Haydon School, Pinner - Proposed 3G Artificial Grass Pitch

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

January 2026

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared on behalf of Albion Properties Norfolk Ltd to determine the potential impact of a proposed 3G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) at Haydon School, Wiltshire Lane, Pinner in the London Borough of Hillingdon.

Purposes of the Document

1.2 The purpose of this document is to assess the landscape, visual and cultural impacts of the potential development on the site.

1.3 The document evaluates the contribution of the site to the landscape character, visual amenity and cultural and heritage features of the local area before assessing the potential impacts of the development on that character and amenity.

Structure of the Document

Landscape Baseline

1.4 This section assesses the character and quality of the local landscape before identifying the extent to which the proposal site contributes to or detracts from that character and therefore its sensitivity to change. Particular reference is made to the district-wide Landscape Character Assessment

1.5 The assessment of the character and of the proposal site identifies the wider landscape receptors that may be affected by the proposals, as well as their sensitivity to change. These receptors may be features or elements of character that need to be preserved, restored or enhanced.

Development Proposals and Site description

1.6 This section reviews the historic development of the site and its landscape setting, and describes the development proposals.

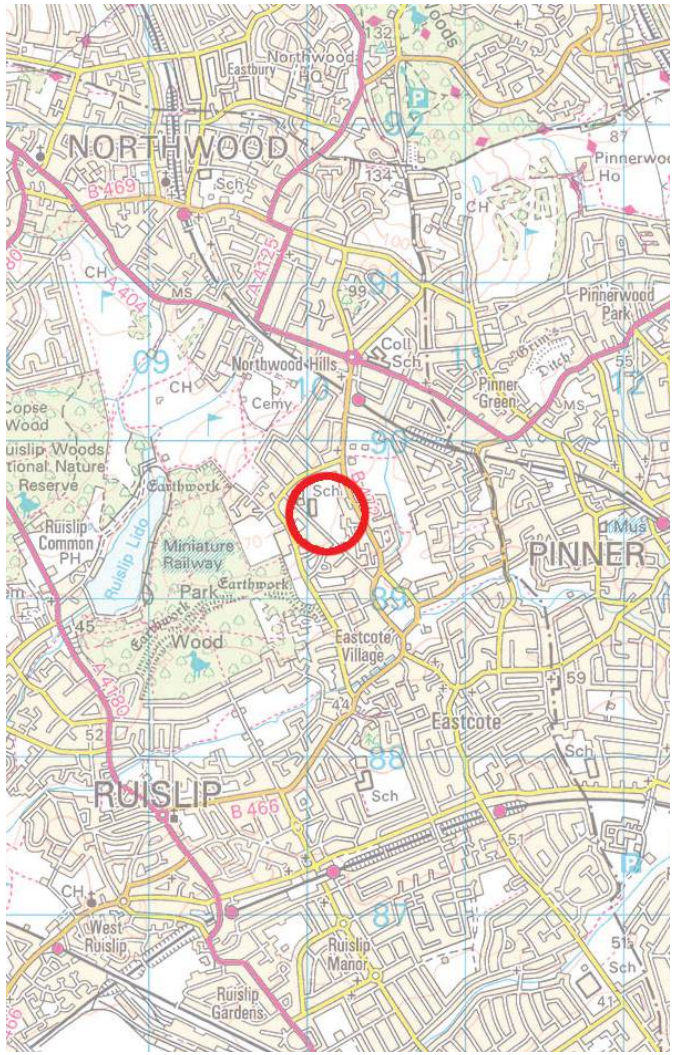
Landscape and Visual Assessment

1.7 This section assesses the potential landscape and visual impacts of development on the site, based on a thorough field survey and panoramic site photographs. The precise locations of the photographs were plotted using GPS, and were prepared in accordance with current LI guidance on photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment. This is followed by a more detailed assessment of the potential impact of the development.

Conclusion

1.8 This section summarises the predicted overall landscape, cultural heritage and visual impacts of the development.

1.9 This landscape and visual assessment was undertaken only from public rights of way or from land under the control of the site owner. Direct views from private property were not possible, although potential views from neighbouring properties were assessed as far as was possible from nearby public rights of way. The assessment was undertaken during June 2025.



2. Personal Statement

2.1 This report has been prepared by **Luke Broom-Lynne CMLI MRTPI.**

2.2 I am an independent Chartered Landscape Architect and Chartered Town Planner with over 30 years in professional practice. I was awarded a BA Degree in Landscape Architecture from Leeds Metropolitan University in 1983, followed by a Post-graduate Diploma (with commendation) in 1985. I have been a Chartered member of the Landscape Institute since 1989 and of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 2004.

2.3 I worked in initially in the public sector, including senior posts in the planning teams of the Broads Authority and Norwich City Council. I have worked in the private sector for the past 18 years, including a period as Partner in a major regional planning and property consultancy. I now work as an independent landscape planning consultant, involved in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Urban Design and Masterplanning for a wide range of commercial and residential projects throughout the UK.

2.4 Significant projects have included

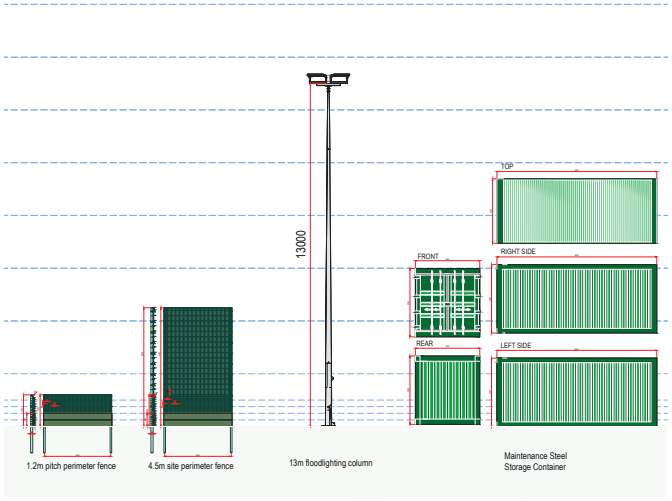
- University of East Anglia – Landscape Strategy
- Bewilderwood, Tatton Park and Hoveton – LVIAs and Landscape Strategy
- North Weald AONB, Essex Coast and Pembrokeshire - LVIAs for new solar farms
- Future Biogas – LVIAs and landscape strategy for various power plants in Lincolnshire, Staffordshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.
- Coltishall airfield Solar Park – LVIA and landscape strategy.
- Grays, Essex - Masterplanning and urban design for new residential development
- Bridlington, Yorkshire - New holiday development
- Edinburgh - LVIA for new Park and Ride scheme
- Pembroke, S. Wales - LVIA for new solar farm
- Long Stratton, Norfolk - Masterplanning, LVIA and landscape design for town expansion.

2.5 I believe that my submission complies with the requirements of the Codes of Professional Conduct of the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Landscape Institute.

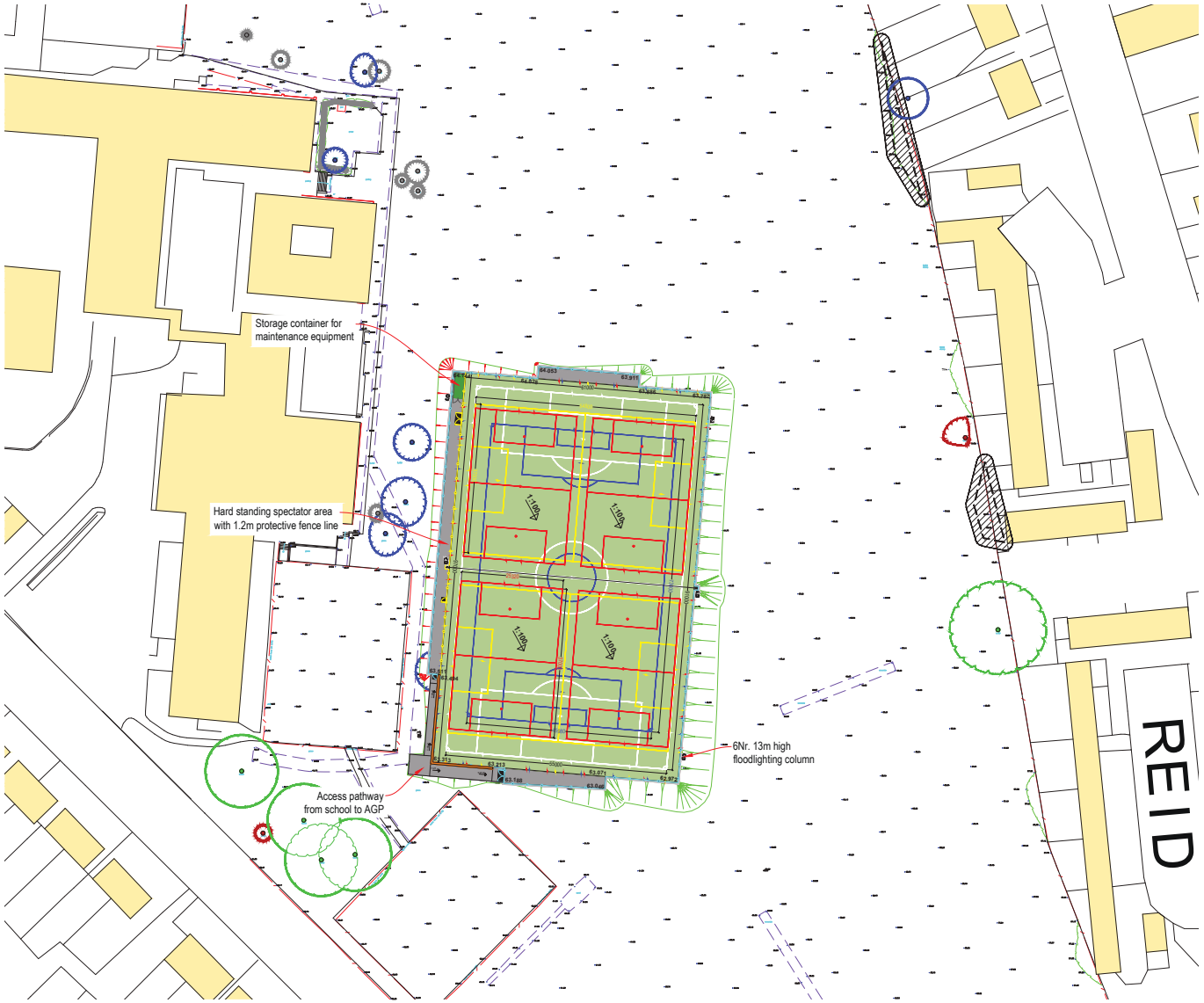
3. Site Proposals

3.1 The proposal comprises the installation of a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP), perimeter fencing, floodlighting, acoustic fencing, hardstanding areas, a topsoil bund and associated landscaping.

3.2 The development has been designed to comply with the FA and Sport England guidance, with the intention of enhancing the club's infrastructure. The scheme aims to provide a modern, durable, and inclusive all-weather sports facility, enabling year-round football activity for both pupils and the wider community, regardless of seasonal or weather-related constraints.



