

Planning Statement

Location: Land at Old Hive, Chipping

Proposal: 2 Self Build Detached Dwellings

Applicant: Ms J Seed and Ms I Seed

Prepared by: Rural Solutions Ltd

Client: Ms J Seed and Ms I Seed

Issue Date: March 2015

Drafted by: SC

Reviewed by: JE

Authorised by: JE

Disclaimer: The information, analysis and recommendations within this document are made by Rural Solutions Limited in good faith and represent our professional judgement on the basis of the information obtained from others. No statement made within this document may be deemed in any circumstance to be a representation, undertaking or warranty and we cannot accept any liability should you rely on such statements or such statements prove to be inaccurate. In particular the achievement of particular goals depends on parties and factors outside our control. Any illustrations and otherwise in this report are only intended to illustrate particular points of argument.

This document and its contents are confidential and will remain confidential until we waive confidentiality or the document is published by a Local Planning Authority.

Copyright © Rural Solutions Limited March 15

Any unauthorised reproduction or usage is strictly prohibited.

Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
1. Introduction.....	3
2. Site and Development Proposal.....	4
3. Planning Appraisal.....	7
4. Landscape Impact Appraisal.....	16
5. Creating Sustainable Rural Communities.....	33
6. Conclusions.....	41

Executive Summary

This application seeks permission for the erection of 2 detached family dwellings to be sold as self-build opportunities on the edge of the village of Chipping. The proposed development responds directly to National Planning Policy which requires local planning authorities to provide opportunities for people wanting to build their own homes. It also responds directly to findings in the latest Chipping Housing Needs Survey which identified a need for small number of 4 bedroom detached properties within the village. Research suggests self-build properties can be developed for as little as 50% of the price of purchasing the same property and so the opportunity directly addresses the acknowledged affordability issues affecting the village and the lack of opportunities to people to move up the housing ladder due to lack of opportunities and affordability issues.

The site as the whole of Chipping lies within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Neither National or Local planning policy precludes minor developments in the AONB and with no opportunities to meet the village's housing needs without developing within the AONB it is considered the site could be appropriate for development given its close proximity to existing residential development and the services and facilities of the village. The proposed development is modest in scale and sympathetic in siting and design and due to the local topography and mature trees around the site would not detrimentally impact on the setting of the village of Chipping or Hamlet of Old Hive. With a sensitive design which reflects local vernacular architecture and with sensitive and simple landscaping scheme retaining the rural appearance of the site as viewed from the lane, the site can be developed whilst preserving the qualities of the AONB.

Rural villages need new development commensurate with their scale and function to ensure the future vitality and viability of its communities. The proposed site and development represent an opportunity to contribute an appropriately scaled development to provide family homes to the village and introduce new families to support local services and facilities. This statement has demonstrated how the development is sustainable development and how there are no adverse impacts which significantly outweigh the benefits of the development and how planning permission should be granted for the development.

I. Introduction

- I.1 This planning justification statement has been produced to support the planning application for Two Self Build Detached Dwellings at land at Old Hive, Chipping.
- I.2 Section two of the statement provides more details on the proposed development including amendments since the previous application last year.
- I.3 Section three includes a Planning Appraisal of relevant planning policy and key matters as relevant to the application.
- I.4 Section four includes considerations of Landscape Impact, a key issue identified by the Council as relevant to the determination of this application due to its AONB location.
- I.5 Section five comprises of an analysis of the sustainability of the proposed development in the context of creating sustainable rural communities, again a key issue due to the sites edge of village rural location.
- I.6 Conclusions to the statement are provided at section six.

2. Site and Development Proposal

The Site

- 2.1 The development site lies adjacent to the hamlet of Old Hive, just outside the village of Chipping, within the Ribble Valley District of Lancashire. Chipping also lies within the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 2.2 The application site is a paddock area. To the west side of the site sit a cluster of stone cottages known collectively as Old Hive. To the east the land falls steeply away towards Kirk Mills, a listed redundant mill complex which has been subject to recent redevelopment proposals including the development of housing to the fields opposite and adjacent this application site. To the north are open fields beyond a small tree belt and to the south is Church Raike / Malt Kiln Brow. Overall the site is relatively well contained by both existing development and the local topography and landscape features.
- 2.3 The land was previously occupied by a collection of garages which were removed in the mid-1980s. The area is now rough grassland and not presently in any active domestic or agricultural use.

The Proposed Development

- 2.4 The application is seeking planning permission for 2 Self Build dwellings to this parcel of land adjoining the hamlet of Old Hive. Because of the sensitive site location within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and adjacent to the Kirk Mills Conservation Area this application is seeking full planning consent to allow details of design and landscaping to be considered to the satisfaction of the Council.
- 2.5 The dwellings as proposed comprise two four bedroom family houses to respond to identified shortages in the local housing stock. The dwellings have been designed to have the appearance of traditional farm houses and buildings in keeping with the

rural setting and the vernacular scale and details of the existing dwellings at Old Hive. They would be constructed of natural random stone walls and natural slate roofs, and boundary treatments would be kept simple with low stone walls and post and wire fencing supplemented by native hedging. The simple grass meadow would be retained to the south of the site to maintain the rural appearance and character to the site.

- 2.6 The dwellings would be accessed via a new tarmac driveway edged with stone setts which would run from the approximate location of an existing field gate from Malt Kiln Brow, which runs east into Church Raike and into the centre of the village.

Planning History

- 2.7 Pre-application advice was sought from the Planning Policy Department of Ribble Valley BC Planning Department (Diane Cafferty May 2013) regarding the principle of a small residential development outside but closely related to the settlement, in the context that the current adopted Local Plan was out of date and a challenged position on five year housing land supply. Giving consideration to the provisions of the NPPF the advice was given that subject to other material considerations the principle of the development could be acceptable.
- 2.8 On the basis of this advice a planning application was prepared and submitted in March 2014. Following negotiation with Council's Planning Officer (Sarah Westwood) raising concerns regarding landscape impact and requesting further information regarding ecological impacts, this application was withdrawn.
- 2.9 Ecology surveys were commissioned and undertaken during the season of summer 2014 to support a revised application. We have also undertaken additional consideration of landscape impacts further to the Council's concerns regarding impact on the AONB landscape. Following consideration of visual and landscape impacts the proposed scheme has been revised to reduce the scale of development proposed on the site from 3 dwellings to 2. As a result development is now

contained to the north of the site continuing the line of development from the existing Old Hive cottages and it's visibility from the lane is materially less.

3. Planning Appraisal

- 3.1 This section of the planning statement will assess the proposed development in respect of summarising relevant planning policy and identifying the key matters for consideration with the development and how the scheme addresses them.

