

The West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange Order 201X  
ES - Vol 1 - Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual  
Regulation 5(2)(a)  
FPCR Environment and Design - July 2018

# 12 Landscape and Visual

## Introduction

- 12.1 This chapter of the ES assesses the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development in respect of landscape and visual matters. In particular, this chapter describes the relevant legislation and landscape and visual policy context; the methods used for assessment and details of the criteria used to determine significance; the baseline landscape and visual conditions at and surrounding the Site; the potential impacts and effects as a result of the Proposed Development; any mitigation or control measures required to reduce or eliminate adverse effects; and the subsequent residual effects and likely significant effects associated with the Proposed Development.
- 12.2 This chapter is accompanied by a series of Figures and Technical Appendices as follows:

### Figures

- Figure 12.1: Landscape Character – National and County
- Figure 12.2: Landscape Sensitivity for Employment Site Allocations (Plan Extract of Figure 1)
- Figure 12.3: Landscape Designations
- Figure 12.4: Site Landscape
- Figure 12.5: Topography
- Figure 12.6: Aerial and Oblique Aerial Photographs
- Figure 12.7: Photo Viewpoint and Photomontage Locations
- Figure 12.8: Photo Viewpoints
- Figure 12.9: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)
- Figure 12.10: Visual Receptors – Inset Plan
- Figure 12.11: Illustrative Green Infrastructure Plan
- Figure 12.12: Illustrative Landscape Cross Sections
- Figure 12.13: Photomontages

### Technical Appendices

- Technical Appendix 12.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Criteria
- Technical Appendix 12.2: Visibility Mapping and Photomontage Methodology
- Technical Appendix 12.3: Published Landscape Character Assessments – Relevant Extracts
- Technical Appendix 12.4: Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan – Relevant Extracts
- Technical Appendix 12.5: Landscape Effects Table (LET)
- Technical Appendix 12.6: Visual Effects Table (VET)
- Technical Appendix 12.7: Arboricultural Assessment
- Technical Appendix 12.8: Lighting Strategy and Lighting Impact Assessment
- Technical Appendix 12.9: Green Infrastructure – Planting and Habitats: Summary Schedule of Areas

- 12.3 This chapter is written by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd.

## Legislation and Policy Context

### National Legislation and Policy

#### National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPS)

- 12.4 In the context of ‘Criteria for “Good Design”’, the NPS states at paragraph 4.34:
- ‘Whilst the applicant may only have limited choice in the physical appearance of some national networks infrastructure, there may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of siting and design measures relative to existing landscape and historical character and function, landscape permeability, landform and vegetation.’*
- 12.5 All of these landscape related aspects and considerations have been taken into account in the design of the Proposed Development.
- 12.6 Chapter 5 of the NPS<sup>1</sup> considers landscape and visual impacts and land use, including open space, green infrastructure and Green Belt. In the context of landscape and visual impacts, the NPS advises that where the development is subject to EIA the applicant should undertake an assessment of any likely significant landscape and visual impacts in the environmental impact assessment and describe these in the environmental assessment. The assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies, as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project.
- 12.7 It further advises that the assessment should include any significant effects during construction of the project and/or the significant effects of the completed development and its operation on landscape components and landscape character (including historic landscape characterisation). It should also assess the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity.
- 12.8 In the context of nationally designated landscape, that includes National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the NPS makes reference to ‘*Developments proposed within nationally designated areas*’ at paragraphs 5.150 – 5.153. The Site is not located within a nationally designated area.
- 12.9 At paragraphs 5.154 – 5.155, the NPS makes reference to ‘Developments outside nationally designated areas which might affect them’ and states:
- ‘5.154 The duty to have regard to the purposes of nationally designated areas also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid compromising the purposes of designation and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. This should include projects in England which may have impacts on designated areas in Wales or on National Scenic Areas in Scotland.*
- 5.155 The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for refusing consent.’*
- 12.10 Under the heading ‘Visual Impact’ at paragraph 5.158, the NPS states:

<sup>1</sup> Department for Transport (2015) National Policy Statement for National Networks

*'The Secretary of State will have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as local residents, and other receptors, such as visitors to the local area, outweigh the benefits of the development...'*

- 12.11 This assessment has considered the potential and likely effects of the Proposed Development on sensitive visual receptors.
- 12.12 Under the heading 'Mitigation' at paragraph 5.160, the NPS states:  
*'Adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure, design (including choice of materials), and landscaping schemes, depending on the size and type of proposed project. Materials and designs for infrastructure should always be given careful consideration.'*
- 12.13 The design of the Proposed Development and the integral and other mitigation measures and landscape proposals have been considered and appraised as part of an iterative and comprehensive process to enable the landscape and visual effects to be mitigated and minimised.
- 12.14 Other related matters are referenced under the section on 'Land use including open space, green infrastructure and Green Belt'. This includes reference to the effects upon Green Infrastructure and Public Rights of Way.
- 12.15 All of the landscape and visual matters raised in the NPS have been considered and appraised as part of the design and subsequent assessment of the Proposed Development.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012

- 12.16 Of relevance to this assessment, the NPPF includes relevant planning principles at paragraph 17, including references to design, Green Belt, countryside and environmental value.
- 12.17 The policies in paragraphs 18 – 219 include the following:  
*Requiring Good Design* (paragraphs 56 – 68);  
*Promoting healthy communities* (paragraphs 69 – 78);  
*Protecting Green Belt land* (paragraphs 79 – 92); and  
*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment* (paragraphs 109 – 125).
- 12.18 Section 11 is concerned with "Conserving and enhancing the natural environment". The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment – protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and affording great weight to the protection of areas of natural and scenic beauty:  
*"109. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes..."*
- 12.19 The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment – protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and affording great weight to the protection areas of natural and scenic beauty. The landscape and green infrastructure proposals which form part of the Proposed Development stem from the landscape and visual assessments undertaken and any necessary mitigation measures identified, reflecting the principles of Good Design which the NPPF advocates.

### National Planning Practice Guidance, 2014

- 12.20 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>2</sup> supports the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for understanding local distinctiveness and Natural England's guidance on landscape character assessment. It also provides a wide range of guidance on

environmental and design matters. Under the 'Design' section of the guidance, paragraph 6 (Reference ID: 26-006-20140306) states:

*"Design impacts on how people interact with places. Although design is only part of the planning process it can affect a range of economic, social and environmental objectives beyond the requirement for good design in its own right. Planning policies and decisions should seek to ensure the physical environment supports these objectives. The following issues should be considered:*

- *local character (including landscape setting)*
- *safe, connected and efficient streets*
- *a network of greenspaces (including parks) and public places*
- *crime prevention*
- *security measures*
- *access and inclusion*
- *efficient use of natural resources*
- *cohesive & vibrant neighbourhoods".*

## Local Policy

### South Staffordshire Core Strategy DPD, 2012

- 12.21 Strategic Objective 4 of the South Staffordshire Core Strategy DPD<sup>3</sup> states:  
*"To protect, conserve and enhance the countryside, character and quality of the landscape and the diversity of wildlife and habitats."*
- 12.22 Core Policy 2: *Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment* is detailed under Chapter 7 Environmental Quality. This includes the following (not quoted in full);  
*"Development or initiatives will generally be supported which:*  
*.....b) are not contrary to the control of development within internationally, nationally or locally designated areas including the Green Belt and Open Countryside, Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Motte Meadows Special Area of Conservation, and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness."*
- 12.23 The explanation to this policy advises that it should be regarded as a positive policy to support the protection and enhancement of South Staffordshire's natural and historic environment and reflects the importance attached to the assets in Strategic Objectives 3, 4 and 5.
- 12.24 The key evidence base for this Core Policy includes the following reference document:
  - *Planning for Landscape Change – Staffordshire County Council SPD 1996- 2011.*
- 12.25 The following Development Policy supports Core Policy 2;
  - *Policy EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape.*  
This policy includes the following references (policy not quoted in full);  
*"The intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape should be maintained and where possible enhanced. Trees, veteran trees, woodland, ancient woodland and hedgerows should be protected from damage and retained unless it can be demonstrated that removal is necessary and appropriate mitigation can be achieved. For visual and ecological reasons, new and replacement planting should be of locally native species."*

<sup>2</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, Live Document, <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> South Staffordshire Council (2012) Core Strategy Development Plan Document Adopted 11th December 2012

*The Council will encourage and support the creation of new woodlands and the management of existing woodlands particularly where they contribute to community forestry....*

*Throughout the District, the design and location of new development should take account of the characteristics and sensitivity of the landscape and its surroundings, and not have a detrimental effect on the immediate environment and on any important medium and long distance views....*

*The siting, scale, and design of new development will need to take full account of the nature and distinctive qualities of the local landscape. The use of techniques, such as landscape character analysis, to establish the local importance and the key features that should be protected and enhanced, will be supported....*

*Proposals should retain and strengthen the components of landscape character and local distinctiveness, with particular attention to the detailing of any proposal and its relationship with existing buildings, features and vegetation...."*

- 12.26 The explanation to this Core Policy advises at para 7.26; "Any development which will have an impact on the landscape should address the intrinsic character of its surroundings, and seek where possible to retain and strengthen the intrinsic character of areas. Landscape character analysis will be an important technique in many circumstances, utilising detailed work already undertaken by Staffordshire County Council in the Supplementary Planning Document 'Planning for Landscape Change' and work on historic landscape characterisation. More detailed guidance on landscape character will be included in a Supplementary Planning Document."
- 12.27 The key evidence base for this policy includes the following reference documents:
- South Staffordshire Landscape Assessment 2003;
  - Historic Environment Character Assessment 2011;
  - Tree and Woodland Strategy 2010;
  - Forest of Mercia Plan 1993; and
  - Staffordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project 2010.
- 12.28 This evidence base has been drawn upon in appraising the baseline conditions and the potential effects of the Proposed Development.
- 12.29 Core Policy 4: Promoting High Quality Design, states (not quoted in full):
- "The Council will expect all development proposals to achieve a high quality of design of buildings and their landscape setting, in order to achieve the vision of a high quality environment for South Staffordshire. Support will be given to proposals that are consistent with the detailed design policy.....and be informed by any other local design statements, and meet the following requirements:*
- ..b) to respect and enhance local character and distinctiveness of the natural and built environment including opportunities to improve the character and quality of the area and the way it functions;...."*
- 12.30 Development Policy EQ12: Landscaping, states (not quoted in full):
- "Landscaping of new development must be an integral part of the overall design, which complements and enhances the development and the wider area...."*

## Legislation

### Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

- 12.31 The legal framework for areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales is provided by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000* which reaffirms the

primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty, and sets out responsibilities for their management and for the production of AONB Management Plans:

- Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty;
- Section 84 confirms the powers of local authorities to take appropriate action to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of AONBs;
- Section 85 places a duty on all public bodies and statutory undertakers to 'have regard' to the 'purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty';
- Section 86 establishes a process for creating AONB conservation boards;
- Section 89 creates a statutory responsibility for local authorities and conservation boards to prepare and publish; and review on a five-yearly basis AONB management plans; and
- Section 92 clarifies that conservation of natural beauty includes conservation of flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features.

## Assessment Methodology

### Baseline Characterisation

- 12.32 The study area for the purposes of the assessment has been defined through field work and desk based assessment. It is defined as the Site and the immediate and surrounding landscape (receiving environment) where, within this landscape, there could be degrees of change and effect on landscape and visual receptors as a result of the Proposed Development. This area broadly correlates with the ZTV as shown on Figure 12.9.

### Method of Assessment

- 12.33 This Landscape and Visual Chapter has been prepared using the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, GLVIA3 (2013)<sup>4</sup>. Further details on the method of assessment and criteria adopted are contained in Technical Appendix 12.1. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the approach that has been adopted for the landscape and visual impact assessment of the Proposed Development.
- 12.34 GLVIA3 states that:
- "Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of, and the effects of, change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity."* (para 1.3)
- 12.35 There are two components that are described separately within this chapter. These are:
- "Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right; and*
- Assessment of visual effects; assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people."* (para 2.21)
- 12.36 The judgements that are made in respect of landscape and visual effects are a combination of the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effect, alongside professional qualitative judgment, which is an important part of the LVIA process as outlined within GLVIA3.

<sup>4</sup> Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, GLVIA3 (2013), Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment



### Assessment of Landscape Effects

12.37 GLVIA3 states that:

*“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”.* (para 5.1)

12.38 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing landscape character assessments and by a description of the Site and its context. This provides an understanding of the area that maybe affected.

12.39 Landscape receptors (i.e. landscape resources that have the potential to be affected) are assessed in terms of their sensitivity. This combines judgements on the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change or development that is specifically proposed, and the value attached to the landscape.

12.40 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape; and
- Combined effects of these changes.

12.41 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or by the addition of new elements.

### Assessment of Visual Effects

12.42 The baseline visual analysis includes determining the likely area from within which the Proposed Development may be visible. It considers the groups of people who may experience views, the viewpoints where they may be affected, and the nature of these views.

