55 metres above ordnance datum (AOD). There is a boating lake located centrally to the southern side of Calderstones Park. In the wider landscape there are a series of hills to the west, south and east including Mossley Hill, Woolton Hill and at Beechcroft, associated with Allerton Golf Course.

### **Vegetation**

- 3.8 A Tree Survey has been produced by Trevor Bridge Associates for the Application Site and submitted as part of this planning application. In summary:

#### **Parcel 1**

- There are a mix of Category 'A', 'B', and 'C' trees to the Parcel peripheries
- Category 'A' trees include rows of Lime trees on the eastern boundary; and Beech and oak trees to the northern boundary
- There are nine Category 'U' trees recommended for removal on account of their condition. These include two cherry trees alongside the vehicular access route and a row of Balsam poplar to the eastern boundary.

#### **Parcel 2**

- There are a mix of Category 'A', 'B' and 'C' trees located across the Parcel.
- Three Category 'A' lime trees are located within the paddocks to the southeast of Beechley.
- Fifteen Category 'U' trees located to the Parcel peripheries are recommended for removal.

#### **Parcel 3**

- Located centrally within the Parcel are a mixed group of Category 'C' trees. To the Parcel boundaries are groups and individual Category 'A', 'B' and 'C' trees.
- The Category 'A' trees are generally to the south western and north western boundaries. The south eastern and north eastern boundaries are formed by Category 'B' beech trees and a mixed species group.
- There are 5 individual trees and 1 Leyland Cypress hedge located to the south and northwest of the Parcel that are Category 'U' and recommended for removal.

- 3.9 Within the wider extent of Calderstones Park there are mature parkland trees and a mix of ornamental and native planting. Mature street trees; avenue trees focussing linear views; and, densely vegetated gardens are common characteristics of the surrounding residential area.

### **Movement**

- 3.10 Harthill Road and Allerton Road run alongside the western and southern boundaries of the Application Site. There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) across the Application Site. All three parcels have restricted vehicular access from Harthill Road, but Parcel 1's access point is also used by pedestrians to gain access to Calderstones Park, all be it, public access terminates before the operational depot itself (i.e. the council depot site is not publically accessible). The remaining parcels have restricted or private access. In the wider landscape, residential streets branch off two main avenues – Menlove Avenue and Mather Avenue. The Trans Pennine Trail, a national coast to coast route for recreation and transport follows part of Calderstones Road to the north of the Application Site.

### **Built Form**

- 3.11 The built form surrounding the Application Site predominantly relates to two storey detached and semi-detached residential properties set within mature gardens. The properties facing Calderstones Park are generally larger in scale and set back from the road behind mature trees. Other significant buildings include Grade I listed All Hallows Church and three Grade II listed buildings within Calderstones School. Within Calderstones Park, Harthill Lodge, Calderstones House and its associated stables are also Grade II listed buildings.
- 3.12 Built form within the Application Site includes the concrete framework of former structures within the park depot site (Parcel 1) and a single storey building used by Calder Kids in Parcel 3. Within Parcel 2, Beechley is a Grade II listed two storey villa and its associated stables; garden ha-ha; and, walls are also listed. A large scale agricultural arena building is also located within Parcel 2.

### **Landscape Character Assessment**

- 3.13 At the time of this appraisal there were no current townscape or landscape character assessments covering the Application Site. It was therefore considered appropriate to assess the landscape/townscape elements within the study area which combine to form distinct character areas. These are derived from an assessment of changes in land use; vegetation; built form; condition; and, movement. This has identified, along with consideration of aesthetic and perceptual factors five Landscape Character Areas (LCA) which are listed below and illustrated on **Figure 4**:

- LCA1 – Beechley Estate
- LCA2 – Harthill Road Western Park Fringe
- LCA3 – Calderstones and Harthill Estate Gardens
- LCA4 – Calderstones Eastern Parkland
- LCA5 – Allerton and Mossley Hill Residential Areas

#### **LCA1 - Beechley Estate**

- 3.14 This character area comprises Parcel 2 of the Application Site and two individual residential properties. The enclosed character and private ownership contrasts with the

surrounding publically accessible parkland. The key elements and features of the LCA are:

- Predominantly residential land use with a series of horse paddocks and stables. Beechley, a former care home, is no longer occupied.
- Vegetation is generally associated with residential gardens including ornamental shrubs; clipped hedgerows; and, mature trees. A mature woodland block is located to the south west of the LCA.
- Detached two storey residential properties of varied style and form. Beechley and associated entrance gates, Ha Ha and stables are Grade II listed buildings. A large scale equestrian arena fronts Harthill Road. Beechley Cottage includes a large modern extension.
- Condition is variable with good quality mature trees scattered throughout and manicured grounds at Beechley Cottage. Beechley has declined in condition as has the large scale agricultural barn to the west of the LCA
- Access is restricted to the self-contained private residences and riding stables. Properties are set back from the road and entrance gates; mature vegetation; and, walls to the peripheries visually enclose the area.

- 3.15 LCA1 is considered to be of moderate importance on account of its current use and condition, with some areas of higher importance including the listed buildings. It is therefore assessed to be of **major to moderate value** overall. The south east area is considered to be of moderate to minor value on account of the influence of modern development and the change in land use from gardens to paddocks.

### **LCA2 - Harthill Road Western Park Fringe**

- 3.16 Parcels 1 and 3 of the Application Site are located within this area. It is characterised by mixed land use; restricted access arrangements; and a decline in condition contrasting with surrounding well-maintained parkland landscape. The key elements and features of the LCA are:

- Mixed land use with a number redundant features including: the former park depot site; a single residential property; model railway; paddocks; and, Calder Kids adventure playground.
- Vegetation relates to mature parkland trees to the peripheries; allotment gardens; rough grass and scrub to the former park depot site; and scattered trees and shrubs.
- The built form includes a two storey Grade II listed gatehouse, Harthill Lodge; single storey school building; and redundant concrete framework in the former park depot site.
- The condition has declined provoking a sense of neglect to parts of the area. 'No entry' signs, deteriorating boundary features, and overgrown vegetation reduce the landscape and visual quality of the area.



- The site is not publically accessible. A variety of boundary treatments including metal railings; padlocked gates; post and rail fencing and stone walls restrict public access.
- Views out of the area are generally contained by mature boundary vegetation

3.17 LCA2 is considered to be of minor importance on account of its current use and condition, with some areas of higher importance including the listed building. It is therefore assessed to be overall of **moderate to minor value**, with the Application Site located within an area that has minor to low value.