Introduction to Planning Policy Context

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are to be applied. The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) adds further clarification and guidance as to how these policies should be interpreted and implemented. The NPPF is confirmed as being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Local planning policies should be in conformity with these national policies, adding the locally specific detail needed to deliver the Government's objectives whilst meeting local needs and aspirations.
- 3.3 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that *"if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise"*.
- 3.4 The NPPF also clarifies that Local Plans adopted prior to the publication of The Framework should be given due weight according to their degree of consistency with The Framework.
- 3.5 The current Development Plan for Ribble Valley comprises of:
- The Core Strategy (Adopted December 2014) which contains the main strategic policies to guide development in the area in addition to more detailed development management style policies to guide determination of planning applications.

3.6 Regard should also be had to local supporting documents such as the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment and AONB Management Plan and the Ribble Valley Council’s Meeting Housing Needs SPD.

Discussion of Key Matters

3.7 The following sections will assess the key issues of relevance to the determination of this application, summarising the relevant policy context and outlining how the proposed development complies with the objectives and requirements of these policies and should thus be supported.

3.8 Sustainable Development

Policy / Guidance Document	Reference
National Planning Policy Framework	Paragraphs 6-10, 14
Ribble Valley Core Strategy	Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

3.9 In making decisions on development proposals national planning policy requires Local Planning Authorities to consider the sustainability of individual schemes, The appraisal of the sustainability of a development is particularly important now that the Government has introduced a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development in the NPPF. This Presumption is repeated in local policy.

3.10 Chapter 5 of this document contains a commentary on the issue of rural sustainability and demonstrates how the proposed development complies with the objectives of creating rural sustainable communities.

3.11 Housing Delivery

Policy / Guidance Document	Reference
National Planning Policy Framework	Paragraphs 47, 50, 55
Ribble Valley Core Strategy	Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy Key Statement DS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Key Statement H1: Housing Provision Key Statement H2: Housing Balance Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations

3.12 Section 6 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should ‘boost significantly’ the supply of housing. It should do this by ensuring an up to date evidence base to inform the housing need in the area and to identify sites to deliver housing to meet this need. It also states that

“to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should

- *Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups of the community (such as but not limited to families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes);”*

3.13 Local policy seeks to concentrate the majority of new housing development in the principle settlements of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley but allows for some development in the villages. In tier 2 villages of which Chipping is categorised, development is to be limited to that which meets proven local needs or delivers regeneration benefits. Outside of settlement, development is limited to the usual rural exceptions, but does include provision for dwellings to serve local needs. This proposed development in proposing to meet an identified local need, is therefore considered to comply with this policy.

- 3.14 It is proposed that the pending Housing and Economic Development DPD will look to update and where necessary extend settlement boundaries in all settlements and to allocate sites for housing, but only in the larger tier settlements. There is currently no mechanism in place therefore for the Council to determine where local needs housing would be delivered in or around the tier 2 settlements.
- 3.15 With the whole of the village of Chipping within the AONB (as is 75% of the borough) and with village boundaries established in 1998 and not expected to accommodate development beyond 2006 and not yet reviewed, there is no potential for the provision of housing to meet local needs without potentially developing outside the settlement boundaries and therefore in the AONB. The Council acknowledges this challenge in its report to Committee in September 2014 where it stated *“it is possible to consider the expansion of the settlement boundaries of the above settlements (RSL Comment: i.e. AONB settlements including Chipping) if considered necessary and justified in terms of any effect on the AONB and within the levels of development considered appropriate in these settlements”*.
- 3.16 There has been limited housing development in Chipping over the last few decades. The housing stock in the Chipping ward is identified in the 2008 SHMA as being dominated by terraced housing stock and that detached housing was identified as being limited and therefore in high demand contributing to rising prices and affordability issues. The 2008 SHMA has undergone a 2013 however this document does not analyse housing issues at ward or settlement level. Borough wide headline findings suggest a population increase (5.9%) and household increase (8.3%) which would suggest a continuing and increasing housing supply issue. The provision of two family sized detached dwellings would therefore contribute to diversifying the housing stock in the area, meet an identified housing need (the 2012 Chipping Housing Needs Survey highlighted an expressed requirement for 2 x 4 bedroom detached dwellings in the village).
- 3.17 By making these proposed dwellings available as Self-Build plots with the benefit of planning consent, the development also responds to the needs of a particular

community group which the Core Strategy policies are not addressing. There is no provision in the Core Strategy for meeting a demand for self-build opportunities as required by the NPPF. Whilst not expressly proposed as affordable units, the National Custom and Self-Build Association has advised that the cost of self-building can be as little as half the cost of buying an equivalent house. Self-building is therefore a viable means of introducing a more affordable means of home ownership into the village where available properties are limited and properties that are available are reportedly very expensive and inaccessible to those on average incomes. Most people prefer to own rather than rent, however, due to the high prices many people cannot afford to purchase on the open market. Self-build offers a mechanism to allow people to access home ownership or move up the property ladder at a more affordable level. An Ipsos¹ poll carried out on behalf of NaCSBA suggests over 2.1 million adults in the UK wants to build their own homes but on average only 10,000 have, demonstrating a huge unmet need.

3.18 The Core Strategy offers no response to identifying or meeting this need within the district despite the requirement of the NPPF and in the absence of such a policy it is considered that the Presumption of Sustainable Development should apply and subject to the proposed development not giving rise to any unacceptable impacts, the development should be support. This application is also made in the context of a recent undersupply of housing and lack of five year housing supply. The latest published figure (Housing Land Availability Schedule January 2015) suggests a 5.56 year supply, but appeal decisions across the country have suggested that such a small oversupply position is not justification for refusing applications for otherwise sustainable development.

3.19 The NPPF advises that to promote development in rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. There is no doubt that the delivery of family housing in this location, so closely related to Chipping, will contribute to maintaining the vitality and viability of the village and its

¹ <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/3347/One-in-seven-Britons-expect-to-look-into-building-their-own-home.aspx>

services such as the local school and church. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 of this statement where it is clearly demonstrated that the proposed development represents sustainable rural development.

3.20 Overall therefore it is summarised that the proposed development meets an identified local needs i.e. 4 bedroom family dwelling and a national planning objective to identify and provide sites for self-builders, in a sustainable location well located in relation to Chipping and on a visually contained site which can deliver 2 dwellings sympathetically without undermining the development strategy for the area or the duty to protect the landscape of the AONB. It is therefore considered the proposed development is acceptable and complies with the objectives of planning policy regarding the delivery of new housing.