12.43 The first stage in the assessment is to identify the potential visibility of the Site (and the Proposed Development). This is either done by a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), which is a desk study exercise and treats the world as 'bare earth', i.e. it does not take into account factors other than terrain that influence actual visibility, such as buildings, woodland and hedges, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation to establish a Representative Visual Envelope (RVE). In this instance a computerised ZTV was initially prepared and subsequently refined by field evaluation and analysis as detailed in Technical Appendix 12.2.

12.44 The assessment considers both susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity, and the value attached to particular views.

12.45 GLVIA3 states that:

*“The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:*

- *residents at home;*
- *people, whether residents or visitors who engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views;*
- *visitors to heritage assets or other attractions, where views of surroundings are an important contributor to the experience; and*
- *communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.”* (para 6.33)

12.46 Travellers on road and rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of susceptibility to change, although where travel involves recognised scenic routes an awareness of views is likely to be particularly high.

12.47 GLVIA3 notes that:

*“Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:*

- *People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape; and*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life...”* (para 6.34)

12.48 An assessment of visual effects deals with the area in which the development may be visible and effects of change on these views to people and their visual amenity. Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility. In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

- *“The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;*
- *The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture; and*
- *The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.*
- *The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:*
- *The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;*
- *The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and*
- *The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.”* (GLVIA3 § 6.39-6.40)

12.49 Three visual effects assessments have been conducted for receptors during the different stages of the Proposed Development. The first considers the effects during the construction period. The second assesses the effects upon full completion of the development and in the winter period (i.e. the screening effects of any deciduous foliage in the summer is not taken into account) and the third predicts the residual effects 15 years after completion and in the summer period (thus enabling the effectiveness of any planting to be evaluated).

## Significance Criteria

12.50 Conclusions on the level of effects, and whether these are adverse or beneficial, are drawn from separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects alongside professional qualitative judgment. Effects use a word scale of Major, Moderate, Minor or Negligible. Where it is determined that the assessment falls between, or encompasses two of the defined thresholds, then the judgement is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both. The criteria for the effects is outlined within Technical Appendix 12.1.

### Landscape Effects

12.51 In terms of what constitutes a significant landscape effect, GLVIA3 makes it clear at paragraph 5.56 that:

*“There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and landscape context and with the type of proposals. At opposite ends of a spectrum it is reasonable to say that:*

- *major loss or irreversible negative effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes are likely to be of the greatest significance;*
- *reversible negative effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to but are not key characteristics of the character of the landscapes of community value are likely to be of the least significance and may, depending on circumstances, be judged as not significant;*
- *where assessments of significance place landscape effects between these extremes, judgements must be made about whether or not they are significant with full explanations of why these conclusions have been reached." (para 5.56)*

### Visual Effects

12.52 In relation to what constitutes a significant visual effect, GLVIA3 states at paragraph 6.44 that:

*"There are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal. In making a judgment about the significance of visual effects the following points should be noted:*

- *Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant.*
- *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant.*
- *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes already involving features already present within the view." (para 6.44)*

### Likely Significant Effects

12.53 In accordance with the approach advocated in GLVIA3, the categories of Effects considered to represent a likely significant effect for this LVIA have been determined and are those effects that are stated as Major or Moderate/ Major. Where this occurs, this is identified within the LVIA.

12.54 It should be noted that there may also be some changes resulting from the Proposed Development that will be significant in their nature and extent yet may encapsulate both adverse and beneficial change. In some of these instances, the resultant effect may not be Major or Moderate/ Major or stated as significant, due to the combined effect of the adverse and beneficial changes.

### EIA Scoping Request Opinion

12.55 Consideration has been given both as part of the design process and this assessment to the EIA Scoping Request Opinion as summarised in Table 12.1 below.

**Table 12.1: EIA Scoping Opinion Response**

Consultee	Comment	Response
Secretary of State	Para 3.15 The list in Section 5.1 omits landscape and visual impact assessment, which has been proposed as a separate volume in the ES. It is unclear why the landscape and visual impact assessment chapter is being prepared as a separate volume to the ES.	The landscape and visual impact assessment is included as a chapter within the ES and not as a separate Volume.
	Para 3.67 The landscape and visual assessment in the Scoping Report refers to the ZTV. The Secretary of State advises that the ES should describe the model used, provide information on the area covered and the timing of any survey work and the methodology used.	The ZTV model and methodology employed is detailed within this chapter and Technical Appendix 12.2.
	Para 3.68 The Secretary of State recommends that sensitive receptors and the location of viewpoints should be agreed with South Staffordshire Council and Cannock Chase AONB where appropriate.	The locations of the viewpoints and photomontages have been agreed with Natural England, SCC, SSDC and the Cannock Chase AONB Unit.
Secretary of State	Para 3.69 The landscape and visual assessment should be cross referenced with the assessment on the setting of cultural heritage assets. The Secretary of State notes the consultation response from CRT, which states that the assessment should include consideration of the impacts on the setting and views of the canal network and its associated historic assets.	The LVIA has been cross referenced to the assessment on the setting of the cultural heritage assets and this includes consideration of the impacts upon setting and views. References to the Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage is included within this chapter as part of the cross referencing.
	Para 3.70 Careful consideration should be given to the form, siting, and use of terrain/ ground levels, green walls/ roofs and material finishes in terms of minimising the adverse visual effects of these structures. The assessment should also set out any other features that could impact local views such as gantries and storage containers.	These matters have been considered both as part of this assessment and as part of the overall design of the Proposed Development. Approaches to minimising and mitigating the potential adverse effects of the structures are outlined in this chapter. The LVIA makes reference to the different structures in the context of the effects upon both the landscape and more particularly views.
	Para 3.71 The Applicant should set out any proposed measures to avoid light pollution	These matters are addressed within this

Table 12.1: EIA Scoping Opinion Response		
Consultee	Comment	Response
	and associated impacts on amenity, dark landscapes and nature conservation. An assessment of lighting effects should be included within the landscape and visual chapter.  Para 3.72 The Applicant should ensure that ecological and landscape mitigation measures are integrated and that every effort is made to retain existing habitats where possible. The Secretary of State considers that detailed consideration should be given to the phasing of landscape screening measures and also recommends that advance planting is considered within the construction phasing proposals to optimise the establishment period for screening/ ecological mitigation planting. This is particularly important in respect of perimeter planting.	chapter and in particular within Technical Appendix 12.8 Lighting Strategy and Assessment  All of these matters have been thoroughly considered as part of the design and assessment process as detailed within this ES.
Canal and River Trust (CRT)	The canal is identified as a sensitive landscape receptor though it should be made clear that this includes the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal, the Hatherton Canal and the marinas at Gailey and Hatherton. These should all be identified as both sensitive landscape and visual receptors.  In addition, Calf Heath reservoir should also be considered as a sensitive landscape receptor and the effects on its character identified as a potential impact.  Para 6.7.62 states that the location of photo viewpoints and photomontages will be agreed with the relevant consultee and the Trust would welcome the opportunity to engage with the applicant on this matter.  Para 7.4 Light Spillage should be considered	The canal, marinas and Calf Heath Reservoir have all been identified as both landscape and visual receptors. It should be noted that the canal (including the marinas) is included as a separate landscape receptor and users (boat and towpath) of the canal are included as a separate visual receptor  Calf Heath Reservoir is included as part of the 'Site and immediate landscape context' landscape receptor and users of the reservoir as a separate visual receptor.  A number of meetings have been held with the CRT to consider and discuss the emerging development proposals. This has included consideration of the views from the canal and reservoir.  Light Spillage is addressed within this chapter and in particular within Technical Appendix 12.8 Lighting

Table 12.1: EIA Scoping Opinion Response		
Consultee	Comment	Response
		Strategy and Assessment
SSDC	The scoping report picks up on the majority of potential landscape and visual effects. However, the ES should also consider:  1.The potential for additional landscape and visual effects arising at night time from the development through the introduction of any potential lighting viewable from the wider landscape  2. Effects over time – both before and after screening planting has matured, and also taking account of any intended phasing in this planting  3. The assessment of effects should be informed by tree and hedgerow surveys of the existing planting likely to be affected, given the large extent of both which may potentially be affected/proposed to be removed.	1. The night time effects arising from the potential lighting are assessed in this chapter and in particular within Technical Appendix 12.8 Lighting Strategy and Assessment.  2. The effects over time are assessed. The residual effects include an assessment of the Proposed Development after 15 years of planting (conserved and proposed) management and growth.  3. Both the design of the Proposed Development and the assessment have been informed by tree and hedgerow surveys. These are detailed within Technical Appendix 12.7 and Chapter 10: Ecology and Nature Conservation.
SCC	Assessment of effects should be provided for the construction phase, at completion/ year 1 and once landscape proposals have had time to mature, at around 15 years post completion.  If development would be phased then phases should be described and assessed separately. Ground modelling or planting delivered during a particular phase that might affect the level of mitigation achieved should be fully described and included in those assessments.	The LVIA assesses effects during construction, at full completion and at 15 years post completion (assuming planting is 15 years old).  Phasing is also considered and indicative phasing arrangements are detailed within the ES and elsewhere. Where the phasing has any relevant implications in terms of the landscape and visual effects this is described in the chapter.
	There is no specific reference to assessing the effects of lighting and this should be included in the assessment.	Lighting effects have been assessed and are detailed within this chapter and in particular within Technical Appendix 12.8 Lighting Strategy and Assessment.
	There appears to be no reference to a Tree Survey in the scope. In order to comply with BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction –	This is included at Technical Appendix 12.7 and has informed the design and assessment of the Proposed



Table 12.1: EIA Scoping Opinion Response		
Consultee	Comment	Response
	Recommendations a tree survey is required and this should inform the assessment of constraints to development from existing trees that merit retention.	Development.
	Under the heading 'Landscape': The West Terminal Option appears to have less impact on the Canal and potentially the wider landscape and would therefore be preferred.	The West Terminal Option has been pursued as the Proposed Development. The design options and selection of a preferred scheme are referred to in Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution, of this ES.
Natural England	We welcome the report's inclusion of assessment of impacts on the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) i.e. longer distance views out of the AONB.	The assessment includes an assessment of the Proposed Development upon the landscape and Special Qualities of the AONB and upon views to and from the AONB

## Assumptions and Limitations

12.56 The following assumptions are relevant to this Chapter:

- The Residual Landscape and Visual Effects of the Proposed Development take into account the growth of the proposed planting and in particular the proposed woodland and tree planting. Typical growth rates for this planting is drawn from published sources and assumes that the woodland and trees will be 8 – 12 metres high after 15 years.
- The following limitations are relevant to this Chapter:
- Judgements on the likely visual effects for any 'private' receptors e.g. residential properties have been determined based upon publicly accessible or agreed access positions. For example in some situations it has not been possible to determine the detailed nature of some private views from residential properties, although the likely nature of the view has been appraised based upon a combination of views back towards the property from within the Site and from nearby publicly accessible locations.

## Baseline Conditions

### Current Baseline

12.57 This section summarises the characteristics of the existing landscape and visual conditions of the Site and the surrounding area.

### Landscape Character

12.58 Landscape Character Assessments and related studies have been prepared at National, County and District wide scales covering the Site and its context. Relevant extracts of the published landscape character assessments and studies are included at Technical Appendix 12.3 and the location and extent of the different defined areas are detailed on Figures 12.1 and 12.2.

## National

12.59 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCA`s defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics.

12.60 At this broad landscape scale, the Site and its wider context encompass three NCA`s. The Site lies just within the south-east corner of NCA 61 'Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain'. To the east is NCA 67 'Cannock Chase and Cank Wood' and to the south is NCA 66 'Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau'. As the Site and its wider context lie across multiple character areas it also combines characteristics and features that are relevant to varying degrees to all three NCA`s. In landscape character terms, the Site is not therefore strongly associated with, or closely representative of, any one of the three areas.

12.61 NCA 61 'Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain' stretches from Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury in the south, to Chester and Macclesfield in the north. The summary description of this NCA includes the following reference;

*"This is an expanse of flat or gently undulating, lush, pastoral farmland, which is bounded by the Mersey Valley NCA in the north, with its urban and industrial development, and extending to the rural Shropshire Hills NCA in the south."*

12.62 NCA 67 'Cannock Chase and Cank Wood' extends from Halesowen in the south west to Stafford in the north-west and Tamworth in the east. The summary description of this NCA includes the following reference;

*"It is situated on higher land consisting of sandstone and the South Staffordshire Coalfield. The NCA principally coincides with the historical hunting forest of Cannock Chase, with major remnants surviving within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)..... There are no major rivers within the area, but canals are a significant feature and some major transport routes also cross the NCA. The current landscape is extremely varied, including extensive areas of urban development predominantly in the south of the NCA and extensive conifer plantations and heathlands in the north interspersed with farmland. The Forest of Mercia, a Community Forest, lies in the heart of the NCA."*

12.63 NCA 66 'Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau' stretches from Telford in the north-west to Kidderminster in the south. The summary description of this NCA includes the following reference:

*"The Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau is predominantly rural and important regionally for food production, with large arable fields in the central and eastern areas, and remnant areas of characteristic lowland heathland. Parklands provide an estate character in places, as exemplified by Weston Park. The plateau is drained by fast-flowing tributaries of the rivers Worfe and Stour..."*

12.64 These three NCA`s set the very broad landscape character context for the Site.

## County

12.65 A county level of landscape character is provided in the 'Staffordshire Planning for Landscape Change 1996 - 2011' (2000) SPG5. The introduction to this landscape study advises that it is 'aimed primarily at planning officers in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan area, and at developers and others who need to be informed about policy and practice for the conservation, enhancement and regeneration of the rural landscapes of the Plan area. It may also prove to be of value in a wider context, as a means of informing other decisions relating to land use and land management.'

