



# **Sevington Inland Border Facility**

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

06 November 2020

Confidential



Mott MacDonald



Department for Transport



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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Overview	1
<b>2</b>	<b>Legislative and Policy Framework</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1	National policy	2
2.1.1	National Planning Policy Framework	2
2.2	Kent Downs AONB	2
2.3	Local policy	3
<b>3</b>	<b>Method of Assessment</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1	Overview	5
3.2	Engagement	5
3.3	Baseline methodology	5
3.4	Assessment methodology	6
3.5	Significance criteria	6
3.5.1	Sensitivity of landscape resource	6
3.5.2	Sensitivity of visual resource	7
<b>4</b>	<b>Assumptions and Limitations</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Baseline Information</b>	<b>12</b>
5.1	Study area	12
5.2	Relevant designations	12
5.3	Landscape character baseline	13
5.3.1	National	13
5.3.2	Kent Downs AONB	13
5.3.3	Local character baseline	13
5.3.4	Site description	18
5.4	Visual baseline	18
<b>6</b>	<b>Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>20</b>
6.1	During Construction	20
6.2	During Operation	20
<b>7</b>	<b>Predicted Effects</b>	<b>22</b>
7.1	Effects upon designated assets	22
7.2	Effects during construction	22
7.2.1	Key construction elements	22

7.2.2	Effects upon landscape character	22
7.2.3	Effects upon visual amenity	24
7.3	Effects during operation	25
7.3.1	Day 1-200	25
7.3.2	Day 200	25
7.3.3	Year 5 and beyond	25
7.3.4	Effects upon landscape character	25
7.3.5	Effects upon visual amenity	27
<b>8</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>Drawings</b>	<b>31</b>
A.1	Zone of Theoretically Visibility Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3019	31
A.2	Landscape Character Area Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3018	31
A.3	Visual Receptor Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3017	31
A.4	Visual Impact Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3017	31
<b>B.</b>	<b>Visual Receptor Schedules</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>C.</b>	<b>Landscape Design Plans</b>	<b>49</b>
C.1	Environmental Masterplan Day 1 (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3030)	49
C.2	Environmental Masterplan Plan Day 200 (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3031)	49
C.3	Outline Long-Term Enhancement Plan (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3032)	49
<b>Tables</b>		
Table 3.1:	Landscape sensitivity typical descriptions	7
Table 3.2:	Visual sensitivity (susceptibility and value) typical descriptions	7
Table 3.3:	Magnitude and nature of the impact on the landscape and typical descriptions	8
Table 3.4:	Magnitude of Visual Impact (change) and Typical Descriptions	9
Table 3.5:	Significance of Effect	10
Table 5.1:	Landscape Designations	12
Table 7.1:	Summary of Visual Effects during Operation and beyond	28
Table 8.1:	Summary of Landscape Effects	29
Table 8.2:	Summary of Visual Effects	30

# 1 Introduction

Mott MacDonald has been commissioned by the Department for Transport (DfT) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment associated with the development of an Inland Border Facility, at Sevington, Ashford, Kent.

## 1.1 Overview

Mott MacDonald has been appointed by the Department for Transport (DfT) to produce '*An Analysis of the Likely Environmental Effects of the Development Report*' for the proposed use of a land at Sevington in Ashford (hereafter referred to as 'the site') for a temporary heavy goods vehicle (HGV) Inland Border Facility (hereafter referred to as 'the scheme'). Further details on the description of the scheme including a description of the location of the site is provided in the Sevington, Inland Border Facility '*An Analysis of the Likely Environmental Effects of the Development Report*' (document ref: 419419-MMD-XX-SV-RP-YE-0002). This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken to support the *Analysis of the Likely Environmental Effects of the Development Report*.

## 2 Legislative and Policy Framework

### 2.1 National policy

#### 2.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework

Current policy for planning and the environment is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was last updated in February 2019 and replaces the previous NPPF published in 2012 and revised in July 2018. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England with Paragraphs 170-183, Section 15 of the NPPF setting out the framework with respect to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 170 states the following:

The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological conservation interests and soils.
- Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate.
- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans.
- Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

#### 2.2 Kent Downs AONB

Whilst the scheme sits outside the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) boundary, due consideration is given to the following policies taken from the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan in so much as needing to consider the setting of the AONB and borrowed landscape:

- SD1 - The need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB is recognised as the primary purpose of the designation and given the highest level of protection within statutory and other appropriate planning and development strategies and development control decisions.
- SD3 - New development or changes to land use will be opposed where they disregard or run counter to the primary purpose of the Kent Downs AONB.
- SD7 - To retain and improve tranquillity, including the experience of dark skies at night, careful design and the use of new technologies should be used. New developments and highways infrastructure which negatively impact on the local tranquillity if the Kent Downs AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.

- SD8 - Proposals which negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.
- SD10 - Positive measures to mitigate the negative impact of the infrastructure and growth on the natural beauty and amenity of the AONB will be supported.
- SD11 - Where it is decided that development will take place that will have a negative impact on the landscape character, characteristics and qualities of the Kent Downs AONB or its setting, mitigation measures appropriate to the national importance of the Kent Downs landscape will be identified, pursued, implemented and maintained. The removal or mitigation of identified landscape detractors will be pursued.
- SD12 - Transport and infrastructure schemes are expected to avoid the Kent Downs AONB so far as practicable. Essential developments will be expected to fit unobtrusively into the landscape, respect landscape character, be mitigated by sympathetic landscape and design measures and provide environmental compensation by benefits to natural beauty elsewhere in the AONB.

### 2.3 Local policy

Ashford Borough Council's (ABC) Local Plan was adopted in February 2019. The *Ashford Local Plan 2030* forms the main statutory development plan for the borough. Relevant policies to this appraisal include the following:

- Policy ENV2 - The Ashford Green Corridor

The protection and enhancement of Ashford's Green Corridor is a key objective. The proposed scheme boundary lies within an area of Potential Future Additions as shown in Map 6 of Chapter 9 of the Local Plan and as such the following aspects of Policy ENV2 apply:

- Development proposals on land adjoining the Green Corridor shall provide suitable access and links to the existing movement networks of the adjoining Green Corridor wherever possible. They must not cause significant harm to any of the key features and functions and should make a positive contribution to the Green Corridor in respect of its environment, biodiversity, visual amenity, movement networks or functioning and its setting.
- Development proposals must take into consideration the appraisals, projects and management recommendations set out for the specific areas in the Ashford Green Corridor Action Plan, including the identified proposed extension areas to the designation.'

- Policy ENV3a - Landscape Character and Design

All proposals for development in the borough shall demonstrate particular regard to the following landscape characteristics, proportionately, according to the landscape significance of the site:

- a. Landform, topography and natural patterns of drainage.
- b. The pattern and composition of trees and woodlands.
- c. The type and composition of wildlife habitats.
- d. The pattern and composition of field boundaries.
- e. The pattern and distribution of settlements, roads and footpaths.
- f. The presence and pattern of historic landscape features.
- g. The setting, scale, layout, design and detailing of vernacular buildings and other traditional man-made features.

- h. Any relevant guidance given in the Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- i. Existing features that are important to and contribute to the definition of the local landscape character shall be retained and incorporated into the proposed development.
- j. Any non-designated, locally identified, significant landscape features justified in a Parish Plan or equivalent document.

Other SPD relating to the above policies include the Landscape Character SPD, Sustainable Development and Construction SPD, and the Sustainable Drainage SPD.

## 3 Method of Assessment

### 3.1 Overview

Landscape encompasses many more elements than the common association which focuses merely upon the view or appearance of the land. The notion of landscape can be applied to both rural and urban environments with the term ‘townscape’ frequently adopted within the urban context. The term ‘landscape’ applies to capture the appraisal of environmental factors such as topography, drainage, land use and management, and vegetation as well as ecology and historical and cultural associations.

This landscape assessment follows the recommendations set out in the following documents:

- *Highways England’s Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance document LA107 Landscape and Visual Effects*, 2020 which broadly aligns with the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3* produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), third edition, 2013.

### 3.2 Engagement

A meeting with Ashford Borough Council (ABC) was held on 08/09/20 during which the selection of visual receptors to be identified as part of this assessment were discussed and agreed. It was agreed that the receptors addressed within the Environmental Statement for the Stour Park Development (ref. 14/00906) would be appropriate. Additional matters raised by ABC included the placement and management of temporary stockpiles associated with the scheme, and the general rationale of the outline landscape masterplan currently in progress at the time of the meeting.

### 3.3 Baseline methodology

The landscape and visual baseline have been established through both a desk study and subsequent site survey. The desk study used online mapping and literature in order to gather an understanding of the study area and its surroundings. This included a review of Ordnance Survey mapping and several Landscape Character Assessments at a regional and local level, as well as the identification of any key designations that may be impacted by the scheme. A site visit was undertaken in August 2020, during which likely visual impacts from local receptors were identified.

Current good practice indicates that a study area should extend to contain all areas in which visual impacts have the potential to occur. This is known as the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).

A ZTV has been prepared using GIS software, accounting for a maximum proposed finished height of 12m above existing ground level, set within a Digital Surface Model of the surrounding landscape (see Appendix A). The digital modelling of the ZTV was undertaken in accordance with paragraphs 6.6 – 6.11 of *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition*.

It should be noted that ZTV mapping can overestimate the visibility of a development as the data used is based on digital surface model which can present as if the ‘viewer’ is placed upon all surface features, including that of vegetation and buildings, which should be discounted by the reader in these instances.

Ground truthing was subsequently undertaken on site, resulting in some receptors being removed from further consideration in the assessment due to distance or the presence of intervening screening which reduces the potential visibility of the scheme.

### 3.4 Assessment methodology

Landscape and visual effects are determined by a number of factors, which collectively provide a level of significance of effect. Significance is based on the sensitivity of an area to a perceived change, along with an assessment of the magnitude of the impact (change). Impacts upon landscape character and visual amenity are considered during both the construction and operational phases of a scheme.

The assessment uses structured, informed and reasoned professional judgement, taking into account a combination of quantitative and qualitative data derived from desk study and fieldwork.

### 3.5 Significance criteria

The significance of effect upon landscape character and visual amenity considers a combination of the magnitude of change (or impact) against the sensitivity of the affected landscape and visual receptors. Sensitivity is defined through a combination of the value judgement attached to a landscape or visual receptor and the susceptibility to specific change.

#### 3.5.1 Sensitivity of landscape resource

The sensitivity of the landscape was evaluated by considering the existing value of the landscape and its susceptibility to the type of change arising from the proposed development. There can be a complex relationship between the value attached to the landscape and its susceptibility to change, especially where the change is within or close to a designated landscape. A designated landscape such as an AONB is likely to have a high susceptibility to change, however depending on the type of development, it may accommodate the change without detrimental effect on its key characteristics. In this case its susceptibility to change could be medium or even low.

The value of each identified landscape character area (LCA) was evaluated and defined in the baseline by considering:

- Designations recognising the quality of landscape character (such as National Park, AONB).
- Scenic quality and distinctive combination of features, elements and characteristics.
- Strong or weak sense of place.
- Presence of cultural or historic associations or ecological elements which make a major contribution to landscape character.
- Presence or absence of landscape detractors.
- Rarity and condition.
- Perceptual aspects such as tranquillity or wildness.

The evaluation of susceptibility to change was based on the ability of the overall character and the valued landscape characteristics, elements and features identified in the baseline, to tolerate the nature and scale of the change resulting from the proposed development.

The evaluation of sensitivity of the landscape resource was defined through reasoned professional judgement, combining value of the landscape and its susceptibility to the type of change arising from the proposed development. Typical descriptions are set out in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Landscape sensitivity typical descriptions**

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors and Examples
Very High	Landscapes of very high international/national importance and rarity or value with no or very limited ability to accommodate change without substantial loss/gain (i.e. national parks, internationally acclaimed landscapes- UNESCO World Heritage Sites).
High	Landscapes of high national importance containing distinctive features/elements with limited ability to accommodate change without incurring substantial loss/gain (i.e. designated areas, areas of strong sense of place - registered parks and gardens, country parks).
Medium	Landscapes of local or regional recognition of importance able to accommodate some change (i.e. features worthy of conservation, some sense of place or value through use/perception).
Low	Local landscape areas or receptors of low to medium importance with ability to accommodate change (i.e. non-designated or designated areas of local recognition or areas of little sense of place).
Very Low	Landscapes of very low importance and rarity able to accommodate change.

Source: LA107, DMRB, 2020

### 3.5.2 Sensitivity of visual resource

The sensitivity of visual receptors was evaluated by considering the value attached to specific views and the susceptibility of visual receptors to changes to views and visual amenity. The susceptibility to change depends on the occupation or activity of the receptor and the extent to which their attention is focused on the view and visual amenity. The value attached to particular views were determined in the baseline by considering:

- Presence of attractive features are dominant or include attractive focal points and/or skyline features.
- Presence/absence of visual detractors or discordant features and their dominance in the view.
- Views that are designated or identified as of value in a guidebook or tourist literature or where the composition is a fundamental aspect of the design or function of a heritage asset and is integral to its setting.

The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in view and visual amenity is mainly a function of the occupation and activity of people experiencing the view, and the extent to which their attention is focussed on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.

The evaluation of sensitivity was defined through reasoned professional judgement, combining value of the view and susceptibility to the type of change arising from the proposed development. Typical descriptions relating to visual sensitivity are outline in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2: Visual sensitivity (susceptibility and value) typical descriptions**

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors and Examples
Very High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Static views from and of major tourist attractions.</li> <li>2. Views from and of very important national/international landscapes, cultural/historical sites (e.g. National Parks, UNESCO World Heritage sites).</li> <li>3. Receptors engaged in specific activities for enjoyment of dark skies.</li> </ol>

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors and Examples
High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Views by users of nationally important PROW / recreational trails (e.g. national trails, long distance footpaths).</li> <li>2. Views by users of public open spaces for enjoyment of the countryside (e.g. country parks).</li> <li>3. Static views from dense residential areas, longer transient views from designated public open space, recreational areas.</li> <li>4. Views from and of rare designated landscapes of national importance.</li> </ol>
Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Static views from less populated residential areas, schools and other institutional buildings and their outdoor areas.</li> <li>2. Views by outdoor workers.</li> <li>3. Transient views from local/regional areas such as public open space, PROW, scenic roads, railways or waterways, users of local/regional designated tourist routes of moderate importance.</li> <li>4. Views from and of landscapes of regional importance.</li> </ol>
Low	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Views by users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main arterial routes.</li> <li>2. Views by indoor workers.</li> <li>3. Views by users of recreational/formal sports facilities where the landscape is secondary to enjoyment of the sport.</li> <li>4. Views by users of local public open spaces of limited importance with limited variety or distinctiveness.</li> </ol>

Source: Based on LA107, DMRB, 2020

### 3.5.2.1 Magnitude of Impact

The magnitude of change to landscape character was determined by considering:

- The scale of the change - extent of the loss of landscape elements, the degree to which aesthetic features or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered (by the removal of hedgerows or introduction of new structures for example) and whether a key characteristic of the landscape is altered.
- The geographical extent of the area affected.
- The duration of the change and its reversibility.

**Table 3.3: Magnitude and nature of the impact on the landscape and typical descriptions**

Magnitude of Impact		Typical Descriptions
Major	Adverse	Total loss or large-scale damage to existing landscape character or distinctive features or elements; and/or addition of new uncharacteristic, conspicuous features or elements (i.e. road infrastructure).
	Beneficial	Large scale improvement of landscape character to features and elements; and/or addition of new distinctive features or elements, or removal of conspicuous road infrastructure elements.
Medium	Adverse	Partial loss or noticeable damage to existing character or distinctive features and elements, and/or the addition of new but uncharacteristic noticeable features and elements (i.e. road infrastructure).
	Beneficial	Partial or noticeable improvement of landscape character by restoration of existing features or elements; or addition of new characteristic features or elements or removal of noticeable features or elements.
Minor	Adverse	Slight loss or damage to existing landscape character of one (maybe more) key features and elements; and/or addition of new uncharacteristic features and elements.
	Beneficial	Slight improvement of landscape character by the restoration of one (maybe more) key existing features and elements; and/or the addition of new characteristic features.
Negligible	Adverse	Very minor loss, damage or alteration to existing landscape character of one or more features and elements.