3.21 Design & Landscape

Policy / Guidance Document	Reference
National Planning Policy Framework	Paragraphs 56, 58, 61
Ribble Valley Core Strategy	Key Statement EN2: Landscape Policy DMG1: General Considerations Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations

3.22 Both the NPPF and local planning policy seeks to secure good design through the planning process. As explained by the NPPF, good design is not simply about external appearance or architectural style – whilst these are important element – but also includes the consideration of ensuring developments

“address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment”

3.23 Local planning policy sets out some high level considerations such as the need for high quality design, consideration of adjacent land uses in terms of scale, massing etc, protection of nature conservation assets and residential amenities etc. The proposal is not in conflict with any of these objectives; the development has been designed to

sympathetically respond to the adjacent dwellings at Old Hive in terms of scale and siting; the ecology report commissioned to support this application has concluded the proposed development would not have any detrimental impact on the ecological value of the site or surrounding area subject to mitigation and methodologies proposed. Conditions can be used to ensure materials etc are appropriate in appearance and quality to ensure the design quality and appearance that the Council seeks.

- 3.24 Regarding the AONB setting, local policy accepts that the Council needs to have regard to the 'economic and social well-being of the area'. It then adds
"However the most important consideration in the assessment of any development proposals will be the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape and character of the area...development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the AONB by virtue of its size, design, use of material, landscaping and siting"
- 3.25 The scheme has been sympathetically designed to ensure it sits well in its environs, and will not have a designed to reflect the appearance and character of the existing dwellings at Old Hive which stand adjacent to the application site. The proposed dwellings reflect local vernacular rural architecture and have been sited so as to align and provide a visual relationship with the existing buildings adjacent.
- 3.26 The scheme layout works with the topography of the site and focuses the built development towards the flatter northern section of the field. The scheme also maintains existing boundary treatments and an element of openness to the front of the plot to retain the rural and landscape character along the lane side.
- 3.27 New boundary treatments will be minimal (post & wire fences, native hedging) to ensure sympathetic boundaries at the junction with the field with a 1m high traditional style stone wall providing separation of the two private rear gardens.

3.28 Due to the areas topography and the mature trees to the north and east boundaries of the site, the development would not be visible in any long distant views within the AONB and thus limiting its effect on landscape character and value. Whilst the dwellings would be visible in some local views they are not considered to result in the loss of any land or views which make a significant contribution to the AONB. Overall it is considered that the development can be accommodated whilst preserving the quality and appearance of the AONB. Core Strategy Key Statement EN2: Landscape does not preclude development within the AONB as the Council itself acknowledges², though it emphasises that the protection, conservation and enhancement of the AONB are the primary objectives. It is considered on balance that any small visual impacts are minimal, not detrimental to the overall landscape quality or appearance of the AONB and outweighed by the overall benefits of the development. The matter of landscape impact is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this statement.

3.29 It is also considered relevant that whilst assessing proposals for residential development on the adjacent field as part of the Kirk Mills Planning Application³ the planning officer concluded that *“whilst acknowledging the (residential) aspects have a visual impact I do not consider them sufficiently harmful as to warrant a refusal on that ground”* and *“whilst a change to landscape would occur there is no significant visual intrusion – that is a change which leads to an uncharacteristic element within the view and this no significant detriment to the visual qualities of the AONB”*. The proposed two dwellings subject to this current application comprise less development and in a location set back into the site allowing the rural landscape character along the lane to be maintained in its current appearance. Whilst every application is considered on its own merits, it is not considered the Council can reach a different decision regarding the visual and landscape impact of this proposed development than they did the more intensive adjacent development.

²

https://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/4739/agenda_item_6_-_proposed_criteria_for_revised_settlement_boundaries pg 14

³ 3/2014/0183P:

Summary

- 3.30 Overall it is considered the proposed development is in line with the general provisions and objectives of national and local policy and should therefore be supported. The next two chapters provide further evidence and justification in relation to two key matters in relation to the application; landscape impact and the sustainability of the development in this rural location.

4. Landscape Impact Appraisal

- 4.1 Given the small scale of development proposed it is not considered necessary to undertake a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Due to the AONB location however, this chapter however includes a proportionate appraisal of landscape impact, including a baseline appraisal of the existing landscape, an analysis of the magnitude of change that will likely result from the proposed development, and a description of the anticipated effects on landscape character and visual amenity of users. This will allow a consideration of the landscape impact of the proposed development.

Baseline Description

- 4.2 The aim of the baseline analysis is to document, classify and appraise the existing landscape features in the vicinity of the development site. It also establishes the extent of the visibility of the site. Through this process, a better understanding of the key components or characteristics of the study area is gained, which is critical in identifying valued and potentially sensitive landscape and visual receptors against which the predicted landscape and visual impacts of the development can be assessed.
- 4.3 The baseline landscape description has been established through consultation with the following research material:
- Site visit
 - OS Maps
 - Local Plans
 - Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment
 - Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment
 - Natural England National Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.4 The land is currently rough grassland which is not currently farmed. It was partly previously developed, with a block of domestic garages on land in the south west corner of the site, but these garages were cleared around 30 years ago and the land is now considered returned to nature.
- 4.5 The surrounding landscape is semi-rural in nature made up primarily of existing residential properties at Old Hive and more distant roof top views of built development of Chipping such as the industrial buildings at Kirk Mills and the dwellings at Kirkfields / Kirkland and the individual property 'The Field'. There are views of fields immediately adjacent to the west across the lane, with some limited views of the wider landscape, mainly to the north/east/west punctuated by rooftops and interrupted by woodland.
- 4.6 The small residential development will comprise of 2 x 2 storey dwellings adjacent to the existing dwellings at Old Hive. The dwellings would be located to the northern half of the site, the southern part retaining its natural and open character appearance onto the lane.

National Landscape Character Area

- 4.7 The application site is within the Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill National Character Area (NCA 33). This NCA is described as a "transitional landscape, which wraps around the dramatic upland core of the Bowland Fells". Chipping itself falls very close to the boundary of NCA 33 with the adjacent Bowland Fells NCA (NCA 34).
- 4.8 Over half of the NCA, along with the Bowland Fells, makes up the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a diverse landscape of herb-rich hay meadows – several of which are nationally and internationally designated – lush pastures, broadleaved woodland, parkland and waterbodies (including rivers and streams supporting nationally and internationally protected species). The numerous river valleys and associated woodlands are a major component of this area. The

influence of human habitation and activity, and the area's long farming history, contribute significantly to its character.

Key Characteristics of Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill National Character Area

- 4.9 This is an undulating, rolling landscape, with local variation created by numerous river valleys and by the moorland outliers of Beacon Fell, Longridge Fell and Pendle Hill.
- 4.10 The Bowland Fells provide a dramatic backdrop to the north, with extensive views across the river valleys and Lancashire plain below.
- 4.11 On the northern edge of the area, drumlins are characteristic, while on the south, strong mounded outcrops or 'reef knolls' of limestone form distinct landscape features in the Ribble and Hodder valleys.
- 4.12 Semi-natural woodland, much of which is ancient, occurs in the main valley bottoms, side valleys and ridges, and is dominated by oak, ash and alder.
- 4.13 Small- to medium-sized fields are defined by hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. Drystone walls are also common in some areas. Metal railings around estate boundaries and highway corners and junctions are characteristic of the southern and western edges of the NCA.
- 4.14 Land use is mainly permanent, improved pasture for livestock and dairy farming.
- 4.15 To the west, this NCA includes part of the Bowland Fells Special
- 4.16 Protection Area (SPA), designated for its important populations of hen harrier, merlin and lesser black-backed gull.