<sup>5</sup> 'Staffordshire Planning for Landscape Change 1996 - 2011' (2000) SPG, Staffordshire County Council



- 12.66 The study was prepared in 2000 and draws on government guidance at this time on development plan policies for the conservation and enhancement of landscape character and quality, and on work undertaken by the former Countryside Commission and English Nature to map and describe the landscape character of England.
- 12.67 The study maps Landscape Character Types (LCT) across the county. No judgements about the relative worth of the LCT's are determined but the approach does acknowledge that any given landscape type will be represented by some areas in which the underlying landscape character is strongly expressed and the constituent elements are in good condition, and other areas where this is not the case.
- 12.68 The study considers landscape quality and based upon this assessment it has defined a series of landscape policy objective zones (Map 2). Those landscapes of the highest quality fall within zones in which 'active landscape conservation' is the objective and those of the lowest quality in the 'innovative landscape regeneration' zones. Areas of highest landscape sensitivity are also assessed and mapped. The study recognises that it is of a strategic scale and within any landscape tract there will be variations in quality and sensitivity and that detailed Site specific analysis will be needed to assess the impact of development proposals. The study also maps landscapes considered to be at risk of a rapid loss of character and quality (Map 5).
- 12.69 In relation to the landscape policy zones mapped and shown on Map 2 of the study, the Site encompasses land defined as 'Landscape maintenance' (west of the canal) and 'Active landscape conservation' (east of the canal). No 'Areas of highest landscape sensitivity' and no 'Landscapes at risk of rapid loss of character and quality' lie within the Site.
- 12.70 Within the study, the Site stretches across two LCT's. The land within the Site to the east of the canal lies within the 'Settled Heathlands' LCT and to the west of the canal it lies within the 'Ancient Clay Farmlands' LCT.
- 12.71 The description of the 'Settled Heathlands' LCT advises: *"The soils are mainly acid sands and brown earths which support cropping and mixed farming in a regular pattern of small and large hedged fields. Many areas of this type are quite well wooded, although there may be few hedgerow trees. The settlement pattern is dispersed, and urbanised in places."*
- 12.72 Under the heading 'Visual Character', it states:  
*"This is a flat, intensively farmed landscape characterised by a well-wooded appearance due either to the high percentage of interlocking woodlands or coalescence of stunted hedgerow oaks and overgrown hedgerows. Remnant heathland character is evident in the presence of birch, bracken and gorse."*
- 12.73 *Tree cover defines the medium scale of both the arable landscape of irregular fields, and pastoral areas of a more regular pattern. These areas of planned landscape are given a sense of apparent naturalness by the woodland cover and grown-up hedgerows....The presence of railways and electricity pylons and the intrusive nature of the individual residential properties erode the quality of the area."*
- 12.74 *The characteristic landscape features for the 'Settled Heathlands' LCT are listed as, "Interlocking woodlands and woodland edges; flat landform; straight roads; canal; relic heathland; well-defined hedgerows and numerous hedgerow trees; Staffordshire red brick rural villages."*
- 12.75 The SPG study advises that the 'Ancient Clay Farmlands' LCT is *"geographically well defined and restricted to the western side of the county. It is characterised by the irregular pattern of hedged fields with ancient hedgerows and oaks, by subtle evidence of former heathland, and by a dispersed settlement pattern with small rural towns. The major land use has been dairying...."*
- 12.76 Under the heading 'Visual Character', it states:

*"This is a landscape of mixed arable and pastoral farmland, the character of which is strongly influenced by existing land use and farming practices."*

*In the areas of pastoral farming an intact irregular ancient pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees is still retained. In places this pattern is beginning to break down, with hedgerows either being allowed to grow up and become ragged, or being mechanically trimmed and becoming gappy as a result. The mature hedgerow oaks are characteristic of this countryside...*

*Localised industrial and commuter development does not impact to any great extent on this general character, although a general decline, both of village character and landcover elements, could result in long-term irreversible erosion of the landscape character. Major road corridors have a significant localised effect and result in some areas being particularly well viewed".*

- 12.77 This landscape study is now quite dated but does still provide some relevant and helpful background to the landscape character and context of the Site.

## District

- 12.78 There is no District wide landscape character assessment study covering all of the landscape within the district. However, a study titled 'Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Study for Employment Site Allocations'<sup>6</sup> for South Staffordshire was published in December 2015 (relevant extracts included at Technical Appendix 12.3). At paragraph 1.2 of the Introduction to this study, it advises that its purpose is to *"produce a landscape sensitivity analysis of the land parcels which are under consideration to accommodate the expansion of the four strategic employment sites at i54, ROF Featherstone, Hilton Cross and Four Ashes. This analysis will form part of Local Plan evidence base and the findings should be set out in a report accompanied by maps clearly showing the relative sensitivity of accommodating the proposed development type on each of the identified sites."*
- 12.79 The study is split into two parts. Part A details the methodology adopted and a summary of sensitivity findings for each of the employment areas. Part B contains the sensitivity assessment for each identified land parcels.
- 12.80 The study considers and assesses the majority of the land within the Site (with the exception of land in the northwest towards the A449/ A5 Gailey roundabout) as part of the potential 'Four Ashes' employment area. In summary, the study states at paragraph 3.1, 'Overall, the study has found that there is capacity for employment around each of the areas defined in the site allocations document.'
- 12.81 Across the land identified as 'Four Ashes', the study subdivides this land into nine Land Cover Parcels (LCP) (FAE01 – FAE09). Four of these LCPs are assessed as being of High Landscape Sensitivity to Employment Development; one as High/ Medium; and four as Medium. The Site includes land within three of the LCP's (FAE01 – FAE03) and avoids the other remaining six LCP's. The location and extent of the LCP's are shown on Figure 1 of the study (see Technical Appendix 12.3) and an extract of this plan is reproduced at Figure 12.2.
- 12.82 None of the LCP's within the Site are assessed as being of High Landscape Sensitivity. All of the High Sensitivity LCP's within the Four Ashes area lie to the south of Station Drive and the existing Four Ashes industrial area. The three LCP's that lie within the Site include one assessed as High/ Medium Landscape Sensitivity (FAE01) (to the west of the rail line in the west of the Site) and two of Medium Landscape Sensitivity (FAE02 and FAE03), stretching across the vast majority of the Site to the east of the rail line.
- 12.83 It should be noted in the context of this Employment Sites specific study, that the Landscape Sensitivity judgements for the LCP's are relative to the other LCP's within the

<sup>6</sup> Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Study for Employment Site Allocations', December 2015; South Staffordshire District Council by White Consultants in association with Steven Warnock

study and are not landscape sensitivity assessments based upon either a comprehensive district wide landscape study or factors of Landscape Value and Susceptibility as advocated in GLVIA3 (and detailed in the assessment methodology at the beginning of this chapter).

- 12.84 Consequently, the stated landscape sensitivity of the LCP`s in the study are relative judgements in the context of the other LCP`s and in this case (where consideration is focussed on land for employment expansion around existing employment sites), it generally elevates the stated sensitivity of the landscape. An assessment of the factors influencing the sensitivity of these LCP`s in relation to the Proposed Development has been undertaken in accordance with GLVIA3 and the methodology detailed at the beginning of this chapter and is detailed in the subsequent Potential Effects section and Technical Appendix 12.5.
- 12.85 Part B of this Employment Allocations study includes the detail of each of the LCP assessments. The following extracts are taken from these assessments for the three LCP`s that cover land within the Site.

#### LCP FAE01 (west of the rail line)

*“Summary description:*

*The main receptors are users of the A449, sports ground, pub garden and residents to the south and on the main road. The tranquillity is limited by the road, railway and presence of settlement and industry nearby. The LCP lies in the Green Belt...*

*Evaluation justification:*

*The sensitivity of the LCP lies in its openness, especially to the north, its rural character and its visibility to users of the A449. Residents and users of the sports ground to the south are sensitive...*

*Potential for mitigation and improvement of settlement edge:*

*If the area was selected for development a strong Mixed tree belt buffer would be needed to the west along the A449 to screen views from the wider landscape and to the north along Gravelly Way.”*

#### LCP FAE02 (majority of the Site to the east of the rail line and north of Vicarage Road)

*“Summary description:*

*A very gently rolling landscape comprising of a series of rectilinear fields of arable to the north, pasture to the south with blocks of Mixed plantation, secondary woodland and Calf Heath reservoir in the north-eastern corner. The arable fields to the north have trimmed hedges and occasional trees and bound the straight A5 Watling Street Roman Road which has occasional settlement along the road, particularly at Gailey Wharf where the road crosses the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal... Further south west there are sand and gravel workings with an access road off the A5 and a power line. These workings further reduce tranquillity.*

*The core of the LCP is formed by Calf Heath Wood plantation which appears dominated by conifers with deciduous tree edges to the north west and south east. These trees form a strong edge in views across the area. The main receptors are users of the canal, A5, reservoir and Vicarage Road, and scattered residents. The tranquillity is limited by the roads and presence of settlement the industrial estate nearby. The LCP lies in the Green Belt and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area runs through the area.*

*Potential for mitigation and improvement of settlement edge:*

*If the area was selected for development care would be needed to avoid or mitigate impacts on the canal corridor and its users, and on the broad strip of landscape to the north south of the A5, including the reservoir and its users. It would be desirable to maintain parts of*

*the Calf Heath Wood plantation to act as a screen and buffer, as well as a strong landscape element. Hedgerow trees, especially oaks should be maintained where possible.”*

#### LCP FAE03 (South of Vicarage Road)

*“Summary description:*

*A relatively flat landscape comprising of a series of rectilinear fields of pasture with small blocks of secondary woodland and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal on the southern boundary...*

*The canal appears to be well used and well maintained and has a strong deciduous tree buffer between it and the area for the majority of its length. A power line is a detractor. The tranquillity of the area is reduced by noise from the nearby M6 to the north east, views of the adjacent industrial estate and Energy from Waste building to the south west and the urban fringe character of the area. The LCP lies in the Green Belt and the Canal Conservation Area.*

*Potential for mitigation and improvement of settlement edge:*

*If the area was selected for development care would be needed to avoid or mitigate impacts on the canal corridor and its users, and on rural residents. Hedgerow trees, especially oaks should be maintained where possible.”*

- 12.86 This district scale landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that all of the Land Cover Parcels (LCP`s) within the Site have the potential to accommodate new employment development, subject to the inclusion of suitable landscape design and mitigation measures. The measures referenced by this study have been considered as part of the design and assessment process for the Proposed Development.

### Historic Landscape Character

- 12.87 The Historic Landscape Character (HLC) of the Site and the surrounding landscape are detailed on the HLC map within the Appendices to Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage – Built heritage, of this ES. The majority of the Site and the surrounding landscape are late eighteenth and nineteenth-century Parliamentary period enclosures, with regular field boundaries that retain no evidence of any earlier features.

- 12.88 Calf Heath Wood and Reservoir Plantation are both plantation woodlands of recent date, and map evidence suggests that they date to the mid nineteenth century. The pattern of the enclosure boundaries has been degraded within the Site by industrial workings and quarrying which has reduced the agricultural characteristics of the historic landscape. The presence of the motorway and the SI Group chemical works and industrial estate has affected the historic character of the landscape.

### Designated Landscapes

- 12.89 The Site is not situated within a designated landscape at either a national or localised scale.

#### Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 12.90 The Cannock Chase AONB lies approximately 3km to the east of the Site at its nearest point (see Figure 12.3). The majority of this AONB stretches across the landscape further to the north and north east of Cannock. Cannock Chase AONB is the smallest mainland AONB at 68 km<sup>2</sup> (26 square miles). It is relatively geographically isolated as an accessible area of higher environmental quality and is surrounded by many urban areas. It includes three Local Nature Reserves, as well as two working quarries and a wide range of historical features.



12.91 The Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019<sup>7</sup> includes relevant baseline information on landscape character and issues facing the AONB (See Technical Appendix 12.4). These include references to views into and out of the AONB and to the potential effects of development upon the character of the AONB landscape and its setting.