### **LCA3 – Calderstones and Harthill Estate Gardens**

3.18 Located to the east of the Application Site this area is characterised by a series of publically accessible intimate spaces relating to the Harthill Estate and Calderstones Park. The key elements and features of the LCA are:

- Informal and formal recreational land use including walking routes; ornamental gardens; playground; car parking; and, Mansion House containing a café, exhibition space and function area.
- Vegetation relates to the estate gardens character including avenue trees to pathways that frame views; formal ornamental planting within courtyards; woodland trails; and scattered ornamental trees and shrubs.
- The built form includes Grade II listed Calderstones House (Mansion House) and stables; car parking; and walled gardens.
- The LCA is in a good condition with the active management of formal gardens and parkland. Good quality parkland trees are located throughout.
- Public access is available throughout with a series of formal walkways defined by avenue trees; informal woodland trails; vehicular access with car parking; and park amenities.
- Views across the area are framed or contained by mature vegetation and walls enclosing garden spaces.

3.19 LCA3 is considered to be of moderate and local importance on account of its current use and condition, with some areas of higher importance including the listed buildings. It is therefore assessed to be of **major to moderate value**.

### **LCA4 – Calderstones Eastern Parkland**

3.20 This character area includes the wider publically accessible extent of Calderstones Park. It is defined from adjacent areas by its large scale, informal, parkland character. The key elements and features of the LCA are:

- Recreational land use including playing fields; open parkland spaces for informal recreation; walking routes and a boating lake;
- Vegetation is predominantly mature parkland trees. It is a protected nature conservation site.

- Built form is limited to the Boat House and toilet block to the south west corner.
- Public access is available throughout with a series of formal walkways defined by avenue trees; informal trails; and vehicular access with car parking off Yew Tree Road.
- There are open views across the parkland evoking a sense of the large scale, and filtered views to the residential properties facing the park.

3.21 LCA4 is considered to be of moderate to high importance on account of its value locally and condition. It has no designated heritage assets but is protected for nature conservation. It is therefore assessed to be of **moderate value**.

### **LCA5 – Allerton and Mossley Hill Residential Areas**

3.22 This character area comprises the residential areas surrounding Calderstones Park. This includes areas neighbouring the western and southern boundaries of the Application Site. The key elements and features of the LCA are:

- Predominantly residential land use punctuated by open space, local amenities and recreation grounds.
- Vegetation relates to well vegetated residential gardens and mature street trees.
- Built form includes two storey detached and semi-detached residential properties. Properties facing the park are often larger in scale. Scattered listed buildings including All Hallows Church and the buildings at Calderstones School.
- Residential streets branch off two main treed avenues – Menlove Avenue and Mather Avenue. The Trans Pennine Trail crosses the area.
- Long distance views are generally prevented by intervening residential development aside from views south west across the Geoffrey Hughes Memorial Ground towards St. Anne's Church.

3.23 LCA5 is considered to be of moderate importance, with some areas of higher importance including the listed buildings. It is therefore assessed to be of **major to moderate value**.

### **Visual Appraisal**

3.24 The visibility of the Application Site and extent of its ZTV has been established through both a desktop analysis of the surrounding area and by confirming on site the localised screening effect of the landform, vegetation and built form. The visual amenity appraisal has been undertaken in a two-staged process:

- Stage 1: established the likely extent of the Application Site's ZTV and the visual receptors that are visible from within the Application Site; and
- Stage 2 determined the visibility of the Application Site to the previously identified visual receptors as illustrated on **Figure 5**. This visual receptors assessment will

be supported by a series of photographs from representative viewpoints as shown in **Figures 6 and 7**.

### **Stage 1**

- 3.25 It was concluded that the Application Site's visibility is reasonably contained due to the mature trees within Calderstones Park; the mature street trees on local roads; stone and brick walls defining individual plots of land; the large scale Calderstones School buildings to the west of the Application Site; and, the two storey residential development enclosing the park. In summary:

#### **Parcel 1**

- Open views are possible to the west along the access road from Harthill Road.
- Occasional glimpsed views to residential properties facing Calderstones Road to the north.
- The pavilion containing The Calderstones, a Scheduled Monument, is noticeable in views to the east from within the parcel. (Although this is to be relocated.)
- The extent of visibility to the remaining areas of Calderstones Park varies dependant on trees and shrubs to the parcel's boundaries. Through breaks in vegetation to the northwest, there are views across the existing allotments.
- Breaks in vegetation and low clipped shrubs to the south allow glimpsed views to trees in the immediate parkland.

#### **Parcel 2**

- Within the parcel there are views to the south from the 'ha-ha' associated with Beechley across the horse paddocks to the mature trees lining the access path to Calderstones Park from Allerton Road. From the house itself, these views are partially screened by mature trees in the paddocks and in its associated gardens.
- Glimpsed views are possible to the south of the parcel towards the modern extension of Beechley Cottage.
- Views west to Harthill Road are generally screened by mature trees; a stone wall enclosing the grounds of Beechley; and, associated buildings within the parcel.
- There are filtered views north into Parcel 3 through breaks in mature vegetation to both sides of the dividing post and rail fence.

#### **Parcel 3**

- The post and rail fence defining the parcel's eastern boundary allows views to trees and shrubs within Calderstones Park. Occasional breaks in this ornamental shrub belt allow glimpsed views further into the Rose Gardens to the south of the former parks department depot.
- Glimpsed views are possible to the south west into the grounds of Beechley and southeast into the adjacent part of Calderstones Park.

- Views northwest to Harthill Road are filtered by trees and buildings within the parcel.

## Stage 2

- 3.26 The visibility of the Application Site in the views from the identified visual receptors are described in the following sections. The existing visibility, distance and value of the visual receptors are set out in Table 3.1. The findings inform the sensitivity of the surrounding areas visual amenity to the Scheme Proposal. To supplement this appraisal eleven representative viewpoints have been identified and consulted on with Liverpool City Council, as shown in **Figures 6 and 7**.
- 3.27 There are likely to be partial views of parts of Parcels 1 and 3 within the Application Site from Harthill Lodge (Ref:1). This includes from the gardens of the residential property and from windows orientated towards the access road to the depot and towards the northwest boundary of Parcel 3. Partial views of the Application Site are also likely to be possible from buildings associated with Calderstones School (Ref:2). The extent of visibility varies dependant on the presence of trees and intervening buildings within the school grounds; the stone wall partially enclosing the grounds of Beechley and mature trees within the Application Site adjacent Harthill Road.
- 3.28 To the northern and southern extents of Harthill Road, there are glimpsed views of trees; boundary features; and, buildings within the Application Site. The lower height stone wall and high canopy trees allow partial views across the allotments to parts of the former parks depot site and parts of Parcel 3. There are also partial views into the Application Site at access points from the road. From Calderstones Road there are glimpsed views of Parcel 1. These glimpsed views are also likely to be possible from properties associated with Calderstones Road to the eastern side of Harthill Road (Ref:9) and Harthill Lodge associated with Calderstones Road (Ref:10).
- 3.29 From the extent of Allerton Road where it runs adjacent to Calderstones School playing fields, there are glimpsed views looking above the boundary wall to the roof of the equestrian arena in Parcel 2 and trees within the Application Site. This extent of visibility continues in the grounds of the Church of All Hallows (Ref:6) and from properties to the southern side of Garth Road (Ref:7). To the northern extent of Garth Drive, views are screened by large scale buildings within Calderstones School. Views from properties facing the Application Site from Allerton Road (Ref:5) are limited to glimpsed of trees and woodland in Parcel 2 due to the intervening trees enclosing Beechley Cottage (Ref:4); the stone wall alongside the pavement; and, the property associated with the junction of Harthill Road and Allerton Road (Ref:3).
- 3.30 From the park paths that are located in close proximity to the Application Site there are glimpsed views to boundary features; buildings and trees within the Application Site. These increase to partial views from paths associated with the access to the former park depot site and from the rose garden where clipped ornamental shrubs allow views across Parcel 1 towards The Calderstones pavilion and parkland trees to the north east. A break in boundary vegetation to the north east corner of Parcel 1 also allows partial views from park paths in close proximity to the Application Site. In the wider parkland to the south, views of the Application Site are prevented by mature trees; the enclosed walled gardens; and, the built form associated with Mansion House. Views from