Site elevations



Site plan

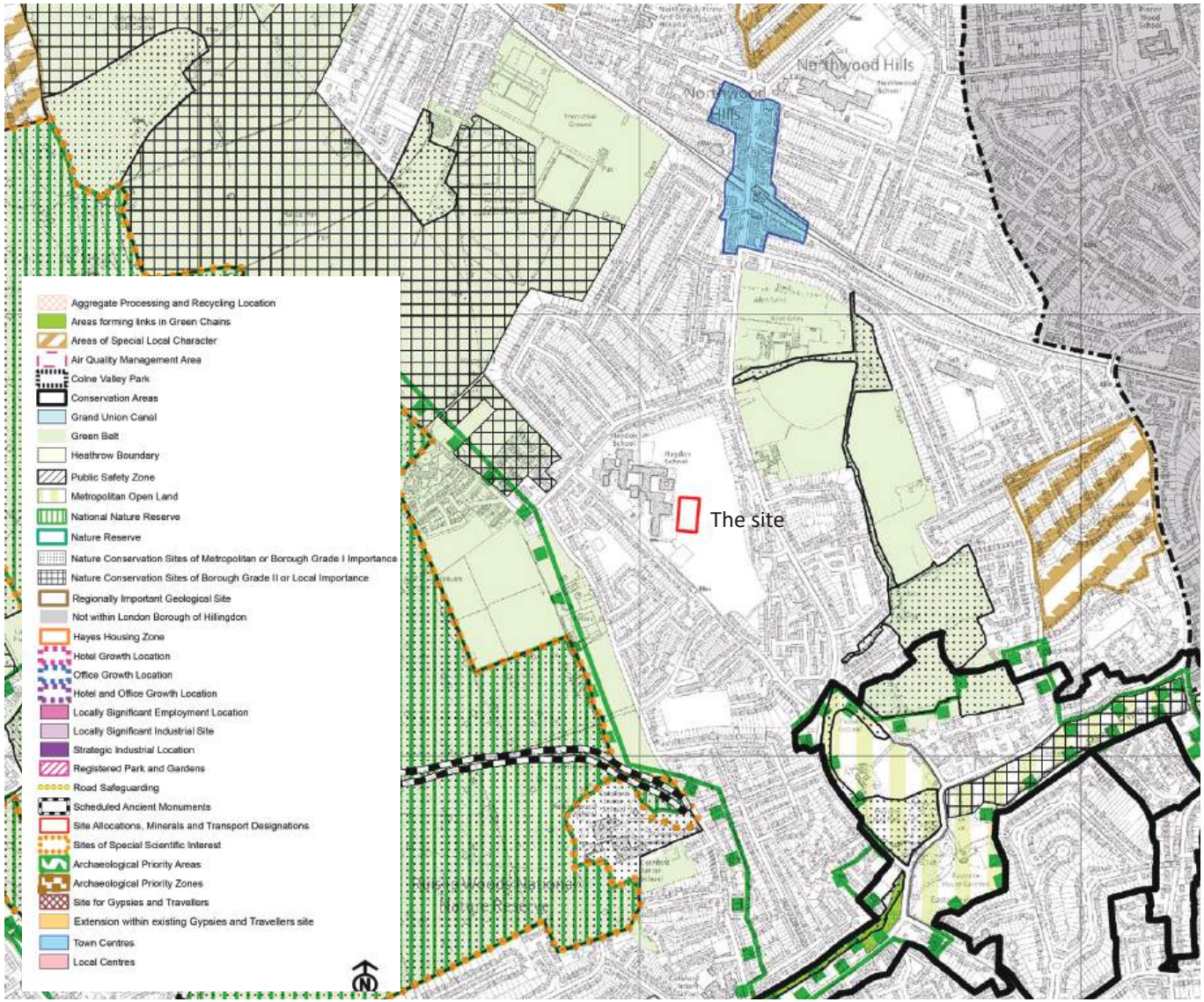
4. Landscape, Townscape and Planning Considerations

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

4.1 The proposed development aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) by promoting sustainable development that delivers social, environmental, and economic benefits. It supports inclusive community access to sport (para 96) and contributes to improved health and well-being through year-round physical activity (para 98). The scheme mitigates flood risk through SuDS (para 181), ensures design quality and integration with its surroundings (para 131), and reduces environmental impact via sustainable materials and biodiversity enhancements (para 187). It also encourages sustainable travel through active and public transport options (para 110). These principles are embedded throughout the design and long-term operation of the AGP.

4.2 In respect of lighting, Central Government guidance on lighting and planning is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Dec 2024).

4.3 The NPPF identifies sustainable development as the core principle of planning, comprising economic, social, and environmental objectives. The environmental objective includes protecting and enhancing the natural, built, and historic environment—while helping to minimise pollution.



Extract from the London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan Policies Map

4.4 Paragraph 198 of the NPPF states:

4.5 "Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation."

HILLINGDON LOCAL PLAN

4.6 The Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1- Strategic Policies is the key strategic planning document for Hillingdon and will support the delivery of the spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy. It sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the Borough, what is going to happen, where, and how this will be achieved.

4.7 It establishes the framework for managing growth, improving infrastructure, and protecting the borough's distinctive suburban and environmental character. The Plan places strong emphasis on enhancing community facilities, safeguarding and improving open spaces, and widening access to sport and recreation as part of creating healthier, more inclusive neighbourhoods. Its policies support high-quality educational and leisure provision, promote active lifestyles, and ensure that new development contributes positively to local amenity, environmental quality, and community wellbeing.

4.8 It is noted that the application site is located outside any areas with direct policies. However, key policies particularly relevant to the built environment, residential amenity, landscape and design quality include the following:

BE1 - Built Environment

4.9 The Council will require all new development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment in order to create successful and sustainable neighbourhoods, where people enjoy living and working and that serve the long-term needs of all residents. All new developments should:

- Achieve a high quality of design in all new buildings, alterations, extensions and the public realm which enhances the local distinctiveness of the area, contributes to community cohesion and a sense of place;
- Be designed to be appropriate to the identity and context of Hillingdon's buildings, townscapes, landscapes and views, and make a positive contribution to the local area in terms of layout, form, scale and materials and seek to protect the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential properties;

Policy DMHB 11: Design of New Development

4.10 All development, including extensions, alterations and new buildings will be required to be designed to the highest standards and, incorporate principles of good design including:

4.11 Harmonising with the local context by taking into account the surrounding:

- scale of development, considering the height, mass and bulk of adjacent structures; building plot sizes and widths, plot coverage and established street patterns;
- building lines and setbacks, rooflines, streetscape rhythm, for example, gaps between structures and other streetscape elements, such as degree of enclosure;
- architectural composition and quality of detailing;
- local topography, views both from and to the site; and
- impact on neighbouring open spaces and their environment.

4.12 Ensuring the use of high quality building materials and finishes;

4.13 Ensuring that the internal design and layout of development maximises sustainability and is adaptable to different activities;

4.14 Protecting features of positive value within and

adjacent to the site, including the safeguarding of heritage assets, designated and un-designated, and their settings; and

4.15 Landscaping and tree planting to protect and enhance amenity, biodiversity and green infrastructure.

Policy DMHB 14: Trees and Landscaping

4.16 All developments will be expected to retain or enhance existing landscaping, trees, biodiversity or other natural features of merit.

PLANNING HISTORY

4.17 It is noted that a previous proposal for the 'construction of an external 3G Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) with fencing, floodlighting and a storage container' (planning application no. 9556/APP/2014/3306) was refused on 10 December 2014.

4.18 One of the key reasons for refusal was that *'the submission fails to fully address how the effects of the change of levels across the site will affect the installation of the astro turf pitch, and flood lights, such that it can be demonstrated that it would not have an unacceptable impact on visual and residential amenity. As shown, the proposed pitch, including the associated fencing, floodlights (both structure and illumination) and grass bund, would, due to its height associated with the change in levels across the site, appear as an overly dominant feature, which would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and detrimental to visual and residential amenity. The proposed floodlights and grass bund would, in particular, be viewed as artificial and alien features in this location, contrary to the aims of policies BE13, BE19, BE21, BE38 and OE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 Saved UDP Policies (November 2012) and Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (2011).'*

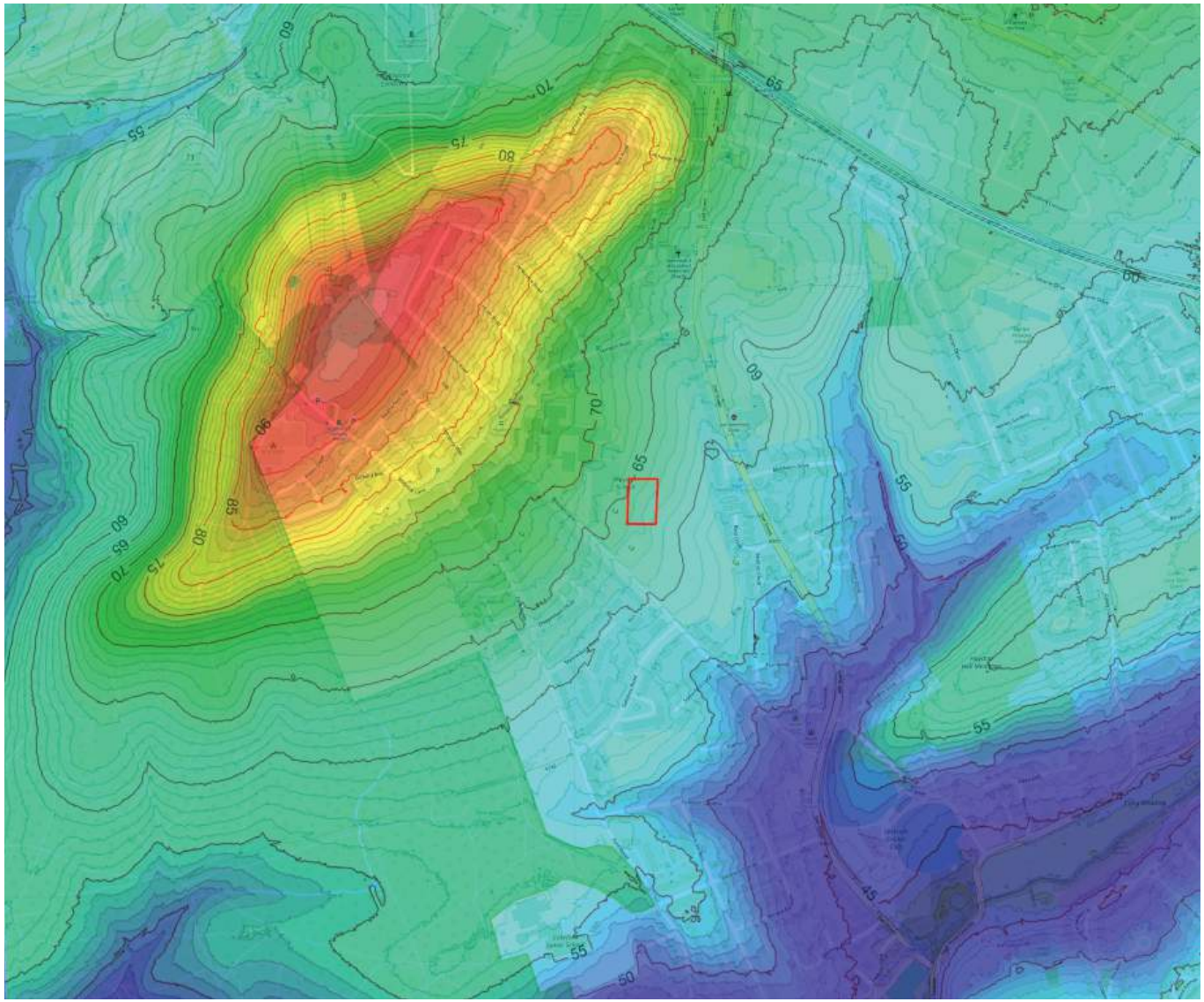
5. Topography

5.1 Detailed topographical data for the overall site was assessed using LIDAR data on a 2 metre grid.

5.2 The wider borough of Hillingdon is a predominantly flat and relatively low lying landscape. The main changes in topography are found in the northern part of the borough as the land rises towards Harefield and Northwood as the landscape approaches the Chilterns further to the north and west.