12.92 The nearest part of the AONB to the Site includes a mix of landscape character areas, comprising Designed Parkland, Clay Estatelands and Open Hills and Heaths (Heathland and Forestry Land), as illustrated on Figure 3 of the Management Plan (see relevant extracts at Technical Appendix 12.4). This part of the AONB includes Shoal Hill and Hatherton Hall on the north-western edge of Cannock. The 'Special Qualities' of the AONB landscape are detailed in the AONB Management Plan. This includes the following references for those Landscape Character Areas (LCA) nearest to the Site:

#### Open Hills and Heaths – Heathland Special Qualities

- 'Large tract of open heathland with sweeping views - wide expanse of heather and scattered birch
- Many fine views to surrounding countryside
- Seasonal colour
- Enclosure of dark green edges to adjacent conifer plantations
- Tranquillity/remoteness'

12.93 The landscape character description for this LCA includes the following reference;

*'...The large expanses of open land create an impression of spaciousness and give wide sweeping views over the heathland and beyond. Groups of regenerating birch and pine trees provide visual diversity, helping to create a more intimate feel to parts of this landscape, and conifer edges often visually enclose the area so that all horizons appear wooded....'*

#### Open Hills and Heaths – Forest Special Qualities

- Changing character of the ordered pattern of different aged conifer forestry
- Lines of beech along rides
- Dark green coniferous edges to views from adjacent landscape

12.94 The landscape character description for this LCA includes the following reference;

*'...The extent of planting in many places creates a strong impression of visual enclosure, where virtually all horizons appear wooded. Remnant heathland vegetation survives along rides, roadsides and in clearings, and more strongly within the broadleaved woodlands....'*

#### Clay Estatelands Special Qualities

- Large scale regular field pattern
- Foreground vista up to Cannock Chase edge
- Horse pasture

12.95 The landscape character description for this LCA includes the following reference;

*'...This larger scale provides opportunities for extensive views across the landscape, as well as long views across to neighbouring landscapes and up to the Cannock Chase woodland edge....'*

#### Designed Parklands Special Qualities

- *Unique design and history*
- *Landscape quality*
- *Landmark historic buildings'*

12.96 The landscape character description for this LCA includes the following reference;

*'...The parklands of Shugborough, Beaudesert, Tixall, Wolseley and Hatherton all fall within Cannock Chase AONB. Each parkland is a unique product of its original design and its evolution over time and these landscapes are locally and individually sensitive to the impacts of development and land use change....'*

12.97 These LCA`s are not shown on Figure 3 of the Management Plan extending beyond the boundary of the AONB. The LCA`s do however relate to the broader LCT`s and Sub Types of the County Level Staffordshire study as detailed earlier and shown on Figure 12.1. In this context the Settled Heathlands and Settled Plateau Farmland Slopes LCT`s of the Staffordshire study extend to the west and south of the nearest part of the AONB and provide relevant details on the landscape character of this part of the AONB setting.

12.98 The Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 details the Key Issues affecting the AONB. Under the heading 'Landscape', 24 issues are listed. Those of most relevance are;

*'...KI6 Pressure for development, its quality and impacts may change the character of the AONB landscapes and its setting...*

*...KI15 Pressure for development, its quality and impacts may change the character of the AONB landscapes and its setting...*

*...KI21 Maintaining views from and into the AONB...'*

12.99 Management Policies within the Plan for the AONB include the following;

*'...LP15 The distinctive landscape character of the AONB will be conserved and enhanced, including views into and out of the area...'*

12.100 Whilst the Site is not situated within the Cannock Chase AONB, there is the potential for views to and from it.

### Registered Parks and Gardens

12.101 Chillington is a Registered Park and Garden and is located at its nearest point approximately 1.7km to the south west of the Site. The house was designed and built in the 1760's and the eighteenth century grounds, designed by Capability Brown, consist of an oak avenue, a serpentine lake and three follies. This receptor is considered further in Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage, of this ES.

### Other Landscape Initiatives and Features

#### Community Forests

12.102 The Site is located within the Forest of Mercia, one of a number of Community Forests in England. Community Forests aim to enable people living within towns and cities to have improved facilities and access in relation to the natural environment. The Forest of Mercia covers approximately 92 square miles of South Staffordshire and adjoining parts of the West Midlands and lies between Penkridge in the west, Lichfield in the east, Walsall and Wolverhampton in the south and Cannock Chase in the north.

12.103 The Community Forests initiative was established in the early 1990`s, with broad-based partnerships seeking to deliver positive environmental, social and economic change. Recently, Community Forests have moved towards greater financial independence from national funding bodies. The Forest of Mercia now comprises a Community Interest Company (CIC), based at Hilton Green in South Staffordshire, with a focus on local environmental education and training.

<sup>7</sup> Cannock Chase AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019, DEFR



### *Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal*

- 12.104 The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal extends through the Site along a broadly north-south alignment. The canal is designated as a Conservation Area and this heritage based designation is considered in greater detail in the Chapter 9 (Cultural Heritage).
- 12.105 The stretch of canal that passes through the Site includes Gailey Marina at its northern extent close to the A5(T) and a towpath along its western side. As a landscape feature it is relatively well enclosed by a combination of some existing buildings and dwelling to its western side, south of the A5(T) and by mature trees and other planting to the immediate canal side on its eastern side and further to the south.
- 12.106 To the south of the existing bridge crossings located towards the centre of the Site the character of the canal remains enclosed and this stretch of the canal is influenced by the adjoining SI Chemical Works and Bericote Development.
- 12.107 The character of the canal both through the Site and within its immediate context is varied. Typically views for users are not expansive but interrupted and in places contained and focussed along the canal corridor. Rural, urban and industrial elements and influences reinforce this varied character.

### Site and Context - Local Landscape Character

- 12.108 The Site lies immediately south west of Junction 12 of the M6 in South Staffordshire and also west of Cannock which lies beyond the motorway. The A5 lies along the northern boundary of the Site and extends in a broadly west to east direction across the local landscape. The A449 (Stafford Road) traverses this landscape in broadly the opposite direction, north to south and defines the western Site boundary. Figures 12.4 and 12.6 should be referred to in relation to the following description.
- 12.109 The local landscape context of the Site is varied and comprises a mix of uses, influences and characteristics. In addition to the major road corridors, the West Coast Main Rail Line runs north to south through the Site, close to its the western edge and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal runs similarly but less directly north to south and also through the western part of the Site.
- 12.110 Between and surrounding these major transport corridors is a mix of predominantly farmland, settlement and industry, interspersed with woodlands, more minor and local roads and a finer mix of scattered and small groupings of properties.
- 12.111 To the north of the Site, the landscape comprises predominantly low lying and gently rolling farmland that stretches northwards up to Penkridge, approximately 2.5 km away. Rodbaston College lies within this area to the north of the Site and between the A449 to the west and M6 motorway to the east.
- 12.112 North-west and west of the Site, the land is also primarily farmland which gently rises and falls towards the River Penk, which lies approximately 1.5 – 2km to the west of the Site and flows generally northwards towards Penkridge.
- 12.113 Brewood lies to the west of the river and is approximately 2.5km from the Site. A series of minor roads and a small number of scattered properties lie within the intervening landscape. Somerford Hall and some more prominent mature woodlands and tree belts lie to the south west of the Site. Marsh Wood and Somerford Wood lie to the east of the Hall, which sits close to the River Penk within Somerford Park.
- 12.114 The settlement of Coven also lies to the south west of the Site and beyond the intervening A449, existing woodland and some other intervening properties and development, that include Standeford alongside the A449.
- 12.115 The existing Four Ashes Industrial Estate is located adjacent to the southern Site boundary and the Veolia Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) Plant is also located south of the Site. A large chemical works (operated by SI Group (referred to as SI Works)) is located to the north of

the industrial estate between the western and eastern sections of the Site and an area under construction as a storage and distribution development (known as the Bericote Development) lies close to these established uses but east of the canal.

- 12.116 This grouping of industrial and larger scale developments do influence the character of the local landscape to varying degrees. The ERF Plant is the most visible and can be seen across the broader landscape context, whereas the influence of the Four Ashes industrial estate is more localised. The SI Works include some taller stacks and elements that are also visible from the A449 and the landscape to the west. These existing developments influence the character of the Site and in particular those areas in the south and west.
- 12.117 The landscape more broadly to the south of the Site includes primarily a mix of rolling farmland, the canal and scattered farming properties, leading southwards towards Featherstone and a prison. Further settlement exists approximately 2 – 2.5km to the south east of the Site at Shareshill and Little Sarendon. These small settlement areas occupy relatively more elevated positions towards the A460 and Junction 11 of the M6 motorway.
- 12.118 Other settlement areas and properties lie within closer proximity to the Site as described further in the section below.

### Site Landscape – Features and Uses

- 12.119 The Site comprises a mix of uses, features and influences that vary across the area. A large proportion of the land is under agricultural use with other notable areas of mineral workings in the east and woodland (Calf Heath Wood) towards the centre of the Site. The existing Four Ashes Industrial Area lies alongside the Site in the south, contained between the railway and the canal. Existing residential properties are located along Croft Lane and the A5(T) around the northern part and boundary of the Site, with further farming and residential properties positioned around or close to the Site boundaries.
- 12.120 Further settlement and properties exist at Calf Heath close to the south-eastern corner of the Site and along the A449, Station Drive, Vicarage Road, Straight Mile and Stable Lane.
- 12.121 The agricultural land within the Site is sub divided by a network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with other wooded copses located across the area. Calf Heath Reservoir lies just beyond the north-east extent of the Site and alongside Junction 12 of the M6 motorway.
- 12.122 Public access to the Site is very limited. A single Public Right of Way (PROW) exists in the north-west and provides a link between Croft Lane and the A449 via an overbridge to the railway. A towpath also extends along the western side of the Canal for its length through the Site and this has links to Croft Lane, Gravelly Way, Station Road and a minor road to the south of Straight Mile. There is no definitive public access to the large area of the Site to the east of the canal or to Calf Heath Wood.

### Arboriculture

- 12.123 A comprehensive survey of trees and hedgerows across the Site has been undertaken in accordance with guidance contained within British Standard 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations. The survey has included those trees, hedgerows and woodlands which are present either within the Site or within influencing distance so that an assessment of impacts arising from the proposals can be made and to inform decision making.
- 12.124 The survey assessed 309 individual trees, 149 groups of trees, 76 hedgerows and 8 woodlands. This categorisation of trees and hedgerows differs slightly from the ecological assessment due to the respective methods of assessment. For example, an outgrown hedgerow may be assessed by one survey as a hedgerow and by another as a linear tree group. The categorisation of trees and hedgerows for the Arboricultural Assessment are detailed within Technical Appendix 12.7.

- 12.125 The dominant species across the Site is English Oak, the vast majority of which are associated with the network of field boundary hedgerows or woodlands or form free standing trees. Where individual oak trees are present they are generally of sizable proportions, with many exhibiting open grown forms. These trees are generally visually prominent and form integral features of the local and Site wide landscape.
- 12.126 A total of 11 oak trees across the Site were assessed to be of 'true veteran status' as they possessed the required minimum number of characteristic features pertaining to veteran trees (to qualify under the definition). A further 25 oak trees are considered as 'future' or 'transitional' veteran trees. In addition to the veteran and transitional veteran trees, it has been confirmed through DNA testing that there is a native black poplar on the Site. All of these trees are identified on the plans and schedules within Technical Appendix 12.7.
- 12.127 Alongside the oak trees there is a broad range of other species types found across the Site, including evergreen varieties as well as broadleaved, recorded both as individual specimens and groups. The varied range of species across the Site is complementary of the rural environment and typical of open countryside. Riparian species are present along watercourses and water bodies which include alder and willow types.
- 12.128 On the whole, the surveyed tree cover is largely in good physical and structural condition. The exceptions being largely limited to scattered trees and groups across the Site, where the effects of maturing ages and adverse weather conditions have had their natural effect and where formal management has been absent. In these instances, these trees and groups are showing various signs of decline and reduced quality. Despite this, by virtue of the overall maturity of the tree cover and its positive visual influence, it is contributing significantly to the local landscape.