Mansion House (Calderstones House) itself are also screened by intervening park features.

- 3.31 Views of the Application Site are not likely to be possible from properties associated with Garth Drive (Ref:7); properties associated with Calderstones Road to the western side of Harthill Road (Ref:8); properties to the north of Menlove Avenue (Ref:12); properties to the south of Yew Tree Road (Ref:13); properties to the west of Allerton Road (Ref:14); properties to the north of Calderstones Road (Ref:15); and, properties associated with Allerton Drive (Ref:16).

**Table 3.1: Visual receptors baseline effects**

Visual receptors	Visibility	Distance	Value
Property visual receptors			
Harthill Lodge associated with Harthill Road (Ref:1 on <b>Figure 5</b> )	Partial views	Adjacent	Moderate
Calderstones School (Ref:2)	Partial to glimpsed views	Short	Moderate
Property associated with the junction of Harthill Road and Allerton Road (Ref:3)	Glimpsed views	Adjacent	Moderate to low
Beechley Cottage (Ref:4)	Glimpsed views	Adjacent	Moderate to low
Properties adjacent to the Application Site on Allerton Road (Ref:5)	Glimpsed views	Short	Moderate to low
Church of All Hallows (Ref:6)	Glimpsed	Short	Moderate
Properties associated with Garth Drive (Ref:7)	Glimpsed to no views	Short	Moderate to low
Properties associated with Calderstones Road to the western side of Harthill Road (Ref:8)	No views	Short	Moderate to low
Properties associated with Calderstones Road to the eastern side of Harthill Road (Ref:9)	Glimpsed views	Short	Moderate to low
Harthill Lodge associated with Calderstones Road (Ref:10)	Glimpsed views	Short	Moderate
Mansion House (Ref:11)	No view	Short	Moderate
Properties to the north of Menlove Avenue (Ref:12)	No view	Long	Moderate to low

Visual receptors	Visibility	Distance	Value
Properties to the south of Yew Tree Road (Ref:13)	No view	Long	Moderate to low
Properties to the west of Allerton Road (Ref:14)	No view	Long	Moderate to low
Properties to the north of Calderstones Road (Ref:15)	No view	Long	Moderate to low
Properties associated with Allerton Drive (Ref:16)	No view	Long	Moderate to low
Public highways			
Harthill Road	Partial to glimpsed views	Short	Moderate to low
Allerton Road	Partial to no views	Short	Moderate to low
Matner Avenue (B1580)	Glimpsed to no views	Short to medium	Low
Yew Tree Road	No views	Short	Moderate to Low
Menlove Avenue (A562)	No views	Short to medium	Low
Calderstones Road	Glimpsed to no views	Short	Moderate to Low
Public rights of way			
Trans Pennine Trail	Glimpsed to no views	Short to medium	Moderate

## 4. Scheme Proposal

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for new homes set across three different areas of the Application Site creating three distinct residential areas: The Depot; Beechley Drive; and, Beechley Grounds. This appraisal and Scheme Proposal description is based on the Detailed Site Layout (DSL-01 Revision B) by Redrow Homes. The residential development will comprise 39 no. dwellings and the conversion of existing buildings into 12 no. homes/properties. Vehicular access will branch from existing points on Harthill Road. The Scheme Proposal does not obstruct or alter any publically accessible parts of Calderstones Park.
- 4.2 The Detailed Site Layout shows an indication of landscape treatments which aim to minimise the effects on landscape features; landscape character; views; and, where possible to provide enhancements to the baseline situation. A small number of trees will be lost to accommodate the Scheme Proposal but will be compensated with additional tree planting throughout the layout. The Scheme Proposal does not seek to visually enclose the proposed residential development but aim to soften views of the built form; complement the existing landscape setting; and, reflect the existing surrounding character of residential properties set within well vegetated grounds overlooking parts of Calderstones Park.
- 4.3 The Depot (Parcel 1) falls within a self-contained area defined from the surrounding parkland by ornamental shrubs and a variety of mature parkland trees. The proposed residential properties vary in style to create visual interest and reflect characteristics found in properties the local area. Large gardens set the built form back from the parkland edges and accommodate root protection areas of retained trees. Houses will be constructed of brick with varied colour to details bricks, heads and sills. Occasional properties will have chalk render and the form of the houses reflects properties facing the park from the local area. Trees will be incorporated to front gardens adjacent to the access road in order to break up the massing of built form and enhance views from the entrance of the park.
- 4.4 Beechley Drive (Parcel 3) falls adjacent to the western parkland edge and properties face outwards towards the park. The band of existing trees and shrubs within Calderstones Park soften views of the built form from paths within the park. Three new properties are located to the southeast of Beechley backing on to a tree belt within the park. They are located to the eastern edge of the adjoining paddock which is nestled behind trees and set on lower ground than Beechley. Proposed street trees located along the new access road to enhance glimpsed views from Beechley. New properties also face onto Harthill Road creating an active frontage, partly screened by the boundary wall and existing trees. The use of street trees to this frontage is consistent with local residential streets. Generous front and back gardens to all properties within Beechley Drive reduce the massing of the built form. Again the residential properties vary in style and are sympathetic to the parkland setting.
- 4.5 The Scheme Proposal relating to Beechley Grounds (Parcel 2) includes the sensitive rejuvenation of the listed building with new high quality apartments. The stable block and summer house will also be improved and the associated formal gardens will be

refurbished. The removal of the large equestrian arena adjacent Harthill Road allows for four new dwellings that enhance the street scene along Harthill Road. These dwellings have been designed to be simple, contemporary and of smaller more appropriate scale in the setting of Beechley. The walls, a characteristic feature of the area surrounding Beechley and the stables will be retained.