5.3 Along the western boundary of the borough is the River Colne Valley. As such the north west of the borough supports some attractive views westwards out across the Colne Valley.

5.4 The topography has had a major impact on the defining features of the borough such as the canal, whose alignment was largely governed by the desire to follow the contour line around the hills rather than require major engineering works.



Heydon School: Regional site topography

5.5 The Haydon School site slopes north-west to south-east from around 76 metres above Ordnance Datum near the road junction of Wiltshire Lane and Norwich Road, to around 57 metres 500 metres at the south-eastern site corner. The land then rises relatively steeply to Haste Hill at around 94 metres

Haydon School local topography

6. Local Landscape Character

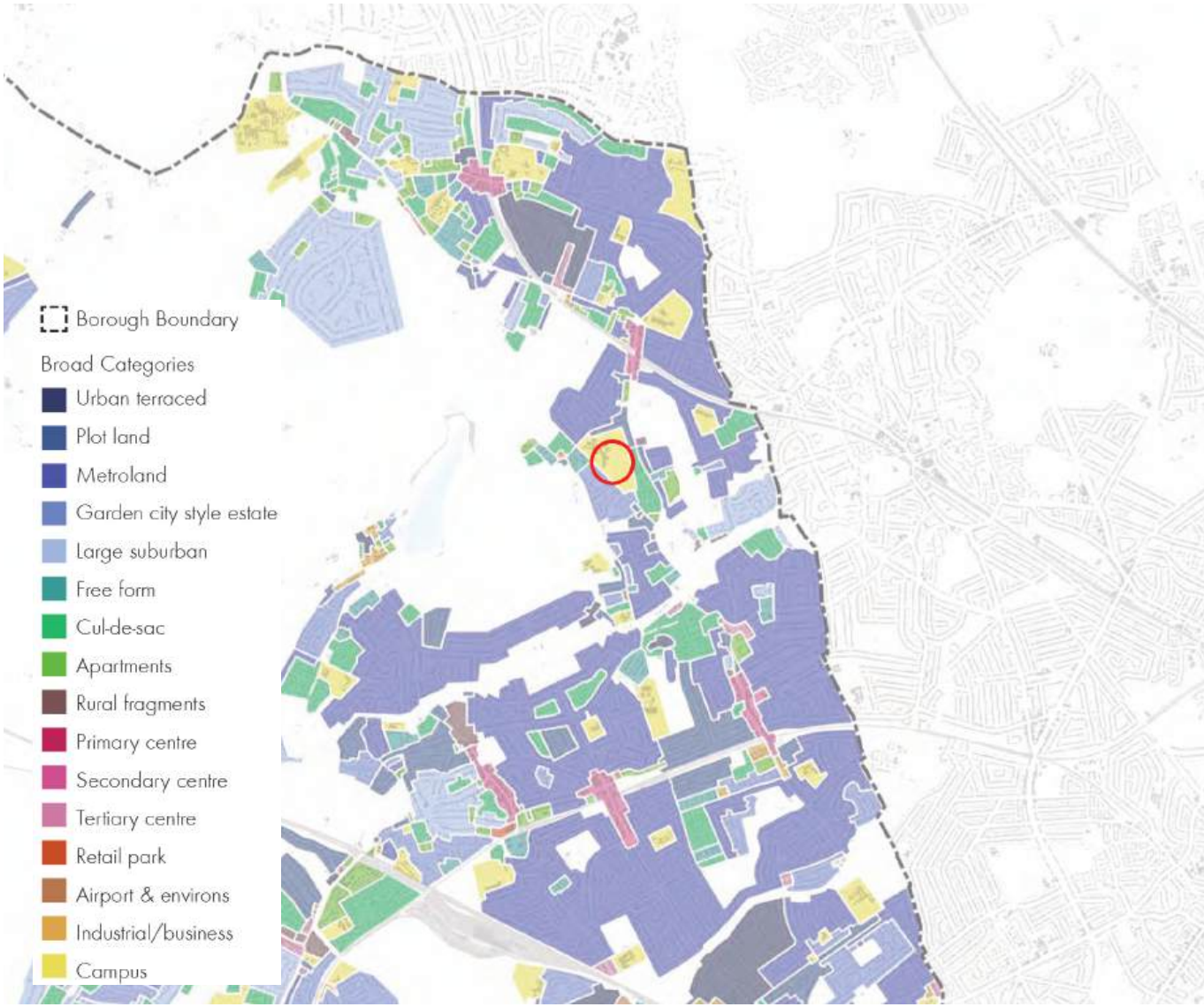
6.1 Reference is made to the Hillingdon Townscape Character Study which incorporates the requirements of Policy D1 of the London Plan (2021) and the subsequent draft guidance which has been published by the Mayor of London. It describes the townscape of the London Borough of Hillingdon and forms part of the suite of documents that have been prepared to inform local planning policy.

6.2 It notes that the Haydon School site is surrounded by mixed housing described variously as Metroland, Garden City Style Estates and Cul-de-sacs.

6.3 Immediately to the west of the site, around Wiltshire Lane and Fore Street is an area of housing defined as Garden City Style Estates. Key characteristics of this type of housing include:

- Buildings composed as unified groups, often with an overall symmetry or composition.
- Square or wide plans to the buildings with generally horizontal proportions.
- Consistent use of a very limited palette of materials and few elaborate details to give a plain and simple appearance.
- Overall urban plan composition, often featuring areas of shared green space.
- Typical density range for this typology is 20-30 dph.

6.4 Wiltshire lane has a mature townscape and landscape



Extract from the Hillingdon Townscape Character Study

character, with mature street trees, strong garden boundary hedgerows and with a sense of openness created by the open space of the Haydon School Sports pitches.

6.5 To the north of the school, around Norwich Road and the streets off it, is an area defined as Metroland. Metroland is the term used to describe the classic interwar suburban housing which is found in many parts of Hillingdon. The term was coined by the marketing department of the Metropolitan Railway company but has since come to be associated with the large swathes of interwar housing in north-west London and further afield.

6.6 This area has a less intimate feel than the garden city characteristics of the Wiltshire Lane area, with wider roads, undistinguished built form and fewer street trees.

6.7 East of the school is an area described as cul-de-sac development, off Joel Street. Cul-de-sac areas are frequently criticised both for their lack of legibility and permeability. The use of consistent building types repeated throughout an amorphous layout can make it difficult to distinguish easily between different streets.

6.8 The nature of the layout is also to funnel movement on to the main spine road, making walking and cycling around the area much less efficient than it could be - there are few other choices and the routes are often far less direct than necessary.

Top left: View along Wiltshire Lane (Garden City Style Estate). Top right: Reid Close (cul-de-sac).

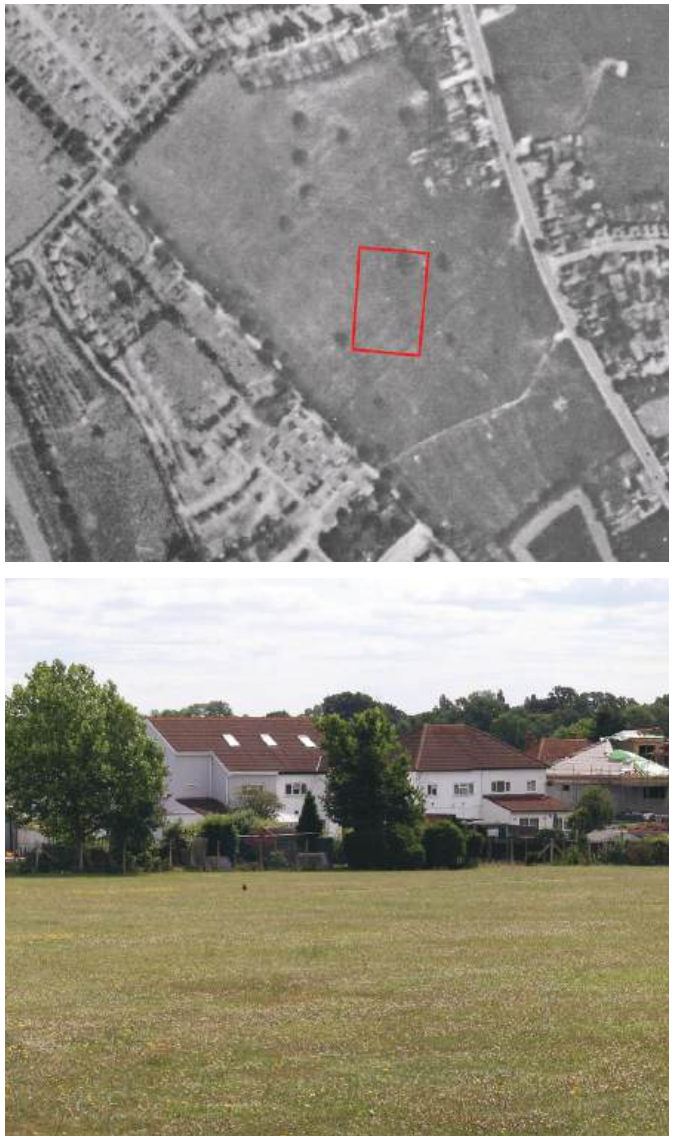
Bottom left: View along Norwich Road (Metroland). Bottom right: View into the school from SE corner from Farnlands.

6.9 Haydon School occupies an approximately 9.9 hectare irregularly shaped and sloping plot located on the north east side of Wiltshire Lane in Northwood. The school comprises a number of large linked and detached classroom blocks, ranging from single-storey to three storeys in height, located towards the north west corner of the site. Various hard surfaced games courts are located close to the main school buildings and playing fields occupy the eastern and southern parts of the site.

6.10 The school playing fields themselves are relatively enclosed, bounded to the west by the school buildings, and to the north and east by suburban development of Norwich Road and cul-de-sac development off Joel Street, with the gardens of these properties backing onto the site boundary.

6.11 Many of these properties have long gardens and the impact on these is likely to be minor. Many of those off Joel Street have much shorter gardens and are closer to the proposed pitch with open views over the existing pitches.

6.12 The only open public views into the site are from a stretch along Wiltshire Lane to the south and vis the public footpath which cuts through from Wiltshire Lane to Joel Street, skirting the southern edge of the school grounds.



Top left: Aerial view 1946. Top right: Aerial view 2025

Bottom left: Properties on Wyevale Close with views over the playing fields. Bottom right: View into the site from the Wiltshire Lane boundary

7. Lighting assessment

7.1 A separate lighting statement has been prepared, and modelling was undertaken to determine the impact for a number of representative properties located to the east, north and west of the proposed AGP. This is summarised below.

7.2 The proposed lighting scheme has been designed to minimise impacts. It uses full cut-off LED luminaires with no upward light output, controlled beam angles to limit spillage, and automated curfews to prevent illumination during sensitive hours.

7.3 Obtrusive Light is measured in candela (cd) which measures how bright a light source appears in a particular direction. The assessment has determined that the highest maximum luminous intensity experienced by any observer is 1,355 candelas, meeting the 10,000 candela pre-curfew threshold.