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Descriptions
Beneficial	Very minor noticeable improvement of character by the restoration of one or more existing features and elements.
No Change	No noticeable alteration or improvement, temporary or permanent, of landscape character of existing features and elements.

Source: LA107, DMRB, 2020

The magnitude of change to views was determined by considering:

- The context and nature of the existing view, orientation (for static receptors) and duration of views (for receptors moving through a landscape).
- The extent to which the view has been altered due to the loss/ addition of features and the proportion of the view the development will occupy.
- The scale and appearance of the proposed development and the degree of contrast/integration with the existing view.
- The presence of screening elements and intervening vegetation which may filter views.
- The distance of the visual receptor from the development.
- The duration and reversibility of the effect.
- The geographical extent of the changes to the view.

The evaluation of the magnitude of change was based on the criteria set out in the table below.

**Table 3.4: Magnitude of Visual Impact (change) and Typical Descriptions**

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Descriptors and Examples
Major	The project, or a part of it, would become the dominant feature or focal point of the view.
Medium	The project, or a part of it, would form a noticeable feature or element of the view which is readily apparent to the receptor.
Minor	The project, or a part of it, would be perceptible but not alter the overall balance of features and elements that comprise the existing view.
Negligible	Only a very small part of the project work or activity would be discernible or being at such a distance it would form a barely noticeable feature or element of the view.
No Change	No part of the project work or activity would be discernible.

Source: LA107, DMRB 2020

### 3.5.2.2 Assessment of significance

The assessment of the significance of effect is undertaken by combining the sensitivity of an asset with an assessment of the magnitude of change put upon it. These effects can be beneficial or adverse, and temporary or permanent depending on the nature of the development and the mitigation and any enhancement measures proposed. The output of this function is detailed within Table 3.4 below but determined through professional judgement.

**Table 3.5: Significance of Effect**

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact				
	No change	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major
<b>Very High</b>	Neutral	Slight	Moderate or Large	Large or Very Large	Large or Very Large
<b>High</b>	Neutral	Slight	Slight or Moderate	Moderate or Large	Large or Very Large
<b>Medium</b>	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Slight	Slight or Moderate	Moderate or Large
<b>Low</b>	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight	Slight	Slight or Moderate
<b>Negligible</b>	Neutral	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight	Neutral or Slight	Slight

Source: Based on LA 104, DMRB, 2020

## 4 Assumptions and Limitations

The following assumptions and limitations have been made as part of this assessment of landscape and visual effects:

- The assessment was restricted to publicly accessible areas only and from the curtilage of the private properties/residential receptors.
- The assessment assumes the following working hours: 07:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday, and 08:00 to 01:00 Saturday.
- Receptors were grouped together in some instances with a representative view being assessed for that group.
- Site assessment was undertaken during summer months only.
- The assessment is based on a phased use of the site as set out in detail in the scheme description (Chapter 1). In summary there are four key stages in the phasing and construction of the site set out below:
  1. Construction (up until Day 1): the construction of the facility for the Day 1 scenario.
  2. Day 1 to Day 200: the operation of the Day 1 scenario (with the Department for Transport (DfT), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) use and small Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) use of the site). This phase would also include the construction of the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) buildings, additional HMRC inspection sheds, removal of the parking in the viewing corridor, and the suspension of the parking areas in the north-west and the south of the site, commencing 2 months prior to the Day 200 use of the site.
  3. Day 200 Operation: HMRC, Border Force and Defra use of site. Suspension of parking areas in northern and southern most areas under the Day 200 Scenario.
  4. Reinstatement; this would follow beyond the 5 years operational period; an indicative restoration plan is submitted with this application (refer to drawing 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3011 in Appendix C). This phase would involve reinstatement of the site, and the removal of the infrastructure associated with the Inland Border Facility with the exception of areas of hardstanding and green-blue infrastructure.

## 5 Baseline Information

Baseline information has been gathered to establish the existing baseline for both landscape character and visual receptors within the study area. An initial desk study has subsequently been corroborated on site.

### 5.1 Study area

Transport corridors form dominant features within the area, with the M20 running through the study area to the north east of Ashford and the more southerly village of Mersham. The A2070 and A20 also form important transport corridors as they move through the centre of the study area, with the A2070 travelling south towards Romney Marsh, and to the north of the proposed site, and the A20 running parallel with the M20. Likewise, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) also traverses the landscape, although its impact is limited by running in cutting as it travels through the study area.

Away from transportation corridors, land use is varied, with the central core of the study area set to agriculture, with large scale open agricultural fields. Historic villages are found amongst the more rural agricultural scene, whilst to the north of Sevington, the A2070 forms the southern urban fringe of Ashford to the north. The North Downs rise further to the north forming a strong elevated ridge line high above Ashford. The Kent Downs AONB lies some 2.6km from the scheme boundary at its nearest point.

### 5.2 Relevant designations

There are a number of designated sites, considered as part of this assessment which are presented in Table 5.1 below.

Further information regarding the baseline and potential effects upon heritage assets have been addressed in greater detail within the *Assessment of Likely Environmental Effects of the Development* report (document ref: 419419-MMD-XX-SV-RP-YE-0001).

**Table 5.1: Landscape Designations**

Designation	Description
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	Kent Downs AONB sits 2.6km to the north of the site, upon ground rising to the north of Ashford.
Conservation Areas	One in the north at Willesborough Lees, one at Lacton Green in the north east of the study area and one covering the village of Mersham in the south.
Listed Buildings	Numerous listed buildings, with a particularly high concentration within three local Conservation Areas. St Marys Church Sevington is particularly notable landmark within the study area.
Scheduled Monuments	The first, Boys Hall Moat, a moated site and associated garden located immediately adjacent to the CTRL just west of Ashford Industrial Estate. The second is a medieval moated site at Quarrington Manor located south of Quarrington Farm in the north eastern part of the study area.
Registered Park and Garden	Hatch Park - a grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden in the north east of the study area.

## 5.3 Landscape character baseline

### 5.3.1 National

The site is located within Natural England's National Landscape Character Area (LCA) 120 Wealden Greensand. Key Characteristics of this National Character Area are outlined below:

- Topography - Long narrow belt of Greensand. Scarp and dip slope topography.
- Land Use - Mixed agricultural land with pasture and arable farming within a wooded framework. Small to medium sized fields.
- Vegetation Cover - Extensive areas of mixed ancient woodland.
- Development - Rural settlement pattern-mixture of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets and nucleated villages. East of LCA is more developed with majority towns and infrastructure corridors such as the M26, M25, M20 and CTRL.
- Vernacular Style - Frequent use of varying local stones, as well as timber framing and weather boarding.
- Historic Features- Sunken lanes form historic and highly characteristic feature, as do old deer parks and more recent 18th Century Parklands. Other features include field monuments, historic military defences, pre-historic tumuli, iron age hill forts, roman forts, Royal military canal.
- Water environment - Numerous streams and rivers including Great and East Stour, Western Rother, Wey, Arun and Medway rivers.

### 5.3.2 Kent Downs AONB

The AONB Management Plan for 2014 - 2019 gives the following vision for the AONB, which is largely unchanged since its first iteration in 2004: '*In 2034... the qualities and distinctive features of the Kent Downs AONB, the dramatic south-facing scarp, secluded dry valleys, network of tiny lanes, isolated farmsteads, churches and oasts, orchards, dramatic cliffs, the ancient woodlands and delicate chalk grassland along with the ancient, remote and tranquil qualities, are valued, secured and strengthened.*'

The AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 identifies nine special characteristics and qualities as set out below which cover the area's:

- Dramatic Landform and Views
- Biodiversity Rich habitats
- Farmed landscape
- Woodland and Trees
- A rich legacy of historic and cultural heritage
- Geology and Natural Resources
- Vibrant communities
- Development Pressures
- Access, enjoyment and understanding

### 5.3.3 Local character baseline

This assessment has been informed at the county level by The Landscape Assessment of Kent dated October 2004. The assessment was subsequently reviewed in 2009 by Jacobs on behalf of Ashford Borough Council for areas of the Landscape Assessment of Kent that specifically fall

within the Ashford Borough boundary. The review, subsequent recommendations and update covered areas beyond the urban fringe landscape which was covered at a local scale by the *Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study* (Studioengleback 2005).

There are five character areas covering the study area of the scheme, four of which are covered by the Kent Landscape Character Assessment. These are shown on the Landscape Character Plan in Appendix A of this document. A further two LCAs have been included in this appraisal to cater for the small urban area of Ashford (LCA1) within the study area, and Mersham Village (LCA4) as its own entity. Where applicable, reference has also been made to the *Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study* which subdivided the county character areas and provided a more refined analysis of the county character assessment for four of the five character areas addressed within this assessment.

#### 5.3.3.1 LCA 1 Ashford Urban Centre

Ashford urban centre is heavily dominated by a mix of residential dwellings in a tight urban environment. The main proportion of this LCA within the study area focuses on the urban area of Willesborough. The majority of properties are modern red brick semi-detached and detached properties forming a townscape which appears to have evolved over a number of years as shown by the minor variations in architectural style. The street pattern is tightly knit, creating a relatively dense built form. The southern edge of the LCA is defined by the presence of the A2070, which currently forms the boundary between the urban edge of Ashford and rural farmland at Sevington and beyond, to the south. This is with the exception of the newly built A2070 link road which traverses the landscape to join the new M20 Junction 10A in the east. The CTRL forms the south western boundary of the LCA and separates the residential area of Willesborough from the more industrial / shed retail developments in South Willesborough (LCA 3). The Church at Willesborough forms an important visual connection with churches in the villages of Sevington and Mersham to the south east.

Ashford Urban Centre LCA is considered to be of low value due to the lack of landscape designations in the area, a relatively weak sense of place and low tranquillity. Features are common with few historical connections aside from the historic St. Mary the Virgin Church. The urban characteristics and presence of large-scale infrastructure reduces the susceptibility to change resulting in low sensitivity.

#### 5.3.3.2 LCA 2 Mersham Farmland

LCA 2 is defined by undulating farmland of open arable fields and small-scale pastoral / grazing fields. Vegetation cover is limited in an essentially open landscape, apart from a small number of hedgerows, fragmented in places, which delineate the large field boundaries. The M20, whilst in the most part being hidden from view due to undulating topography and the road being in cutting, is still audible, and reduces the perception of tranquillity. In addition the newly constructed A2070 link between the original A2070 and the new M20 Junction 10A junction, adds to the built elements within the LCA and further diminishes the sense of tranquillity in the immediate area surrounding the road, albeit undulating topography does contain this urbanising feature and does not detract from the rural character in the LCA as a whole. The south of the character area is defined by another major transport route, the CTRL.

LCA 2 has been subdivided into 4 distinct areas within the *Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study*. Twenty Landscape Description Units were applied to the county landscape character area, which were then grouped into 4 District Landscape Types in the study. MF1 and MF4 sit to the west of Mersham village and cover the scheme redline boundary, whilst MF2 and MF3 sit to the north and east of Mersham.

The majority of the site sits within MF1 [REDACTED] with only the south eastern corner south of [REDACTED] being captured under MF4. The study describes key characteristic features including open arable farmland, bounded by hedgerows, with the area on a gentle rise and dominated by St. Mary's Church Sevington; a line of poplars delineates the brook to the north; and the noise from the M20, CTRL and A20 is described as very apparent. The analysis goes on to describe a weak pattern of elements, interrupted by transport corridors and a landscape of generally low condition; and with regards to sensitivity refers to a 'weak sense of place and long-distance views to the North Downs'.

MF2 [REDACTED] is located to the north of Mersham. The boundary to the south is delineated by the northern side of Kingsford Street, whilst the northern border is defined by the M20. MF2 extends east capturing land to the north west of Mersham. The area has recently undergone change in the western most reaches with the introduction of the new Junction 10A and associated infrastructure leading off the M20, where it runs in cutting. To the east, irregular field patterns delineated by gappy hedgerows dominate, with a small area of woodland plantation. The landscape character study refers to 'a coherent simple pattern of intact elements', a distinctive landscape with 'apparent sense of place and intermittent visibility', albeit noise from the M20 does present a detracting feature.

MF4 West Mersham Farmlands captures [REDACTED] in the northwest and envelopes the southern and south eastern boundary of the site including the CTRL. Key characteristics as described in the study include a group of farms with gently open undulating arable fields, gappy hedgerows and some paddocks next to farm buildings. Sunken lanes such that of [REDACTED] have high mature hedges, with the area to the west having a more wooded feel adjacent to the CTRL. The analysis describes a fragmented pattern but intact to some degree to the south (south of the CTRL). The CTRL is described as visible in places and audible throughout, eroding the sense of place. Long distance views are afforded south and west where localised dense planting does not foreshorten the view.

Taking into consideration the findings of the *Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study*, it is considered that LCA2 is overall of low value due to 'a weak pattern of elements, interrupted by transport corridors and a landscape of generally low condition'. The presence of large-scale infrastructure reduces the susceptibility to change resulting in a low sensitivity in and around the proposed site.

### 5.3.3.3 LCA 3 Upper Stour Valley

This LCA is defined by a flat, generally open landscape formed by Great Stour and East Stour Rivers. Occasional views of Ashford can be afforded towards the north east, over the low rise of Greensand and North Downs beyond.

Small groups of field trees and copse add interest to a flat landscape otherwise dominated by arable and improved grass fields. Hedgerows appear relatively infrequent and fragmented due to previous removal associated with agricultural improvements. This has degraded the visual unity of the landscape.

LCA 3 is bounded to the north by the CTRL. It is dominated by an open and more industrial character to the south of the A2070 with the presence of the Ashford International Truck Stop, development at the Ashford Waterbrook site and disused railway freight terminal. To the north of the A2070, a large shed style Retail Park, hotel and fast food restaurant characterise this portion of the LCA.

This character area is further defined in the *Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study*, being subdivided into three District Landscape Types within the boundary of

the study area. USV2 Willesborough Dykes located to the south of the CTRL and west of the A2070, USV 3 Waterbrook bordering USV2 to the east and finally USV4 East Stour Valley sitting south of MF4 West Mersham Farmlands.

USV2 Willesborough Dykes located in South Willesborough is a low-lying area traversed by dykes, the East Stour River and dominated by transport infrastructure including the A2070, A2042 and CTRL. Areas of farming are surrounded by retail and light industry, as well as housing on the edge of Ashford. The condition of the area is considered low with an 'incoherent pattern of elements, interrupted character and generally degraded condition'. Given the open nature of the area, visibility is high, but the sense of place considered weak.

At the time of the assessment of USV3 Waterbrook, it was described as being a 'gently undulating open valley floor with extensive tree, hedge and ditch clearance with mix of arable land, neglected grazing gravel workings, freight depot and former railway sidings'. Through gathering the current baseline for this area, it is apparent that a large residential area has recently been introduced and ongoing works are both present and planned as part of the Waterbrook Development, including a lorry park adjacent to the old railway sidings. Vegetation continues to have a presence, particularly following the East Stour river across the area. The original character study described the area as 'fragmented and degraded' with 'many detracting features', and how notable change in the area had led to loss of landscape features. In its current state, it is felt that this analysis is still valid as the area continues to undergo considerable change.

USV4 East Stour Valley sits in the very south eastern corner of the study area within the flood plain of the East Stour river. It is characterised by predominantly large arable fields, many of which being formed by the removal of hedgerow boundaries and ditches. The CTRL is present and forms the northern boundary in part of USV4, albeit not in the area within the scheme study area. The study described a weak sense of place in the most part, driven by intensification of the rural landscape, with the overall pattern further fragmented by the presence of the CTRL.

Within the study area, LCA 4 as a whole is considered to be of low landscape value and susceptibility to change due to the fragmented nature of the LCA, and dominance of transport infrastructure in the south, and retail park in the north of the area. The overall sensitivity is considered to be low.