- 4.6 Further details of the design of the Scheme Proposal are included within the planning application's accompanying illustrative drawings and Design and Access Statement.



## 5. Assessment of Effects

- 5.1 The effect of the Scheme Proposal is quantified by predicting the magnitude of the change in the effects on the previously identified landscape character and visual receptors. The visual assessment does not attempt to predict the visual effects of seasonal changes throughout the year but describes the 'worst case' position in terms of the view for the receptors i.e. in the winter the trees would have lost their leaves.
- 5.2 The appraisal is based on landscape and visual receptors after the fifteenth year of the Scheme Proposal's completion, at this time the landscape strategy would have matured and its effect on the identified receptors will be permanent. On account of the relative containment of the Application Site and the scale of the Scheme Proposal, it was considered that the change experienced on the landscape and visual receptors would be similar during the construction phase and the initial years following implementation.

### **Sensitivity and the residual effect on Landscape Character and Visual Receptors**

#### **Landscape Character**

- 5.3 Effects on landscape character are both direct i.e. on the LCA that the Application Site is located within, and indirect i.e. changes to characteristics that occur beyond the boundary of the LCA. **Table 5.1** summarises the identified landscape receptors sensitivity to change and perceived effect on its characteristics. The Application Site falls across two character areas: LCA1 Beechley Estate and LCA2 Harthill Road Western Park Fringe.

#### ***LCA1 Beechley Estate***

- 5.4 LCA1 Beechley Estate is considered to be of major to moderate value overall with an area of moderate to minor value to the southeast. The Scheme Proposal involves the redevelopment of the listed stables and Beechley to provide residential accommodation. The modifications to the listed buildings have been determined with respect to their heritage value and provide improvements that will preserve their longevity. The existing equestrian arena to be removed is large scale in comparison to other buildings in the character area and an unsympathetic addition to LCA1 Beechley Estate. The proposed terraced properties will be more recessive from the street scene, of improved aesthetic appeal and complement the existing built form. The Scheme Proposal will result in the loss of an area of paddock to the southeast and the replacement with three detached residential properties. This is an area that is already influenced by modern development at Beechley Cottage. The views from Beechley will experience change with houses glimpsed in views from the house and garden. The refurbishment and improvement of the Beechley formal gardens and a new hedgerow adjacent to the south eastern properties will soften views of the built form. Access will remain private and despite the loss of a small number of trees, the mature vegetation enclosing the wider extent of the grounds will be preserved and enhanced.
- 5.5 In terms of planning policy, the LCA retains its existing self-contained nature and predominant residential function. It does not affect the overall perceived openness of the Green Wedge (OE3) in visual terms, the separation between major residential areas or

the recreational value of the Green Space (OE11). New residential properties will be glimpsed from the adjacent entrance to Calderstones Park to the south east but the wider visual amenity value of the green space will be preserved. The Scheme Proposal enhances landscape features and incorporates elements of local distinctiveness. Overall, LCA1 Beechley Estate landscape character would have **medium susceptibility to change** to the Scheme Proposal and a **medium sensitivity**. On balance, the preservation and enhancements of the listed buildings, removal of the large equestrian arena and introduction of new landscape features, are considered to outweigh the adverse effects relating to changes in land use, views and the loss of mature trees. The overall effect of the Scheme Proposal on LCA1 Beechley Estate is **moderate beneficial**.

#### ***LCA2 Harthill Road Western Park Fringe***

- 5.6 The Depot, Beechley Drive and south eastern extent of Beechley Grounds within the Scheme Proposal fall within LCA2 Harthill Road Western Park Fringe which is of moderate to minor value. The allotment gardens and the restricted access associated with this character area will remain unchanged. The Calder Kids adventure playground which represents community facilities will be removed and relocated. This area and the park/council depot site will be replaced with new residential development. This represents a change in land use but also offers revitalisation to an area that is in a poor condition and visually unappealing when viewed from parts of Calderstones Park. There will be an increase in residential development but one that reflects the local character of properties facing the park. Existing vegetation is retained where possible with new planting including native species enhancing the entrance to Calderstones Park from Harthill Road and softening views to the built form.
- 5.7 The parts of the character area that are proposed to accommodate the new housing are generally enclosed from the wider open space and in part contain existing built form. These areas do not contribute to the recreational function of park. The proposed residential properties in the depot will have an influence on views from Calderstones Park but this is of low density and reflects characteristics other areas of residential development in the area. Overall, the visual function of the Green Wedge (OE3) and Green Space (OE11) policies would be retained following the implementation of the Scheme Proposal. LCA2 Harthill Road Western Park Fringe is considered to have a **medium susceptibility to change**, therefore a **medium sensitivity** to the Scheme Proposal. Due to the improvement of the condition of the character area and the sympathetic design of the built form which reflects the style of housing in the local area, the overall effect of the Scheme Proposal is **moderate beneficial**.

#### ***LCA3 Calderstones and Harthill Estate Gardens***

- 5.8 The surrounding parkland to the southeast of the Application Site falls within LCA3 Calderstones and Harthill Estate Gardens character area. Changes experienced in the character area relate to changes to views experienced from publically accessible parts of Calderstones Park. The Scheme Proposal does not constitute a change to the accessibility of the park or its recreation value. In some partial to glimpsed views from surrounding areas residential development will be seen in views that are otherwise occupied by parkland trees, amenity grassland and ornamental shrubs. The Scheme Proposal reflects the existing the residential context of the park and in some parts of the character area, visitors to the park will perceive an improvement in the condition of

neighbouring areas. Due to the existing vegetation that separates the Application Site from the wider parkland, the perceived openness of the area will generally be retained.

- 5.9 It is considered that LCA3 Calderstones and Harthill Estate Gardens can relatively accommodate the Scheme Proposal without undue consequences for the achievement of the associated Green Wedge and Open Space planning policies in regard to visual matters. The susceptibility to change and the resultant sensitivity of the landscape character receptor to the Scheme Proposal is **medium to low**. The magnitude of effect on the landscape character area is considered **minor adverse** due to the awareness of increased residential development in views across a contained extent of the wider character area.

***LCA4 Calderstones Eastern Parkland***

- 5.10 The wider parkland to the east is located within LCA4 Calderstones Eastern Parkland. This area has a moderate value. There are likely to be no changes to views experienced from this part of the park and no direct change to characteristics arising from the Scheme Proposal. Users of the park may be aware of a slight increase in residential development to the west, but this will be similar to the existing presence of housing facing the park and scattered to its peripheries. The function of this area as valued open space between residential areas is retained in accordance with the policies for Green Space and the Green Wedge. The overall the susceptibility of change is considered to be **low** and the sensitivity of the character area is also **low**. The magnitude of effect would be **negligible**.