## Topography

### Context

- 12.129 The Site occupies a relatively flat and low lying position within a broader and gently undulating landscape, with more distinctive and higher ground and slopes to the east at Cannock and Cannock Chase and more varied, elevated and rolling land to the west beyond Brewood. Figure 12.5 illustrates the topography of the Site and its context. To the north of the Site the land is similarly low lying with more localised variations associated with a number of minor watercourses. To the south of the Site the land is similarly low lying with minor variations then rises and slopes steepen towards the south east and the settlements at Shareshill and Great Saredon.
- 12.130 Approximately 1.5 – 2 km to the west of the Site and the A449 lies the River Penk which flows from south to north and occupies a gentle valley landform.
- 12.131 The Site lies at around 98 – 108 metres Above Ordnance datum (AOD). The centre of Cannock to the east of the Site and east of the M6 motorway lies at around 140 – 150m AOD, with the northern extent of the settlement area (Pye Green) rising to over 200m AOD where it borders the Cannock Chase AONB. The western edge of Cannock (east of Hatherton) rises from around 120m to 160m AOD and Shoal Hill (within the AONB) is at around 130 – 175m AOD on this edge of Cannock.
- 12.132 Within the broader context of the Site, other settlements are typically situated at the following levels:
- Brewood 95 – 115 m AOD
  - Penkridge 80 – 95 m AOD
  - Coven 90 – 100 m AOD
  - Shareshill 120 – 135 m AOD
  - Featherstone 120 – 135 m AOD

### Local and Site

- 12.133 The Site is relatively flat yet has a general cross fall from east to west and some localised variations and minor undulations, generally in the north and west. The land generally falls from around 108m AOD in the east around Vicarage Rd to around 97.5m AOD on the Site's western boundary with the A449. The land is generally and relatively flatter and slightly more elevated to the east of the canal, although this area does include the temporary changes to the landform arising from the mineral workings.
- 12.134 East of the canal the land typically lies between 104 – 108m AOD, with the relatively lower lying land alongside and close to the canal. Along the northern boundary and adjoining the A5 the land at the Site's boundary is typically at 104 – 105m AOD and along Vicarage Rd it is typically at 105.5 – 108m AOD.
- 12.135 West of the canal, the landform is relatively more varied, yet these changes are still localised and not pronounced, even within the more immediate context of the Site. West of Croft Lane the land typically lies at 104 – 105m AOD before it falls and rises gently towards the rail line. Alongside the rail corridor in this north western part of the Site the land varies between 100 – 103.5m AOD and the rail line extends through this part of the Site predominantly in cutting.
- 12.136 West of the rail line and north of Gravelly Way the land generally falls towards the west as part of a shallow valley, with land in the northern and southern parts of this area relatively higher than that in the central part. The low point of the Site lies alongside the A449 boundary on the western edge at around 97.5m AOD, with land in the north west corner (close to Gailey Roundabout) and along Gravelly Way at around 102.5m AOD.
- 12.137 South of Gravelly Way the land undulates gently with a slight fall towards the south west. Across this area the land generally falls from 103 – 100m AOD.

## Visual Receptors and Existing Views

- 12.138 A detailed visual appraisal has been undertaken for the Proposed Development. The baseline appraisal explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area, existing available views towards the Site and the approximate visibility of the Site from surrounding receptors. Figure 12.8 contains a series of representative photo viewpoints (viewpoint locations are identified on Figure 12.7) of available views towards the Site. The location of visual receptors with potential views towards the Site and the Proposed Development are detailed on Figures 12.9 and 12.10. Further details of the existing views and the likely effects of the Proposed Development on these views and the visual receptors are included in the subsequent Potential Effects section.

## Sensitive receptors

### Existing Sensitive Receptors

#### *Landscape*

- 12.139 The baseline section confirms the following sensitive receptors that may be affected by the Proposed Development. These comprise the following:
- The character of the landscape – on both a Site wide and broader contextual basis. This will include consideration of any effects upon the following:
    - National Character Areas - within which the Site is located or sits within close proximity;
    - County scale Landscape Character Types/ Areas;
    - District Landscape Sensitivity Study for Employment Site Allocations - Land Cover Parcels (LCP's);



- Site and immediate context;
- Cannock Chase AONB landscape; including its special qualities and setting. The AONB lies approximately 3km to the east of the Site;
- Somerford Park to the south west of the Site;
- Community Forest of Mercia; and
- The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.
- Landscape features of the Site, including:
  - Local landform/ topography;
  - Woodland, trees and hedgerows; and
  - Ponds and water features, including the canal.

### Visual

- Residents – including principally those in properties within or surrounding the Site. These comprise residents in the following settlements and locations:
  - on Croft Lane;
  - along both sides of the A5(T) (along the northern boundary of the Site) and close to the north of this road;
  - close to the west and south-west corner of the Site on Station Drive and the A449;
  - along and around Vicarage Road and Straight Mile to the south and south east;
  - at Calf Heath to the south east; and
  - other residents of properties in the wider area with potential views towards the Proposed Development; including at Coven, Brewood, Shareshill, Hatherton and from the edge of Cannock to the east of the Site.
- Users of the canal and the canal towpath;
- Users of Calf Heath Reservoir (including sailors and anglers);
- Users of Public Rights of Way (PROW) and any others with potential views towards the Proposed Development;
- Users of existing employment and commercial facilities;
- Users of Rodbaston College to the north of the Site;
- Users of the surrounding roads; and
- Visitors/ users of the Cannock Chase AONB, particularly visitors/ users of Shoal Hill

### New Sensitive Receptors

12.140 No new sensitive receptors for assessment will be introduced to the Site by the Proposed Development.

## Potential Effects

### Demolition and Construction

12.141 Construction phase details of the project are included in Chapter 4 of the ES and include the indicative phasing or sequencing of the works.

12.142 Throughout the course of the construction process, the approaches and methodologies adopted will seek to avoid or minimise any unnecessary effects upon the landscape and surrounding visual receptors. For example, the location and design of temporary site compounds, lighting, signage and perimeter mounding and screen fencing have or will all

take these issues into account. Combined with effective project management and close liaison and communication with the relevant authorities and stakeholders, the potential landscape and visual effects of construction will be mitigated and minimised as far as practicable.

12.143 The proposed phasing and sequencing of the works have been carefully considered in terms of the potential landscape and visual effects. Where practicable and beneficial, the formation of perimeter mounding and associated planting will be undertaken prior to development on an adjoining or nearby development plot. Early formation of mounding and associated planting will be undertaken where practicable, however in most instances the formation of the proposed mounding is linked to the formation of the development plot plateaus, as part of a sustainable earthworks strategy.

12.144 This approach seeks to balance cut and fill material across the Site and as a result the perimeter mounding proposals will generally be formed using soils from the adjoining or other nearby development plots (on Site). Where this occurs it will not be possible to form the mounding and undertake any planting significantly in advance of the built development works. However, once the proposed mounding is formed any associated planting will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity within the planting season. This approach represents part of a sustainable strategy that will seek to minimise disruption and disturbance as a result of the necessary earthworks.

12.145 Where planting and habitat creation proposals are not linked to other earthworks and drainage works, there will be opportunities to undertake some of these works in advance or early in a particular phase of development. The indicative phasing of the Proposed Development has considered the implications of the construction effects and will bring forward some landscape areas in advance of the nearest development plots (including parts of the proposed Community Parks) in order to mitigate effects and maintain landscape and wildlife connectivity. These areas include a broad landscape corridor between the retained parts of Calf Heath Wood and Calf Heath Reservoir and a further landscape corridor to the south of Calf Heath Wood and the area of Calf Heath Community Park to the south of Straight Mile. The precise sequence will depend upon occupier requirements and therefore the definitive phasing is to be agreed with the SSDC post approval, controlled by a requirement.

12.146 As detailed earlier in the ES, the Proposed Development is anticipated to be constructed over approximately a 15 year period. The landscape and visual effects during Demolition and Construction as stated below represent the worst case scenario for each receptor. It will be the case that for periods and in some instances large periods during construction the effects upon the receptors will be lower than those stated.

### Landscape

12.147 The predicted construction effects are considered with reference to the published landscape character assessments, designated landscapes, local landscape character and Site specific landscape features and components. In landscape terms, the effects arising from construction would generally reflect the overall change to the landscape character of the Site and loss of landscape features and resources as outlined in the following 'Operational Effects' section.

#### *Published Landscape Character Assessment Studies*

In the context of the national scale landscape character assessment study covering extensive landscape tracts as defined by the National Character Areas (NCA`s), the construction of the Proposed Development will have contained implications and effects on the identified National Character Areas. At the county scale of assessment the effects will be relatively greater, yet these will still occur over relatively localised parts of the more extensive landscape character areas or types. In these terms and at these scales, the wider



and indirect construction effects of the Proposed Development will dissipate with distance from the Site.

- 12.148 The progressive nature of the construction works will have a direct effect upon the south eastern part of the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA 61 (national scale) and upon parts of the Ancient Clay Farmlands and Settled Heathlands Landscape Character Types (county scale).
- 12.149 Other more limited and broader indirect effects will occur over the adjoining landscape character areas and types. These include the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau NCA 66 and the Cannock Chase and Cank Wood NCA 67 (national scale) and Settled Plateau farmland Slopes Landscape Character Type (county scale).
- 12.150 The landscape effects arising during the construction period upon all of these defined character areas and types will vary. Given the large scale and extent of most of these landscapes, the effects will be largely concentrated across the area including and surrounding the Site (up to a distance of approximately 3-5km). The existing presence of active major infrastructure (M6 Motorway, A5, A449, West Coast Mainline (WCML) and Rodbaston Wind Turbines) settlement (notably, Cannock to the east) and industrial uses (Four Ashes Industrial Estate, Veolia ERF and SI Works) within this locality will moderate the construction landscape effects of the Proposed Development, at these scales.
- 12.151 The construction effect of the Proposed Development upon these published Landscape Character Types and Areas will vary and at this scale will be up to **Minor Adverse** for those directly affected.

#### South Staffordshire (Landscape Sensitivity Study for Employment Site Allocations)

- 12.152 The construction of the Proposed Development will directly affect three Land Cover Parcels (LCP's) identified in this study and described in the Baseline Conditions section (See also Figure 12.2). These LCP's and the effects of the Proposed Development during the construction phase will be as follows:

##### LCP FAE01:

- 12.153 LCP FAE01 occupies land in the west of the Site sandwiched between the A449 and the WCML. For assessment purposes the area of land (within the Site) immediately to the north of this LCP and stretching up to the A5 is included within consideration of this LCP. This LCP includes land within the western portion of the Site (Development Zones A1 and A2, as shown on the Development Zones Parameter Plan (Document 2.5)).
- 12.154 Construction of the Proposed Development will entail the phased removal of existing trees and hedgerows across much of this LCP, although the majority of those to the A449 and A5 roadside boundaries will be conserved and other trees and hedgerows will be conserved in the south of the Site (towards Station Drive).
- 12.155 Landform changes will also occur with 'cut and fill' earthworks used to form level development plots and rail sidings and areas. This will entail changes to the existing ground levels, with the majority of the changes for the development plot areas occurring within a range of up to approximately 3 metres above or below the existing ground levels. There will be some cut and fill depths in excess of this level, yet these changes will occur in relatively discrete areas and are not representative of the overall changes. There will also be increases in excess of 3 metres for the proposed mounding. Further details on the earthworks are detailed in Chapter 5 of this ES.
- 12.156 As with the removal of any existing trees and hedgerows, the earthworks proposals will be phased and generally undertaken early in the respective identified phase.
- 12.157 Direct change to the character of this LCP will arise from the loss of the existing trees and hedgerows and farmland and from the landform changes as part of the Earthworks Strategy. The formation of perimeter mounding to the adjoining roadsides and subsequent planting of these mounds and the progressive construction of the proposed building(s) and

associated service yards and car parking and the rail infrastructure will have a significant influence over the character of this LCP throughout the construction period.

- 12.158 The magnitude of landscape change upon LCP FAE01 during the construction period will be High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

##### LCP FAE02:

- 12.159 This LCP covers much of the central part of the Site, including a stretch of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Calf Heath Wood and Calf Heath Reservoir. For assessment purposes the area of land (within the Site) immediately to the north west of this LCP and contained by the A5 and rail line are included within consideration of this LCP. This LCP includes land within Development Zones A4, A5 and A6, as shown on the Development Zone Parameters Plan (Document 2.5).
- 12.160 Direct construction effects will include the phased loss of open farmland and removal of existing hedgerows, trees and other vegetation. The mineral workings site will also be replaced during the construction period. The latter lies predominantly within Development Zone A4, yet also with an area (immediately to the north of Vicarage Rd) in Development Zone A5 of the Proposed Development.
- 12.161 Approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood will be removed during development of Development Zone A4. This will comprise much of the central and northern parts of the existing wood. These parts of the wood are predominantly coniferous plantation and of relatively less interest than the conserved part of the wood to the south. The conserved area of wood includes a greater proportion of broadleaved and more mixed species. For further detail on the loss of the woodland and its significance, refer to the Arboricultural Assessment at Technical Appendix 12.7 and Chapter 10: Ecology and Nature Conservation, of this ES.
- 12.162 Significant new woodland and tree planting will be undertaken, including the creation of a broad wooded corridor to the north-east of the retained part of the wood and extending towards Calf Heath Reservoir, within 5 years of the commencement of the Proposed Development, or prior to commencement of development at Development Zones A4a or A4b, whichever is sooner.
- 12.163 Despite the direct loss of woodland, trees and hedgerows a notable number will also be conserved and protected during the construction stage. These will include other smaller areas of woodland and a notable number of trees and hedgerows in the land to the west of the canal, around the reservoir and in the east of the LCP and along the canal corridor.
- 12.164 The existing landform is generally flat and the primary changes to the landform during the construction stage will be largely confined to the formation of some mounding to the east of the canal and along the northern part of the LCP and to formation of the development plot levels. Given the generally flat nature of this LCP the plot level changes are likely to be limited and the scale and extent of the proposed mounding also limited and localised in landform terms.
- 12.165 In addition to the direct and indirect landscape changes arising from the loss of existing landscape features and uses, the progressive construction of the proposed building(s) and associated service yards and car parking and the access roads through the Site will have a significant influence over the character of this LCP throughout the construction period.
- 12.166 The magnitude of landscape change upon LCP FAE02 during the construction period will be High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

##### LCPFAE03:

- 12.167 LCPFAE03 encompasses land to the south and south-east of Vicarage Road, extending southwards to the canalside and Calf Heath (including Development Zone A7). Construction

landscape effects upon this LCP will arise from the direct loss of farmland, trees and hedgerows and indirectly from the presence and influence of the proposals on this landscape. This LCP includes land within the proposed Calf Heath Community Park. There will be no discernible loss of existing trees or hedgerows within this LCP until Calf Heath Community Park is being established.