7.4 To prevent nuisance and environmental harm, lighting operation will be actively managed through:

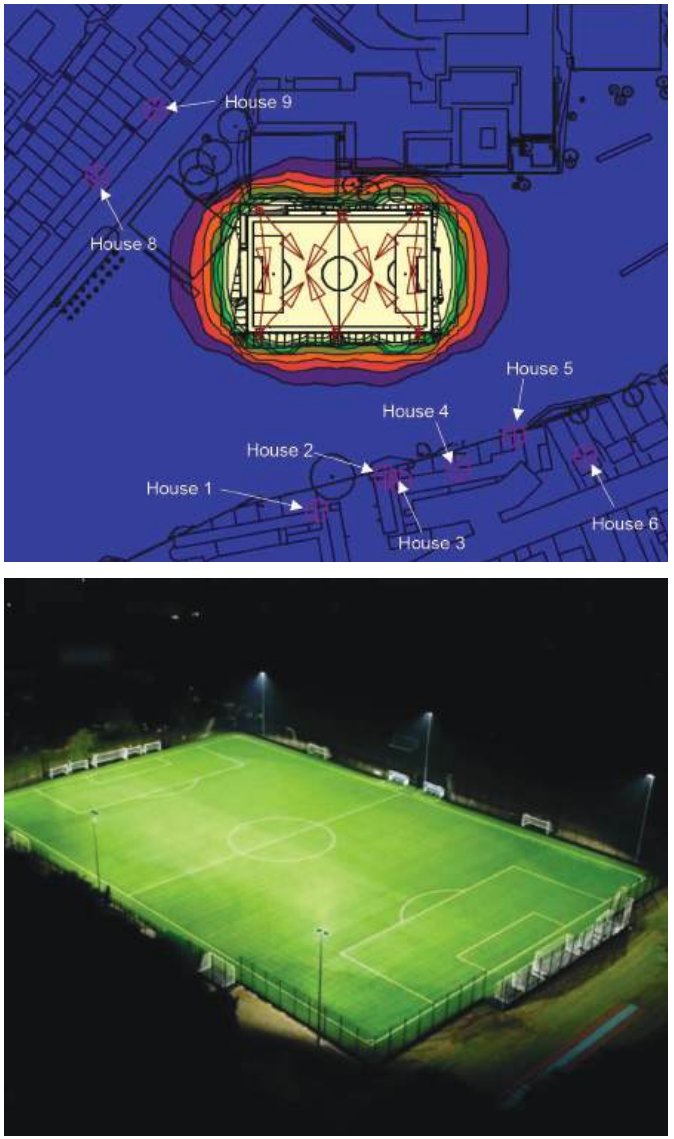
- Time-clock automation tied to agreed curfew times
- Seasonal programming for BST/GMT adjustments
- Pre-programmed usage slots to match bookings
- Zero output post-curfew, aligning with E3 zone requirements

7.5 In addition, the proposed floodlighting scheme has been developed in line with the Institution of Lighting Professionals GN08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. While the system uses 4000K LEDs to meet Football Foundation standards for affiliated football use, the design incorporates multiple mitigation measures to reduce ecological impact and safeguard nocturnal wildlife.

7.6 Key features aligned with GN08/23 include:

- Sensitive Layout: Lighting columns are positioned to avoid direct spill onto tree lines or hedgerows, reducing habitat fragmentation and disruption to potential bat commuting routes.
- Low Spill Levels at Site Boundaries: Modelling confirms lighting levels at the site's perimeter are typically <0.2 lux, with actual values expected to be lower due to existing vegetation.
- Ecological Appraisal: A supporting ecological survey identified no significant roosting features or priority habitats within or adjacent to the site. However, design measures still follow GN08/23's mitigation hierarchy: avoid > minimise > mitigate.

7.7 In summary, the lighting statement concludes that the scheme represents a significant improvement over legacy lighting technologies and has been developed with a strong emphasis on environmental protection and user safety. The system will enable high-quality, year-round sports use of the facility while ensuring lighting impacts are carefully controlled and appropriately mitigated.



Extract from the Sports Lighting Statement. Top: Floodlighting Illuminance Bottom: Example pitch at nighttime with good LED spill control

8. Visualisation

8.1 To aid the determination of the potential impact, an accurate digital model of the proposals was prepared to prepare wireframe visualisations from selected viewpoints.

8.2 These photomontages:

- are intended to be reproduced at a size and level of geometric accuracy to permit impact assessment, which must include inspection at the location where the photograph was taken;
- are based on a replicable, transparent and structured process, so that the accuracy of the representation can be verified, and trust established;
- use techniques, with appropriate explanation, that in the opinion of the landscape professional best represent the scheme under consideration and its proposed environment accurately as possible;
- are easily understood, and usable by members of the public and those with a non-technical background;
- are based on a good quality photographic image taken in representative weather conditions

8.3 The original photographs were taken using a Canon 6d Digital Single Lens Reflex camera, fitted with a 50mm lens, which when stitched together into a panorama is considered to provide a view as close to the perception of human vision as possible. The original images were saved in both JPEG and RAW format.

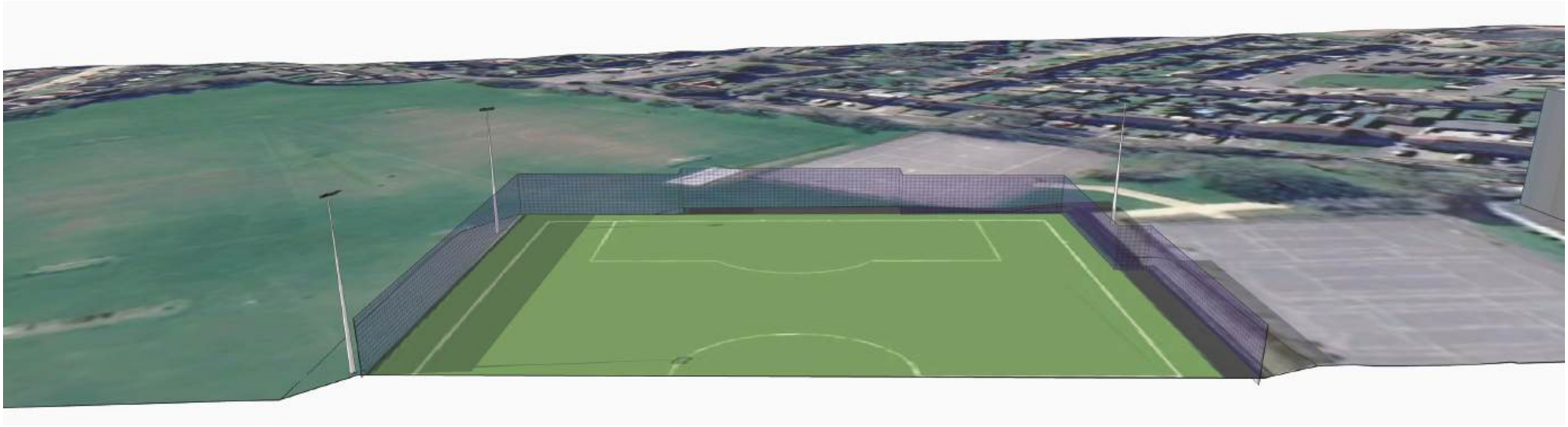
8.4 The location of the photographs was selected as providing the most useful indication of the proposals from within the selected significant vantage points, and the co-ordinates of the photographs was obtained using GPS.

8.5 A digital model of the indicative proposals was created using Autocad and the 3-dimensional modelling software Sketchup.

8.6 Wireframe views of the model were created, using viewpoints at the precise co-ordinates of the panoramic photographs. The views were then superimposed onto the panoramas and scaled by using existing features as reference points. It is considered that this technique provides an acceptably realistic representation of the form of the structures in relation to their setting.

Top: Existing contours

Bottom: Proposed contours



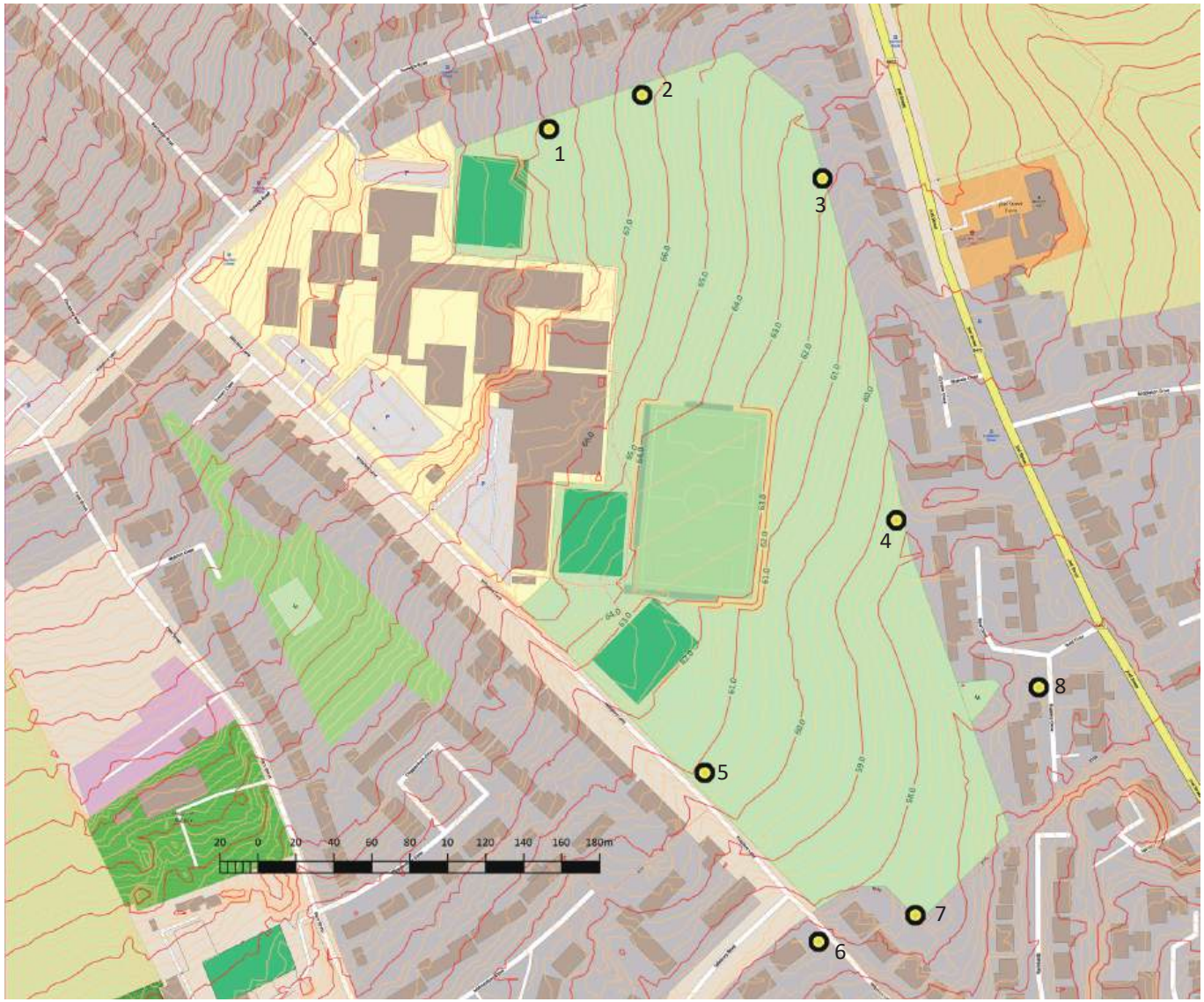
Views of digital model used in the visualisation

Bottom: Section through digital model

9. Visual Assessment

9.1 In order to undertake the assessment, the application site and its environs were walked and driven over one day to determine potential views, and identify representative locations (receptors) to demonstrate the visual impact.