#### 5.3.3.4 LCA 4 Mersham Village

Mersham Village is a historic village dating back to the early medieval period, part of which is now a designated Conservation Area. This once nucleated village has expanded along Kingsford Street and Bower Road, with larger residential properties when compared with the small-scale intimate character of the nucleus of the village. A number of listed buildings are located along Kingsford Street in particular. Generally architectural style varies as the village has grown over the centuries and particularly in the last 100 years. Red brick still remains the most dominant building material, although there are examples of rag stone, brick and tile hung buildings, as well as painted render. Vegetation is mostly focused on private gardens. The periphery of the LCA is surrounded by farmland, although the M20 sits a short distance north east of the village.

Mersham Village falls within Mersham Farmland Settlements under the *Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study*. The area is subdivided into B2 [REDACTED] and B4 Mersham.

B2 [REDACTED] captures properties from the corner of [REDACTED], described as interwar detached residences of varying styles with a mix of materials sat within

large plots. Moving east towards [REDACTED] has the feel of a sunken lane as is quite frequent in this area, with hedgerows and hedge banks forming the southern boundary. The M20 impacts local audible tranquillity.

B4 Mersham captures the village from [REDACTED] heading west, identifying a mix of styles and age of properties from the more historic area north of the church, to more recent post war and modern infilling and extension to the village to the north and east. With regards to perception of the place, the study describes it as 'a peaceful and pleasant village scene'.

Mersham Village LCA is considered to be of medium landscape value overall, due to the distinctive character of the centre of Mersham village and designated Conservation Area in the northern most area of the village. This results in a medium sensitivity overall.

#### 5.3.3.5 LCA 5 Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmland

Located to the east of Ashford, this character area is defined by gently undulating mixed farmlands. The topography varies with flatter lowlands around Ashford, becoming increasingly undulating towards Hatch Park SSSI in the east. The southern extent of the character area is dominated by the M20 motorway corridor which forms a dominant linear feature within the surrounding landscape. Its presence has an impact upon audible tranquillity given the noise associated with passing traffic. It is worth noting that the M20, whilst dominant in some parts of the character area, is actually well contained in cutting in places, reducing its presence in the landscape.

Urban development is not prevalent in this LCA, with little built form present. This is with the exception of the village of Willesborough Lees, a designated Conservation Area; William Harvey Hospital campus; and an area immediately around the A20 where existing and new residential developments, Tesco Superstore, and Pilgrims Hospice have established a linear development pattern to the north east of the M20.

Away from development, agriculture and woodland form the dominant land cover. The large expanse of woodland to the eastern extent of the character area encloses Hatch Park SSSI, a grade II Listed mid-18th century Registered Park and Garden to the north of the village of Mersham. The large extent of tree cover creates an enclosed landscape limiting views out from the central core of the estate.

*Ashford Local Development Framework Landscape Character Study* further defines the county character area within the scheme study area to the east of Willesborough Lees as BL2 Game Rearing Farmlands and BL3 Hatch Park.

BL2 is located to the north of the M20 bordering MF4 West Mersham Farmlands in the south. The area is characterised by undulating farmland in the lower reaches of the North Downs. Areas of woodland are notable features, with many being managed for pheasant rearing and game. Sunken lanes, many bounded with hedgerows wind through this undulating landscape, whilst the M20 forms the southern boundary of the area, generally enclosed in cutting in this location. The study concluded a coherent and distinctive pattern, a well-defined network of semi-natural habitats and a strong sense of place with few detracting features.

BL3 Hatch Park sits immediately adjacent to BL2 and to the north of MF2 [REDACTED]. The area is characterised by a historic deer park which is designated as a Registered Park and Garden. Woodland, lake and pasture dominate, with examples of veteran trees in the north of the park. The M20 runs along the southern boundary reducing audible tranquillity in the area. Despite this, the overall detracting features of the area are low, and the strong historic sense of place and coherent pattern of elements leads it to be highly valued.

This combined with the presence of local designations including the Willesborough Lees Conservation Area and Registered Park and Garden in the south east of the study area results in a landscape of high value with a high sensitivity.

#### 5.3.4 Site description

The site itself lies within LCA 2 Mersham Farmlands and has historically been part of a long standing rural agricultural landscape. This land use has been eroded over time with the urban expansion of the neighbouring village of Willesborough which, through urban infilling, has become adjoined with the town of Ashford in the north west. Likewise, urbanising development has established through the dominance of major transportation corridors, including the CTRL to the south of the site, the newly constructed Junction 10A and associated A2070 link road adjoining the prominent M20 motorway to the north of the site.

With regards to topography the centre of the site sits upon a slight ridge, falling away to the north and south, with a variance of up to 8m between the lowest and highest points on site.

A small number of land drains are located in the lower lying areas of the site. The Aylesford Stream is located to the north of the neighbouring A2070 and sits outside of the site boundary.

Existing vegetation is limited within the site itself, largely focused on lengths of trees and shrubs which have established along land drainage channels. These sit outside the actively farmed field. The most notable of existing vegetation is that of mature trees enclosing the churchyard of St. Mary's Church and a linear belt of trees and shrubs which runs north from the corner of the church up to the newly constructed A2070 link road. This vegetation provides structure and vertical interest in an otherwise open landscape. Around the periphery of the site, vegetation takes the form of boundary hedgerows which vary in completeness and condition.

The historic grade II listed St. Mary's Church sits alongside Court Lodge and Milbourn Equine Centre forming the built aspects of the site to the west, intervening prior to meeting the urban edge of Willesborough. Whilst to the south, a number of residential properties are located along Church Road, a rural lane which leads to Highfield Lane, which was closed to motorised traffic as part of the M20 Junction 10A scheme in recent years. Highfield Lane itself has narrowed with the growth of an unmanaged hedgerow between the eastern boundary of site and Highfield Lane.

The internal site is set to arable farmland, crossed by a small number of PROW, one which links Willesborough in the west with Mersham in the east, and forms an important and valued link between the three churches of Mersham, Sevington and Willesborough.

The site itself is considered to be of low sensitivity, aligning with that of the wider Mersham Farmlands LCA, in which it lies.

#### 5.4 Visual baseline

A number of visual receptors have been identified during the baseline study. The majority of these have been identified within the study area of 1km from the scheme boundary as shown on the Visual Receptor Plan in Appendix A of this document.

Given the elevation of the Kent Downs AONB to the north and rising ground to the south, a representative viewpoint was also established from high in the Downs from the Devil's Kneading Trough, and also beyond 2km to the south of the site at Collier's Hill.

Of the 18 receptors identified as part of this assessment, the majority of receptors are located within 500m of the site, with several residential receptors neighbouring the periphery of the site, and PROW AE639 traversing the site itself from north west to south east.

Local residential properties along [REDACTED] and local PROW (visual receptor no. 6,7,8,9,10,17) afford views through field boundary vegetation across an otherwise open arable landscape towards the site. This view is more rural in character despite the nearby urban edge of Ashford forming the background to the view. St. Mary's Church provides a key landmark in many of the views looking west. Infrastructure associated with the William Harvey Hospital is another notable vertical structure particularly for receptors to the south east looking north west. Views from the east towards the new A2070 are screened in the most part by intervening topography and boundary hedgerows along Highfield Lane, however views to the new route can be afforded in places from the local public right of way network and from a number of residential properties in the west looking north east.

From the west of the site, visual receptors on the edge of Willesborough afford views from upper storey windows towards St. Mary's Church with the intervening A2070 dominant in the view from this location.

More distant views are also afforded from properties and PROW intersection the A20 to the north. Views looking south from this direction are heavily influenced by the intervening road network, with the M20 and associated junctions as well as the newly constructed A2070 link, associated infrastructure and traffic in the foreground and middle ground of the view. St. Mary's Church is visible set in the context of intervening treelines.

The visual sensitivity of individual receptors depends upon the location and context of the view from the receptor, the activity associated with the receptor, and the importance of the view. Further details on the visual baseline and associated sensitivity of receptors identified as part of this appraisal are presented in the Visual Impact Schedules in Appendix B of this report.

# 6 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures would be undertaken to reduce potential effects upon landscape character and visual amenity during both construction and operation. The following section broadly lists those measures that would be implemented during this time.

## 6.1 During Construction

Earth landscape bunds would be constructed at various locations around the periphery of the site, prioritised early in the construction period in order to aid screening of lower level activity on the site and limit visual impacts. The bunds would be seeded as a priority to 'green up' the earthworks. The implementation of planting would also commence in the first planting season to aid the integration of the scheme with the surrounding landscape as soon as possible.

Temporary stockpiles held on the plot of land to the east of Highfield Lane would be kept to a maximum of 2m in height and located as far away as possible from properties on Kingsford Street. The 'active' side of the stockpile would be restricted to the western edge, adjacent to Highfield Lane which would aid screening of any soil and plant movements throughout the 12 months in which it would be stored. The entire stockpile would be seeded as a priority and the remaining faces of the stockpiles would be left inactive to limit visual intrusion upon neighbouring residential receptors.

Site task lighting would be kept to a minimum, be directional and only used for the minimum time required. The use of infrared initiated security lighting would also be explored to help minimise night-time lighting wherever possible. This is particularly the case in close proximity to nearby residential properties which currently look out upon agricultural land use.

The site would be kept clear and tidy with construction materials delivered on an as needed basis to reduce material stockpiles on site.

## 6.2 During Operation

During operation a number of mitigation measures would aid the integration of the site within the surrounding landscape and help to reduce visual impacts associated with the temporary siting of the scheme. A well evolved landscape design has been developed with the objective of not only mitigating the scheme during the five years of operation, but also to account for the potential for future employment use of the site as determined by Ashford Borough's Local plan and allocation. The design has also been developed to provide a long-term legacy that would align with Ashford Borough Council's policies with regards to green blue infrastructure and the creation and enhancement of Ashford's Green Corridors.

The design has been developed whilst considering the possible future uses of the site beyond the 5 years of operation. A summary of mitigation proposals during operation is provided below. Further information can also be seen on the Environmental Masterplan in Appendix C of this document (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3030 and 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3031).

- Vegetated earth bunds at key locations to aid visual screening from local visual receptors.
- A variety of planting types and structure and associated habitats including species rich grassland/meadow planting, ponds and swales, native hedgerows, trees and shrubs as well

as small scale woodland planting to aid landscape integration, provide a sense of place and aid visual screening of the site during the temporary 5 years of operation.

- Buildings would be no greater than 12m in height and recessive in colour to limit their visual prominence. The design would aid their integration with other local built form such as agricultural buildings.
- Lighting would be kept to a minimum and through inter-disciplinary working has been designed to the minimum height possible. It would be directional in nature, limiting upward and outward light spill.

Upon reinstatement after five years, all infrastructure would be removed from the site, leaving only areas of hardstanding in the once operational plots of the site, along with the drainage infrastructure and the SuDs ponds. The green-blue infrastructure and all landscape bunds within the Environmental Masterplan (drawing 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3030 and 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3031) would also remain on-site which would ensure that there are no long-term adverse effects on visual amenity or landscape character.

Additionally, in order to ensure a positive long-term legacy for the local community, further enhancements to the site would also be implemented at this stage. These enhancement measures are not specifically required to avoid or reduce significant effects. Indicative enhancement proposals are documented in the Long-Term Enhancement Plan in Appendix C (419419-MMD-01-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3032) which would be further developed, and a detailed plan included as part of the Reinstatement Plan for the scheme. This plan would also be accompanied by a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan in order to carefully outline the requirements for future management and maintenance of the site to ensure a positive long-term legacy for the site and local communities who may access the associated green spaces once the inland border facility has ceased operation.

# 7 Predicted Effects

## 7.1 Effects upon designated assets

Kent Downs AONB, whilst outside of the study area, has been addressed within the visual assessment (refer to Visual Receptor Schedules, Appendix B) in relation to a key viewpoint identified at the Devil's Kneading Trough. Given the distance from site and expansive nature of this long-distance view it is considered that the scheme would be barely perceptible from this location during both construction and operation.

A number of listed buildings and one Registered Park and Garden (Hatch Park) have been identified within the study area. Whilst the majority fall outside the visual envelope, a small number of listed buildings would sit within the affected area and have consequently been addressed within this assessment considering the change in views from these receptors during construction, operation and beyond. Details are provided in the Visual Impact Schedules in Appendix B. Further insight into the effects upon the setting of the listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments within the study area is detailed in the Heritage Assessment Report (ref. 419419-MMD-XX-SV-RP-YE-0001).

## 7.2 Effects during construction

### 7.2.1 Key construction elements

Key components associated with the construction of the scheme would include:

Large scale earthworks, including excavation of drainage ponds and swales, implementation of landscape bunds and temporary stockpiles; preparation of hardstanding areas for internal access roads and parking areas; utilities works; erection of marshal cabins, modular office buildings and inspection sheds; erection of lighting columns, security fencing, acoustic barriers and access gates.

It is important to note that any impacts and resulting effects during construction would be short term, temporary and reversible in nature.

### 7.2.2 Effects upon landscape character

The five landscape character areas assessed would not be significantly affected by the development during the construction phase. A summary of the likely predicted effects upon each of these landscape character areas during construction is provided below.

#### 7.2.2.1 LCA 1 Ashford Urban Centre

There would be no works within this LCA during construction. The topographical and built up nature of this LCA forms a tight grain and encloses the character area from within. As such, the works in the neighbouring LCA 3 to the east would have little bearing on the wider character area, as there would be limited visual connectivity and consequently landscape features would remain unchanged in the most part. There may be indirect impact upon audible tranquillity for the very eastern edge of the LCA however these would be set in the context of the tight urban grain of Ashford and the existing A2070. Given the indirect nature of impacts occurring within neighbouring LCA 2, the magnitude of change upon LCA1 during construction is considered to be minor. The low sensitivity and minor magnitude of change would result in a Neutral, temporary, non-significant effect.

### 7.2.2.2 Mersham Farmlands (LCA 2)

Mersham Farmlands (LCA 2) would be directly affected as a result of the scheme. The scheme would sit in the northern most area of the character area, in the MF1 Sevington High Fields District Landscape Type, with construction activities bringing new features into the landscape that would be at odds with the current agricultural landscape but in the context of adjacent large scale infrastructure.

To the east of Highfield Lane an area 250m by 150m of site won soil would be stockpiled for a period of up to 12 months. This stockpile would be limited to 2m in height and seeded to aid its integration.

To the west of Highfield Lane in the main body of the site, large scale earthworks, construction activity and associated machinery would be present, along with task lighting and compounds accommodating site offices and staff parking. These features would be large scale elements and whilst incongruous with the wider rural character of Mersham Farmlands (LCA 2) would be set in the context of new A2070 and M20 Junction 10a construction works which are currently ongoing. Whilst these activities would be notable within the site and immediate surroundings, the wider character area beyond would not be impacted to the same degree due to intervening vegetation, and undulating topography which aid the enclosure of aspects of the site from the south east.

Night-time works would use task focussed lighting which whilst at odds with the wider landscape character area, would be set in the context of the neighbouring A2070 and M20 junctions which are currently lit in this location and the urban extents of Ashford.

The immediate area of the LCA affected by the works is likely to see substantial alteration in the localised area directly affected as a result of the scheme. However, given presence of detracting features in the north west corner of the LCA and limited impacts on the wider context of the LCA, the overall magnitude of change is considered to be moderate. The low sensitivity and moderate magnitude of change would result in a Slight Adverse, temporary, non-significant effect.

### 7.2.2.3 LCA 3 Upper Stour Valley

There would be no works within this LCA during construction. Given the sense of severance presented by the CTRL and intervening vegetation, visual connectivity with the neighbouring LCA2 where the works would take place would be limited, particularly where rising ground would enclose the LCA from the surrounding landscape. With regards to indirect impacts upon audible tranquillity, these are also likely to be minimal set in the context of the existing A2070 and CTRL. The low sensitivity of this already fragmented and industrialised character area and the negligible magnitude of change would result in a Neutral, temporary, non-significant effect.

### 7.2.2.4 LCA 4 Mersham Village

Mersham Village would not be directly affected by the proposed works. However, given the boundary of the LCA lies immediately adjacent to the eastern most edge of the redline boundary, there may be indirect effects afforded associated with works in the neighbouring LCA, particularly with regard to the temporary stockpiling in the land parcel between [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There is also likely to be visual connectivity with the works in LCA 2 to the west of Highfield Lane where the main construction works would occur. Key features such as field boundary hedgerows would however be kept in situ which would reduce the wider impact. There may also be a limited reduction in audible tranquillity for the very western edge of Mersham village but given the distance from the main works site and presence of the existing

M20 and other detracting infrastructure it is not considered to be notable. As such, the magnitude of change for the LCA as a whole is considered to be Negligible. The medium sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change would result in a Neutral, temporary, non-significant effect.