***LCA5 Allerton and Mossley Hill Residential Areas***

- 5.11 Surrounding the Application Site to the west, is LCA5 Allerton and Mossley Hill Residential Areas which is of major to moderate value. There would be no direct effect on the character area arising from the Scheme Proposal, but there would be an awareness of change resulting from changes to views. This includes the removal of the large scale equestrian arena, the additional residential properties glimpsed across the allotments and the further properties facing Harthill Road. These changes would be experienced across a small portion of the overall character area and the improved condition features in the views and sympathetic character of the high quality residential properties is considered to be beneficial. The susceptibility to change from the Scheme Proposal is **low** and the sensitivity of the character area is **medium to low**. The magnitude of effect is **minor beneficial**.

**Table 5.1: Landscape character effects during 15 years of operation**

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to change	Sensitivity	Effect
LCA1 – Beechley Estate	Major to moderate	Medium	Medium	Moderate beneficial
LCA2 – Harthill Road Western Park Fringe	Moderate to minor	Medium	Medium	Moderate beneficial
LCA3 – Calderstones and	Major to	Medium to low	Medium to	Minor adverse

Harthill Estate Gardens	moderate		low	
LCA 4 - Calderstones Eastern Parkland	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible
LCA 5 - Allerton and Mossley Hill Residential Areas	Major to moderate	Low	Medium to low	Minor beneficial

### Visual Amenity

- 5.12 **Table 5.2** establishes the previously identified visual receptor's sensitivity. This is based on each visual receptor's susceptibility to change and the value attached to particular views experienced. The visibility of the Scheme Proposal from the identified visual receptors is also summarised and discussed below.
- 5.13 There will be partial views of the residential buildings within the Scheme Proposal from Harthill Lodge (Ref:1). Existing trees adjacent to the property will be removed which will increase the prominence of the new built form. The visually intrusive signage and redundant structures within the former council maintenance depot will be removed with additional tree planting and appropriately designed residential properties taking its place.
- 5.14 Buildings associated with Calderstones School (Ref:2) and Harthill Road will also have partial to glimpsed views of new properties replacing the equestrian arena to the southwest of Beechley and facing Harthill Road. There will also be glimpsed views across the allotments to new residential properties in the former park depot site.
- 5.15 From the property associated with the junction of Harthill Road and Allerton Road (Ref:3) there are likely to be glimpsed views through existing vegetation of the residential properties replacing the equestrian arena. From Beechley Cottage (Ref:4), glimpsed views of the Scheme Proposal's detached properties to the southeast of Beechley will be seen in an area currently free from development. Similar views will be available from paths adjacent to the Scheme Proposal in Calderstones Park where housing will be seen filtered through existing parkland trees and ornamental shrubs in winter months.
- 5.16 In views from Allerton Road and associated properties (Ref: 5) the changes relating to built form within the Application Site are generally set behind woodland that is to be retained. From the stretch of the road adjacent to All Hallows Church; the church itself; and, properties associated with Garth Drive (Ref:7), the semi-detached houses replacing the equestrian arena will be glimpsed.
- 5.17 There are likely to be filtered glimpses of residential properties within views of Calderstones Park from properties associated with Calderstones Road to the eastern side of Harthill Road (Ref:9); Harthill Lodge associated with Calderstones Road (Ref:10); parts of Calderstones Road and the Trans Pennine Trail. These views vary in relation to the cumulative effect of intervening parkland trees and whether these trees are in leaf.

- 5.18 It is considered there would be no discernible change experienced to views from the following visual receptors: properties associated with Calderstones Road to the western side of Harthill Road (Ref:8); Mansion House (Ref:11); properties to the north of Menlove Avenue (Ref:12); properties to the south of Yew Tree Road (Ref:13); properties to the west of Allerton Road (Ref:14); properties to the north of Calderstones Road (Ref:15); properties associated with Allerton Drive (Ref:16); Matner Avenue; Yew Tree Road; and, Menlove Avenue.

**Table 5.2: Visual receptors baseline effects**

Visual receptors	Value	Susceptibility of change	Sensitivity	Effect
Property visual receptors				
Harthill Lodge associated with Harthill Road (Ref:1 on <b>Figure 5</b> )	Moderate	High	High to medium	Minor beneficial
Calderstones School (Ref:2)	Moderate to low	Medium	Medium to low	Moderate to minor beneficial
Property associated with the junction of Harthill Road and Allerton Road (Ref:3)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Minor beneficial
Beechley Cottage (Ref:4)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Moderate to minor adverse
Properties adjacent to the Application Site on Allerton Road (Ref:5)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Negligible
Church of All Hallows (Grade I) (Ref:6)	Moderate	High	High to medium	Minor beneficial
Properties associated with Garth Drive (Ref:7)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Minor beneficial to negligible
Properties associated with Calderstones Road to the western side of Harthill Road (Ref:8)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Properties associated with Calderstones Road to the eastern side of Harthill Road (Ref:9)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Minor adverse/negligible
Harthill Lodge associated with	Moderate	High	Medium	Minor

Visual receptors	Value	Susceptibility of change	Sensitivity	Effect
Calderstones Road (Ref:10)				adverse
Mansion House (Ref:11)	Moderate	High	High to medium	None
Properties to the north of Menlove Avenue (Ref:12)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Properties to the south of Yew Tree Road (Ref:13)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Properties to the west of Allerton Road (Ref:14)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Properties to the north of Calderstones Road (Ref:15)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Properties associated with Allerton Drive (Ref:16)	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Public highways				
Harthill Road	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Moderate to minor beneficial
Allerton Road	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Minor beneficial to negligible
Matner Avenue (B1580)	Low	Medium	Medium to low	None
Yew Tree Road	Moderate to low	High	Medium	None
Menlove Avenue (A562)	Low	Medium	Medium to low	None
Calderstones Road	Moderate to low	High	Medium	Minor adverse to negligible
Public rights of way				
Trans Pennine Trail	Moderate	High	High to medium	Minor adverse to negligible