9.2 Photographs have been used to demonstrate the key views and vistas, and to indicate potential visibility to and from the proposed development site. The location of the viewpoints was logged using GPS and this data was used to prepare the panoramic visualisations which were used in the preparation of the proposals. The following section summarises the potential visual impacts.



Viewpoints used in the visual assessment

Viewpoint 1

Location:
51.595669°N, -0.412692°W, 67.8m aOD
TQ1004589729, 510045, 189729

View southward toward the proposed AGP from the site boundary adjacent to the gardens off Norwich Road, approximately 160 metres from the proposed new pitch.

Location Plan

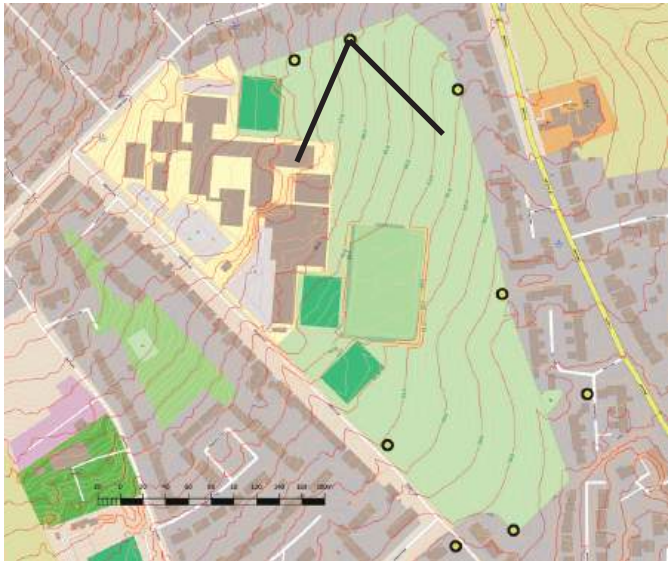
Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

Viewpoint 2

Location:
51.595818°N, -0.411973°W, 66.4m aOD
TQ1009589747, 510095, 189747

View southward toward the proposed AGP from the site boundary adjacent to the gardens off Norwich Road, approximately 165 metres from the proposed new pitch.



Location Plan

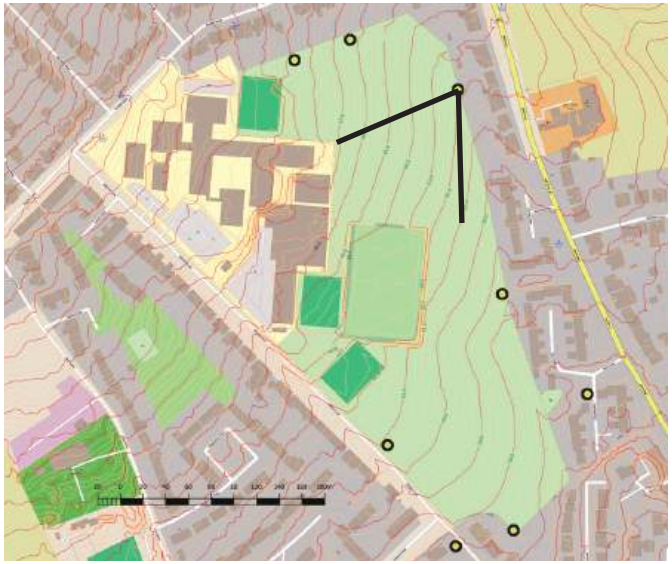
Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

Viewpoint 3

Location:
51.595409°N, -0.410605°W, 62.2m aOD
TQ1019089703, 510190, 189703

View south-westward toward the proposed AGP from the site boundary adjacent to the gardens off Joel Street, approximately 130 metres from the proposed new pitch.



Location Plan

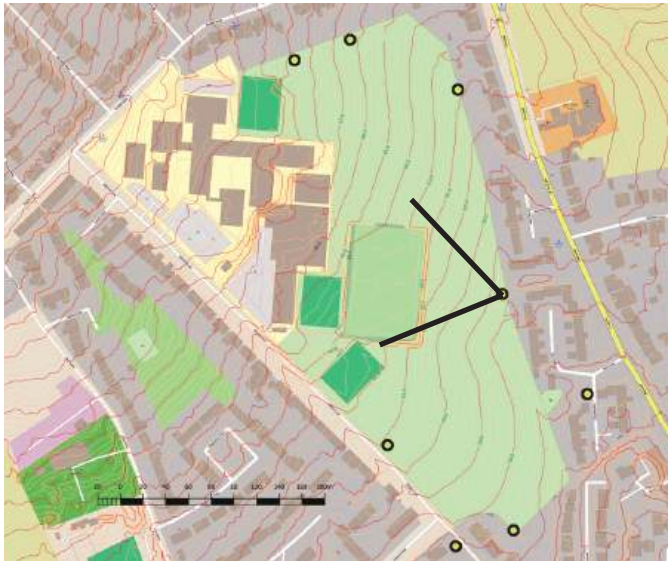
Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

Viewpoint 4

Location:
51.593784°N, -0.410102°W, 58.4m aOD
TQ1022989523, 510229, 189523

View westward toward the proposed AGP from the site boundary adjacent to the gardens off Norwich Road, approximately 75 metres from the proposed new pitch.



Location Plan

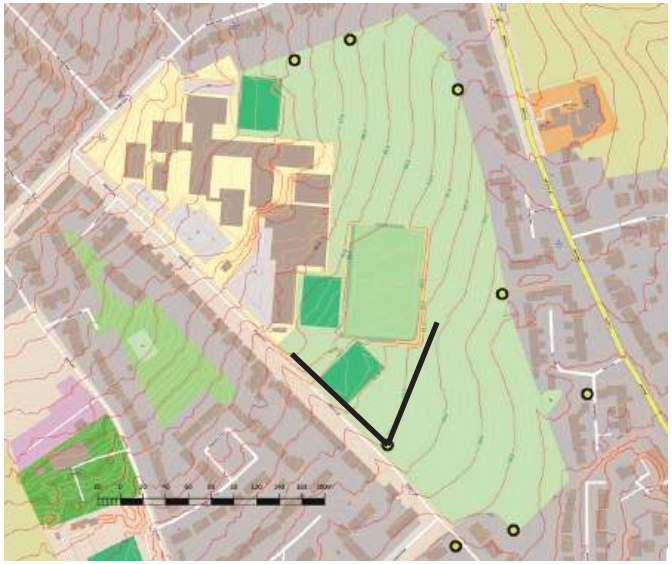
Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

Viewpoint 5

Location:
51.592606°N, -0.41161°W, 60.8m aOD
TQ1012889390, 510128, 189390

View northward toward the proposed AGP from the site boundary adjacent to the gardens off Norwich Road, approximately 95 metres from the proposed new pitch.



Location Plan

Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

Viewpoint 6

Location:
51.591793°N, -0.41076°W, 56.7m aOD
TQ1018889301, 510188, 189301

View northward toward the proposed AGP from the Wiltshire Lane, approximately 180 metres from the proposed new pitch.

Location Plan

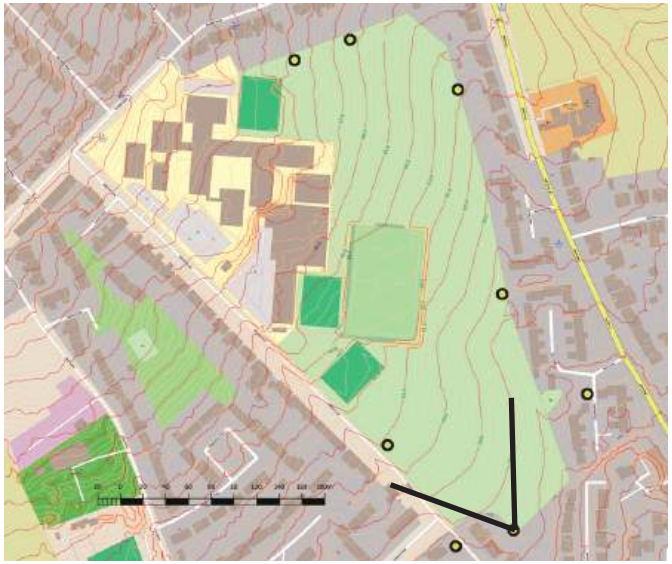
Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

Viewpoint 7

Location:
51.591946°N, -0.409858°W, 57.3m aOD
TQ1025189319, 510251, 189319

View northward toward the proposed AGP from the footpath leading from Wiltshire Lane to Joel Street, approximately 190 metres from the proposed new pitch.



Location Plan

Top: Existing view

Bottom: Visualisation of proposals

10. Nature of Impacts

10.1 Potential impacts can come from a variety of sources related to the proposals and can be adverse or beneficial in nature. This section assesses the magnitude and significance of potential impacts and whether they are adverse or beneficial in nature.

10.2 Magnitude of potential impacts is assessed using Tables 5 and 8 in the Methodology. Significance is a product of Magnitude and Sensitivity and is assessed against the criteria set out in Tables 6 and 9 in the Methodology.

Sources of Impact

10.3 Predicted landscape and visual impacts of the development are based on the construction and completion phases of the proposed scheme as well as the effect of the mitigation proposed.

Impacts Due to Construction

10.4 Potential effects which will be of a temporary nature during the construction phase include:

- The effect of any construction plant within the landscape,
- The effect of the movement of site vehicles and construction traffic, both within the site boundary and the surrounding areas,
- Stockpiles of materials and temporary lighting along with other factors associated with construction sites, and
- During the construction, a progressive change in landscape character and viewpoints .

Impacts from the Completed Development

10.5 Potential effects during completion of the site can include:

- Impact on the character of the site itself
- Impact on the wider landscape character
- Impact on designated sites or the setting of listed buildings
- Impact on residential properties

Effects on biodiversity

10.6 The development site appears to have relatively little ecological or biodiversity value, being part of a large sports fields. Boundary shrubs, hedgerow and mature trees are of value.

10.7 The introduction of new shrubs, grassland, wetland and tree planting as part of mitigation will have value as habitat for birds and other wildlife, and considerably increase biodiversity as part of an overall landscape-led development proposal for the site.

10.8 Mitigation hedgerow planting should be native species which promote biodiversity and be in keeping with and guided by landscape character considerations.

Effects of lighting

10.9 It is noted that the wider area is an area with generally high levels of light pollution. The separate lighting assessment provides detail of the proposed lighting and its impacts.

Magnitude and Significance
Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

10.10 The magnitude of a landscape impact is based on a judgement of the number of receptors affected and the degree to which they would be affected. Magnitude does not make a judgement on whether an impact is positive or negative so this is recorded in addition to other factors.

10.11 The magnitude of landscape impacts was assessed against criteria set out in Table 5 in the appendix.

Magnitude of Visual Impacts

10.12 Judgement of the magnitude of visual impacts is based on the extent of the view affected, the proportion of the source of impact visible, the distance to the source and whether the view is transient, i.e. from a moving vehicle.