#### 7.2.2.5 LCA 5 Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmland

This LCA sits around 300m from the scheme boundary, and as such would not be directly impacted by the proposed works. Given the open nature of the LCA boundary in places, visual connectivity would be afforded to neighbouring LCA 2 where an increase in discordant features would be apparent including that of large-scale earthworks, plant movement and general construction activities to the south. Works would however be set within the context of the existing A20, M20 and A2070 highway corridors and associated traffic including the presence of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), which already present detracting features along the boundary with the neighbouring LCA. Intervening vegetation between LCA 5 and neighbouring Mersham Farmlands would contain the LCA to a certain degree, particularly in the lower and eastern areas of the LCA. However, visual connectivity may still be sought from more open or elevated areas directly north of the site, particularly where the vegetated boundary along the southern edge of LCA 5 was opened up to accommodate the construction of the M20 Junction 10A works and vegetation has yet to re-establish. There may be localised reductions in audible tranquillity, however these would be minimal given the diminished tranquillity associated with the intervening highway corridors.

Considering the high sensitivity combined with the minor magnitude of change for the LCA as a whole, the overall significance of effect would be Slight Adverse and not significant during construction.

#### 7.2.3 Effects upon visual amenity

The effects upon visual amenity during construction have been detailed for each receptor identified within the assessment process, as presented in Appendix B of this report. The schedules detail the baseline view and provide a description of the likely view during construction from each location before determining the magnitude of change and associated significance of effect.

The construction period would see the introduction of discordant features (as described in 7.2.1) in views towards site for a number of nearby receptors including near distance views for properties neighbouring the scheme [REDACTED] and PROW AE639 immediately adjoining the site.

Of the 18 receptors assessed, receptors (1, 2, 6, 16, and 17) located immediately adjacent to the site would be subject to changes in the immediate foreground of their view, and the effects would be difficult to completely mitigate at this stage of works. However, given the temporary nature of the 6 month construction period, the impacts would be short lived and as such would result in a minor magnitude of change leading to non-significant effect. Receptors 10 and 6 (PROW AE363 and AE639) would be closed between [REDACTED] during construction and as such have not been assessed for this phase.

For receptors beyond the immediate boundary of the site, the effect of the scheme would reduce, as distance and intervening vegetation, landform or pre-existing detracting features reduce views to site and the magnitude of impact experienced.

Key elevated views from the Kent Downs AONB to the north would experience a neutral significance of effect due to the distance from site and expansive nature of the far-reaching view from the Devil's Kneading Trough.

### 7.3 Effects during operation

The effects during operation have been captured to include the phase at which both operation and additional construction for the Day 200 scenario would be in tandem, as well as solely operational activities post Day 200. Further details are outlined below.

#### 7.3.1 Day 1-200

Key components include provision for 1278 HGV parking spaces, 379 staff parking spaces, internal access roads with access/egress onto A2070 in the north of the site and staff/emergency access off Church Road in the west; landscape bunds, acoustic fencing up to 5m in height; lighting columns between 8m and 12m high; temporary modular office accommodation and inspection facilities including two inspection sheds, welfare facilities and marshal cabins. The temporary stockpiling of earth on land to the eastern side of Highfield Lane would also be present.

The operation of the Day 1 scenario includes the use of the site by DfT, HMRC and small DVSA and BEIS use of the site. This phase would also include construction of the Defra buildings and additional HMRC inspection sheds, commencing 2 months prior to the Day 200 use of the site. Landscape implementation would continue throughout the first planting season in order to establish the green infrastructure on site as soon as possible.

#### 7.3.2 Day 200

The operation of the Day 200 scenario includes HMRC, Border Force and Defra use of the site. Key components at Day 200 would be as per the Day 1- 200 scenario with the exception of the introduction of four additional inspection buildings for HMRC and buildings for Defra use. There would be a suspension of parking in the north- western and southern most plots of the site with no HGVs or buildings in these areas. Likewise, the viewing corridor would be reinstated, and the landscape strategy for that area of the site implemented during the following planting season.

#### 7.3.3 Year 5 and beyond

The operation of the site would cease as an inland border facility and reinstatement would commence. All infrastructure would be removed off site, leaving only areas of hard standing in the once operational plots of the site. This would include the removal of all acoustic barriers. The green-blue infrastructure would remain in situ, as would all landscape bunds which would have settled in the landscape with associated planting having established throughout. Further landscape enhancements to the site would also be implemented at this stage to ensure a positive long-term legacy for the local community. Outline proposals are documented in the Long-Term Enhancement Plan (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3032) (Appendix C) and would be subject to detailed design substantially in accordance with the outline proposal and, agreement prior to implementation.

#### 7.3.4 Effects upon landscape character

##### 7.3.4.1 LCA 1 Ashford Urban Centre

There would be no direct impact upon LCA 1 during operation. There may be a degree of intervisibility with the scheme in the neighbouring LCA 2. However, this would be set in the context

of the tight grain of the intervening townscape and the existing intervening highway network, with the A2070 forming the boundary between the clear shift in landscape character. Key existing vegetation would be retained aiding the enclosure of the LCA from the scheme in LCA 2. Given the indirect, short to medium term nature of the change and the minimal connectivity with LCA 2, the magnitude of change for LCA 1 is considered to be minor. The low sensitivity and minor magnitude of change would result in a Neutral, temporary, non-significant effect during operation and beyond.

Following reinstatement of the site in Year 5 the adverse effect would diminish, particularly looking ahead into the longer term as landscape mitigation and enhancements establish on the boundary with the character area, chiefly at its closest point in the north west corner of the site.

#### 7.3.4.2 LCA 2 Mersham Farmland

This LCA would see a notable change during the operation of the scheme, particularly in MF1 Sevington High Fields in the north western corner of the area where the inland border facility would be situated. These new features would be a distinct change from the existing landscape, with notable development in a previously arable scene, albeit with detracting features in the immediate area.

As described in sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2, the five-year operational phase of the scheme would see the introduction of many built aspects, including the introduction of large areas of hardstanding as well as buildings, inspections sheds and other structures such as acoustic barriers. Over 1200 HGVs would be accommodated on-site during Day1-200, which would further dominate the site with the associated movements into and around the site. Whilst these features would appear discordant within LCA 2 as whole, detracting features are not uncommon within this part of LCA, with the presence of the A2070, A20, M20 and associated junctions adjacent to the site. The style of development and associated infrastructure is more commonplace in neighbouring LCA 3 Upper Stour Valley immediately south of the scheme boundary.

Night-time impacts have also been considered given the site would be lit throughout hours of darkness in order to allow safe 24-hour operation. This would bring additional light to an LCA which is currently unlit in the most part. It would however be set in the context of the neighbouring A2070 and M20 junctions which are currently lit in this location, as are the urban extents of Ashford.

Given the scale of the change to the LCA as a whole, the magnitude of impact is considered to be moderate. This combined with a low sensitivity would result in a Slight Adverse non-significant effect on the LCA as a whole during operation.

Upon reinstatement of the site, buildings and infrastructure would be removed. It is not considered this activity would be any worse than that during construction, particularly given the benefit of landscape mitigation being in place which would further reduce effects. Upon removal of the scheme infrastructure this corner of the LCA would no longer contain the discordant features of development that would be seen during operation. Infrastructure would be removed, leaving the green blue infrastructure around vacated areas of hardstanding. The implementation of the landscape design and establishment of large-scale tree and shrub planting would form the remaining features on site, and the beginnings of new informal greenspace for the local community within this part of the LCA. Whilst not a return to agriculture, this long-term strategy would bring interest and beneficial change to the immediate landscape character by strengthening the landscape structure of the area. The magnitude of change would be minor, leading to a Neutral or even Slight Beneficial non-significant effect on LCA 2 in the longer-term.

#### 7.3.4.3 LCA 3 Upper Stour Valley

The Upper Stour Valley would not be directly affected by the scheme during operation. It would however border the site, with the CTRL forming the boundary between LCA 3 and the site in LCA 2 to the north. Given the presence of the Ashford International Truck stop, works associated with the Ashford Waterbrook development site and operational CTRL it is not considered that there would be an impact upon the audible tranquillity of the LCA in this location, or indeed within the wider area. Any visual connectivity between LCA 3 and the scheme would be limited and set in the context of existing development immediately to the south of the CTRL which is not dissimilar in nature to that of the scheme. Consequently, the scheme works are unlikely to result in a change in character for the Upper Stour Valley. As such the magnitude of change is considered to be negligible, leading to a Neutral non-significant effect from Day 1 of operation through to reinstatement of the site at Year 5 and beyond.

#### 7.3.4.4 LCA 4 Mersham Village

Whilst LCA 4 sits outside the boundary of the site, the very western edge of the LCA would sit immediately adjacent to the field in which temporary stockpiles would be stored for up to a period of 12 months. This may bring detracting features upon the very edge of the character area although it would be very limited in its effect and temporary in nature. Beyond, a degree of inter-visibility between LCA 4 and the scheme may be afforded, set in the context of intervening vegetation and a newly planted bund along the eastern edge of Highfield Lane which would help to contain the site from the wider landscape. In the initial days of operation, prior to boundary planting establishing and the stockpiles still being in place, indirect impacts upon LCA may be afforded. However, these would be localised on the very western boundary of the LCA and would diminish over time as intervening planting matures. As such, the operational magnitude of change upon the LCA as a whole are considered to be negligible during operation and beyond. The medium sensitivity and negligible magnitude of change would result in in a Neutral, temporary, non-significant effect.

#### 7.3.4.5 LCA 5 Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmland

Brabourne Lees LCA would not be directly impacted by the scheme during operation or reinstatement, however there may be limited visual connectivity to the scheme prior to mitigation planting establishing on the new A2070 and A20 to the north of the site. Any change would be indirect and in relation to visual connectivity between LCA 5 and the new site within LCA2. It would however be set in the context of existing infrastructure assets such as highways and lighting which are already detracting features within the northern extents of LCA 2 and borrowed landscape of LCA5. Given the very small indirect change to the edge of the LCA set in the context of the existing M20, A20, and A2070 the magnitude of change during Day operation is considered to be minor for the LCA as a whole. The removal of parking in the most northerly plot of the site at Day 200 and following reinstatement of the site at Year 5 would reduce the extent of detracting features in the neighbouring LCA and therefore reduce any slight impacts upon the setting of LCA 5. The significance of effect upon LCA 5 as whole is considered to be Slight Adverse at worst during operation, falling to Neutral following reinstatement at Year 5 and beyond.

#### 7.3.5 Effects upon visual amenity

The effects upon visual amenity during operation have been detailed for each receptor identified within the assessment process, as presented in Appendix B of this report. The schedules detail the baseline view, view during construction and finally provide a description of the likely view during operation from each location before determining the magnitude of change and

associated significance of effect. Descriptions, and associated magnitude of impact and significance of effect focus on operational effects, and then beyond Year 5 when the site would have been reinstated, and all infrastructure would have been removed. This is with the exception of the areas of hardstanding and landscaping including landscape bunds that would be retained in the long-term, working in line with ABC's employment allocation for the site.

As with the construction period, operation would see the introduction of new discordant features into several local views. The nature of those features is described for Day 1-200, Day 200, Year 5 and beyond in paragraphs 7.3.1-7.3.3 above.

Of the 18 receptors assessed, five would experience Moderate Adverse significant effects in the short-medium term until reinstatement. However, with the benefit of the landscape mitigation, these views to site would be progressively softened during operation. Upon reinstatement of the site at Year 5, the significance of effect would reduce to Slight Adverse or Neutral for all eighteen receptors and would therefore not be significant. This would decrease further in the long-term with the landscape scheme reaching maturity resulting in Neutral effects at worst for all receptors and likely beneficial changes for some receptors.

Table 7.1 below provides a summary of visual effects during operation, post reinstatement at Year 5 and beyond into the long-term, up to Year 15 when it is considered that planting would have fully established to meet its intended screening and landscape integration functions.

**Table 7.1: Summary of Visual Effects during Operation and beyond**

<b>Significance of Effect during Operation (Up to Year 5)</b>	<b>Significance of Effect post Reinstatement</b>	<b>Significance of Effect in the Long-term (Yr 15)</b>
5 Moderate Adverse significant effects and 13 non-significant effects: 9 Slight Adverse and 4 Neutral.	No receptors significantly affected: 7 Slight Adverse, 11 Neutral	No receptors significantly affected: 18 Neutral

## 8 Conclusions

The potential impact upon five Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) was assessed as part of this assessment. There would be no significant effects upon landscape character as a result of the scheme. Upon reinstatement of the site and long-term maintenance of the landscape mitigation it is considered that there would be a Neutral effect upon all five LCAs assessed as part of the scheme.

**Table 8.1: Summary of Landscape Effects**

Significance of Effect	LCAs affected during Construction	LCAs affected during Operation	LCAs affected post Reinstatement	LCAs affected in the Long term (Year 15)
Large Adverse	-	-	-	-
Moderate Adverse	-	-	-	-
Slight Adverse	LCA 1 LCA 2 LCA4 LCA5	LCA 1 LCA 2 LCA5	-	-
Neutral	LCA3	LCA3 LCA4	LCA 1 LCA 2 LCA 3 LCA 4 LCA 5	LCA 1 LCA 2 LCA 3 LCA 4 LCA 5

The potential impacts upon visual amenity were addressed through the assessment of 18 receptors identified within the visual envelope of the scheme. Two PROW, receptors numbers 6 and 10 were removed from the assessment of construction effects as they would be temporarily closed and not be accessible during this time. Of those 18, none would experience significant effects during construction, and five receptors would experience Moderate Adverse effects during operation in the short-medium term. Post reinstatement of the scheme, and with continued establishment of the landscape scheme, there would be no residual significant effects resulting from the scheme. By Year 15, considering the presence of the green infrastructure only, it is predicted that all visual receptors would experience a Neutral significance of effect at worst. This outcome does not account for any potential and as yet unidentified change in use of the site once reinstated.