- 12.168 Existing trees and hedgerows along Vicarage Road and Stable Lane to the east and in the southern part of this LCP will be largely conserved where these lie within the Site. Some limited stretches of hedgerows and trees along Vicarage Rd will be removed to facilitate access from the existing road into the Site to the south. Two hedgerows (including mature hedgerow trees and ponds) that extend south eastwards from Vicarage Rd will also be predominantly conserved as part of the Proposed Development. These will be protected during the course of construction on this part of the Site. Other trees and hedgerows that extend south-eastwards from Vicarage Rd will however be removed during construction.
- 12.169 The existing landform on Site is generally flat and the primary changes to the landform during the construction stage will be largely confined to the formation of some mounding to the southern perimeter of the built development. Given the generally flat nature of this LCP, the plot level changes will create some obvious localised interruptions and changes, with slopes and banks extending between different development plots and surrounding areas. The progressive introduction of the associated mounding will also introduce some notable localised changes to the landform. These features will be predominantly up to 4.5 – 6.0m above proposed plots levels but in limited places will be up to 8.0m high.
- 12.170 The construction effects of these landform changes will be notable at a localised and Site wide scale yet not across the wider landscape and topography.
- 12.171 The only direct construction effects that will arise for this LCP to the south of Straight Mile will arise from the formation of part of the Calf Heath Community Park. These works will entail the creation of wetland areas, footpath and new habitats. A potential small car park may also be included as part of the park proposals. All of the effects arising from these construction stage changes will be limited and localised.
- 12.172 The magnitude of landscape change upon LCP FAE03 will be High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

### *Designated Landscapes*

#### Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 12.173 The Site is not situated within the AONB yet there are views to/ from its south-western extent on the north-western edge of Cannock. The special qualities of the AONB landscape include its views and maintaining these are considered by the AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 to be one of many issues affecting this designated landscape.
- 12.174 The Proposed Development will have no direct construction effect upon the AONB landscape yet it will have an influence over its very south westerly extent and over views to and from this part of the AONB landscape. The construction effects upon views are addressed in the Visual Effects section. The influence of the construction stage of the Proposed Development will be limited to the south west corner of the AONB and the visible activities and emerging form of the Proposed Development will form one of a number of active and large scale infrastructure and development in this context (including the settlement of Cannock, M6 Motorway, Veolia ERF, Rodbaston Wind Turbines, Four Ashes Industrial Estate etc.).
- 12.175 The indirect construction landscape effects have been considered by reference to the special qualities and character of the AONB and the identified LCA`s within the AONB Management Plan as follows:

#### Open Hills and Heaths LCA – Heathland:

- 12.176 Construction activity will affect the views to surrounding countryside (identified as one of the special qualities of the *'Open Hills and Heaths LCA - Heathland'*) from a very limited

part of the south-western extent of the AONB. In the context of the special qualities for this LCA, it is relevant to note that the expansive and long ranging views from this far south-western part of the AONB are different in nature to the more characteristic *'sweeping views'* over *'large tracts of open heathland'* and *'wide expanse of heather and scattered birch'* as identified as a special quality of the *'Open Hills and Heaths – Heathland'* LCA.

- 12.177 The nature of the existing views from Shoal Hill and elevated positions at the south-western extent of the AONB are nevertheless an important quality of this part of the AONB. Where present, these views are generally expansive and varied in character.
- 12.178 Beyond the views, the other identified special qualities of this LCA are focussed on the large tracts of open heathland; enclosure of dark green edges to the adjoining conifer plantations; seasonal colour; and tranquillity/ remoteness. These qualities and characteristics stretch throughout much of the AONB yet are less pertinent to its very south-western extent and the broader landscape setting of the AONB in this direction.
- 12.179 Construction of the Proposed Development will have no more than a Minor Adverse indirect effect upon these special qualities of the LCA.

#### Open Hills and Heaths LCA – Forest:

- 12.180 Construction of the Proposed Development will have no more than a Negligible indirect landscape effect upon the special qualities of this LCA, which are focussed upon the more ordered pattern of conifer forests and impressions of enclosure and wooded horizons.

#### Clay Estatelands LCA

- 12.181 The landscape character and special qualities of this LCA include the *'Foreground vista up to the Cannock Chase edge'* and long views both to and across neighbouring landscapes. In relation to the Site there is however only a small part of this LCA (See AONB Management Plan Figure 3 within Technical Appendix 12.3) occupying the rising farmland slopes to the east of Hatherton Hall.

- 12.182 Construction of the Proposed Development will have no more than a Negligible indirect effect upon the qualities and characteristics of this limited part of the LCA.

#### Designed Parklands LCA

- 12.183 This LCA recognises the historical significance of a number of historic buildings and parklands within the AONB including Hatherton Hall. The AONB Management Plan recognises that this particular existing parkland has deteriorated in quality. This defined landscape is relatively enclosed and separated from the Site by a combination of its lower lying position, landform variations and intervening planting and features.

- 12.184 Construction of the Proposed Development will have no more than a Minor Adverse indirect landscape effect upon the parkland landscape of Hatherton Hall.

#### AONB Summary

- 12.185 Construction of the Proposed Development will progressively introduce a new active and large scale scheme into the context of this corner of the AONB. The vast majority of the lower level construction activity will not however be visible from the AONB landscape and will have no influence over this landscape. This will include the earthworks and construction of the roads and below ground services etc. All of these types of work will be effectively screened by the lower lying wooded context of the Site. The visible elements during the construction stage will be largely confined to the construction of the higher parts of the buildings, involving the use of construction cranes. Consequently the most notable influence over the AONB landscape is likely to occur at the height of building construction activity.

- 12.186 At that stage, this activity will represent a new large scale active influence in the context of this corner of the AONB. It will form a significant element in the landscape context west of the M6 motorway and will progressively over the construction period add to the existing urban and industrial uses present in this landscape. It will have an indirect effect upon the character of a very limited part of the AONB.



12.187 The overall magnitude of landscape change upon the Cannock Chase AONB will be Low/ Negligible, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

#### *Registered Parks and Gardens*

12.188 There will be no direct or indirect landscape construction effect upon Chillington Registered Park and Garden. For further details on this Registered Park and Garden, refer to Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage.

#### *Community Forests*

12.189 Construction of the Proposed Development will result in the removal of approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood and other hedgerow and trees across the Site. These existing woodland areas, trees and other habitats will be progressively removed during the course of the construction stage. This will have an adverse impact upon this broad Community Forest area. The significance of the effect upon woodland areas and trees is assessed under 'Site Landscape Features' and as part of the Arboricultural Assessment. (Technical Appendix 12.7)

#### *Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal*

12.190 The landscape character of the canal will change to varying degrees during the construction period. The most notable change will arise when there is construction activity in relatively close proximity to the canal corridor and when the new vehicular road crossing is constructed close to the existing Gravelly Way Bridge.

12.191 There will be limited direct construction effects upon the immediate canalside landscape. Disturbance will occur and existing planting will be removed to facilitate construction of the new bridge crossing and there may be other minor direct disturbance as part of the drainage proposals. However, the latter would result in no more than a very limited and localised effect.

12.192 Construction of the bridge crossing will have a direct effect upon a limited area of canalside planting and indirectly upon the character of a short stretch of the canal corridor. The proposed bridge location is close to the existing bridge crossing and the northern extents of the existing Bericote Development and the SI Works. The location of the proposed bridge is also relatively enclosed and consequently the temporary effects upon the landscape character of the canal will be contained and localised.

12.193 The magnitude of change upon the landscape features and character of the canal will be Medium/ High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** landscape effect during construction.

#### *Site Landscape – Character*

12.194 A description of the character of the Site landscape is provided in the Baseline section. It should be noted that the Site landscape broadly aligns with the three Land Cover Parcels (LCP's) considered in the South Staffordshire Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Employment Site Allocations. Consequently, the assessment of the effects upon the relevant South Staffordshire LCP's also provides the construction effects of the Proposed Development upon the Site landscape. Consequently, this section provides an overview of the effects upon the character of the Site landscape.

12.195 Construction of the Proposed Development will result in some progressive and notable changes to the landscape character of the Site and its immediate context. The construction works will entail the active presence of plant and machinery, site compounds, temporary access routes and the increasing presence of the buildings and the highway and rail infrastructure.

12.196 The influence of the existing mix of farmland, mineral workings, woodland, industry and other landscape features will progressively change or be replaced and become dominated

by the phased construction of the proposals. Initial works will entail site clearance and the removal of some trees, hedgerows and other vegetation and would then generally be followed by earthworks activities (and the formation of the development plateaus) utilities and highway related works.

12.197 Given the phased nature of the Proposed Development, these works will take place progressively across the Site and will not occur at the same time across the Site as a whole. At the start of the construction process the effects will be more localised and concentrated across the first phase yet as the Proposed Development progresses, the direct landscape effects and construction influences will extend more broadly across the Site.

12.198 The construction stage will progressively result in new large scale buildings and infrastructure being sited within and dominating the Site landscape. The protection and conservation of woodland, trees and hedgerows as part of the construction process will be important and will assist in limiting some of the more indirect influences arising from construction across the Site's context and along the canal corridor.

12.199 The magnitude of the change arising from construction of the Proposed Development upon the character of the Site landscape will be High resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

#### *Site Landscape Features*

##### *Landform*

12.200 As part of the construction process, the Site landform will be progressively altered to create the required development plateau's, perimeter mounds and earthworks and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) balancing ponds and features.

12.201 The proposed earthworks will be extensive across the Site yet the scope of the level changes is more contained due to the relatively flat nature of the Site. The construction works will entail the re-modelling of the ground to form generally flat plots or plateaus for the proposed employment buildings, intermodal rail area. The earthworks will combine "cut" and "fill" operations, with the majority of the development plots occupying levels within a range of up to approximately 3 metres above or below existing ground levels. In some areas the extent of the level changes will be greater than 3 metres, including within the existing minerals site.

12.202 Around parts of the Site's perimeter, the edges of some of the development plots and close to the east of the canal, there will be some mounding features formed as part of the design approach to mitigating potential landscape and visual effects. Sustainable Drainage features comprising landscaped swales and ponds will also be formed at a number of locations across the Site yet principally towards the centre and in the vicinity of the canal.

12.203 The mounding proposals will be typically 4.5 – 6 metres above the nearest development plot levels and could extend up to 8 metres above in some places along the northern Site boundary and to the east of the canal. The mounding proposals will include varying slope profiles, gradients and heights to assist in assimilating them as effectively as possible with the existing landscape. The outer facing and more publicly visible slopes will generally include gentler gradients and more variations. A series of landscape cross sections are included at Figure 12.12 that illustrates the design approach to be adopted for the mounding and associated landscape proposals.

12.204 The earthworks proposals will result in extensive yet largely localised and contained changes to the landform characteristics across the Site. The magnitude of landscape change upon the Site's landform will be Medium/ High, resulting in a **Moderate Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

##### *Woodland, Trees and other Hedgerows*

12.205 Details of those to be removed or retained are included within the Arboricultural Assessment which is included at Technical Appendix 12.7. Summary Schedules detailing the



approximate extent of conserved, removed and proposed planting and habitats are included in Technical Appendix 12.9.