10.13 The magnitude of the change will vary depending on the viewpoint. From certain locations the site will have little or no impact due to the lack of visibility caused by the site's location. In other places, where the site

is clearly visible, the magnitude of the impact will potentially be higher.

10.14 Magnitude is not a reflection on whether an impact is positive or negative, merely the scale of that impact. The magnitude of the visual impacts was assessed against table 8 in the Appendix.

10.15 Magnitude of visual impacts is assessed without mitigation, including planting proposed as part of the masterplan design.

Significance

10.16 Significance is a combination of the magnitude and the sensitivity of the receptor. However, magnitude is not a judgement on the positive or negative nature of the impact and, therefore, significance cannot be such a judgement either.

Nature of Impact

10.17 The nature of the potential impacts is identified in the following tables. These can be one of the following:

- **Beneficial** - an improvement on the current baseline.
- **Neutral** - no change in baseline or impact deemed to be neither beneficial or adverse.
- **Adverse** - new elements detract from the baseline.

11. Magnitude and Significance of Landscape Impacts

Receptor	Sensitivity	Nature of effect	Degree to which receptor is affected	Nature	Magnitude	Significance
Public rights of way	High	Potential effect / disruption to public footpaths	No direct impacts on public rights of way will be impacted by the proposals	Neutral	None	None
Adjacent hedgerows trees and tree belts	Medium	Potential impact of loss of hedgerow and trees	It is not anticipated that these features will be affected. The development will be contained entirely within existing site boundaries	Neutral	None	None
Designated Sites	Very High	Potential physical impact upon designated sites	Designated sites are unaffected directly by the proposals.	Neutral	None	None
Adjacent residential buildings	High	Impact upon the amenity of residential properties backing onto or facing the development site, including disturbance and impact upon views.	A number of properties have gardens which back onto the site boundary. The proposed pitch has been placed as far as possible from the garden boundaries	Adverse	Minor	Minor
Setting of Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas	High / Very High	Potential impact on setting of listed buildings or Conservation Areas	Designated sites are considered to be unaffected directly by the proposals.	Neutral	None	None
Veteran Trees	High	Loss of trees due to new development or road accesses	No veteran trees are anticipated to be affected	Neutral	None	None
Field Patterns	Medium	Potential loss of existing and historic field boundaries and patterns	The proposed development is located within existing boundaries and does not change existing field patterns.	Neutral	None	None
The Proposal Site	Low	The part of the existing sports field will be replaced with artificial surface, fencing and lighting	Partial change of use of the existing playing fields	Neutral	Minor	Minor
Landscape Character	High	Changes to landscape character due to the effects of new development	Little change in overall character, the site already being a sports field adjacent to active school buildings	Neutral	Minor	Minor
Tranquility	High	Intrusion into the tranquility of the rural landscape, by movement and noise of plant and machinery during construction and increased sports activity	Minor increase in noise from sporting activities	Adverse	Minor	Minor

12. Summary of Landscape and Visual Assessment

12.1 The key impacts are considered to be the visual impact for residential properties off Joel Street and the impact of new fencing and lighting into an area of open space.

12.2 It is noted that in its objections to the previous scheme (9556/APP/2014/3306) the Borough Planning Council asserted that:

- '*The submission fails to fully address how the effects of the change of levels across the site will affect the installation of the astro turf pitch, and flood lights, such that it can be demonstrated that it would not have an unacceptable impact on visual and residential amenity. As shown, the proposed pitch, including the associated fencing, floodlights (both structure and illumination) and grass bund, would, due to its height associated with the change in levels across the site, appear as an overly dominant feature, which would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area and detrimental to visual and residential amenity. The proposed floodlights and grass bund would, in particular, be viewed as artificial and alien features in this location.'*

12.3 The current scheme has aimed to address these issues as follows:

Levels

12.4 Unlike the earlier scheme, which proposed bunding to utilise excess excavated soil, the current scheme is designed to fit into the landform, with a gentle cutting on the western side and a gentle slope on the eastern side, rather than a bund. As the modelling has demonstrated, this will create a gentle and barely perceptible grass bank on the residential side of the proposed pitch.

Lighting

12.5 In accordance with paragraph 198 of the NPPF, the lighting has been designed to minimise nuisance to neighbouring residences. The light modelling excludes potential mitigating features such as tree lines, fencing, and buildings. By modelling under these simplified conditions, the assessment provides worst-case results, offering a conservative basis for evaluating compliance with lighting standards and environmental thresholds.

12.6 The proposed lighting uses full cut-off LED luminaires with no upward light output, controlled beam angles to limit spillage, and automated curfews to prevent illumination during sensitive hours.

12.7 The proposed floodlighting scheme has also been developed in line with the Institution of Lighting Professionals GN08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night. While the system uses 4000K LEDs to meet Football Foundation standards for affiliated football use, the design incorporates multiple mitigation measures to reduce ecological impact and safeguard nocturnal wildlife.

12.8 Key features aligned with GN08/23 include:

- Sensitive Layout: Lighting columns are positioned to avoid direct spill onto tree lines or hedgerows, reducing habitat fragmentation and disruption to potential bat commuting routes.

- Low Spill Levels at Site Boundaries: Modelling confirms lighting levels at the site's perimeter are typically <0.2 lux, with actual values expected to be lower due to existing vegetation.

- Ecological Appraisal: A supporting ecological survey identified no significant roosting features or priority habitats within or adjacent to the site. However, design measures still follow GN08/23's mitigation hierarchy: avoid > minimise > mitigate.

12.9 A 13m mounting height was chosen as the most efficient solution for the new pitch, as this will allow the optimal downward light angle whilst minimising spillage to the surrounding area and maintaining a low visual profile during daylight hours.

12.10 In summary, the lighting statement concludes that the scheme represents a significant improvement over legacy lighting technologies and has been developed with a strong emphasis on environmental

protection and user safety. The system will enable high-quality, year-round sports use of the facility while ensuring lighting impacts are carefully controlled and appropriately mitigated.

Location and scale

12.11 The current scheme is of a smaller scale than the original scheme, with the pitch covering an area of approximately 5900m² as opposed to 9600m² on the earlier scheme.

12.12 The proposed pitch is also moved further away from the site boundary, with the north-eastern corner of the pitch being approximately 60 metres from the nearest garden boundary as opposed to 28 metres on the original scheme

Residential amenity

12.13 As noted above, a key consideration in the design has been to minimise the potential impact on nearby residences, the key impact being the visual impact of the new fencing and lamp columns during the day, and the lighting during the evening as well as the increased evening activity.

12.14 The properties off Norwich Road to the north of the site and those at the northern end of Joel Street have long and well-established mature gardens, the boundaries of which are up to 170 metres from the edge of the new pitch or have only oblique views toward the site. It is considered that the impact on these properties is therefore minor, with the new fencing appearing as a minor extensions to the existing school buildings and relatively recessive in the landscape.

12.15 Properties off the southern part of Joel Street, primarily those on Reid Close and Wyevale Close, have short gardens and many have open views over the sports pitches. The closest of these properties is approximately 70 metres from the NE corner of the proposed pitch.

12.16 The new fencing will have a moderate impact on views from these properties, but it should be noted that the view will be against the backdrop of existing buildings so any perception of the loss of open space will be reduced.

12.17 As discussed above and in the Lighting Statement, the new lighting has been designed to have minimal light spillage.

12.18 The proposed sports lighting system will be operated during evenings of permitted use, after dusk and up to the approved curfew hour (22:15) After the final session, a short illuminated period allows players, coaches, and spectators to vacate safely and for staff to store equipment and secure the facility. To minimise impact, lights will be dimmed to 10% during this time, signalling session end and facilitating a safe, efficient shutdown.

Mitigation

12.19 This assessment has concluded that there will be a minor visual impact on neighbouring residential properties.

12.20 As noted there will be direct views primarily from properties off Joel Street. It is recommended that new hedgerow, using native trees and shrubs, be planted in gaps in the boundary hedges. Although this will not significantly enhance views from upper windows, it will help screen the new development from ground level windows and gardens as well as enhancing biodiversity.

12.21 In conclusion, it is considered that there will be minor impact on the sense of openness and some visual impact on neighbouring residential properties but that these impacts are not significant and that the development complies with local and national policy on this type of development.

Appendix : Methodology

13. Methodology

13.1 As a matter of best practice the assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the methods outlined in the following best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition), published by the Landscape Institute and the IEMA (2013) (GLVIA); and
- Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland, published by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency (2002).

13.2 In accordance with the GLVIA and other best practice guidance noted above, both the landscape and visual assessments will include baseline studies that describe, classify and evaluate the existing landscape and visual resources, focusing on their sensitivity and ability to accommodate change.

13.3 The assessment has been based on a desk-based review of relevant published guidance, including legislation and policy, baseline information production, and information followed by a number of detailed site appraisals.

13.4 The principal objectives of the LVIA are:

- to identify and classify the existing landscape likely to be affected by the construction and operation of the proposal and ancillary works;
- to identify the 'visual receptors' with views of the proposed development; and
- to assess the significance of effects on the prevailing landscape character and visual amenity, taking into account the measures proposed to mitigate any impacts identified.

Legislation and Policy Context
Landscape Planning Policies

13.5 Guidelines, legislation and planning policy documents provide the framework for the protection and conservation of landscape within the study area, the most relevant of which are outlined below.

13.6 Of these, statutes exist to ensure both direct and indirect protection of our most valued and important landscapes, their intrinsic visual qualities and the individual elements and components that constitute their appeal. Those with direct relevance to the assessment comprise the following:

- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- Environment Act 2021;
- Countryside Act 1968; and
- The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Baseline Study

13.7 Both the landscape and visual assessment include baseline studies that describe, classify and evaluate the existing landscape and visual resources, focusing on their sensitivity and ability to accommodate change. The initial study area was set to a radius of approximately 3km from the centre of the site on the basis that, at this distance, this form of development, when seen by the human eye, would be hardly discernible.

13.8 Following an initial desk based assessment of aerial photography, Ordnance Survey mapping a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

13.9 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is normally modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated.

13.10 A computer generated ZTV was established and a study area together with a number of representative viewpoints determined. All these viewpoints are at

13.11 various distances from the scheme and cover all main points of the compass.

13.12 The extent of study area and viewpoints were selected, as part of the scoping exercise, as being representative and having the potential to offer significant landscape and visual effects.

Method of Assessment

13.13 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been based on an evaluation of the sensitivity of the receiving landscape and visual receptors, and the magnitude of change associated with the introduction of the proposed scheme into the landscape and visual context of the study area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

13.14 Description and classification of existing landscape character has involved a review of published regional and sub-regional landscape character assessment information.

13.15 Local landscape character and landscape sensitivity has been defined by taking account of landform, hydrology, vegetation, settlement, land use pattern, and cultural and historic features and associations, consequently the landscape character has been categorised as follows.

Quality

13.16 Quality or condition relates to the physical state of the landscape and its intactness from the visual, functional and ecological perspectives, together with the state of repair of its constituent features or elements (e.g. hedgerows, woodlands, field pattern etc.). Local landscape quality within the study area has been considered based on the criteria described in the following table.