**Table 8.2: Summary of Visual Effects**

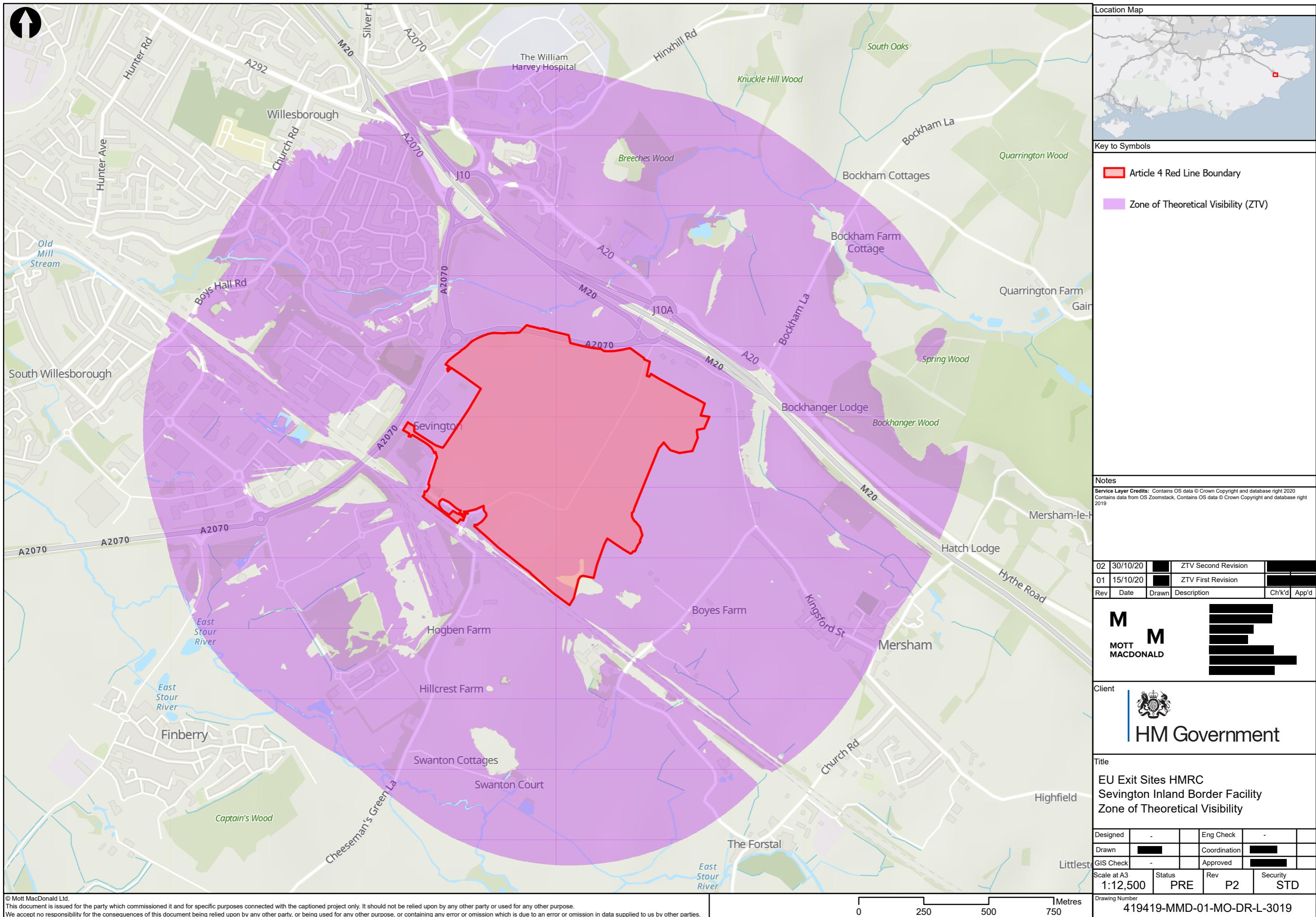
Significance of Effect	Visual receptors affected during Construction	Visual receptors affected during Operation	Visual receptors affected post Reinstatement	Visual receptors affected in the Long-term (Year 15)
Large Adverse	-	-	-	-
Moderate Adverse	-	5	-	-
Slight Adverse	12	9	7	-
Neutral	4	4	11	18

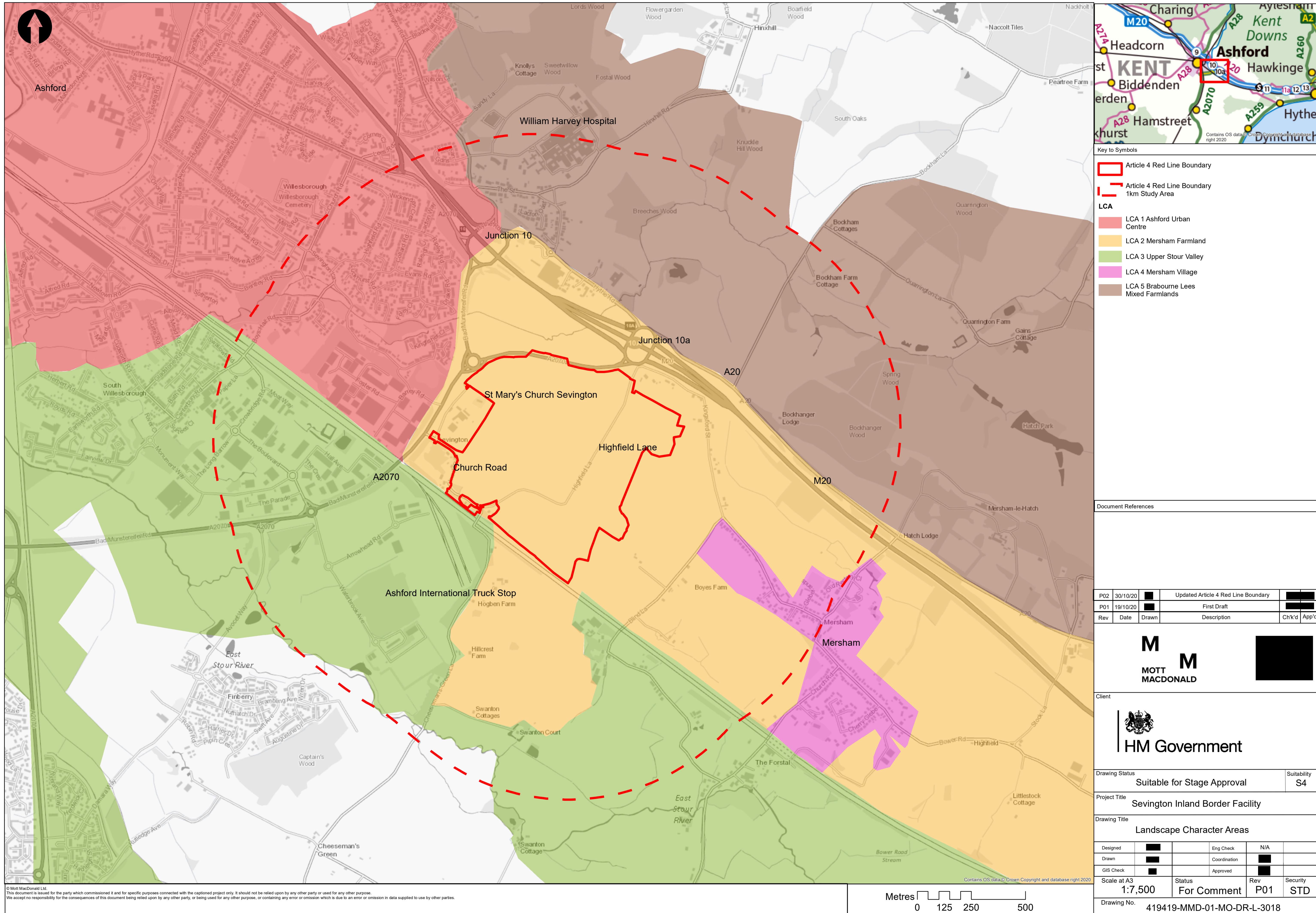
The outcome of this assessment is predicated on the successful execution and long-term management of the landscape mitigation scheme proposed in Appendix C of this report. As such, this assessment concludes that following the removal of the infrastructure on the site and the retention of the landscape mitigation, there would be no significant adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity following reinstatement of the site at Year 5 and beyond into the long-term, when it is considered that planting would have fully established to meets its intended screening and landscaping integration functions.

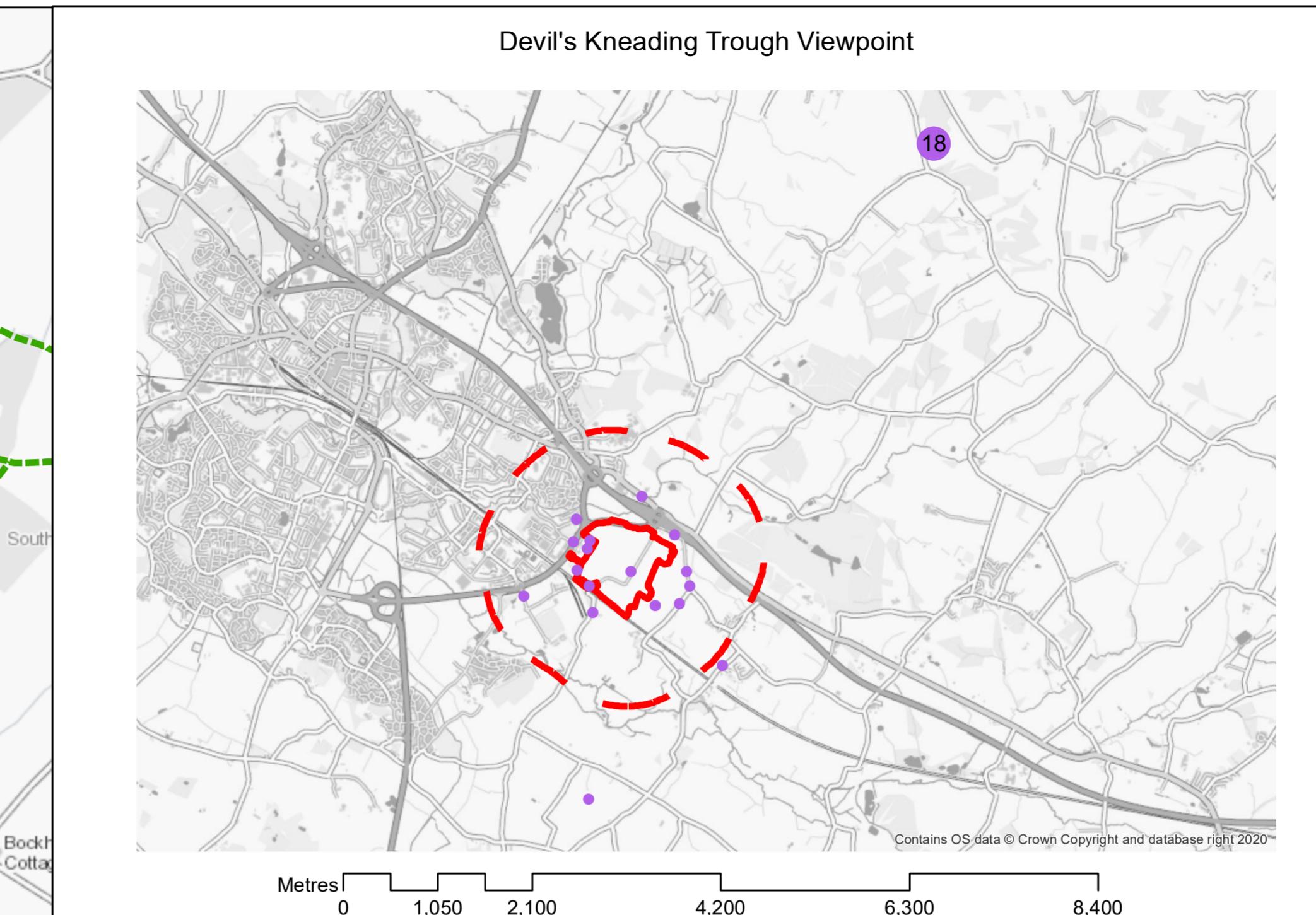
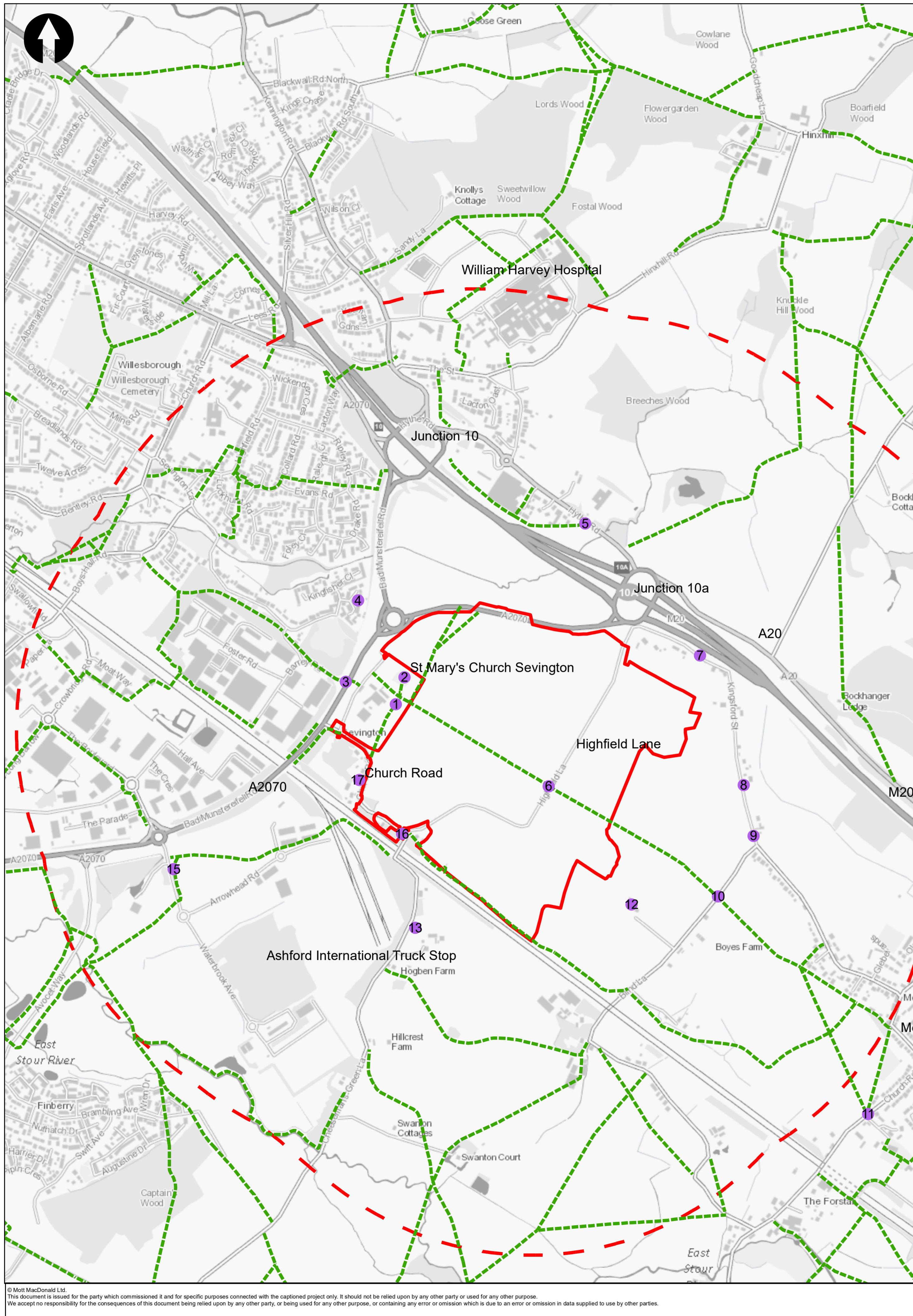
In time, it is expected that the retention of this green-blue infrastructure would provide long-term benefits for landscape character and visual amenity as well recreational benefits to the local community whilst creating a well-established landscape setting for any future employment use in support of Ashford Borough's planning policies for the site.