- 12.206 Careful attention has been paid throughout the design process to minimise as far as practicable the potential effects upon woodland, trees and hedgerows as part of a balanced and well considered development solution. Whilst the construction of the Proposed Development will result in the loss of a notable number of woodland areas, trees and hedgerows, a notable number will also be conserved and protected during the construction stage.
- 12.207 For a proposed development of this scale and nature, tree and hedgerow losses are inevitable. However, considerable effort has been made to incorporate as many of the existing trees and hedgerows as practicable thus limiting losses, as it is recognised that the Site's existing tree cover is a valuable local asset in landscape, biodiversity and arboriculture terms. The conserved woodland, trees and hedgerows are shown on the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan (Document 2.7).
- 12.208 The construction process will result in the phased and progressive removal of woodland, trees and hedgerows, at the same time as there will be phased and progressive new woodland tree and hedgerow planting. The strongest concentration of existing woodland, trees and other planting within Development Zones A2 and A3 lies close to the canal corridor and within the proposed Croft Lane Community Park and the vast majority of this will be conserved. This includes a number of transitional veteran trees.
- 12.209 Other wooded areas, trees and hedgerows will be lost during this initial construction phase, including, hedgerows and hedgerow trees to the east of the canal in the north-east part of the Site and the small wooded area and trees in the north-west of the Site close to the A449. Extensive new native woodland, tree and hedgerow planting will also be undertaken including, notably around the Site's perimeter, along the Canal corridor, within the Croft Lane Community Park and between Calf Heath Wood and Calf Heath Reservoir in Development Zone A4.
- 12.210 This will deliver a net increase in native planting across this area and will be implemented and establishing in advance of subsequent construction phases.
- 12.211 Construction of Development Zone A4 will include the removal of approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood (a predominantly coniferous plantation), with only very limited other planting losses. This will represent a notable loss of existing woodland from the Site, although in landscape and visual terms this needs to be set alongside its existing contribution and value which is localised and the new native woodland and broader planting proposals which will provide an overall net increase in tree cover.
- 12.212 In the context of Calf Heath Wood, it is also relevant to note that in considering the potential for employment development in the area of the Site containing the existing wood, the South Staffordshire Landscape Sensitivity Study stated (for LCP FAE02) '*...it appears to have limited intrinsic biodiversity or historic value' and '...it would be desirable to maintain parts of the Calf Heath Wood plantation...*' This study acknowledged the lower value of the woodland, yet the benefit of being able to retain at least part of it.
- 12.213 The Proposed Development will also include new native planting as part of the Calf Heath Community Park to the south of Straight Mile.
- 12.214 The majority of the existing planting losses during the construction of Development Zones A1, A5, A6 and A7 will consist of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with no woodland losses.
- 12.215 The loss of veteran trees during the construction period will total 4 (of 11) true veterans and 5 (of 25) future or transitional veterans, Thus the majority of true veteran and future or transitional veteran trees will be conserved. Those to be removed will mitigated for through a range of measures, including; propagation of hard wood cuttings and growing acorns from retained specimens (in order to retain the local oak gene pool); strategically planting these trees to form new veteran tree communities / habitats in close proximity to

retained specimens; and retaining large sections of felled trunks close to retained specimens (for their biodiversity and ecological connectivity benefits).

- 12.216 The single identified native black poplar will be removed as part of the Development Zone A4 construction works. This tree is in poor condition and the strategy to propagate from it and to plant clonal cuttings at appropriate locations around the Site is beneficial. The replanting of these propagated specimens will also be undertaken within the Development Zone A4.
- 12.217 The magnitude of landscape change upon the Site's woodland, trees and hedgerows will be Medium/ High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

#### Water Features and Watercourses

- 12.218 There are a limited number of water features across the Site, comprising a number of field ponds and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. These features are considered in ecological, heritage and drainage terms in other Chapters.
- 12.219 Careful attention has been paid throughout the design process to minimise the potential effects upon the ponds and canal. Construction of the Proposed Development will have a limited effect upon these existing water features, with the majority of the ponds being conserved. With the exception of any relatively small scale drainage works relating to the canal and the requirements for the vehicular bridge crossing to the canal there will be no other works that will have a direct effect upon the canal.
- 12.220 The magnitude of landscape change upon the Site's water features and watercourses will be Low/ Negligible, resulting in a **Minor Adverse/ Negligible** effect during construction of the Proposed Development.

#### Visual

- 12.221 A comprehensive visual impact assessment of the Proposed Development has been undertaken to determine the potential effects upon surrounding receptors. This has considered the specific effects arising during the construction stage and as a result of the likely phasing of the Proposed Development.
- 12.222 A series of photo viewpoints, photomontages (for the completed development), related plans and a Visual Effects Table are included and collectively detail and support the description of the likely visual effects arising from construction of the Proposed Development. The following are included and should be referenced alongside the following description of visual effects:
- Figures 12.7 & 12.8 Photo Viewpoints and plan showing the location of the Photo Viewpoints;
  - Figure 12.9 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV);
  - Figure 12.10 Visual Receptors; and
  - Technical Appendix 12.6 Visual Effects Table.

#### Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- 12.223 The ZTV of the Proposed Development is described fully under the Operational Development section. During the construction stage, the visible extent of the Proposed Development will vary quite considerably subject to the nature of the construction works and the location of these within the Site.
- 12.224 For construction stage works relating to the earthworks and drainage proposals, below ground services and utilities, roads and highway infrastructure and landscape and Green Infrastructure proposals, the resultant visibility will generally be contained and localised. The existing immediate context of the Site includes a good proportion of mature woodland

and trees, existing industrial development and the M6 Motorway corridor and localised variations in the landform.

- 12.225 These features and factors combine to limit the visibility of these lower level construction activities and it is unlikely that any of these works will be distantly visible.
- 12.226 Construction of the buildings and in particular the higher parts of the buildings will however be more widely visible. The visible extent of the higher parts of the buildings (including the rail gantry cranes) under construction will generally reflect the ZTV for the completed Proposed Development as detailed on Figure 12.9. However, this may be temporarily extended during the construction period by the use of cranes that are likely to extend to heights above the maximum building heights.

#### *Effects upon Visual Receptors*

- 12.227 Given the nature and phasing of the Proposed Development, the visual effects arising from its construction will vary throughout this stage. Construction activities and plant movements within the Site will be visible at times from all of those receptors with views towards the completed and operational development.
- 12.228 In general, the clearest views towards the construction activities and plant movements etc. will be experienced by residents and users of those properties, roads, rights of way and other receptors in closest proximity and with the clearest existing views towards the Site. More distant views will also be possible to construction activity, although in many instances these views will be limited to the construction of the frames and higher parts of the building(s) as described above.
- 12.229 The significance of the visual effects for all of the receptors will vary during the course of construction and will generally be most notable during construction of those works closest to the respective receptor, including the formation of some of the mounding proposals. At these times, the significance of the visual effects arising for some receptors is likely to exceed those resulting from the completed and operational development, although these construction visual effects will only occur for a temporary period.
- 12.230 The sequencing and phasing of the development has been considered with regard to the potential visual effects. The formation and planting of the perimeter mounding, once completed and particularly to the north and west of the Site will help to restrict and screen some of the closest views towards the lower level construction activities.
- 12.231 The effects of the Proposed Development upon visual receptors are detailed in the Visual Effects Table (Technical Appendix 12.6). The following summarises the visual effects during construction of the Proposed Development. Receptor references are included in brackets and refer to the Visual Effects Table and the location of the Visual Receptors on Figures 12.9.
- 12.232 The indicative phasing of the Proposed Development has been taken into account in determining the visual effects during the construction period and the assessment recognises that parts of the Proposed Development will be completed and operational at the same time as other parts are still under construction or have not yet commenced construction on Site.

#### *Settlement and Properties*

- 12.233 The most significant views during construction will be for those properties with the clearest existing Site views immediately surrounding the Site. These will include properties on Croft lane, the A5 (along the northern Site boundary), the A449, Station Drive, Vicarage Rd and Straight Mile. For the majority of these properties, views will be possible towards construction activity and the building(s) under construction where these are closest to the respective properties. More extensive views of construction activity across the Site are unlikely from the majority of these properties, although the phasing of the Proposed Development will mean that the nature of the views will change throughout the construction works.

- 12.234 For many of these properties surrounding the Site perimeter the nature of the visual effects will be similar with views initially towards site clearance and earthworks operations prior to the construction of building(s) and other infrastructure. The earthworks operation will include the formation of the mounding proposals, which for some of these properties will be in close proximity. Following formation and planting of the mounding proposals, much of the lower level construction activity will be screened by the intervening mounding where present.
- 12.235 Views towards construction of the buildings and in particular the higher parts of the building(s) will however generally be visible above and beyond existing conserved woodland, trees and hedgerows and the proposed mounding and planting.
- 12.236 For the properties at Gailey Marina and on Croft Lane (Receptors R1 – R5) and along the A5 (R6 - R12) on the northern edge of the Site, there will be views to varying degrees principally across construction activities in the northern half of the Site. The conservation of existing roadside and canalside trees, hedgerows and other planting will offer some visual screening and filtering, most notably for the lower activities and during the summer, yet views will generally be possible to all stages of construction.
- 12.237 The sequencing of the proposals across the Development Zones A2, A3 and A4 will have some implications at a detailed scale upon the duration and nature of some of the visual effects. In most instances, proposed mounding and associated planting relating to the adjacent warehousing units will be effective in screening the lower level construction activity and previously constructed warehouse units once in place. From a number of positions and properties however, there will be the potential for some construction activity and warehouse units to be more visible due to the later sequencing of the proposed mounding and planting.
- 12.238 For example, this could potentially arise for properties on Croft Lane with views westwards (Receptors R4 and R5). Subject to the final sequencing of development within Development Zones A2, A3 and A4, these properties could potentially have views towards any completed development within Development Zone A2, west of the WCML before any development and associated mounding to the east of WCML in Development Zone A3 is constructed. In this instance, the construction visual effects will be relatively greater for a limited period during development of Development Zones A2, A3 and A4. This has been taken into account in the assessment of effects.
- 12.239 There is also the possibility that development within Development Zone A3 and the mounding to the east could proceed in advance of that within Development Zone A2. In this instance, the mounding and associated planting on the western edge of the Croft Lane Community Park will assist in screening the lower level construction activities for both the Zones east and west of the WCML.
- 12.240 Once in place the mounding and planting proposals adjacent to Development Zones A2, A3 and A4 will be effective in screening lower level construction activities across the area.
- 12.241 The significance of the visual effects upon these properties will be up to **Moderate/ Major Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development.
- 12.242 Along the western side of the Site are a small number of properties situated alongside or a short distance west of the A449 (R14 – R17). There will be views to varying degrees from these properties, principally across construction activities in the western part of the Site, between the A449 and rail line. Close clear views across the A449 will be possible from one property fronting directly on to this road and more restricted and limited views will be possible from other properties towards the construction activities.
- 12.243 Following construction of the mounding proposals situated immediately to the east of the conserved roadside hedgerow and trees, views towards lower level construction activity will be largely screened, although subsequently views will be possible towards the construction of the building(s).