Table 1. Landscape Quality (or Condition)	Typical Indicators
Very High	All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are in local vernacular and materials. No detracting elements are evident
High	Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Few detracting elements are evident
Medium	Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Some buildings are in local vernacular and materials and some detracting elements are evident
Low	Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Few buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Many detracting or incongruous elements are evident
Very Low	No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are not in local vernacular and materials. Detracting or incongruous elements are much in evidence

Value

13.17 The value attributed to an area of landscape reflects communal perception at a local, regional, national or, occasionally, international scale. It is informed by a number of factors including scenic beauty, wildness, tranquillity and particular cultural associations. Cultural associations may be widely held at a national scale or more local in nature. Landscapes considered to be of the highest value would generally be formally designated at the national level, whereas those considered of lowest value would generally be undesignated, degraded landscapes, perhaps identified as being in poor condition and requiring either restoration or re-creation. Although value is largely determined by reference to statutory and planning policy designations, an absence of such designation does not necessarily imply the absence of value, as other factors such as scarcity or cultural associations can establish an area of otherwise unremarkable landscape as a valued local resource. The value of landscape character areas and designations has been determined using the criteria described in the following table.

Table 2. Landscape Value	Typical Indicators
Very High	Areas comprising a clear composition of valued landscape components in robust form and health, free of disruptive visual detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of conservation. Such areas would generally be internationally or nationally recognised designations, e.g. National Parks
High	Areas primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Such areas would generally be national statutorily designated areas, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Such areas may also relate to the setting of internationally or nationally statutory designated areas, e.g. National Parks.
Medium	Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Such areas would generally be non-statutory locally designated areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value. Such areas may also relate to the setting of national statutorily designated areas, such as National Landscapes.
Low	Areas containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Such areas would be commonplace at the local level and would generally be undesignated, offering scope for improvement.
Very Low	Areas lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with a dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. Such areas would generally be restricted to the local level and identified as requiring recovery.

Character sensitivity

13.18 Each landscape character area or designation is assessed for the sensitivity of its character to the introduction of the proposed development, taking into account its key characteristics, landscape elements, composition and cultural associations. Certain aspects of landscape character are particularly important indicators of the degree to which a landscape is likely to be able to successfully accommodate development. These include the general scale and complexity of its landforms and elements; the degree of enclosure or openness; the degree and nature of manmade influences upon it; and whether it offers particular experiences such as remoteness or tranquillity. The criteria used to determine the sensitivity of landscape character are set out in the following table.

Table 3. Character Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	**Landscape elements**: Important elements of the landscape susceptible to change and of high quality and condition. **Scale and Enclosure:** Small-scale landform/land cover/ development, human scale indicators, fine grained, enclosed with narrow views, sheltered. **Manmade influence:** Absence of manmade elements, traditional or historic settlements, natural features and 'natural' forms of amenity parkland, perceived as natural 'wild land' lacking in man-made features, land use elements and detractors **Remoteness and Tranquillity:** Sense of peace, isolation or wildness, remote and empty, no evident movement.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium
Medium	**Landscape elements:** Important elements of the landscape of moderate susceptibility to change and of medium quality and condition. **Scale and Enclosure:** Medium-scale landform/land cover/ development, textured, semi-enclosed with middle distance views. **Manmade influence:** Some presence of man-made elements, which may be partially out of scale with the landscape and be of only partially consistent with vernacular styles. **Remoteness and Tranquillity:** some noise, evident, but not dominant human activity and development, noticeable movement.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	**Landscape elements:** Important elements of the landscape insusceptible to change and of low quality and condition. **Scale and Enclosure:** Large-scale landform/land cover/ development, Featureless, coarse grained, open with broad views. **Manmade influence:** Frequent presence of utility, infrastructure or industrial elements, contemporary structures e.g. masts, pylons, cranes, silos, industrial sheds with vertical emphasis, functional man-made land-use patterns and engineered aspects. **Remoteness and Tranquillity:** Busy and noisy, human activity and development, prominent movement.

Visual Sensitivity of Landscape Areas

13.19 The visual sensitivity of an area of landscape relates to its general level of openness, the nature and number of visual receptors present within a landscape, and the probability of change in visual amenity due to the development being visible. It should be noted that landscape visual sensitivity refers to the visual sensitivity of the entire landscape that is being assessed, rather than an assessment of the visual effects of a specific, individual development.

13.20 The following table provides an overview of the typical indicators of visual sensitivity, which can be used to give a transparent, reasoned judgement regarding landscape visual sensitivity.

Table 4. Landscape Visual Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	**Visual interruption:** Flat or gently undulating topography, few if any vegetative or built features. **Nature of views:** Densely populated, dispersed pattern of small settlements, outward looking settlement, landscape focused recreation routes and/or visitor facilities, distinctive settings, gateways or public viewpoints.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium.
Medium	**Visual interruption:** Undulating or gently rolling topography, some vegetative and built features. **Nature of views:** Moderate density of population, settlements of moderate size with some views outwards, routes with some degree of focus on the landscape.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	**Visual interruption:** Rolling topography, frequent vegetative or built features. **Nature of views:** Unpopulated or sparsely populated, concentrated pattern of large settlements, introspective settlement, inaccessible, indistinctive or industrial settings.

13.21 The overall landscape sensitivity is derived by combining the assessed values attributed to landscape condition, landscape value, character sensitivity and effects on landscape elements and landscape visual sensitivity, to define an overall value within the range of Very High, High, Medium and Low.

13.22 Since each criterion has a varying weight in its contribution to sensitivity the overall value is determined by professional judgement.

13.23 For the purposes of this assessment greater weight is attributed to Landscape Value and Landscape Character Sensitivity since these factors have greater defining criteria in the description of the landscape characterisation.

Magnitude of Change

13.24 Magnitude of change has been predicted by considering the anticipated loss or disruption to character forming landscape elements (e.g. tree planting, landform, buildings, and watercourses etc), which would arise through introduction of the proposed scheme.

Table 5: Definition of Magnitude of Landscape Impacts	Description
Major	Total loss of or major alteration to key valued elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered being prominent and totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be at a considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. Would cause a high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be out of scale with the landscape, and at odds with the local pattern and landform. Will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.
Minor	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. May not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. Affect an area of recognised landscape character
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Maintain existing landscape quality, and maybe slightly at odds to the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.

Significance of Landscape Effects

13.25 The significance of the landscape character effects is determined by the assessment of landscape sensitivity set against the magnitude of change as indicated by the matrix in Table 5.

13.26 For the purposes of this assessment and with reference to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2012, 'Significant' landscape effects would be those effects assessed to be severe, major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading in the following table.

Table 6: Significance of Landscape Effects	Sensitivity			
	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Major	Major	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor
Minor	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor/moderate	Minor	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

13.27 The process for undertaking this study involves two stages;-

- Definition of local level landscape character areas.
- Assessment of landscape capacity.

Definition of local level landscape character areas

13.28 Prior to assessment of landscape capacity a review of the areas within the study area was required in order to define boundaries for assessment. These boundaries are called 'Character Areas' and the establishment of these is based on guidance within "Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England and Scotland" (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, April 2002).

13.29 Character areas are defined as…' distinct, recognisable and consistent patterns of elements in the landscape that makes that landscape different from another' . Elements and features assessed include a number of different aspects such as the geological pattern, landform, land use, vegetation, ecology, scale and enclosure.

13.30 This characterisation process has already been completed to a district-wide level within the Borough Landscape Character Assessment - June 2001 (BLCA). However the areas within this are considered to be too large for assessment of landscape capacity. Therefore the character areas within the BLCA were refined in order to produce smaller local–level character areas. This was carried out through desk-top study and on-site assessment using the above guidance.

Assessment of Landscape Capacity

13.31 Landscape Capacity is defined as 'the extent to which a particular area or type of landscape is able to accommodate change without significant effects on character or overall change in landscape type'. Ref - 'Topic Paper 6 - Techniques and criteria for judging capacity and sensitivity' (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, Jan 2004) and illustrates methods for assessing Landscape Capacity.

13.32 The Landscape Capacity is a combination of the sensitivity of the landscape character (both physical/ aesthetic and visual) and the value attached to the landscape, and can be expressed as follows;-

13.33 This is adapted from *Figure 1(b): Summary of factors to consider in judging landscape capacity for a particular type of change. Page 5, 'Topic Paper 6 - Techniques and criteria for judging capacity and sensitivity' (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, Jan 2004)*

13.34 Note 1 - In order to provide a consistent assessment, the nature of the type of development that are likely to have an impact on the landscape needs to be defined . For the purposes of this study, it has been agreed that the likely form of development will consist of mainly 2-3 storey residential development with some 4 storey buildings; however, likely numbers of houses and layouts have not been defined but have been assumed to be in range of 35-50 houses per hectare.

13.35 Using this method, the Landscape Sensitivity and Visual Sensitivity of each character area are combined to produce an overall Landscape Character Sensitivity.

13.36 The Landscape Character Sensitivity is then combined with the Landscape Value of the area to produce the overall Landscape Capacity for each character area. The value of the landscape is important in the process as the value attached to certain landscapes will need to be considered in relation to the capacity of the landscape to accept change.

13.37 These aspects and the elements assessed within them can be defined as follows;-

Landscape Capacity to accommodate specific type of change	=	Landscape Character Sensitivity Landscape Sensitivity plus Visual Sensitivity	+	Landscape Value

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

13.38 This is based on judgements about sensitivity of physical and aesthetic elements in the landscape that are most likely to be affected. The level of sensitivity is based on ….a professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on its character. This means making decisions about;-

- whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss through disturbance;
- whether or not they could be easily restored and;
- whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change;
- the consideration of new elements, which may also have a significant influence on character.

13.39 These decisions need clear and consistent thought about three factors;-

- the individual elements that contribute to character; their significance and their vulnerability to change;
- the overall quality and condition of the landscape in terms of it's intactness; representation of typical character and condition; and
- the aesthetic aspects of landscape character – including scale; enclosure, diversity, form, colour, line pattern and texture. These elements may have significance for judgements about sensitivity and are different from the perceptual aspects of landscape character which are much more subjective.

(Page 5-6, Topic Paper 6 - Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity' (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, Jan 2004).

13.40 Assessment of these will help to measure the endurance of the landscape character representing the likelihood of change in relation to the degree to which the landscape is able to tolerate change.

13.41 The aspects most likely to be affected and illustrations as to how the level of sensitivity are assessed is based on the following;-

Natural Factors

13.42 Vegetation – the nature and extent of woodland and hedgerows will have different sensitivities (e.g. an area with a strong and extensive hedgerow structure will be more sensitive to change than a landscape with few hedges; natural woodland may be more sensitive than a plantation).

13.43 Extent and pattern of semi-natural habitat – presence, size and dispersal of seminatural habitats. There are areas which have greater sensitivity due to the nature of habitats (e.g. species rich grassland will be more sensitive than areas in continued arable crop production).

13.44 Landform and drainage – presence of water courses, distinctive features (valleys, scarps etc), slopes and elevation all contribute to the sensitivity of the landscape (e.g. features such as prominent slopes, ridges and river valleys would be more sensitive to development than flat landscapes.

Cultural factors

13.45 Land use/function of the area – the nature of land use, the level of scarcity and resilience to change will all have a level of sensitivity attached (e.g. an area of woodland would be more sensitive to change than area of urban fringe activities such as paddocks)

13.46 Settlement Patterns – nature and extent of settlement patterns, would they be sensitive to change (e.g. sprawling urban fringe may be less sensitive to change than a clear town/country divide)

13.47 Historical features – the presence of historical features adds to the sensitivity because of the need to preserve their integrity. Features such as historical parks, Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM), Roman roads and scarce/uncommon historical landscape types. The level of sensitivity will depend on their presence, nature and extent.

Landscape quality and condition

13.48 Representation of typical character – this will indicate how similar the area is to the landscape character area within which it exists, how many of the typical features it exhibits.