## A. Drawings

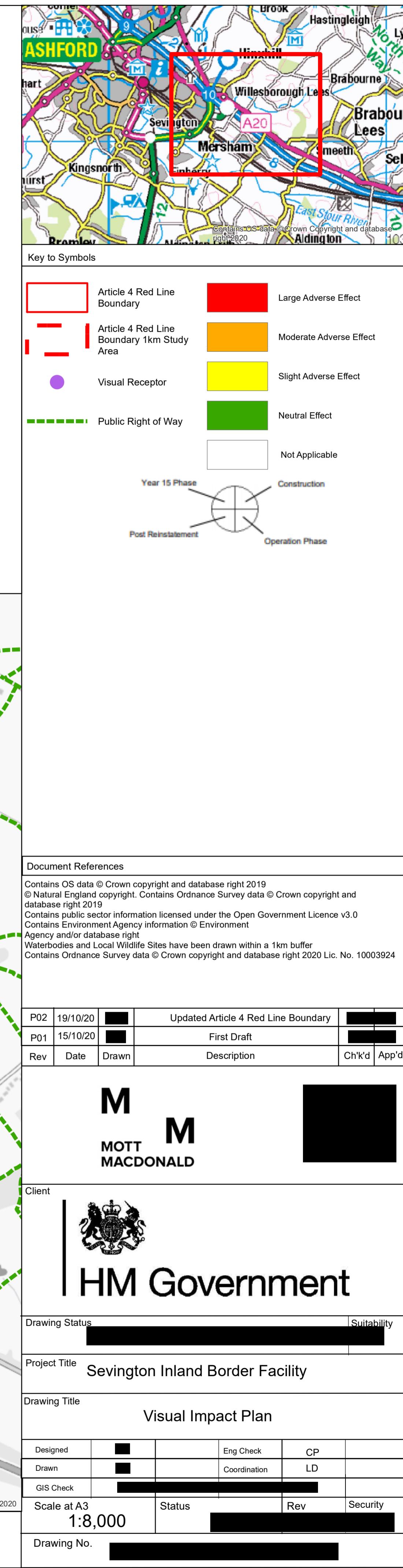
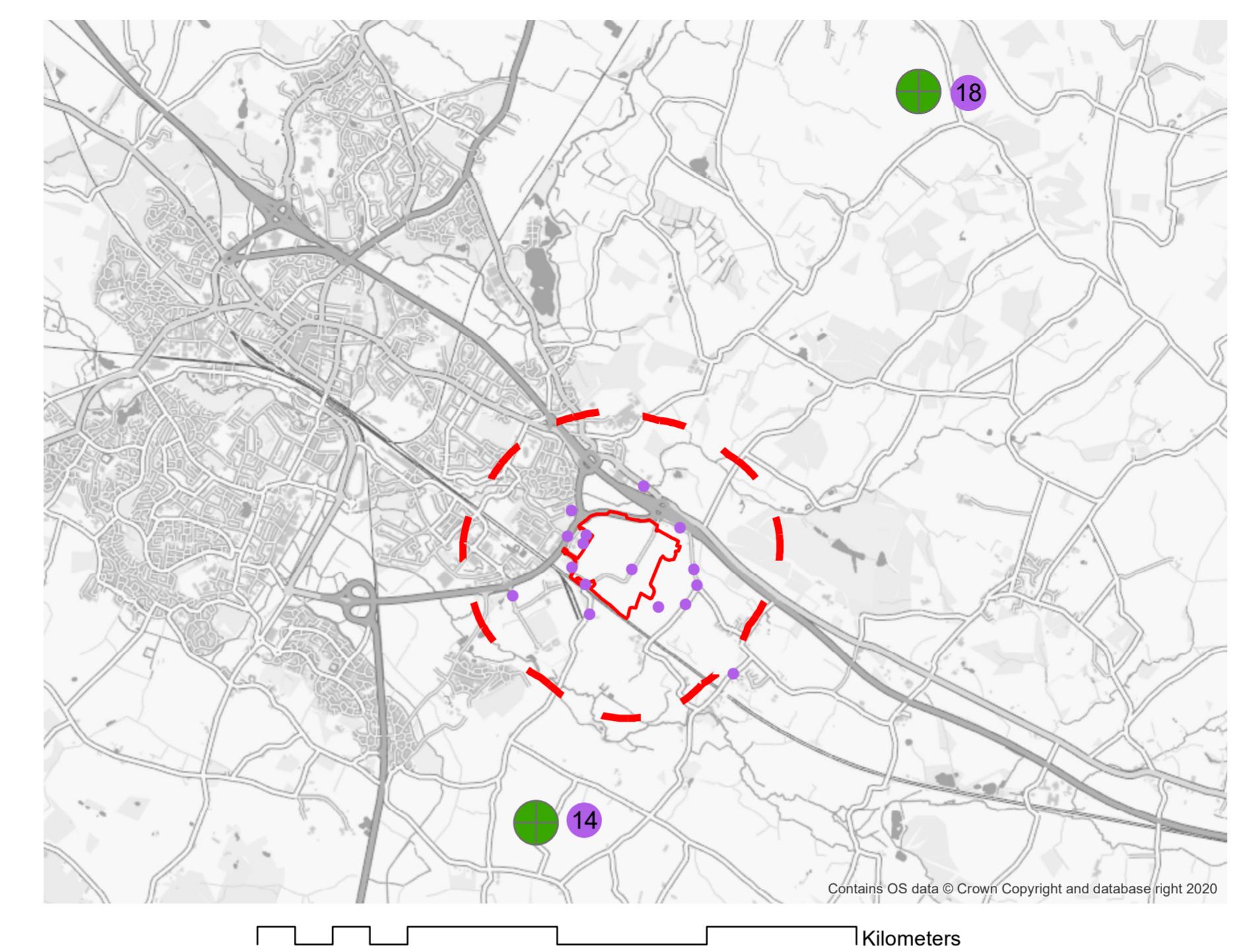
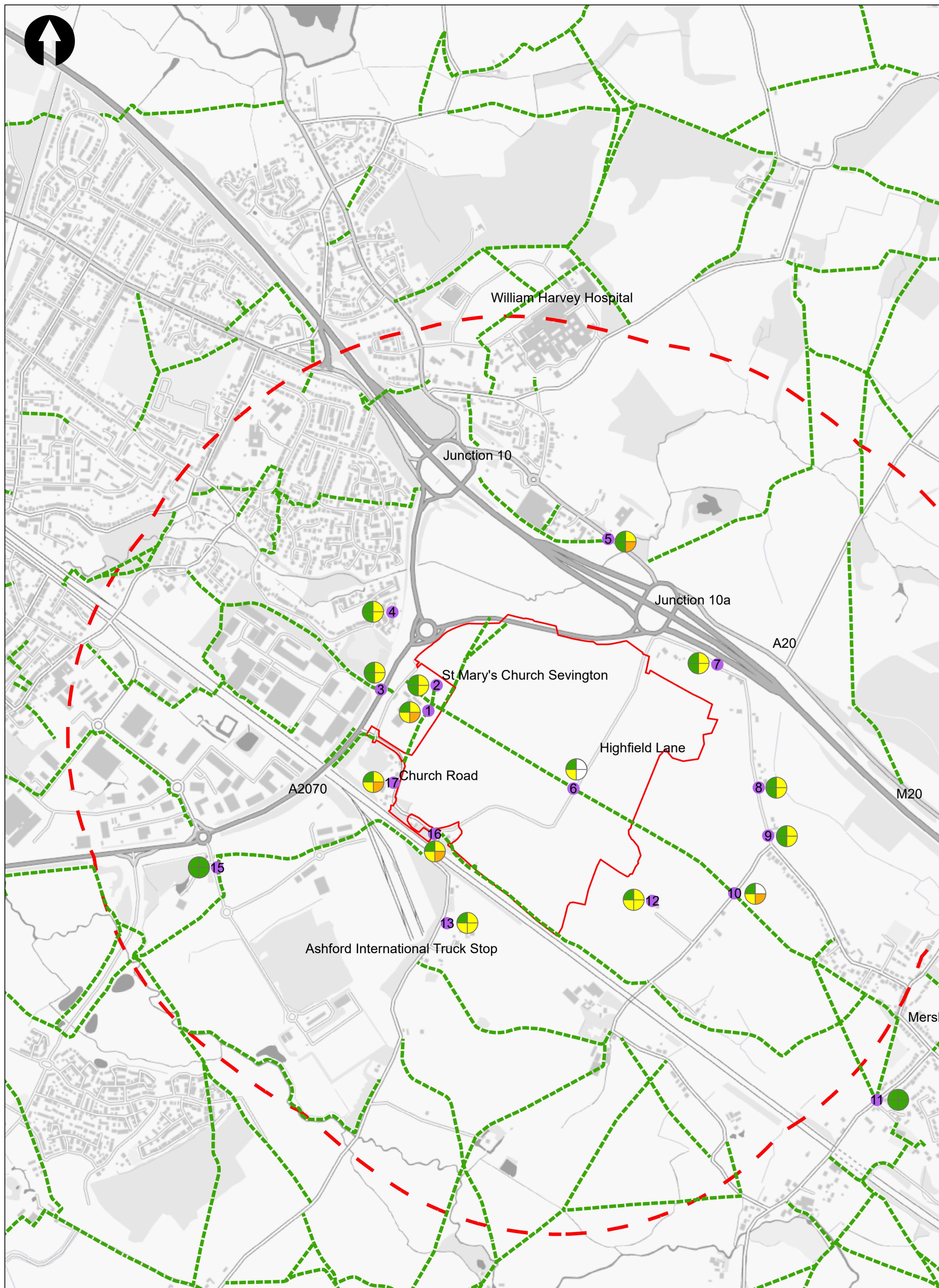
- A.1 Zone of Theoretically Visibility Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3019**
- A.2 Landscape Character Area Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3018**
- A.3 Visual Receptor Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3017**
- A.4 Visual Impact Plan Drawing no. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3017**







Key to Symbols			
Article 4 Red Line Boundary			
Article 4 Red Line Boundary 1km Study Area			
Visual Receptor			
Public Right of Way			
Document References			
P02	30/10/20		
P01	19/10/20		
Rev	Date Drawn	Description	Ch'kd App'd
Drawing Status Suitable for Stage Approval			
Project Title Sevington Inland Border Facility			
Drawing Title Visual Receptor Plan			
Designed		Eng Check	N/A
Drawn		Coordination	
GIS Check		Approved	
Scale at A3 1:7,500	Status PRE	Rev P01	Security STD
Drawing No. 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3017			