- 4.17 There are species-rich hay meadows, including several that are nationally and internationally designated.
- 4.18 Rough grazing, rushy pasture and traditionally managed meadows at higher elevations are of national importance for breeding waders such as redshank, lapwing, curlew and snipe and breeding skylark.
- 4.19 A network of winding, hedge-lined lanes connect small, often linear, villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads, mostly in local stone. Traditional stone barns are commonplace on higher ground, and are of stone with slate or stone flag roofs.
- 4.20 Isolated country houses set in formal parkland are typical of the area, and may be enclosed by belts of woodland and estate fencing.
- 4.21 The relatively urban areas of Clitheroe, Bentham and Longridge provide a contrast to the rural feel of the area.

National Neighbouring Landscape Character Area

- 4.22 Chipping itself falls very close to the boundary of NCA 33 with the adjacent Bowland Fells NCA (NCA 34); the main characteristics of this character area are listed in the below.
- 4.23 The large-scale, sweeping landform of the Bowland Fells is incised by narrow, wooded, intimate valleys and cloughs. Steeply sloping sculptural escarpments and exposed moorland tops contrast with the surrounding lush green valleys of the Lune, Ribble, Hodder and Wyre.
- 4.24 The dominant feature is the central upland core of Carboniferous Millstone Grit fells, with its large areas of moorland habitat – including some of England's most extensive tracts of blanket bog.

- 4.25 Extensive coniferous plantations, such as Gisburn Forest, occur to the south-east and east of the area.
- 4.26 The moorland is ringed by extensive rough grazing enclosures with mosaics of woodland, unimproved meadows, pasture, marshes and streams. These upland pastures are enclosed by drystone walls and are grazed mainly by sheep, with some cattle.
- 4.27 Piecemeal, irregular-shaped fields around individual farms are found on the slopes, where there is also a complex system of narrow lanes with occasional wide historic drove roads. Systematic division of the majority of the commons resulted in more regular enclosures on higher ground.
- 4.28 The area is sparsely populated, with the scattered settlements restricted to villages, hamlets and isolated farmhouses.
- 4.29 Traditional farmhouses are generally of gritstone and typically shelter a barn under the same roof line (laithe houses). There is strong unity of building materials, styles and village form.
- 4.30 Large areas of the Bowland Fells are managed for field sports, principally red grouse shooting on the heather moors and pheasant rearing in plantations below the Fells. Fishing is also very popular.
- 4.31 Large areas of open access land enable access to and enjoyment of, the many natural and cultural features of the landscape, and thus improve opportunities to experience escapism and inspiration.

Lancashire Landscape Character Areas

- 4.32 The Lancashire LCA identifies the site as within the 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' character area. The landscape character is described as

“Generally below 150m, the undulating lowland farmland lies between the major valleys and the moorland fringes. The underlying geology is largely masked by heavy boulder clays and hedgerows predominate over stone walls. This lowland landscape is traversed by deeply incised, wooded cloughs and gorges. There are also many mixed farm woodlands, copses and hedgerow trees, creating an impression of a well wooded landscape from ground level and a patchwork of wood and pasture from raised viewpoints on the fells. Some of the picturesque stone villages of the county occur within this well settled landscape type....The area also has many country houses whose boundary walls and designed landscapes add to the species diversity and visual appeal. There is a high density of farms and scattered cottages outside the clustered settlements, linked by a network of minor roads”.

4.33 Within this, Chipping falls within the ‘Lower Hodder and Loud Valley’ sub character area. This is described as:

“The underlying bedrock is limestone which is overlain by good soils, providing lush green pastures and good tree growth. The course of the Hodder is particularly well wooded and the pattern of the incised minor wooded tributaries is distinctive to this character area. The area is little affected by modern development and the picturesque limestone villages of Chipping and Waddington have retained their vernacular character”.

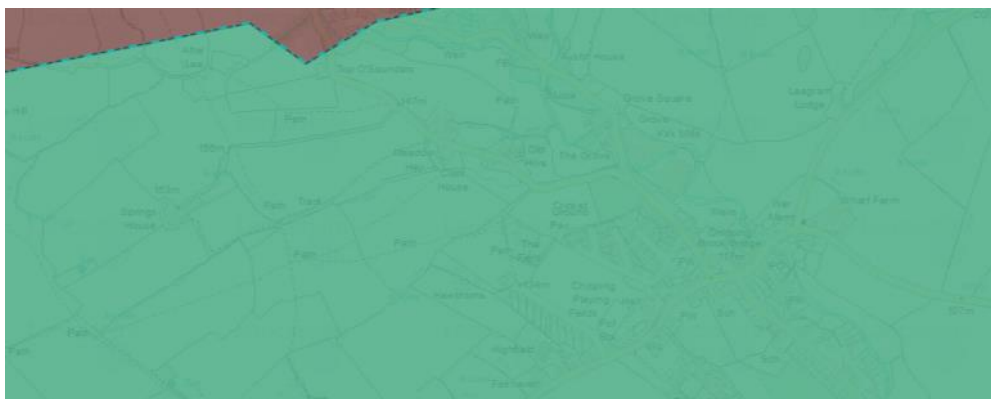


Figure 4 Lancashire LCA – Undulating Lowland Farmland

Forest of Bowland Landscape Character Area Assessment

- 4.34 The Forest of Bowland LCAA continues from the Lancashire assessment but then introduces different character sub types within each character area. Chipping and the application site are identified as falling within the ‘Undulating Lowland Farmland with Parkland’ character type. It is described as

“...compris(ing) pasture which is interspersed with country houses and associated designed landscapes, particularly parkland...(it) also contains scattered isolated farmsteads and small historic villages, some of which are linked to the estate or park, and hence have buildings of similar age and design. The lowland farmland is enclosed with a mixture of stone walls (reflecting local geology) and hedgerows; clumps of woodland and single mature trees also dot this pastoral and picturesque landscape”.

- 4.35 The application site lies in the ‘Little Bowland’ sub area, close to the boundary with the Whitechapel sub area.