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The LVIA is founded on a thorough study of the Application Site and its landscape setting. Through understanding these features and resources, a robust impact appraisal of the Scheme Proposal has been undertaken in line with good practice principles and planning policy.
- 6.2 The appraisal highlights that the Application Site falls within an area of Green Space and a Green Wedge as identified on the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan 2002. It is also located within the Mersey Forest which is guided by the Mersey Forest Plan (Sept 2013). There are a number of listed buildings both within the Application Site and in close proximity to it.
- 6.3 The Application Site consists of three parcels of land containing the former parks department depot; Beechley (a former care home); and, a parcel containing the Calder Kids adventure playground, a model railway and stables paddocks. These parcels are not accessible to the public and are generally enclosed by mature vegetation.
- 6.4 The LVIA has identified that the Scheme Proposal considers the features of the Application Site and its surroundings. Although it will introduce built development to areas that are currently free from it, these are areas that are in a poor condition or partly redundant. The Scheme Proposal reflects local distinctiveness in terms of design layout and materials and is conscious of views from adjoining green space and adjacent residents. Existing vegetation is retained where possible and additional planting is proposed. Overall the open character of the identified Green Wedge is preserved as well as the recreational function of the Green Space and its visual amenity value. There will be no change to the accessibility of the Green Wedge and Green Space on account of the Parcels within the Application Site not being accessible to the public.
- 6.5 In the absence of a district scale landscape character assessment for the area, five local landscape character areas have been identified within the study area relating to land use, vegetation, built form, condition and access. The Application Site falls within 'LCA1 Beechley Estate' and 'LCA2 Harthill Road Western Park Fringe'. There will be localised changes experienced in both these character areas. In LCA1, the listed buildings will be sensitively redeveloped, the large unsympathetic equestrian arena will be removed and there will be an increase in residential properties. Overall these changes are perceived as beneficial on account of the improvement to the street frontage on Harthill Road, the enhancement of landscape features, the increased longevity and use of heritage assets and the reflection of local characteristics in the design. The effect on LCA1 is considered to be **moderate beneficial**. When viewed on balance, despite the introduction of further built form, the effect on LCA2 is also considered **moderate beneficial**. The Scheme Proposal respects the character of local built form, relates to the residential context of the area and provides landscape enhancements to the street frontage and access to Calderstones Park from Harthill Road.
- 6.6 Within the surrounding character areas, there will be a **minor adverse** effect experienced in 'LCA3 Calderstones and Harthill Estate Gardens' relating to indirect effects on views. Although views of built development will be largely filtered and

softened by vegetation, housing will be introduced to a number of views that are currently occupied by parkland trees and ornamental shrubs. In LCA 4 Calderstones Eastern Parkland, the effect will be **negligible** on account of the visual containment of the Scheme Proposal from the wider open space. There will be a **minor beneficial** effect on 'LCA5 Allerton and Mossley Hill Residential Areas'.

- 6.7 The Application Site is generally well contained by surrounding mature vegetation and built form. From formal paths and informal recreation area in Calderstones Park there are likely to be partial to glimpsed views of the Scheme Proposal. Although the overall amenity value of the park will be retained, and residential development is not out of character for this location, there will be a slightly adverse effect on a small number of views across Calderstones Park which are currently free from built development. From the identified visual receptors there is only one **moderate to minor adverse effect** predicted following the implementation and establishment of the Scheme Proposal on Beechley Cottage (Ref: 4). There is likely to be a **minor adverse** effect in views from Harthill Lodge associated with Harthill Road (Ref:1) due to the removal of adjacent existing trees and the increased prominence of built form in the views. This local area will also experience some beneficial effects from the improvements to the entrance of Calderstones Park.
- 6.8 From Calderstones School (Ref:2) the effect is likely to be **moderate to minor beneficial** due to the landscape improvements to the access point; the improved condition of the former park depot site when viewed from the west and the enhanced street frontage to Harthill Road.
- 6.9 Where glimpsed views of the proposed residential development is introduced to views of Calderstones Park from the north, it is considered the effect will be **minor adverse or minor to negligible adverse**. This is experienced from the following receptors: Properties associated with Calderstones Road to the eastern side of Harthill Road (Ref:9); Harthill Lodge associated with Calderstones Road (Ref:10); Calderstones Road; and restricted sections of the Trans Pennine Trail.
- 6.10 The remaining landscape and visual receptors are likely to have **minor beneficial, negligible or no** effects from the Scheme Proposal. This is due to existing and proposed boundary vegetation, the reflection of existing characteristics in built form, existing urban influences in the surrounding landscape and the proportion of views being affected.



## **Appendix 1: Supporting Figures**

# Appendix 2: Legislative Framework and Planning Policy

## Legislative framework

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) provides a basis for closer co-operation on landscape issues across Europe and was signed and ratified in the UK. This recognition to landscape matters raises the profile and the ELC has been set out to improve approaches to the planning, management and protection of landscapes throughout Europe.

The ELC defines landscape as “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*” and it includes ‘townscape’, as well as all forms of rural landscape.

## Planning Policy

The existing and emerging planning policy and the existing landscape character area assessments relevant to this appraisal are summarised below.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

At paragraph 17 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the twelve Core Planning Principles, those specific to landscape and visual amenity issues include:

- Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of the land and buildings.
- Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.
- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework.
- Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production).

Section 7 of the NPPF states in paragraph 58 what points should be included in planning policies to ensure quality developments. The following points are relevant to landscape and visual amenity issues:

- Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscape and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.
- Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local and surrounding materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore it states that, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance 2014**

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014 has been issued by the Government as a web resource. This is intended to provide more detailed guidance and information with regard to the implementation of national policy set out in the NPPF 2012. In paragraph 003 the design guidance category supports the need to evaluate and understand the defining characteristics of an area in order to identify appropriate design opportunities and policies. Paragraph 007 goes on to state that views into and out of larger sites should be carefully considered from the start of the design process.

### **Emerging Liverpool City Council Local Plan**

Liverpool City Council is in the process of producing the Local Plan for Liverpool. Once adopted, the Local Plan will replace the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (2002), which is the current statutory development plan for the City.

### **Core Strategy 2012**

The Core Strategy DPD which has been under preparation for a number of years will not be submitted as a separate DPD, but will instead, form the framework for the Local Plan for Liverpool. Strategic objectives and policies relevant to the Application Site and Scheme Proposal include:

#### ***Strategic Objective 5 – High Quality Green Infrastructure: Suburban areas***

To protect and enhance important open space (including Green Wedges) and biodiversity assets and ensure that green infrastructure complements housing renewal in the regeneration fringes.

#### ***Strategic policy 23 - Key Place-Making and Design Principles***

The City Council will secure innovative, high quality design to create well-integrated places that are usable, accessible, durable and adaptable. Guidelines include: A positive contribution to context and place-making and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness; delivery of high quality architecture, including materials, landscaping and enhanced public realm; creation of high quality landscaping which contributes to protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and its associated benefits and functions.

#### ***Strategic Policy 26 - Protecting and Enhancing Green Infrastructure***

Green infrastructure resources protected from inappropriate development; including specifically Green Wedges; Locally important open spaces and water courses, including amenity spaces, allotments, playing fields and pitches; The network of City, District, Neighbourhood and Local Parks.