## B. Visual Receptor Schedules

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
1.	PROW AE639 also representative of views from [REDACTED]	<p>Views from [REDACTED] to the north are dominated by existing vegetation and St. Mary's Church Sevington in the foreground of the view beyond the horse paddock immediately adjacent to the property.</p> <p>Long-distance views looking north east are likely to be afforded from upper storey windows capturing a paddock in the immediate foreground bordered by a post and rail fence, across arable fields in the middle ground leading towards the newly constructed A2070 and vegetated boundary of [REDACTED]. The elevated North Downs provide the distant backdrop to the view.</p> <p>Looking east from the PRoW, views are afforded over a field gate to an open arable field beyond. Hedgerow field boundaries run across the view screening [REDACTED] and further arable fields beyond towards Mersham.</p> <p>Unremarkable view, undesignated. St Mary's Church Sevington is an attractive landmark in the foreground. Overall sensitivity medium.</p>	<p>The view north and north east capture construction activity associated with the implementation of parking areas, lighting and acoustic barrier to the right of the church beyond the paddock in the middle distance of the view. The presence of the church and churchyard vegetation would help screen views to site works beyond when looking immediately north and north west. The view to the church from [REDACTED] would be unaffected.</p> <p>Looking east from upper storey windows of Court Lodge, oblique views would likely be afforded towards an active construction site in the foreground and middle ground of the view, extending to vegetation along the field boundary with [REDACTED].</p> <p>Looking east from PROW AE639, open views would be afforded over the field gate and post and rail fence towards the construction site. This would capture large scale earthworks including the implementation of earth bunds in the near distance, as well as the construction of parking areas, lighting, acoustic barrier and buildings.</p> <p>Task lighting would be visible Monday to Friday during winter months but would not be used beyond 20.00.</p> <p>The oblique filtered views from [REDACTED] and direct views from a very short section of PROW looking on to construction works in the foreground of the view would lead to a moderate magnitude of change. However, when considering the short-term nature of the construction period of just 6</p>	<p>Day 1 to 200, the view north and north east capture the eastern most edge of a new pond beyond the paddock boundary. The presence of the church and churchyard vegetation would help screen views to site works beyond when looking immediately north and north west. The view to the church from [REDACTED] would be unaffected.</p> <p>Looking east from upper storey windows of [REDACTED], oblique views would likely be afforded towards the inland border facility beyond the existing paddock and newly implemented green infrastructure in the foreground of the view. Bunds and mitigation planting would help partially filter views to the operational aspects of the site including HGVs and built elements.</p> <p>Night-time views from this location would capture new artificial lighting for 24 hour operation albeit lighting associated with the A2070 and Junction 10a is already visible from this location. Directional lighting units would be used but the potential for glare would need to be considered.</p> <p>Looking east from PROW AE639 direct views would be afforded into site, albeit somewhat softened by intervening planting. To the north east and south east views would be limited to a degree by 2m high landscape bunds planted with trees and shrubs to aid screening of the operational area beyond, helping to break up taller aspects of the operation site beyond, such as buildings and HGVs in the south east and the</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
			<p>months the magnitude is reduced to minor leading to a slight adverse effect during construction.</p>	<p>massing of HGVs and modular buildings to the north east.</p> <p>At Day 200 the most northerly area of the site would be suspended from active use and newly introduced buildings would become visible in the view looking east, where additional inspection sheds are required for Day 200 use. The reinstatement of the viewing corridor would go someway to softening the edges of this built form in that particular area of the site, with the removal of HGVs and infrastructure.</p> <p>Upon reinstatement of the site at Year 5, the built elements of the site would be removed, leaving just hardstanding and the landscape scheme in place.</p> <p>During the operation period as a whole it is considered that there would be a moderate magnitude of change leading to a moderate adverse significance of effect upon this receptor.</p> <p>Over time the planting scheme would mature, and whilst the baseline view would not be reinstated, an attractive view to ponds, grassland and native trees and shrubs would emerge leading to a neutral significance of effect in the long-term.</p>
2.	Representative of St. Mary's Church, Sevington	<p>Glimpsed views are afforded from the churchyard through gaps in boundary vegetation looking north, across grassland towards the newly constructed A2070 and M20 in the distance beyond. The view east is through boundary vegetation which heavily filters views across the neighbouring paddock to the arable field beyond.</p> <p>Unremarkable and undesignated view. St Mary's Church Sevington is an attractive landmark. Presence of boundary vegetation around the church provides a strong sense of enclosure. Interest of users focussed on</p>	<p>During construction views from the churchyard looking north through boundary vegetation would capture glimpsed views of construction of the new church car park, pond and associated landscape planting.</p> <p>Looking east towards site, views would again be restricted to a degree by intervening vegetation along the churchyard boundary and again along the boundary of the paddock with the site beyond. Elements of construction that may be visible through intervening vegetation from this location include the creation of another large pond in the western most area of the site, bordered by an</p>	<p>During operation between Day 1 and 200 intermittent views through gaps in boundary vegetation would be afforded to the newly implemented pond, landscaped areas and car park to the very north west corner of the church yard. Grassland areas would be punctuated by tree and shrub planting. To the east of the retained treeline running north glimpsed views would be afforded north east across through intervening vegetation towards a newly implemented landscape bund planted with trees and shrubs. This would partially screen views to the operational area of the site beyond including</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
		the church and churchyard. Overall sensitivity medium.	<p>earth bund. Glimpsed views may also be afforded, again through intervening vegetation to larger scale construction activities beyond associated with the preparation of parking areas, building erection and lighting columns and acoustic fence. The temporary nature of construction works and extent of intervening vegetation screening much of the view from this location would result in a negligible magnitude of change leading to a slight adverse non-significant effect upon views from St. Mary's Church.</p>	<p>HGV movements and buildings. Lighting columns may also be visible above intervening vegetation in places.</p> <p>At Day 200 the most north westerly area of parking would be suspended, removing activity from this aspect of any glimpsed view. The 'viewing corridor' that runs from east to west through the site would also be reinstated with parking areas removed and landscaping implementation would follow, bringing a green corridor through the site, and once again linking the visual connectivity between the church spires of Mersham and Sevington. Additional buildings would be introduced adjacent to the viewing corridor, although given the enclosed nature of the churchyard by boundary vegetation views would be limited.</p> <p>Upon reinstatement of the site at Year 5, the built elements of the site would be removed, leaving just hardstanding and the landscape scheme in place.</p> <p>Given the presence of intervening vegetation enclosing much of the view from the church yard, the magnitude of change is considered to be negligible leading to a slight adverse significance of effect during operation.</p> <p>Beyond Year 5, upon reinstatement works, a neutral significance of effect is expected.</p>
3.	PROW crossing A2070 footbridge leading to St Mary's Church	Elevated views are afforded from this footbridge over the existing A2070 below. Looking south east towards Sevington, intervening mature vegetation foreshortens the view, with the upper sections and spire of St. Mary's Church visible above the treeline in the near distance. Views looking north east are more open in nature across an open grassland field backed by a mature treeline on its eastern most boundary, and	<p>During construction views would be afforded from this elevated position down towards construction of a new car park to service St. Mary's Church, with a large drainage pond and associated swale, as well as planting of trees and shrubs around the pond area. Existing mature vegetation along the edge of field would remain in situ and aid screening of the construction works beyond. Views of limited construction activity may still be visible above the</p>	<p>During operation the view from this elevated position would capture the intervening vegetation and St. Mary's Church Spire looking south east. Looking in a more north easterly direction the view would capture the newly landscaped field in the east. Grassland, trees and shrubs would be set around the newly established pond. The new church car park would also be seen immediately adjacent to this area of landscaping. An existing line of</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
4. [REDACTED]		<p>the new A2070 link road on its northern boundary. Lighting columns and acoustic barrier form vertical detracting elements within the view. Beyond intervening vegetation, Junction 10A can be seen, identified by the series of lighting columns visible above the intervening tree line. The backdrop of the view is defined by the North Downs in the far distance.</p> <p>In considering the many detracting features in this transient view, the overall sensitivity is considered to be low.</p>	<p>tops of trees or localised gap in vegetation, albeit screened in the most part.</p> <p>Considering the construction of the scheme set within the context of the detracting features of the local highway network, looking north east, and intervening vegetation screening views east, the magnitude of change is minor resulting in a slight adverse effect at worst during Construction.</p>	<p>vegetation towards the eastern edge of the field would remain in situ and aid screening of lower level elements of the operational scheme, however it is possible that the upper sections of the proposed acoustic barrier along the main access route through site would be visible above the treeline.</p> <p>During winter months, views through this vegetation towards HGV parking and acoustic barrier may increase. This would however be set in the context of the immediate view of the A2070 below the bridge and the middle-distance view to the A2070 link road and M20 beyond.</p> <p>At Day 200, the parking area beyond the existing treeline in the most north westerly section of the site would be suspended which would reduce activity within the view through any breaks in vegetation, particularly during winter months.</p> <p>At Year 5 the site would be reinstated leaving only the green infrastructure and areas of hard standing in place.</p> <p>During operation the magnitude of impact would be minor leading to a slight adverse effect at worst leading to neutral in the long term.</p>
4. [REDACTED]		<p>Views looking east from upper storey windows across the A2070 towards St. Mary's Church and Junction 10A in the distance. Some views to ongoing construction works associated with the final stages of the Junction 10A scheme are still afforded.</p> <p>Unremarkable and undesignated view although. St Mary's Church spire is an attractive landmark in the middle ground. Overall sensitivity medium.</p>	<p>During construction views would be afforded from a small number of residential properties which are located immediately adjacent to the A2070. Views would be restricted to upper storey windows only, and of the construction of a proposed pond on the land bordering the far side of the A2070 in the middle of the view. Further views to the main works site would be limited by the intervening mature line of vegetation which runs across the view.</p> <p>Any views to task lighting during construction would be set in the context of the already well-lit</p>	<p>During operation views would be afforded from upper storey windows across intervening boundary fence lines and garden vegetation and the A2070 in the immediate foreground of the view towards the newly landscaped field in the east. Grassland, trees and shrubs would be set around the newly established pond. The new church car park would also be seen immediately adjacent to this area of landscaping.</p> <p>An existing line of vegetation towards the back of the field would remain in situ and aid screening of lower level elements of the</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation	
			<p>A2070 and would be through or above intervening vegetation. Construction works and associated lighting would be restricted to 20.00 Monday to Friday only.</p> <p>As such the magnitude of change during construction is considered to be minor on balance set within the context of the existing busy A2070 leading to a slight adverse non-significant effect.</p>	<p>operational scheme in the most part, however it is possible that the upper sections of the proposed acoustic barrier along the main access route through site would be visible above the treeline for some more elevated views. During winter months, views through this vegetation towards HGV parking and acoustic barrier may increase.</p> <p>Night-time views would capture lighting beyond the intervening vegetation line as well as low level bollard lighting within the new church car park. This would be set in the context of the adjacent A2070 which is already well lit.</p> <p>At Day 200, the parking area beyond the existing treeline would be suspended which would reduce activity within the view through any breaks in vegetation, particularly during winter months.</p> <p>At Year 5 the site would be reinstated leaving only the green infrastructure, hardstanding and new church car park in place.</p> <p>Given the presence of intervening vegetation which would screen views to the operational aspects of the scheme in the most part, a minor magnitude of change is anticipated leading to a slight adverse effect during operation.</p> <p>In the longer term, the magnitude of change associated with the green infrastructure only and as such is considered to lead to a neutral effect thereafter, if not even a beneficial effect compared to the baseline view.</p>	
5.	PROW AU534		<p>Open views are afforded across continuing construction works associated with the M20 J10a scheme in the foreground of the view. Beyond the M20, the new A2070 and associated traffic movements and infrastructure can be seen. Lighting columns of the A2070 bring vertical elements into an</p>	<p>During construction the foreground would remain unchanged. Views across the intervening M20 and A2070 to the site would capture construction activity including large scale earthworks, plant movement, erection of lighting and other elements of structural built form including marshal cabins and office buildings. The electricity line that runs</p>	<p>During Day 1 to 200 of operation views across the intervening highway network would then fall upon an active site of HGV parking and movements in and out of the site at the main access/egress junction to the south of the A2070 in the centre of the view. Modular office buildings would also be seen, as well as</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
		<p>otherwise horizontal plane. Arable fields form the background to the view from this location. St Mary's Church spire can just be made out amongst existing mature vegetation to the south west.</p> <p>Given the presence of detracting features within the view from these properties and PROW the overall sensitivity from the edge of this urban settlement is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>along the top of the ridge would be removed during construction.</p> <p>This activity would be set within the context of the existing and dominant M20 and A2070 in the foreground of the view, where some aspects of construction works are still ongoing. Any task lighting required during evening works would be viewed beyond existing lighting of the A2070.</p> <p>The presence of detracting features already in the view reduce the magnitude of change for this receptor. Given the very temporary nature of the construction period, the overall magnitude of change considered to minor leading to a slight adverse effect.</p>	<p>marshal cabins. Day 200 would see the introduction of additional inspection sheds on the skyline. The site would be well lit with views to lighting columns during day light hours and views to the lit border facility during hours of darkness. This would be set in the context of the intervening lighting of the A2070 immediately in front of the site. Reinstatement of the site at Year 5, would include the removal of infrastructure on the skyline from this receptor.</p> <p>The magnitude of change during operation as a whole is considered to be moderate, leading to a moderate adverse effect at worst during this time.</p> <p>In the medium to long term the significance of effect would reduce to neutral.</p>
6.	PROW AE639	<p>Open views are afforded from this PROW which runs along a slight ridge from west to east across an arable field. Looking north west views are afforded over sloping ground down towards the new A2070 link road and M20. The A20 and associated built development along its route is visible beyond with the background of the view dominated by the rising North Downs in the far distance. Views looking north west capture Sevington and notably St. Mary's Church which provides a key way marker in the view. To the south, views of arable and well vegetated landscape are contained by undulating landform.</p> <p>Whilst some detracting features are visible towards the north west, St Mary's Church and Court Lodge bring attractive qualities looking west. Overall sensitivity medium.</p>	<p>During construction this footpath would be temporarily closed and not form a receptor at this time.</p>	<p>During the five years of operation this PROW would be closed.</p> <p>At Year 5 the site would be reinstated, retaining the newly implemented landscape scheme and areas of hardstanding but removing infrastructure associated with the operation of the site. At this point the PROW would be reopened.</p> <p>Whilst the character of the newly reopened PROW would be different from that of the baseline it is not considered to afford notable adverse effects as a result of the change. Given the transient nature and relatively short distance of this length of the PROW moving through the scheme extents, the magnitude of change is considered to be minor leading to a slight adverse effect.</p> <p>In the long-term as the landscape scheme matures, the significance of effect is likely to</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
7. [REDACTED]		<p>Existing views from residential properties vary along the length of [REDACTED] due to the gently rising landform in the fields bordering the rural lane. The properties on the western end of Kingsford Street back on to an arable field at the rear of the properties. The long rear gardens are enclosed by boundary vegetation within the gardens themselves.</p> <p>Given the extent of screening to the rear of these properties and enclosed nature of the view, the overall sensitivity is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>During construction, glimpsed views would be likely afforded through boundary garden vegetation most notably towards the temporary earth stockpiling in the field at the rear of the properties. Given the maturity of vegetation along this boundary it is considered that views would be enclosed in the most part. Views in winter may be more open in nature. Glimpsed oblique views through intervening garden vegetation may also be afforded towards the main works site during this period, although the intervening stockpiles, landscape bund and retained vegetation along Highfield Lane would limit this.</p> <p>Aspects of task lighting may also be visible during construction, although limited to Monday – Friday until 20.00 only.</p> <p>Given the presence of intervening vegetation aiding screening of the view to site in the most part, the magnitude of change would be minor leading to a slight adverse effect at worst during construction.</p>	<p>become neutral and even potentially beneficial over time.</p> <p>During the early months of operation, the temporary earth stockpiles would remain present beyond the boundary vegetation in the near distance of the view.</p> <p>At the end of the 12 month period (which would commence during construction), the stockpiles would be removed from site. From this point forward, any views afforded from the properties through intervening vegetation would capture the newly planted landscape bund running along the eastern edge of [REDACTED]. Views may be afforded beyond to taller aspects of the scheme such as lighting columns and operational buildings, including the addition of new inspection sheds at Day 200.</p> <p>Where night-time views maybe afforded through intervening vegetation, views would capture a well-lit operational site in contrast with the unlit foreground this receptor currently affords looking south and south west, however the well-lit A2070 is only a short distance to the west of the receptor.</p> <p>At Year 5, the site would be reinstated with all infrastructure removed from site. The site or features within it would no longer be visible beyond garden vegetation and the planted bund to the east of Highfield Lane.</p> <p>The magnitude of change during operation is considered to be minor at worst due to the intervening boundary vegetation and landscape bund along [REDACTED] preventing more open views to site. The resulting significance of effect would be slight adverse at worst.</p> <p>In the long-term as the landscape scheme matures, the significance of effect is likely to</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
8. [REDACTED]		<p>Further to the east, houses on the northern side of [REDACTED] look out upon open fields towards the south and south west. The depth of view varies due to intervening hedgerow vegetation along the boundary of [REDACTED] as well as due to the locally rising ground of the arable field in the foreground.</p> <p>At its most open, views from [REDACTED] looking west extend over open arable farmland with St Mary's Church spire and surrounding vegetation at Sevington forming the skyline. The electricity line on timber poles that traverses the view in this location also provides a vertical element to an otherwise horizontal view. Elsewhere the roadside hedgerow and rising topography drastically foreshorten the view and prevent views beyond. Upper storey views from a small number of properties are afforded which capture longer distance views across open arable fields to Sevington and Ashford beyond forming the background to the view. With intervening rising ground foreshortening views in the most part from this section of [REDACTED] the overall sensitivity is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>During construction it is likely that views would be afforded from only a small number of properties along [REDACTED], over the locally rising arable field in the foreground of the view towards the stockpiles held in the adjacent field. Given the rising topography, views are likely to be restricted to upper storey windows in the most part and localised just to one or two properties. Views beyond to the main construction site would be interrupted by the intervening temporary stockpiles and vegetation bounding [REDACTED] which runs across the centre of the view. Some higher-level works such as building construction and the erection of lighting columns may also be visible from elevated windows across the field and stockpiles beyond.</p> <p>In the small isolated locations where ground level views can be afforded to site through gaps in roadside vegetation, views to the stockpiles and construction works beyond in the main body of the site would be afforded, backed by St. Mary's Church spire in the background of the view. These views would however still be set in the context of the intervening vegetation and landform.</p> <p>Aspects of task lighting may also be visible during construction, although limited to Monday – Friday until 8pm only.</p> <p>Given the temporary nature of the works, the magnitude of change is considered to be moderate at worst and for only one or two properties along [REDACTED]. Given that views would only be afforded from upper storey windows from these two properties the magnitude of change is</p>	<p>become neutral where any glimpsed views are afforded through boundary vegetation.</p> <p>During operation, the initial impacts and significance of effect would be similar to that reported in construction until the removal of the temporary stockpiles to the east of [REDACTED]. Upon removal of these stockpiles the active site would not be visible for the majority of receptors along [REDACTED]. The two properties that afford views from upper storey windows would look out towards site, although the newly implemented landscape bund and associated planting along [REDACTED] would break views to the operational site beyond which would include views to lighting columns, and light itself during hours of darkness, and the tops of buildings and some lorry movements in the east of the site.</p> <p>At Year 5, the site would be reinstated with only views to planting from the two properties with views from upper storey windows.</p> <p>The foreground of the view would remain unchanged from the baseline and as such the magnitude of change would be minor in the worst instance leading to a slight adverse effect in operation for the two properties with upper storey views, whilst vegetation establishes. For other properties on [REDACTED] the view would remain as per the baseline.</p> <p>Long-term, once intervening vegetation has fully established a neutral significance of effect is likely.</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
9.		<p>Views from this elevated property towards the proposed site are contained in the foreground of the view by intervening mature garden vegetation, as well as secondary hedgerows forming the boundary between [REDACTED]. However, when hedgerows have been flailed, views are afforded over the top of the hedgerows across open arable fields towards Ashford. Within this long-distance view, St Mary's Church spire, the M20 and William Harvey Hospital are just perceptible amongst intervening vegetation.</p> <p>Given intervening vegetation helping to filter views from this location, the susceptibility to change is somewhat reduced. The overall sensitivity is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>considered to be moderate at worst leading to a slight adverse effect overall during construction.</p>	<p>The effects during operation would be similar to that reported during construction until the removal of the temporary earth stockpiles. Once removed, glimpsed views through intervening vegetation would capture the newly formed earth bund along Highfield Lane and associated planting which would screen lower level views into site and break up any taller elements in the view such as lighting columns and inspection sheds.</p> <p>Night-time views may capture lighting associated with the site, although this would be set in the context of lighting associated with the neighbouring A2070 and urban landscape of Ashford beyond.</p> <p>Upon reinstatement of the site at Year 5, all infrastructure associated with the scheme would be removed from the view. Only the green infrastructure associated with the scheme would remain visible, with the planted bund redefining the edge of [REDACTED] looking east.</p> <p>During operation the magnitude of change is expected to be minor leading to a slight adverse effect.</p> <p>Long-term, once intervening vegetation has fully established a neutral significance of effect is likely.</p>
10.	PROW AE363, off Blind Lane, Mersham	<p>Open and wide angled views can be afforded from this PROW looking east across open arable farmland. The field boundary along Highfield Lane in the middle ground restricts low level views further west. Views are afforded along the line of electricity cables that runs in line with the</p>	<p>During Construction this footpath would be temporarily closed and not form a receptor at this time.</p>	<p>During operation and once the stockpiles have been removed from site, this footpath would reopen to the public. Views to site would be directly afforded, with the newly implemented landscape bund visible along the eastern edge of the field adjacent to Highfield Lane. This bund would be planted with trees and shrubs which</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
		<p>PROW towards St Mary's Church Spire at Sevington and a nearby mature treeline that forms the backdrop of the view. To the right of St. Mary's church, the North Downs are just visible in the very far distance of the view. Views looking north east beyond the immediate arable field and Kingsford Street, capture glimpsed views to the new A2070 backed by mature vegetation at Willesborough Lees. Elevated structures associated with the William Harvey Hospital present built elements amongst an otherwise vegetated skyline.</p> <p>With the exception of the upper aspects of the William Harvey Hospital in the background of the view, there are few detracting features in this rural view, as such the sensitivity is considered to be medium.</p>		<p>over time would break up views to the operational aspects of the site, albeit a gap would remain in the bund and planting to ensure access to the field and to retain the visual link between churches in Sevington and Mersham. Views to upper sections of inspection buildings, the tops of HGVs and also lighting columns are likely from this location.</p> <p>It is unlikely the rural footpath would be used in hours of darkness, but should it be, views would capture a well-lit site ahead. This would be set in the context of the A2070 which is already lit in the north west of the view.</p> <p>Upon reinstatement of the site at Year 5, all infrastructure associated with the scheme would be removed from the view. Only the green infrastructure associated with the scheme would remain visible, with the planted bund redefining the edge of Highfield Lane.</p> <p>The magnitude of change during operation as a whole would be moderate when considering the intervening landscape bund and planting, leading to a moderate adverse significance of effect.</p> <p>Long-term, once intervening vegetation has fully established a neutral significance of effect is likely.</p>
11.	PROW AE365 off Church Road, Mersham	<p>Views from this PROW are initially restricted by a hedgerow which runs immediately adjacent to the footpath and prevents views across the neighbouring arable landscape. However, at the northern end of the PROW uninterrupted long-distance views emerge across open arable fields.</p> <p>There are few detracting features from this footpath running along the very edge of Mersham village, with views capturing a</p>	<p>During construction, at its most open this PROW would afford long distance open views across arable farmland towards the site and landscape beyond. Given the distance from site, intervening vegetation and scale of the development within this far reaching view, it is not considered the works would be a dominant feature.</p> <p>Any night-time effects would be limited to distance views to task lighting associated with the</p>	<p>Given the distance from site and scale of the works set within a far-reaching view, the magnitude of effect during operation and beyond is considered to be negligible at worst resulting in a neutral effect.</p> <p>Any lighting in the night-time view would be from a distance and set in the context of the urban edge of Ashford and associated highway infrastructure.</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
		mostly rural scene. It is therefore considered to have a medium sensitivity.	construction works. Lighting would be limited to Monday to Friday up until 20:00 only. As such the magnitude of change is considered to be so negligible it would lead to a neutral significance of effect.	
12. [REDACTED]		This residential property is surrounded by arable fields with varying views across a locally undulating landscape. A vegetated boundary along the north western extents of the property limits views in that direction, however other boundaries remain open with views looking north across open rising fields and the electricity line that runs along the PROW on the local ridgeline.		
		There are few detracting features in this view across rising arable farmland, albeit views are afforded of timber electricity poles and cables which run along the ridgeline in the view looking north. As such the sensitivity is considered to be medium.	During construction this residential receptor would afford views to the north and west of the temporary stockpiles held in the adjacent field in the foreground of the view. Beyond, oblique views may be afforded through intervening vegetation along Highfield Lane towards the main construction works including the erection of buildings and lighting columns as well as the movement of construction plant. It is likely that the rising intervening landform would go some way to restricting these views, particularly from ground level.  Aspects of task lighting may also be visible during hours of darkness, although limited to Monday – Friday until 20:00 only.  When looking west, views would be oblique in nature and through intervening vegetation on the property boundary as well as that associated with the boundary of Highfield lane . Intervening rising ground would also aid the screening of views from this location. Heavily oblique views looking south west would capture the construction of the parking area in the very south eastern corner of the site, although any views would be through the line of mature vegetation which forms the western boundary of the property.  Consequently, the magnitude of change during construction is considered to be moderate, with the scheme readily apparent in the view. However, when accounting for the temporary nature of the 6 month construction period, the magnitude of change reduces to minor resulting in a slight adverse significance of effect.	The effects during operation would be similar to that reported during construction until the removal of the temporary earth stockpiles. Once removed, the views across the neighbouring arable field would return to baseline conditions with the exception of the newly implemented planted bund which would run along the eastern boundary of [REDACTED] screening lower elements of the site and helping to break up any taller elements in the view such as lighting columns, and inspection sheds.  Oblique views to the very north of the site may be afforded over rising ground and to vertical elements associated with the scheme such as lighting columns and inspection sheds which may be seen above intervening vegetation.  Likewise, oblique views to the west would capture operational activities and infrastructure in the south eastern corner of the site over the top of a newly implemented bund and associated planting.  Night-time views are likely to capture lighting associated with the site.  Upon Day 200, the most south eastern corner of the site would have a parking suspension and be removed from the operational area. This would see the removal of any HGVs in the view looking south west from this time.  Upon reinstatement of the site at Year 5, all elevated built elements would be removed from the view, with only planting associated with the scheme visible from this location. Retained