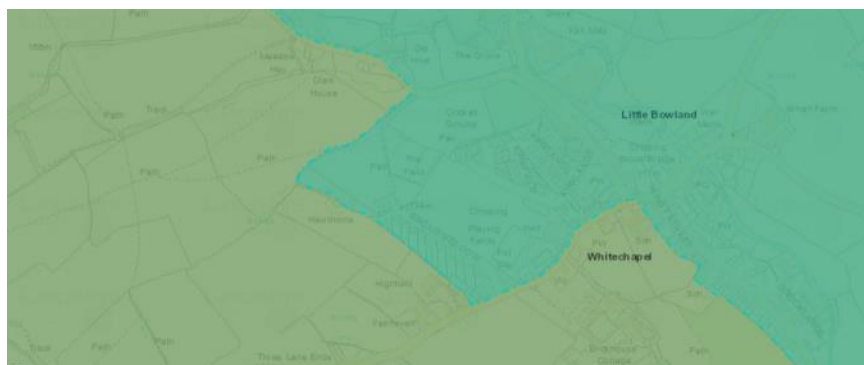


Figure 5 Forest of Bowland LCA

- 4.36 The Forest of Bowland AONB LCA goes further than the National and County documents and provides guidance on the sensitivity of the landscape types and their capacity for change. With regards to the ‘Undulating Lowland Farmland with Parkland’ character type it states that the *“landscape character and visual sensitivity is considered to be moderate”.*

4.37 It then goes on to give a specific set of guidelines for managing change, the following of which are considered to be relevant to this current proposal:

Physical character:

- Conserve and enhance woodland, hedges and stone walls

Ecological character:

- Link existing woodlands and hedgerows to create a continuous woodland network to reverse habitat fragmentation
- Create new hedgerows and regenerate existing hedgerows to maintain and enhance key landscape linkages

Aesthetic and Perceptual Character:

- Conserve open views towards the surrounding higher Moorland Plateaux and Unenclosed and Enclosed Moorland Hills Landscape Character Types

Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan

4.38 In addition to the LCA, the AONB board publishes a management plan which contains guidance for planning and development. Relevant 'actions' to this proposed development include:

- Ensure new development is in keeping with or conserves and enhances the character of its locality (i.e. in terms of appropriate materials, form, setting, scale etc) (12.1A)
- Respect local vernacular styles (12.2A)
- Meet high standards regarding energy efficiency (12.2A)
- Contribute to maintaining a sustainable mix of residents through an appropriate range of housing types (12.2A)
- Ensure that developments do not detract from – and where possible contribute to – the special qualities of the AONB (12.3D)

Magnitude of Change & Effects on Landscape and Visual Character

Landscape Effects

- 4.39 Landscape effects are defined by the Landscape Institute as a “Change in the elements, characteristics, character, and qualities of the landscape as a result of development.” These effects are assessed by considering the landscape sensitivity against the magnitude of change. The type of effect may also be described as temporary or permanent, direct or indirect, cumulative and positive, neutral, or negative. The methodology is outlined in full in Appendix A.

Effects on Undulating Lowland Farmland Landscape Character Area

- 4.40 The development site and surroundings all lie within the ‘Undulating Lowland Farmland’ landscape character area (part of the ‘Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill NCA). The AONB LCA considers that the landscape character is considered to have moderate sensitivity and levels of landscape character.
- 4.41 The development sites capacity for change is considered higher than experienced elsewhere in the landscape type due to the sites proximity to existing residential development which sets a built context, and the somewhat limited long distant views of the site due to the local topography and the presence of mature hedgerows and woodland around the area. No trees or hedgerows are proposed for removal and therefore the overall character of the site boundaries and relationship with adjacent land will be maintained.
- 4.42 In landscape character terms the presence of the development will result in a long term, permanent but minor loss to landscape elements (i.e. rough grassland) that will result in minor changes to the landscape but will not prevent its underlying characteristics or composition from being appreciated, as such the magnitude of change is considered to be moderate in its immediate siting i.e. the partial loss / alteration of key characteristics, and minor in the overall landscape character area. The change of use of an agricultural field to residential use will permanently change

its character however the retention of distinct, mature landscaping to the boundaries will aid its integration. Farmsteads and small hamlets are distributed across the landscape and noted as typically characteristic of the wider landscape character area. The development is therefore in keeping in character with the built heritage of the landscape character area. Overall the development character and mature landscaping will ensure an overall minor adverse impact in causing a perceptible but small change in landscape character.

Indirect Effects on Neighbouring Landscape Character Areas

- 4.43 Due to the small scale nature of the development and limited long distance views there would not be any impacts to any neighbouring LCAs.

Summary of Effects on Landscape Character Areas

- 4.44 Overall none of the LCAs are considered to be significantly harmed by the introduction of the development into the landscape.

Effect on Designated landscapes

- 4.45 Whilst the development site lies within the Forest of Bowland AONB, it is not considered that the development would give rise to any detrimental impacts to the appearance, character or quality of this landscape. The development site is adjacent to an existing hamlet and will be read in this context, rather than as an isolated development in the landscape. The development would not be seen in most, or prominent in any, long distant views, the majority of these being from the north and west where the development would only be glimpsed at most behind or alongside the existing dwellings. Importantly, the development is never seen in any skyline locations, even in the most prominent views (e.g. viewpoint 4) sitting at a similar height to the existing development and maintaining a ridge height below the horizon (hill) line.

4.46 It is not considered that the development site currently contributes significantly to the quality and character of the AONB and it is not considered that the character of this particular part of the AONB would be detrimentally affected by the introduction of the development into this context, where it is completely in keeping with the sense of place already dominated by the residential development on Old Hive, and in the future potentially by the residential developments proposed to be part of the redevelopment scheme for Kirk Mills.

Visual Effects

4.47 Visual effects are recognised by the Landscape Institute as a subset of landscape effects and are concerned wholly with the effect of the development on views, and the general visual amenity as experienced by people.

4.48 Visual effects are assessed by considering the sensitivity of the receptor (people) against the proposed magnitude of change to determine a level of visual effect. In landscape terms, the acceptability of this effect largely relates to the activity and the experience of the viewer and the visual composition, character, context, and the overall ability of the landscape in that view to accommodate the development in design terms. Visual effects are assessed in relation to properties and settlements, tourist and recreational destinations and transport routes.

4.49 This section draws on the results of the landscape context, review of the development proposal and field work observations. It considers the effects of the proposal on the visual amenity of the following groups of potential receptors:

- Residents and workers - in towns, villages and isolated dwellings;
- Motorists and other road users on A class, B class and minor roads;
- Recreational receptors and tourist destinations.

Residents

4.50 The following section of the assessment considers changes and consequent visual effects upon the views available to the nearby residents. In accordance with LVIA

methodology residential receptors with primary views in settlements are all considered to be of high visual sensitivity, residential receptors with secondary views are considered to be of medium sensitivity.