### ***Strategic Policy 30 – Green Infrastructure in the Suburban Areas***

Protecting and enhancing 'The predominately open character and function of the Green Wedges at Otterspool and Calderstones/Woolton'

### **Liverpool Unitary Development Plan 2002**

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is a statutory document that plays a major role in shaping the future of the city. It shows what every piece of land in the city can be used for. It was adopted in November 2002

On the UDP Proposals Map, the Application Site falls within an area allocated as 'Green Space' (Policies OE11 and OE12) and a 'Greenwedge' (OE3) and falls within 'The Mersey Forest' (OE10). The main extent of Calderstones Park to the southeast is a 'Site of Nature Conservation Value' (OE5 and OE6).

### ***Green Wedges OE3***

The policy is designed to protect extensive linked areas of open spaces of city-wide importance. Two Green Wedges are identified on the Proposals Map which, together with the Green Belt, form the strategic open land in the City. They provide a physical and visual break between major residential areas, and help to ensure that the City can continue to offer high quality environments in these areas.

Strict control of development is required to protect the function of Green Wedges. Where new built development is permitted, the City Council will expect a high standard of design. The fact that land has been allowed to become derelict or is underused will not be regarded as sufficient reason for permitting inappropriate development.

Calderstones/Woolton Green = *'A combination of geology, architecture and landscape structure makes this an area of special value, with the appearance and condition of the landscape being of particular importance.'*

The City Council will protect and improve the open character, landscape, recreational and ecological quality of the Green Wedges at Calderstones, Woolton and Otterspool by:

- Planning permission will not be granted for development that would affect the predominantly open character of Green Wedges or reduce the separation between existing built up areas.
- Where permitted, new built development must incorporate standards from policy HD18; have regard to the openness of the green wedge and its function; retain existing vegetation and special site features where appropriate; and, incorporate a high standard of landscape.
- Retaining land in predominantly open use and encouraging proposals that would: enhance tree cover; enhance the recreational role of green wedges; and, offer uses and activities which accord with their open character.

### ***The Mersey Forest OE10 / Mersey Forest Plan (Sept 2013)***

The City Council will seek to implement the Mersey Forest Plan in order to complement the aims of urban regeneration and to achieve the following objectives:

- i. the enhancement of the landscape and amenity interest of the Green Belt, Green Wedges, New Countryside Areas and other open spaces in the City;
- ii. the provision of recreational open space in a woodland setting;
- iii. the protection and enhancement of the existing nature conservation interest and the creation of wildlife habitats; and
- iv. the promotion of educational opportunities.

#### ***Protection of Green Space OE11***

Development will not be permitted unless it can be accommodated without causing material harm to: **The recreational function of the green space** (unless not located in an area of open space deficiency, suitable alternative facility provided) **The visual amenity value of the green space** (in terms of important vistas into/across the site; key frontages visible from main road; important landscape features; character of the site within the surrounding area; relationship to adjoining green spaces) Image of city from important transport vistas; consider value of green space in question

Other UDP policies relevant to this landscape and visual appraisal include:

- **HD16:** Ancient Monument - The Calderstones: six monoliths decorated with rock art is a scheduled Monument
- **HD18:** The scale, density and massing of new development is to relate to local context; and include characteristics of local distinctiveness in terms of design, layout and materials. New development must pay special attention to views into and out of any adjoining green space and incur no severe loss of amenity or privacy to adjacent residents.
- **HD22:** The retention of key ecological and natural site features such as tree, hedgers, walls and ponds is required in order to integrate with new development.
- **HD23:** Make proper provision for trees and landscape within new development including replacement compensation planting for any trees lost due to development.

# Appendix 3: Full Appraisal Methodology

## Landscape and visual impact appraisal methodology

The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) state that this type of appraisal provides a tool for identifying and assessing the *“the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity”* (Para. 1.1). It goes on to emphasise that the appraisal has two interlinked elements of: landscape, as a resource, and visual amenity, including views. The effects of both must be addressed in the assessment.

### Baseline landscape appraisal

Preparation of this baseline landscape appraisal for the Application Site has included a combination of desk study and field work to identify and record the character of the landscape. This has included a summary of associated elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to the landscape. Once these factors were established the landscape/townscape character areas (landscape receptors) and their associated key characteristics were identified. The value attached to the landscape receptor has then been considered with its associated condition.

### *Landscape value*

The value of the identified landscape/townscape character areas has been assessed using the criteria set out in **Table 1**. The consideration of value is initially based on, and takes into account, whether it is covered by a landscape designation at a national, regional or local level. This is also informed by the presence or not of designated heritage assets. Good practice guidance states that undesignated landscapes do, under certain circumstances, have value and should be judged drawing upon such factors as landscape, or townscape quality and scenic quality and/or associations, with people or events that contribute to perceptions of natural beauty

- Table 1: Landscape value

Value	Typical Criteria	Typical Scale of Importance/ Rarity	Typical Examples
<b>Exceptional</b>	High importance and rarity. No or limited potential for substitution	International, National	World Heritage site, National Park, AONB, and/or typically Grade I Grade II* listed buildings
<b>Major</b>	High importance and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	National, Regional, Local	AONB, Scheduled Monuments, Conversation Area, typically Grade II listed buildings, and/or Register Park and Gardens
<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate importance and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Regional, Local	Undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use
<b>Minor</b>	Minor importance and rarity. Considerable potential for substitution	Local	Areas identified as having some redeeming feature or features and possibly identified for improvement
<b>Poor</b>	Minor importance and rarity	Local	Areas identified for recovery

## **Baseline visual appraisal**

The baseline visual effects appraisal has established; the area in which the Application Site and the Scheme Proposal may be visible; the different groups of people who may experience the views of the development; the viewpoints where they will be affected; and, the nature of the views from these locations. These factors interrelate, but for the purpose of the assessment are dealt with in that order. Representative viewpoints have also been identified from a proportion of the visual receptors and they have been used to support this assessment's finding.

The baseline visual appraisal takes into account the following:

- type and relative numbers of people, and their occupation or activity
- location, nature and characteristics
- nature, composition and characteristics of the views (including directions)
- elements which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views

Elements of these evaluations are discussed below and have informed the predicted assessment of effects.