13.49 Intactness – this indicates how well the landscape has survived over a period of time and whether significant features have been lost (e.g. hedges, woods).

13.50 State of repair – this assesses how well the landscape is looked after and whether elements such as hedges have been managed consistently.

Aesthetic Factors

13.51 The aesthetic value of the character areas includes an assessment of sensitivity of the following elements – scale, enclosure, diversity, texture, form, pattern and prominence of skyline. (e.g. areas which are small scale; open character; display a greater level of unity rather than fragmentation; possess a number of local visual horizons could all have a greater level of sensitivity).

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

13.52 The study will also take account of the visual sensitivity of the landscape and consideration as to the way people see the landscape. This depends on; -

General Visibility

13.53 This considers the level of visibility (or intervisibility) in the area, based on the nature of the landform and vegetation cover. Landscapes with higher levels of intervisibility are more sensitive to change.

13.54 This will also consider any key views and the contribution the area makes to the visual setting of an area (including visual links to the wider landscape). Areas containing wider panoramas across areas of countryside will be more sensitive.

Population

13.55 This element will consider the number (magnitude) of people likely to perceive change in the landscape. The higher the number of people then the greater the level of magnitude.

13.56 The purpose of viewers being within an area (sensitivity) is considered, as the nature of activity will have a bearing on how visually sensitive the landscape is (e.g. residential and recreational pursuits (e.g. walking) are considered to be more sensitive than transient views of people travelling through or where there are views from workplaces).

Mitigation Potential

13.57 This aspect considers the likelihood of change being mitigated, without the mitigation measures themselves having an adverse effect (for example, planting trees to screen a development in a large-scale open landscape could have as great an impact as the development itself). The level of sensitivity relates to how appropriate mitigation may be in an area, for example, in an area where mitigation is more appropriate the sensitivity would be lower.

LANDSCAPE VALUE

13.58 The value of the landscape is an important element in assessing the overall landscape capacity of an area. These are more subjective, experiential or perceptual aspects that can also reflect the local value of a landscape to a community and includes both designated and non-designated elements. These include; -

Designations

13.59 The value of a landscape can be recorded by some form of formal designation – from national down to local level. The nature, number and extent of the designation may also indicate the level of sensitivity of the landscape to change – whether physical, visual or historical and is recorded within the assessment as such.

Perceptual Aspects

13.60 The perceptual value of character areas need to be considered within the assessment. The tranquillity of an area can be defined by the extent of noise sources within an area; the absence of views of development and the absence of human activity. The scenic beauty of an area is the subjective value given to an area

relating to pleasing patterns and combinations of landscape features that appeal primarily to visual senses. The value will relate to the presence and extent of these aspects.

Settlement Edge

13.61 This aspect refers to the functional (as opposed to visual) role that an area has in relation to the settlement edge. This could relate to whether or not an area defines some form of physical separation between two areas. The level of sensitivity will relate to the presence and extent of these aspects.

Local Associations

13.62 There are sometimes parts of landscape areas that have special associations or meanings to a local community and therefore make a contribution to the value of the local landscape. Often, these are not designated but still need to be recorded in some manner in relation to the landscape capacity of the area. Assessing this aspect is an intensive area of work, often requiring extensive local knowledge beyond the resource capability of this study. Therefore, in order to reflect this in the assessment, each area is assumed to have a medium level of sensitivity in relation to cultural associations, except where there is some known aspect that contributes to the value of the area. It is possible that this element could be reviewed as time progresses.

ASSESSMENT THRESHOLDS

13.63 Each of the three aspects described above, i.e. Landscape Sensitivity, Visual Sensitivity and Landscape Value, are assessed on a 5 point scale – low, low/ medium, medium, medium-high and high. This assessment is based on how prominent each of the categories is within the character area and also the relative sensitivity of each element to change.

Landscape Character Sensitivity

13.64 In order to establish the overall Landscape Character Sensitivity for each of the character areas the individual assessments for Landscape Sensitivity and the Visual Sensitivity are combined as shown below in table M3:

Table M3 Landscape Character Sensitivity

		VISUAL SENSITIVITY				
		Low	**Low/Medium**	**Medium**	**Medium/High**	**High**
LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	**High**	Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High	High	High
	Medium/High	Low/ Medium	Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High	High
	Medium	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium	Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High
	Low/ Medium	Low	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium	Medium	Medium/High
	Low	Low	Low	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium	Medium

Landscape Capacity

13.65 The result for the Overall Landscape Character Sensitivity is then combined on a similar matrix (Table M4 below) with the Landscape Value for each of the character areas to produce the overall Landscape Capacity.

13.66 In relation to this study, the following indicates the likely level of development that a landscape character area could accommodate;-

- Low – The landscape character area could not accommodate areas of new development without a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character. Occasional, small scale development may be possible, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.
- Low/ Medium – Thresholds for development are low and development can be accommodated only in limited situations, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.
- Medium - Thresholds for change are intermediate with the landscape character area able to accommodate areas of new development in some parts, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.
- Medium/ High – Thresholds for change are high and the area is able to accommodate larger amounts of development, providing it has regard to the setting • and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.
- High – Thresholds for change are very high and much of the area is able accommodate significant areas of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

Table M4: Landscape Capacity

		LANDSCAPE VALUE				
		Low	**Low/Medium**	**Medium**	**Medium/High**	**High**
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	**High**	Medium	Medium/Low	Low	Low	Low
	Medium/High	Medium/High	Medium	Medium/Low	Low	Low
	Medium	High	Medium/ High	Medium	Medium/Low	Low
	Low/ Medium	High	High	Medium/ High	Medium	Medium/Low
	Low	High	High	High	Medium/High	Medium

VISUAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

13.67 In conjunction with the landscape character impact assessment, a visual impact assessment has been undertaken in order to assess any potential visual impact arising as a result of the proposed development.

13.68 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done, to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. The assessment of visual impact from any one location takes into account the:

- Sensitivity of the views and viewers (visual receptor) affected;
- Nature, scale or magnitude and duration of the change
- Extent of the proposed development that will be visible;
- Degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that will occur;
- Distance of the view;
- Change in character or quality of the view compared to the existing.

Visual Receptors

13.69 Visual impact assessment considers the sensitivity to change of visual receptors within the study area, and the magnitude of change associated with the introduction of the proposed development into the existing visual context.

13.70 A range of fixed visual receptors was initially considered, with emphasis placed on identification and selection of locations with a clear relationship to the proposed scheme where potential visual implications were deemed to be greatest. The key visual receptors normally include statutory and non-statutory designated or protected areas, cultural heritage resources, residential properties and farmsteads, recreational/tourist resources, panoramic hilltop views, focused or directed views, and cumulative views. Viewpoints were selected to be representative of these visual receptor types.

13.71 These preliminary viewpoints locations were assessed in terms of visibility during field investigation resulting in some preliminary viewpoints either being repositioned to locations offering improved visual representation or discounted as not offering any views. In addition, field investigation identified a number of other closer viewpoints.

13.72 For the field assessment, a Canon EOS 6D full-frame camera with an 35-135mm lens was used, set at 50mm focal length. This is in line with best practice as shown in the Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment advice notes issued by the Landscape Institute.

13.73 Field investigation from the preliminary viewpoints was used to assess the actual visibility of the proposed development within the study area, taking into account the screening effect of vegetation and buildings.

Site Appraisal/ Photographic Studies

13.74 Viewpoints at varying close distance from the site were selected to represent the typical views of the site. In determining the viewpoints, whether in the immediate locality or further away, the main public highways, sections of public footpaths, and some of the publicly available spaces within the study area were visited. It is acknowledged that from public places, more viewers are likely to be affected thereby adding to the significance of the impact upon receptors in those locations.

13.75 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. In accordance with the "Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition", for the purposes of the visual assessment the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change.

13.76 From the results of the initial desk study and site appraisal it is clear that the proposed development will be visible from a limited number of locations, at varying but close distances, and from both public and private areas.

13.77 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the

13.78 development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. Each assessment of visual impact has therefore been made taking into consideration the character and quality of the existing view. The assessment of the significance of effect is a result of the assessment of magnitude of the impact related to the assessment of sensitivity of the receptor.

Visual Receptor Sensitivity

13.79 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. The assessment of visual sensitivity considers both the category of visual receptor and the nature of their existing view. It takes account of the location of the receptor or viewpoint; the expectations, occupation or activity of the people present; the quality of the existing visual context; and the importance or value likely to be attributed by them to the available view. It is therefore the case that not all receptors within a given category are deemed to display equal sensitivity.

13.80 In accordance with the GLVIA, for the purposes of the visual assessment, the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change against criteria set out in table 7.

13.81 The number of people likely to be present and the duration of time that a view is likely to be experienced may also influence the visual sensitivity of a particular location.

Table 7: Visual Receptor sensitivity	Description
High	Occupiers of residential properties. Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community.
Medium	People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes where higher speeds are involved and views sporadic and short-lived. People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest.
Low	People at their place of work, Industrial facilities.

13.82 It is sometimes the case that different categories of visual receptor might be present at a selected representative viewpoint (e.g. a selected location may include both residential properties and workplaces suggesting different levels of sensitivity). In such cases the primary receptor category is identified (usually the more sensitive).

Visual Magnitude of Change

13.83 The visibility of the proposals and the magnitude of their change upon a view and the resulting significance of visual effect are dependent on the range of factors already outlined, together with, the angle of the sun, the time of year and weather conditions. Of equal importance will be whether the site is seen completely, or in part; whether the site appears on the skyline; whether it is viewed with a backcloth of land or vegetation; or with a complex foreground; and whether the site forms part of an expansive landscape or is visible within a restricted view. The aspect of dwellings and whether the view is from a main window or a secondary window, which may be used less frequently, is also a consideration. From highways, the direction and speed of travel are also a consideration. In the assessment magnitude of change is ranked in accordance with the following table.

Table 8: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Impact	Examples
Severe	The development would result in a dramatic change in the existing view and/or would cause a dramatic change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would appear large scale and/or form the dominant elements within the overall view and/or may be in full view the observer or receptor. Commanding, controlling the view.
Major	The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and/or would cause a prominent change in the quality and /or character of the view. The development would form prominent elements within the overall view and/or may be easily noticed by the observer or receptor. Standing out, striking, sharp, unmistakable, easily seen.
Medium	The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view and/or would cause a noticeable change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form a conspicuous element within the overall view and/or may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Noticeable, distinct, catching the eye or attention, clearly visible, well defined.
Minor	The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or character of the view. The development would form an apparent small element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Visible, evident, obvious.
Negligible	The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or would form an inconspicuous minor element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Lacking sharpness of definition, not obvious, indistinct, not clear, obscure, blurred, indefinite.
None	Weak, not legible, near limit of acuity of human eye.

Significance of Visual Effect

13.84 The significance of the visual effects is determined by the assessment of receptor sensitivity set against the magnitude of change as indicated by the matrix in Table 9.

13.85 For the purposes of this assessment and with reference to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, 'Significant' landscape effects would be those effects assessed to be severe, major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading in the following table.

Table 9: Significance of Visual Effects	Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Severe	Major	Major	Major/moderate
Major	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor
Minor	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor
Negligible	Minor	Minor	Negligible
None	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

14. Bibliography

- Hillingdon Townscape Character Study, October 2023
- Hillingdon Local Plan Strategic Policies, November 2012
- Hillingdon Development Management Policies, january 2020
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), 3rd Edition
- NPPF
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