4.51 From the centre of the village itself there would be no views of the proposed development due to existing development. The main dwellings to experience views of the development would be those at Old Hive, the dwelling 'The Field' which sits to the side of the field behind the development, and there may be limited glimpses from upper windows of properties on Kirkfields. Overall the impact from residential receptors is considered to be minor – moderate adverse.

4.52 From Old Hive the visual impact is the greatest but it is not considered to be harmful subject to sensitive mitigation by the way of landscaping. From the dwelling known as The Field and from Kirkfields the views would be distant views and screened by existing landscaping, and if built, the proposed much larger housing development as part of the Kirk Mills redevelopment scheme.

4.53 The views would change from one of an unmaintained agricultural field to a residential landscape of bespoke dwellings designed to sit sympathetically into their surroundings. The change will affect the majority of the view from Old Hive, but at an oblique angle from the nearest properties, and a much lesser proportion of view from the properties at Kirkfields and The Field. Whilst the views from Old Hive will be affected, the site density and siting allows for through views, and there are more visible field views which will remain to the north and west which hold more value in terms of landscape character and distance of view.

Transport

4.54 Road users are considered of moderate sensitivity as drivers are usually engaged in activities not involving appreciation of the views. However in this rural area within a designated landscape, users are likely more aware of their surroundings than on a more general highway corridor. Few car users however will pass the site; at the

point of the site the road has only minor use providing a route only towards the fells, and the development is therefore considered to have overall minor adverse impacts.

Recreational Receptors

- 4.55 Recreation and visitor interest focuses on the natural environment with walking and cycling representing the key activities. There is a local network of footpaths including footpath 129 which passes to the west and north of the site. It is not considered that the overall character of the landscape as experienced from the footpath would change to any significant degree; there is an existing presence of residential dwellings at Old Hive and the development would be in keeping with this context.

Conclusions

- 4.56 The landscape and visual impact assessment above concludes that the proposed development would result in no significant landscape or visual impacts to the character or appearance of the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 4.57 Whilst there may be some limited locally significant visual impact, mainly to adjacent residents in Old Hive, this does not necessarily lead to an adverse impact or warrant a refusal of the development. The development sits alongside existing residential development and will always be seen in this context. From further afield it would also generally be viewed with existing development or mature landscaping between the receptor and the proposed development, which further lessens the impact on character and any impact on the receptors experience of the landscape.
- 4.58 The purpose of an AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. The landscape character and visual sensitivity of this area of the AONB is considered to be moderate, and suggests that a sensitive, small scale development can be accommodated without harm to the landscape. It involves the loss of a very small amount of locally insignificant rough grassland which is not highly visible in any distant views and contributes little to the wider AONB. The developments visibility

would be limited to its immediate environs and, in these locations, tempered by its surrounding residential context.

4.59 It is concluded that there are no landscape and visual impact reasons why the development should not be permitted, subject to conditions to require suitable and sensitive landscaping scheme for the site.

Photographic Appraisal



Site showing surrounding built development of Old Hive and Kirk Mills



View of site on approach from Chipping centre. Development is shielded by field boundary hedges and trees and sits back over the brow of the field maintaining a rural edge to the road



Site from opposite site access gate showing built development of Old Hive and Kirk Mills. The development would be introduced into this context of views which feature existing built development and domestic activity.



Site viewed from lane showing development site in context of adjacent development; the proposed development would be sited adjacent to the existing houses in a position back from the road, therefore seen as a modest extension of this existing farmstead and not impacting on the general rural character of the lane. Due to

localised topography full height and bulk of dwellings is not experienced from the lane.



View from footpath 125 showing proposed development site in context of existing Old Hive cottages

5. Creating Sustainable Rural Communities

- 5.1 The proposals for delivering this small development on the edge of Chipping is advanced under Government support for the creation of sustainable communities, including through the delivery of housing which will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (NPPF Para.55).
- 5.2 The concept of thriving rural communities and rural vitality is perhaps best understood against the wider concept of sustainable communities. Sustainable communities have been formally defined within the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (UKSDS). Annex A of the UKSDS provides a set of criteria that defines a sustainable community. These criteria are centred on well-run communities that are inclusive and defined to a high standard and define sustainable communities as:
1. Active, inclusive and safe
 2. Well run
 3. Environmentally sensitive
 4. Well designed and built
 5. Well connected
 6. Thriving
 7. Well served
 8. Fair for everyone.
- 5.3 These components have been considered in a rural context by a number of studies including the Toolkit for Sustainable Rural Communities produced by Devon County Council and a Small Settlement Strategy for Cornwall produced by Cornwall Council and the parameters set down for Eco Towns and in various master plans for market town extensions. It has been adopted and used successfully by local authorities such as Shropshire in the production of local development plans and to inform the spatial distribution of development.

- 5.4 This body of work concludes that sustainable rural communities are those which are successful places to live. They are balanced, in that they provide opportunities for people of all types and ages to live in suitable housing at a cost which meets the ability of individual households to pay. They provide access to enterprise and employment opportunities in the local area and allow their residents and those in the surrounding rural hinterland to benefit from services which enable people to shop, access education and engage in social and cultural activities whilst limiting their impact on the natural and historic environment. Sustainable communities enjoy good social capital and benefit from local governance which enables peoples to influence decisions made about the place where they live.

An Updated Concept of Rural Sustainability

- 5.5 In his review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing Taylor found that “restrictive planning practices” had contributed to many smaller rural villages becoming “increasingly unsustainable communities, unaffordable for those who work there, losing jobs and services.”
- 5.6 Taylor took particular issue with the way that the concept of sustainability had been applied. He raised concerns that the narrow application of sustainability criteria (focused on accessibility and “sustainable travel”) in the planning system fails to take adequate account of the social and economic factors, placing undue emphasis on certain environmental criteria – at the expense of otherwise beneficial housing and economic development.
- 5.7 Taylor recommended that “Government should make it clearer that whilst the Local Development Framework (LDF) process may not allocate sites for development in every community, local planning authorities must still address the short and long term needs and vision for each village or parish”.

A Changing Context for Rural Sustainability

- 5.8 Had Lord Taylor been writing his report in 2013 it is probable that he would have highlighted the major changes in lifestyle resulting from the access to technology and the internet that make the historic approach to planning for sustainability – that development should be focused into areas which reduce the need to travel; directing new housing to be located near existing larger service centres – increasingly irrelevant.
- 5.9 Most settlement hierarchies have traditionally been based on the level of services points that settlements provide, or the availability of bus or train services that provide physical access to other service points. Key services and facilities used as measures of sustainability include shops, pubs, schools, workplaces, primary health care and community facilities such as village halls.
- 5.10 Connected living means that physical access to many of these service points and facilities is increasingly less relevant, especially to the generation that has grown up with digital technology.
- 5.11 Connected people now work remotely from home and all manner of internet access points. 77% of adults use the internet every day; they shop online, carry out administrative and financial transactions online (banking, paying bills etc.), access entertainment and interact socially online. School children and learners access their educational resources online, engage with teachers, tutors and mentors online and transfer their work over the internet.
- 5.12 The ability of people to use the internet to meet some of their social and economic needs does not of course mean that communities are not richer and more successful places when they can provide shops, pubs, halls, sports grounds and schools to their residents. Rather it underlines how a simplistic test as to whether an area should or should not host new housing that is wholly reliant upon counting physical service points is no way to determine the future shape of a community.