### ***Extent and proportion of visibility***

The extent of existing visibility of the Application Site from the identified visual receptors or viewpoints is identified as being:

- 'No view' - the Application Site or Scheme Proposal is not visible (or difficult to perceive)
- 'Glimpse view' - the Application Site has a obscured view (by intervening vegetation or built form) or distant view of part of the Application Site or Scheme Proposal
- 'Partial view' - a clear view of part of the Application Site or Scheme Proposal; a partial view of most of it; or a distant view in which the Application Site or Scheme Proposal forms a significant proportion of it
- 'Open view' - a panoramic view of most of the Application Site or Scheme Proposal, occupying most of the field of vision

### ***Distance of visibility***

The distance of the Application Site from the identified visual receptors or viewpoints is defined as being the following:

- Adjacent - within, or adjacent to the Application Site
- Short - one to 500 metres away from the Application Site
- Medium - 500 metres to 1 kilometres away from the Application Site
- Long - 1 kilometres and beyond away from the Application Site

### ***Value attached to the view***

Assessment of the value attached to the view from the identified visual receptors follows the broad criteria set out in **Table 2**. It considers whether the views experienced are one, or both, of the following:

- Recognition of the value attached to a particular view (i.e. in relation to a heritage asset or a planning designation); or

- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors (i.e. is it referenced in a guide book, or tourist map, or in literature and art).

Table 2 Value of the identified visual receptors view

Value	Criteria
<b>High</b>	The view from the identified visual receptor is: related to a designated heritage assets, or a planning designation; and/or mentioned in a number of guidebooks or on tourist maps; and/or referenced in art and literature
<b>Moderate</b>	The view from the identified visual receptor is: related to a non-designated heritage assets; and/or of local visual amenity importance
<b>Low</b>	The view from the identified visual receptor is not related to designated, or non-designated, heritage assets, or a planning designation; and/or mentioned in a guidebooks or on tourist maps; and/or referenced in art and literature; and/or of little visual amenity importance

### Assessing the landscape and visual effects

The interactions between the existing landscape and visual amenity receptors, identified at the baseline stage, and the components of the Scheme Proposal at various different development phases are considered at this stage of the assessment.

#### *Sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors*

In order to identify the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors to the Scheme Proposal the following factors were considered: susceptibility to change; and value of the landscape receptor. The latter point has already been identified as part of the baseline assessment. The reason the sensitivity is determined at the effects stages is due to the need to consider the susceptibility of the receptors in relation to change arising from the specific type of development proposed.

#### *Susceptibility of the landscape receptor in relation to change*

The susceptibility of the receptor has been defined within the GLVIA as “*the ability of the landscape receptor (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 Scheme Proposal without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*” (Para. 5.40 Ref 6). Judgement on susceptibility of change is broadly set out in **Table 3**. This will be linked back to evidence gathered at the baseline stage.

Table 3: Landscape susceptibility to change

Susceptibility to change	Criteria
<b>High</b>	Where the area is unlikely to accommodate the Scheme Proposal without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies
<b>Medium</b>	Where the area can relatively accommodate the Scheme Proposal without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies
<b>Low</b>	Where the area can accommodate the Scheme Proposal without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies

The matrix shown in **Table 4** demonstrates broadly how sensitivity is determined through combining the landscape value with its susceptibility to change. It is important to note that this



is a quantitative approach, which the GLVIA strives to avoid, so will be linked back to evidence gathered at the baseline stage.

Table 4: Sensitivity of landscape character

Susceptibility to change	Value				
	Exceptional	Major	Moderate	Minor	Poor
<b>High</b>	High	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium /Low
<b>Medium</b>	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium /Low	Low
<b>Low</b>	Medium	Medium	Medium /Low	Low	Low

#### ***Susceptibility of the visual receptor in relation to change***

The susceptibility of the visual receptor to change considers the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view; and extent of attention or interest that may therefore be focused on the views and visual amenity the experience. Judgement on susceptibility of change is broadly set out in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Visual receptors susceptibility to change

Susceptibility to change	Criteria
<b>High</b>	Residential properties, public footpaths, bridleways, scenic and residential roads, public parks, visitors to historic assets
<b>Medium</b>	Retail and employment sites, motorways and A roads, sports and recreational facilities, schools
<b>Low</b>	Industrial sites and agricultural land

The matrix shown in **Table 6** demonstrates broadly how sensitivity is determined through combining the landscape and visual receptor value with its susceptibility to change. It is important to note that this is a quantitative approach, which the GLVIA strives to avoid, so will be linked back to evidence gathered at the baseline stage.

Table 6: Sensitivity of visual receptor

Susceptibility to change	Value		
	High	Moderate	Low
<b>High</b>	High	High/ Medium	Medium
<b>Medium</b>	High/ Medium	Medium	Medium /Low
<b>Low</b>	Medium	Medium/ Low	Low

#### ***Magnitude of landscape and visual amenity effects***

The predicted effects are a straight comparison between the existing situation and that occurring at prescribed fixed phases in the future. The magnitude of effect considers the size or scale of the proposals, along with the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration. These areas are defined in the bullets below and summarised in **Table 12**:

- Size and scale is described verbally as the loss and addition of new features being major, moderate, minor or none. This relates to the loss or addition of particular

elements; the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects are altered; and the change to the key characteristics.

- Geographical extent is the area over which the effect will be felt and ranges from site level, to character area, and onto a larger scale.
- Duration, for the purpose of this assessment is considered permanent (once the development is complete)

The overall magnitude of effect of the Scheme Proposal's effect on the identified landscape and visual receptors' areas are defined as either being major, moderate, minor, negligible or neutral. This corresponds to the extent to which the Scheme Proposal improves, causes damage, or is negligible to the existing landscape character areas and visual receptors

The criteria for the adverse, beneficial and neutral effects of the landscape character and visual appraisal is summarised in **Table 7** below. This addresses whether the Scheme Proposal undertakes the following:

- conforms with the pattern, scale, mass, grain and historic features of the identified landscape character;
- creates a loss or restoration of key landscape features;
- contributes to the identified landscape character;
- affects identified receptors and viewpoints; and
- accords with national, regional and local planning policy and guidelines.

Table 7: Landscape character and visual amenity magnitude of effect

<b>Magnitude of Effect</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Major adverse	The Scheme Proposal has a significant detrimental effect on the identified visual receptors or results in a major deterioration of the identified landscape character area
Moderate adverse	The Scheme Proposal has a moderate detrimental effect on the identified visual receptors or fails to contribute to the identified landscape character area
Minor adverse	The Scheme Proposal has a slight detrimental effect on the identified visual receptors or fails to fully contribute to the identified landscape character area
Negligible/neutral	The Scheme Proposal neither contributes to nor detracts from the identified visual receptors or identified landscape character area
Minor beneficial	The Scheme Proposal has a slight beneficial effect on the identified visual receptors or partly contributes to the identified landscape character area
Moderate beneficial	The Scheme Proposal has a moderate beneficial effect on the identified visual receptors or contributes to the identified landscape character area
Major beneficial	The Scheme Proposal has a significant beneficial effect on the identified visual receptors or results in a major contribution to the identified landscape character area

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