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
13. [REDACTED]		<p>Existing intervening woodland and the presence of the CTRL prevent open views towards site from these receptors. Some glimpsed and upper storey views may however be afforded through intervening vegetation from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]</p> <p>Given the presence of the CTRL forming a detracting feature in the view, as well as elements of intervening vegetation, the sensitivity is considered to be medium for this receptor.</p>	<p>During construction, views looking north to site are likely to be afforded (particularly for the most northerly property) through intervening vegetation alongside the CTRL. Intermittent/glimpsed views across the intervening CTRL would capture the temporary stockpiling to the north and construction of the south eastern extents of the scheme including earthworks, plant movement, creation of ponds and landscaping as well as the preparation of hardstanding and erection of lighting columns. Aspects of task lighting may also be visible during construction, although limited to Monday – Friday until 20:00 only.</p> <p>Given the short-term nature of the construction period, set in the context of the intervening CTRL and intervening vegetation, the magnitude of change would be minor, leading to a slight adverse significance of effect.</p>	<p>areas of hardstanding would not be visible from this location.</p> <p>Given the heavily oblique nature of the views and belt of boundary vegetation to the west of the property, the magnitude of change associated with the operation of the site would be minor leading to a slight adverse significance of effect.</p> <p>Longer term upon this would reduce further as mitigation planting reaches maturity leading to a neutral significance of effect over time.</p> <p>During operation, views looking north west through mature intervening vegetation would include that of the newly implemented landscape bund and associated planting along the most eastern edge of the site. Additional planting would be introduced along the southern boundary of the site, augmenting the existing intervening vegetation to the north and south of the CTRL.</p> <p>Views through existing vegetation would capture HGV movements and parking in the southern section of the site as well as lighting and security fencing, bordered to the west by an area of grassland, trees and shrubs surrounding a newly formed pond to the west.</p> <p>Lighting is likely to be visible during hours of darkness from these receptors although reduced by existing intervening boundary vegetation.</p> <p>Two months preceding Day 200, views of the construction of additional inspection sheds and modular buildings may be afforded at the highest point of the site.</p> <p>Upon Day 200, the most south eastern corner of the site would have a parking suspension and be removed from the operational area of the</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
14.	Collier's Hill PROW AE401, east of Cheeseman's Green	<p>Long distance views are afforded from this elevated position on Collier's Hill. Views capture a rural scene looking north characterised by intervening agricultural land and mature vegetation. The site itself is not easily perceptible in this elevated and far reaching view.</p> <p>Given the far-reaching view from this elevated trig point and lack of detracting features within the view, the sensitivity of this receptor is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>Given distance and far reaching views associated with this receptor, any aspects of the construction including any temporary construction lighting that may be perceived would be lost in the wider expanse of view.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that the magnitude of change would be negligible at worst leading to a neutral significance of effect during construction.</p>	<p>site. This would see the removal of any HGVs in the view looking south west from this time. Existing intervening vegetation to be retained along [REDACTED] and also the acoustic barrier beyond would aid screening of HGVs and lower sections of buildings including those introduced at Day 200.</p> <p>At Year 5 the site would be reinstated leaving only the green infrastructure and areas of hardstanding in situ. It is likely that areas of hardstanding would be screened in the most part by planting along the southern boundary of the site.</p> <p>When considering the temporary use of the operational scheme closest to these properties, combined with intervening vegetation and detracting features associated with the CTRL, the magnitude of change associated with the operational phase is considered to be moderate leading to a slight adverse significant effect for this receptor group as a whole during operation.</p> <p>In the long-term as the intervening landscape scheme establishes and matures it is considered that the magnitude would further reduce leading to a neutral long-term significance of effect.</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
15		<p>Views from this location capture a flat landscape under various stages of development including construction activity, large scale buildings, and areas of hardstanding backed by mature vegetation which runs in front of the CTRL forming the background of the view in this location.</p> <p>Given the transient nature of this receptor set in a landscape of change, with many detracting features, the sensitivity to is considered to be low.</p>	<p>During construction any views towards site afforded from this location would be set in the context of intervening built form associated with current development to the north, existing HMRC facility and railway sidings, mature vegetation and presence of the CTRL, which is in false cut in this location, with the embankment planted and further mature planting beyond between [REDACTED].</p> <p>[REDACTED] any views during construction would be highly restricted to elevated aspects of the proposals only, viewed above existing vegetation in the background of the view over 600m away, and would not form a notable part of the view.</p> <p>Any glimpsed views to construction lighting would be set in the context of intervening lighting in the middle ground of the view.</p> <p>The magnitude of change is considered to be negligible resulting in a neutral significance of effect given the current outlook from this receptor.</p>	<p>Similarly to predicted views during construction, any views towards site afforded from this location during operation would be set in the context of intervening built form associated with current development to the north, existing HMRC facility and railway sidings, mature vegetation and presence of the CTRL, which is in false cut in this location, with the embankment planted and further mature planting [REDACTED].</p> <p>[REDACTED] any views to the operational site would be highly restricted to elevated aspects of the proposals only, viewed above existing vegetation in the background of the view over 600m away, and would not form a notable part of the view.</p> <p>The magnitude of change is therefore considered to be negligible resulting in a neutral significance of effect during construction and beyond.</p>
16.		<p>Views from these properties [REDACTED] in the immediate foreground of the view, with higher ground beyond; an established unmanaged hedgerow sits elevated alongside the rural lane. Beyond views are afforded over rising agricultural land to the north with the spire of St Mary's Church visible above surrounding mature vegetation.</p> <p>There are few detracting features in this view across rising arable farmland, albeit views are reduced in part by fragmented hedgerows bordering [REDACTED]. As such the sensitivity is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>Residential receptors in this location would afford views through garden vegetation at the front of the properties north across [REDACTED].</p> <p>[REDACTED] in the foreground of the view to the construction works on the site upon rising ground. A landscape bund would be constructed to aid the screening of views to the remainder of the construction site however large scale construction works including the erection of inspection sheds, modular buildings and lighting columns would still be visible through low level intervening vegetation on the field boundary from this location.</p> <p>Additionally, views from the rear of Bridge Cottage would include the creation of a new drainage pond in the foreground of the view, backed by the construction of a new cycle/bridleway and most notably the parking area beyond and erection of lighting columns. A landscape bund constructed parallel to the southern side of Highfield Lane</p>	<p>During operation a newly implemented landscape scheme would form the foreground of the view looking north [REDACTED]. This would include large ponds, surrounded by areas of grassland, trees and shrub planting. Landscape bunds 2m in height would be planted with trees and shrubs to aid screening at a lower level and break up views to the 3m high timber acoustic barrier that would be sat upon the bunds in this location. The bund, acoustic barrier and tree planting would help to screen and break up views into the operational areas of the site where HGV parking, movements, inspection sheds and office facilities would be visible.</p> <p>Lighting columns would also be visible bringing light to a previously unlit field during night-time operation.</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
			<p>would aid screening to some degree during construction.</p> <p>Aspects of task lighting would be visible during hours of darkness, but this would be limited up to 20:00 Monday to Friday only.</p> <p>Planting would be implemented in the foreground of the view around the new pond. The hedgerow along Highfield Lane would be retained as part of the works offering some degree of screening value at a low level.</p> <p>Whilst construction would be visible from this receptor when considering the early implementation of landscape bunds to aid screening the magnitude of change is considered to be moderate, with the scheme readily apparent in the view. However, when accounting for the temporary nature of the 6 month construction period, magnitude is considered to be reduced to minor leading to a slight adverse significance of effect.</p>	<p>Two months preceding Day 200, views of the construction of additional inspection sheds and modular buildings may be afforded along the highest point of the site although much of this activity would be screened by the intervening bunds and acoustic barrier.</p> <p>At Day 200, the most south eastern corner of the site would have a parking suspension and be removed from the operational area of the site. This would see the removal of any HGVs in the view looking south west from this time. This would have the greatest impact upon the [REDACTED] which would no longer afford near distance views to upper aspects of parked HGVs. Lower aspects of the site would remain screened by the intervening vegetation and close boarded fence. However, it is likely that the upper sections of additional inspection sheds just to the north of the ridgeline would be visible in part from this location.</p> <p>At Year 5 the site would be reinstated, with infrastructure removed from site, leaving only areas of planting and hard standing in place. It is considered that the intervening green infrastructure implemented would sufficiently screen the remaining areas of hardstanding.</p> <p>With the implementation of the intervening green infrastructure and fencing limiting low level views, the magnitude of change associated with the operational period is considered to be moderate leading to a moderate adverse significance of effect in the short-medium term.</p> <p>Long-term as vegetation matures and the landscape design comes to fruition the significance of effect would continue to reduce to a neutral effect in the long-term.</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
17.		<p>Views from these properties capture [REDACTED], with rising ground beyond the unmanaged hedgerow planting that delineates the edge of Church Road and the field beyond.</p> <p>There are few detracting features in this view across rising arable farmland, albeit views are reduced in part by fragmented hedgerows bordering [REDACTED]. As such the sensitivity is considered to be medium.</p>	<p>Residential receptors on [REDACTED] would afford views through garden vegetation at the front of the properties across [REDACTED] in the foreground of the view across to the construction works on the site upon rising ground. The ridgeline that runs from west to east through the site would prevent views of the full site, however short distance views to large scale earthworks, and pond creation in the foreground of the view would be afforded.</p> <p>A landscape bund would be constructed to aid the screening of views to the remainder of the construction site however large-scale construction works including the erection of inspection sheds, modular buildings and lighting columns would still be visible through intervening vegetation on [REDACTED] from this location.</p> <p>Aspects of task lighting would be visible during hours of darkness, but this would be limited up to 20:00 Monday to Friday only.</p> <p>Whilst construction would be visible from this receptor when considering the early implementation of landscape bunds to aid screening, the magnitude of change is considered to be moderate, with the scheme readily apparent in the view. However, when accounting for the temporary nature of the 6 month construction period, magnitude is considered to be reduced to minor leading to a slight adverse significance of effect.</p>	<p>During operation a newly implemented landscape scheme would form the foreground of the view looking north beyond [REDACTED]. This would include large ponds, surrounded by areas of grassland, trees and shrubs.</p> <p>Landscape bunds 2m in height would be planted with trees and shrubs to aid screening at a lower level and break up views to the 3m high timber acoustic barrier that would be sat upon the bund. In the very western corner of the site adjacent to the new access of [REDACTED] a 5m high timber fence with intervening specimen tree planting would aid screening where bunds are not achievable.</p> <p>The bund, acoustic barrier and tree planting would help to screen and break up views into the operational areas of the site limiting and mostly screening views to HGV parking, movements, and lower sections of inspection sheds and office buildings.</p> <p>Lighting columns would also be seen and would bring lighting to a previously unlit field during night-time operation, albeit intervening features would screen the lower aspects of the lighting columns.</p> <p>Two months preceding Day 200, views of the construction of additional inspection sheds and modular buildings may be afforded along the highest point of the site. These views would however be restricted by intervening landscape bunds, planting and acoustic fencing.</p> <p>At Year 5 the site would be reinstated, with infrastructure removed from site, leaving only areas of planting and hard standing in place. It is considered that the intervening green infrastructure implemented would sufficiently screen the remaining areas of hardstanding.</p>

Visual Receptor No.	Receptor type	Existing view	Construction	Operation
18.	PROW AE138 at Devils' Kneading Trough, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	<p>This highly elevated position affords open panoramic far reaching views over steeply falling ground towards Ashford approximately 4km away and beyond to the west. Given the distance from the proposed site, the scale of Ashford appears insignificant in the wider view, with individual built elements of the townscape such as the M20 motorway corridor not distinguishable from this location. The majority of the view is dominated by agricultural land interspersed with pockets of woodland and field boundary hedgerows. The village of Brook can be seen in the middle distance in the centre of the view.</p> <p>Given this receptor has a highly valued view from the AONB on a nationally important PROW with an absence of visual detractors, the sensitivity considered to be high.</p>	<p>Given the long distance of this view from site it is not considered the works would be easily discernible from this location during Construction. Consequently, a negligible magnitude of change at worst would result in a neutral significance of effect.</p>	<p>With the implementation of the intervening green infrastructure and fencing limiting low level views, the magnitude of change associated with the operational period is considered to be medium leading to a moderate adverse significance of effect in the short-medium term. Following reinstatement the significance of effect would reduce to slight adverse, continuing to reduce in the long-term, as vegetation matures and the landscape design comes to fruition.</p> <p>Given the long distance of this view from site, and the expansive vista afforded, it is not considered the works would be easily discernible from this location during Operation. Any lighting associated with the operational period would be set in the context of the adjacent urban area of Ashford, and the lit A2070 junctions 10 and 10a of M20 adjacent immediately north of the scheme.</p> <p>As such a negligible magnitude of change is predicted, leading to a neutral significance of effect during operation and beyond.</p>

## C. Landscape Design Plans

- C.1 Environmental Masterplan Day 1 (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3030)**
- C.2 Environmental Masterplan Plan Day 200 (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3031)**
- C.3 Outline Long-Term Enhancement Plan (drawing ref: 419419-MMD-01-MMD-01-MO-DR-L-3032)**



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