- 5.13 The impact of the internet and the role that it can play in service accessibility is noted in the National Planning Policy Framework which states (paragraph 42) that *“the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.”*
- 5.14 People do not live as they used to. Just as people’s lifestyles and the things that they need from their community changes, so must the communities in which they live. The application of outdated and irrelevant criteria as a test of sustainability undermines the ability of settlements and communities to change through development. This, as Taylor has found, will inevitably ensure that they become less sustainable.

A New Policy Context for Rural Sustainability

- 5.15 The shift recommended by Taylor in the way that plan makers and decision takers should assess the sustainability of development in rural areas is evident in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.16 The core planning principles set out in paragraph 17 state that planning should: *“take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;”*
- 5.17 Section 3 Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy states at paragraph 28 that planning policies should: *“support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development”.*
- 5.18 The Framework is clear about the need to significantly boost housing supply to secure economic growth. Paragraph 19 of the NPPF states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth by the planning system

- 5.19 The policy statement makes no reference to restricting development to places that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport. Indeed paragraph 29 under the heading Promoting Sustainable Transport states that whilst “transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives” the government recognises that *“different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas”*.
- 5.20 This approach is fundamentally different to that applied in PPS1 Sustainable Development which states that *“accessibility should be a key consideration in all development decisions”* and which directs that *“most developments which are likely to generate large numbers of trips should be located in or next to towns or other service centres that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, in line with the policies set out in PPG13, Transport.”*
- 5.21 The new approach to spatial planning in rural areas introduced by the Framework is evident in paragraph 55 (in the Housing section) of the NPPF which states that: *“to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.”*
- 5.22 Paragraph 55 goes on to state that *“Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside, unless there are special circumstances”*. This qualification demonstrates that any kind of settlement is considered capable of being a suitable location for sustainable development where it can be shown that the development will enhance or maintain the vitality of the community that hosts it.
- 5.23 This approach builds on paragraph 50 which requires local planning authorities to *“create sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities”* through provision of the appropriate size, type, tenure and range of housing.

5.24 This message is further reinforced by the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) which states that

“It is important to recognise the particular issues facing rural areas in terms of housing supply and affordability, and the role of housing in supporting the broader sustainability of villages and smaller settlements. This is clearly set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, in the core planning principles, the section on supporting a prosperous rural economy and the section on housing.

A thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends, in part, on retaining local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship. Rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities.

Assessing housing need and allocating sites should be considered at a strategic level and through the Local Plan and/or neighbourhood plan process. However, all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas – and so blanket policies restricting housing development in some settlements and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided unless their use can be supported by robust evidence.

The National Planning Policy Framework also recognises that different sustainable transport policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas”.

5.25 The way that the approach to sustainable development set out in Planning Policy Statements 1, 7 and 13 has been applied in rural areas has been shown to result in more unsustainable communities.

5.26 The context against which the suitability of rural settlements to assess sustainable development has changed dramatically with the influence of the internet and high speed broadband; the application of saved planning policies does not take proper account of this change.

5.27 The National Planning Policy Framework introduces a fundamentally different approach to assessing the location of sustainable rural development which is focused

on the ability of the development proposed to maintain and enhance vitality of its host community and moves away from assessments based solely on reducing the need to travel.

5.28 It continues in paragraph 7 to describe the three 'pillars' of sustainable development; environmental, social and economic sustainability.

5.29 The provision of a small scale housing scheme of a scale commensurate with the existing village, in an edge of village location, is considered a sustainable development which helps meet local housing needs. The site is within walking distance of the village centre (approximately 450 metres) and has easy access to infrastructure and services. Chipping is linked to a numbering of neighbouring towns and villages including the local service centres of Longridge, and Clitheroe and the town of Blackburn via direct bus services which run services at 1-2 hourly intervals between the hours of 7am – 7pm. From Clitheroe or Blackburn direct trains to Manchester can be reached as can the West Coast mainline at Preston. Whilst the frequency of such services is limited, the NPPF suggests that rural developments which comply with the NPPF in all other respects should not be considered unsustainable because their rural locations means that sustainable transport options such as public transport are not as widely available as in urban areas. Whilst there is no railway or main road link in the area, access to the motorway (M6) and Preston Railway Station is within a reasonable distance making commuting feasible. The cities Preston and Lancaster are 12 miles and 17 miles away respectively, the market town of Clitheroe is 9 miles away. Secondary Schools are available in Longridge, Clitheroe and Whalley. Blackburn, Preston and Lancaster offer further education and university places. It is considered that Chipping is therefore reasonably well served by public transport connections given its rural location. It is considered in environmental terms the development is sustainable.

5.30 A social role is ensured by providing a supply of housing to meet the needs of present and future generations, as well as providing a development type (self-build) currently not provided for by the Council's development strategy. It directly

responds to an identified need for family homes as identified in the Parish Housing Needs Survey and for larger detached houses which are identified in the SHMA as being in short supply.

5.31 The development supports economic sustainability by accommodating additional households in this rural area which will support local businesses and services, whilst the development further contributes to economic sustainability by facilitating development and creating activity in the construction sector. Overall, therefore, the proposal is considered sustainable in all respects and therefore the Local Planning Authority should seek to approve the development in the absence of any significant and demonstrable adverse impacts, of which this statement will demonstrate there are none.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 In conclusion, the proposed development is considered in line with both national and local planning policy. In the absence of a local plan provision to support self-build dwellings the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF is considered applicable. This statement has demonstrated how the development is sustainable development and how there are no adverse impacts which significantly outweigh the benefits of the development.
- 6.2 The proposed development would make a contribution to housing supply in the borough, in a development of a scale suitable for its location. It directly responds to an identical housing need for detached family homes.
- 6.3 The scheme has been sensitively designed to integrate with existing surrounding development and the immediate and wider landscape and is considered to present a sympathetic built form at the fringes of this village within the AONB. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal contained in this statement demonstrates there will be no significant landscape or visual impacts to the character or appearance of the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- 6.4 For the above reasons, and all the justification expressed in this statement, it is not considered there are any reasons to withhold planning consent in this instance.

Appendix I: LVIA Methodology

I.1 General Approach

The assessment has utilised information from Natural England (National Character Areas), the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment and the Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment.

I.2 Significance Criteria

The aim of the landscape and visual assessment is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects arising from the proposed development. Wherever possible identified effects are quantified, but the nature of landscape and visual assessment requires interpretation by professional judgment. In order to provide a level of consistency to the assessment, the prediction of magnitude and assessment of significance of the residual landscape and visual effects have been based on pre-defined criteria.

I.3 Landscape Sensitivity

The sensitivity of landscape to change is not absolute and varies according to the existing landscape, the nature of the proposed development and the type of change being proposed. Accordingly, the concept of 'sensitivity to change' is not part of the baseline description of the landscape of the study area, but is considered in relation to the assessment of the effects of the proposed development. In general terms, areas of high landscape quality and value are more sensitive to change than areas of lesser quality and value, and general guidance on the evaluation of sensitivity is provided in Figure 1. However, the actual sensitivity would depend on the attributes of the landscape receiving the proposals, and the nature of those proposals.

I.4 The assessment of sensitivity is based on consideration of the following parameters, together with the nature of the proposals, during the course of the assessment:

- i. *Landscape value: the importance attached to a landscape, often as a basis for designation or recognition which expresses national or regional consensus, because of its quality, cultural associations, scenic or aesthetic qualities;*
- ii. *Landscape quality: the state of repair or condition of elements of a particular landscape, its integrity and intactness and the extent to which its distinctive character is apparent;*

- iii. *Landscape capacity: the capacity of a particular type of landscape to accommodate change brought about by development without unacceptable negative effects on its character, reflecting key aspects of landscape character including scale and complexity of the landscape and degree of 'wildness' or 'remoteness'.*

Parameters	Sensitivity of Landscape		
	High	Medium	Low
Landscape value (designations)	National (e.g. National Parks and AONBs)	Regional (e.g. Area of Great/High Landscape Value)	No designation
Landscape quality	A landscape in good condition, predominantly intact and with a clearly apparent distinctive character	A landscape in moderate condition, reasonable intact, retaining a distinctive character	A landscape in poor condition, lacking in integrity, where landscape character has been adversely affected
Landscape capacity	Landscapes of distinctive character susceptible to relatively small changes	Landscapes reasonably tolerant of changes	Landscapes potentially tolerant of substantial change

Figure 1: Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.5 Visual Sensitivity - The sensitivity of potential visual receptors will vary depending on the location and context of the viewpoint, the activity of the receptor and importance of the view. Visual receptor sensitivity is defined as high, medium, or low in accordance with the criteria in Figure 2.

High sensitivity	Residents experiencing principal views from dwellings, users of outdoor recreational facilities including strategic recreational footpaths and cycle ways, people experiencing views from important landscape features of physical, cultural or historic interest, beauty spots and picnic areas.
Medium sensitivity	Road users and travellers on trains experiencing views from transport routes. In addition, resident's experiencing secondary views from dwellings, users of secondary footpaths experiencing views, and people engaged in outdoor sport (other than appreciation of the landscape) or recreation i.e. hunting, shooting, golf and water based activities.
Low sensitivity	Workers, users of facilities and commercial buildings (indoors) experiencing views from buildings.

Figure 2: Visual sensitivity criteria

- 1.6 Those receptors living within view of the scheme are usually regarded as the highest sensitivity group along with those engaged in outdoor pursuits for whom landscape experience is the primary objective. The threshold for significance of visual effects relies to a great extent on professional judgement. Criteria and local circumstances require close study and careful consideration to decide if the effect on a single property will warrant classification as a highly significant issue. Generally it will be rare for the impact on a single dwelling to be categorised as of high significance for the development overall. However it may combine with similar impacts on many properties to give rise to a more general impact of high significance.
- 1.7 The magnitude of change arising from the proposed development at any particular viewpoint is described as substantial, moderate, slight or negligible based on the interpretation of a combination of largely quantifiable parameters, as follows:
- Distance of the viewpoint from the development;
 - Duration of effect;
 - Extent of the development in the view;
 - Angle of view in relation to main receptor activity;
 - Proportion of the field of view occupied by the development;

Background to the development; and

Extent of other built development visible, particularly vertical elements.

1.8 In order to differentiate between different levels of magnitude the following definitions are provided:

Substantial - total loss or major alteration to key landscape elements/features/characteristics such that post development the baseline landscape character or composition of the view will be fundamentally changed;

Moderate - partial loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements/ features or characteristics such that post development the baseline landscape character or composition of the view will be partially changed;

Slight - minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements/features or characteristics such that post development the change/loss will be discernible but the underlying landscape character or composition of the view will be similar to the baseline;

Negligible - very minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements / features/ characteristics of the baseline conditions. Change will be barely distinguishable approximating to no change.

1.9 The significance of any identified landscape or visual effect has been assessed in terms of major, moderate, minor or negligible. These categories are based on the juxtaposition of viewpoint or landscape sensitivity with the predicted magnitude of change. This matrix should not be used as a prescriptive tool but must allow for the exercise of professional judgement. These categories have been based on combining viewpoint or landscape sensitivity and predicted magnitude of change, to determine significance of effects:

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SENSITIVITY	Magnitude of Change			
	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
High	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Minor	Minor
Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor/ negligible

Figure 3 Significance of landscape and visual impact

- I.10 The measure of significance of effects must not be taken to imply that they are necessarily adverse or should warrant refusal. As with many aspects of landscape and visual assessment, significance of effect also needs to be qualified with respect to the scale over which it is felt. An effect may be locally significant, or significant with respect to a small number of receptors, but not significant when judged in a wider context.
- I.11 Any effect may be described as temporary or permanent, direct or indirect, positive or negative and these various types of effect have a bearing on the acceptability or otherwise of the type of effect. The various types of effect are described as follows:
- **Temporary/ Permanent Effects** - If a proposal would result in an alteration to an environment whose attributes can be quickly recovered then judgements concerning the significance of effects should be tempered in that light.
 - **Direct and Indirect Effects** - Direct and Indirect landscape and visual effects are defined in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA 4th Edition). Direct effects may be defined “... as an effect that is directly attributable to a defined element or characteristic of the proposed development, for example the loss or removal of an element or feature such as a hedgerow or a prominent group of trees...”. An indirect (or secondary) effect is an effect that is not a direct result of the proposed development but is often produced away from the site of the proposed development or as a result of a complex pathway or secondary association.

- **Positive/Negative (Beneficial and Adverse)** - Positive effects upon landscape receptors may result from changes to a view involving positive enhancement measures or through the addition of well-designed elements, which add to the landscape experience or sense of place in a complementary manner. The perception of the viewer influences whether a significant visual effect would constitute acceptable change to the landscape.