- 12.244 As with the visual implications of the sequencing of warehouse units within the Development Zones A2, A3 and A4 upon views from Croft Lane, there will also be the potential for clearer views from the A449 properties towards the construction and operation of the development within Zone A3, east of the WCML should this be constructed in advance of that within Zone A2 to the west of the WCML. In this instance the construction visual effects will be relatively greater prior to construction of Zone A2. This has been taken into account on the assessment of effects.
- 12.245 At Station Drive, views towards construction activities will be relatively limited. There will be no views towards construction on the majority of the Site, including those areas to the east of the Four Ashes Industrial estate and across the northern half of the Site. Filtered views will however be possible to construction in the nearest part of the Site directly to the north (Zones A1, B and C) and potentially alongside the rail line.
- 12.246 Once the proposed mounding and planting within the Site to the north of these properties has been undertaken it will be effective in screening much of the construction activity associated with the rail area (Zones B and C) and warehouse units (Zone A1).
- 12.247 The significance of the visual effects upon the properties along and close to the western side of the A449 (R14 – R17) and on Station Drive (R19) will be **Major Adverse** for a single property and up to **Moderate/ Major Adverse** for a limited number of other properties on the A449 with the clearest views, and **Moderate Adverse** or **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** for other properties with more restricted views towards construction.
- 12.248 From four properties on Vicarage Rd and Straight Mile (R20 and R21) there will be close and clear views northwards towards construction of the Proposed Development. For the property on Vicarage Rd, this activity will be seen within an existing distinctly active and industrial context, although these influences are lessened in relation to the properties on Straight Mile.
- 12.249 The proposed warehouse units closest to these properties will be constructed as part of Development Zone A7, with intervening mitigation mounding and planting also being undertaken alongside this Development Zone. For the three properties on Straight Mile (R21) there will also be some more distant and filtered views towards construction of earlier Development Zones if these precede development within Development Zone A7. This will include views northwards towards construction of warehouse units north of Vicarage Rd (Development Zones A4 and A5).
- 12.250 The most notable visual effects for these properties will however arise during construction of Development Zone A7. This will include construction of the closest warehouse units and the formation of part of the Calf Heath Community Park (with mounding and planting). Pylon works will also be undertaken close to and between these properties immediately north of Straight Mile. These works will involve replacement of an existing pylon with a new pylon and associated compound.
- 12.251 Construction activities in relation to the properties on Straight Mile (R21) will be clearly visible to varying degrees throughout the development phases, although the most notable effects will arise during construction of Development Zone A7. The significance of the visual effects upon these properties will be up to **Major Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development, with the most significant visual effects arising during construction at Development Zone A7.
- 12.252 From Calf Heath, existing views in the general direction of the Site are limited and largely restricted by a combination of the orientation of the properties, landform variations and presence of mature woodland and trees, most notably along Woodland Lane and Stable Lane and to the south of Straight Mile.
- 12.253 Construction of the Proposed Development will be partially seen through the existing intervening woodland/ trees, yet where available views will be filtered (relatively less so in winter) towards construction activity south of Vicarage Rd. For any available views, it will be the initial site clearance and earthworks operations and the subsequent construction of the building(s) south of Vicarage Rd within Development Zone A7 that will be visible through the woodland and trees.
- 12.254 More limited and restricted views towards construction activities and units within other Development Zones will also be possible from a limited number of properties on Straight Mile, largely within winter. Where any views are possible, they will be more distant and still largely screened in winter by the existing intervening woodland and trees, principally along Woodlands Lane.
- 12.255 From the majority of properties in Calf Heath, including properties further south on Kings Rd and on Queens Rd there will be no views towards construction of the Proposed Development.
- 12.256 The significance of the visual effects upon those Calf Heath properties (R22) with the clearest views (albeit filtered by intervening woodland and trees) will be up to **Moderate Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development. For other properties with more restricted views (R23) the effects will be **Minor Adverse**.
- 12.257 More distant views towards construction of the Proposed Development will be possible from other settlement areas and properties within the wider context of the Site. During construction, the visible aspects of the Proposed Development will be largely limited to construction of the higher parts of the buildings with lower level construction activities generally screened by intervening woodland, trees and landform in these more distant views.
- 12.258 From the south and east, there will be some views from a relatively limited number of generally elevated locations and scattered properties at Shareshill (R32), Great Saredon (R33), and east of the motorway (R34). From the west there will be views some of the more elevated properties in the central and eastern side of Brewood (R29 and R30) and a limited number of properties/ locations on the eastern and north-eastern edge of Coven (R31) will have restricted and limited views.
- 12.259 From all of these settlement areas and locations in the wider landscape, views towards construction will largely be confined to the higher parts of the buildings and the associated use of construction cranes. Views towards the lower level construction activities including site clearance, earthworks, roads and building service yards and parking will be very effectively screened from these more distant locations by existing intervening woodland, trees and landform variations.
- 12.260 The significance of the visual effects upon these more distant settlement areas and properties, largely to the south and west of the Site will be up to **Minor/ Moderate Adverse**, although for the majority of properties at the identified settlements (e.g. Brewood, Coven and Shareshill) there will be no views towards construction of the Proposed Development and consequently no visual effects.
- 12.261 To the east of the M6 motorway, construction of the Proposed Development will not be visible from the vast majority of Cannock, including the majority of properties on the settlement edge. Elevated and distant views towards construction of the highest parts of the building(s) and associated construction cranes will however be possible from relatively limited locations and properties on the western edge of Cannock (R35), to the east of Hatherton.
- 12.262 For those properties with views, the Site occupies a wooded position on lower lying land beyond the M6 motorway and consequently, views towards any lower construction activity will be very restricted and generally unlikely due to the existing woodland and trees within and surrounding the Site and along the M6 corridor/ junction.
- 12.263 The significance of the visual effects upon those properties with any views towards construction will be **Minor Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development. For



the majority of properties at Cannock there will be no views towards construction of the Proposed Development and consequently no visual effects.

12.264 Other lower lying and distant views towards construction of the highest parts of the Proposed Development are likely from a relatively limited number of properties and locations at Hatherton (including Hatherton Hall) and Pillaton (to the east of Penkridge). No views towards construction of the Proposed Development have been identified from any properties or locations at Penkridge, approximately 2.5km to the north of the Site. Other limited scattered and more distant settlements and properties may have the potential for distant views towards construction of the very highest parts of the proposed building(s). In these instances, any activity is likely to be partially visible as part of a broad, varied and largely wooded context and any resultant visual effects are likely to be at most **Minor Adverse**.

#### Roads/ Highways

12.265 Views towards the construction of the Proposed Development will be possible from a number of roads surrounding the Site and within the wider landscape.

12.266 Construction of the Proposed Development will be seen from Croft Lane (H1), although views for users of this short minor road to the activities will be interrupted and restricted by existing intervening properties/ buildings. Development Zones A1-A4 of the Proposed Development lie to the east, west and south of the road, with the proposed Croft Lane Community Park situated immediately to the west and south of the road. At the height of the nearest construction activity, the significance of the visual effects upon these road users will be **Moderate/Major Adverse**.

12.267 Upon completion of the proposed development within Development Zones A1-A4, any potential views for Croft Lane users towards construction activities within the other Development Zones will be limited by the new intervening buildings and landscape and mounding proposals, including the proposed Community Park.

12.268 From the A5 (H2) and A449 (H3) to the north and west of the Site, there will be opportunities for close and clear views generally towards the nearest parts of the built development, the perimeter earthworks, the pylon replacement works and construction activity associated with the highways and access points. Along other stretches of these roads the views towards construction will be more screened and filtered by existing trees and hedgerows on the Site's perimeter. Views towards construction in the central and southern parts of the Site will also be notably more screened from these surrounding roads.

12.269 Development Zones A2, A3 and A4 of the Proposed Development all extend near to the Site boundary with the A5. Views towards construction activity, including formation of the mounding immediately south of the A5 would arise for road users during these works. However, once the mounding and associated planting is in place views beyond to construction would be notably more limited and there are unlikely to be any significant views towards construction activities in subsequent phases. Views towards the pylon works on the northern side of the A5 will also be possible for road users.

12.270 The significance of the visual effect upon users of the A5 where it extends alongside the Site will be up to **Moderate Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development, with the effects being most notable during construction activities in Development Zone A4.

12.271 For users of the A449, there will be close views towards different elements of construction within Development Zones A1, A2, B and C. Perimeter mounding and associated planting will be undertaken at different times alongside this road. Much of it will be undertaken as part of the Development Zone A1 works, although some perimeter mounding and planting south of the Gravelly Way junction may be undertaken as part of later phases. This is due to the relationship and timing of the ground remediation and earthworks strategies which encompass both the development plots and the perimeter mounding.

12.272 As a consequence and in advance of completion of the proposed perimeter roadside mounding south of Gravelly Way, there will be some more open views towards the rail area and construction activities for part of the construction period. However, this will only arise over a relatively short stretch of the A449 and only until this mounding is completed. During this time, there will be views for road users towards the rail area, including containers and potentially cranes (subject to the timing of installation). Subsequently, the rail area and components will be effectively screened by the mounding and proposed buildings.

12.273 The significance of the visual effect upon users of the A449 where it extends alongside the Site will be up to **Moderate Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development, with the effects being most notable during construction of Development Zones A1, A2, A3, B and C.

12.274 Views towards construction of the Proposed Development will also be possible to differing degrees from roads alongside and close to the south of the Site. These comprise Four Ashes Rd, Station Drive, Station Rd, Vicarage Rd and Straight Mile (H4 – H8). Most of the available views from these roads towards any construction activities are likely to see it in the context of the existing industrial estate, Veolia ERF and SI Works.

12.275 Views towards early construction activities in Development Zones A2, A3 and A4 will be more restricted and limited from these roads, though still possible from some positions. Construction activities in the southern part of the Site and in particular as part of development of Development Zones A5, A6 and A7 will result in the most notable effects for users of Vicarage Rd and Straight Mile. Users of Straight Mile will also have views towards the pylon works, which entail replacement of an existing pylon with a new pylon and associated compound. These works are located immediately north of Straight Mile.

12.276 The significance of the visual effects upon users of these roads will vary between **Minor and Moderate Adverse**, based upon the extent of the available views during construction of the Proposed Development. From some sections of some of these nearby roads there will be no views towards the construction activities.

12.277 From Woodlands Lane and Stable Lane (H9) close to the south east of the Site there will be generally filtered and restricted views towards construction activities primarily in the south east of the Site, south of Vicarage Rd. More broadly, there will be views towards construction of the Proposed Development from many other roads in the wider landscape surrounding the Site. In most instances, these views will be confined to relatively short stretches of mainly minor roads and will also be generally limited to construction of the higher parts of the proposed buildings. This construction activity is also likely to be seen in a wooded context and including elements of the Veolia ERF and SI Works.

12.278 The significance of the visual effects upon users of these roads within the wider landscape with any views towards the construction activity will be **Minor Adverse**. These effects will generally arise as part of construction of development within Development Zones A5, and A7, although very restricted views may also be possible of construction activity within the other Development Zones.

12.279 The M6 Motorway (H10) extends broadly north – south close to the eastern edge of the Site. This major road corridor and the associated Junction 12 include mature woodland and tree belts to both sides and this existing planting is notable in restricting clear views in the general direction of the Site. Towards the west the Veolia ERF and wind turbines are visible at breaks in the existing planting. Views from the M6 in the general direction of the Site are limited.

12.280 Construction of the highest parts of the proposed building(s) nearest to the motorway are likely to be briefly visible at a number of relatively short breaks in the existing roadside woodland/ planting. Where visible, construction of these higher parts of the nearest proposed building(s) will be seen in a wooded context and there are unlikely to be views from the motorway towards lower level construction activity.

12.281 The significance of the visual effects for users of the M6 motorway will be **Minor Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development.

Public Rights of Way (PROW), Public Open Space and Other Footpaths

12.282 Construction of the Proposed Development will be visible to varying extents and at varying times along the stretch of canal and towpath (P1) between north of the Site (east of Rodbaston College) and south of the Site (at Hatherton Marina, Calf Heath). In addition to views from the towpath, views for boat users (either travelling along the canal and/ or moored at locations along the canal) have been assessed. The nature and value of these views and the susceptibility to change of the boat users are considered to be comparable with the towpath users and therefore the following assessment applies to all of these canal users.

12.283 From north of the A5, construction activities will become increasingly visible approaching the Site from the north. In these views, it will initially be the higher parts of the building(s) closest to the A5 and east of the canal that will be most visible. These works in the northern part of the Site form part of Development Zone A4.

12.284 From Gailey Marina and the initial stretch of canal and towpath to the south of the A5, construction of the higher parts of the building(s) nearest to the east of the canal will be visible either above or through the existing and new trees and planting along the eastern side of the canal. Formation of the proposed mounding close to the east of the canal is also likely to be visible, although views towards these works are likely to be more filtered and restricted by the existing planting on the eastern side of the canal. Once in place this proposed mounding, in conjunction with the existing canalside planting will be effective in screening views towards and lower level construction activity to the east of the canal, including the access road. All of these construction works form part of Development Zones A2, A3 and A4 and it is works in these Development Zones that will have the most notable visual effects upon the canal users.

12.285 Views westwards from the towpath will be possible towards construction activities and construction of the new road bridge crossing to the canal will be clearly visible along a short stretch of the towpath either side of this proposed bridge. South of the new and retained canal bridges views towards construction of the Proposed Development will be limited due to the existing industrial uses and buildings to both sides of the canal.

12.286 More limited and restricted views will be possible from south of the Station Rd bridge, with the clearest views occurring for a short stretch of the towpath immediately to the east of Long Molls Bridge (south of Straight Mile) (VP7). From this position, construction of the higher parts of the building(s) south of Vicarage Rd in Development Zone A7 will be visible beyond intervening fields. The construction of the replacement pylon immediately north of Straight Mile will also be visible from this short stretch of the towpath. There would however, be limited views to any lower level construction activity. Any views towards construction activities from the towpath at and approaching Hatherton Marina are also likely to be limited and restricted.

12.287 Overall, the nature and significance of the visual effects for canal and towpath users will vary during the course of construction and in relation to the relative position along the identified stretch of towpath. The most notable visual change is likely to arise for users of the towpath between Gailey Marina and Gravelly Way Bridge during construction of the road bridge crossing and nearest proposed buildings to the east and west. The significance of the visual effects for canal and towpath users along this stretch of the canal will be **Moderate/ Major Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development.

12.288 Views towards construction of the Proposed Development from Public Rights of Way (PROW) surrounding and in the wider Site context are quite limited due in part to the limited existence of PROW over this particular landscape and to the natural screening provided by landform variations and woodlands. Views will however be possible from generally limited stretches of PROW (footpaths) north of the Site (east and west of

Rodbaston College) (P2); west and south west (including at Coven (P3)); south, including at Shareshill (P4 and P5) and east and north east (P6).

12.289 In the majority of these views, it will be predominantly construction of the higher parts of the building(s) that will be visible above intervening woodland/ trees and lower level construction activity is unlikely to be visible. From the elevated PROW on the northern side of Shareshill, construction activity (highest parts of the buildings and associated cranes) will be seen as part of an expansive view, set within a wooded and varied context in the middle to longer distance.

12.290 The significance of the visual effects during construction for users of the PROW in this broader landscape context and with views towards construction activity will be up to **Moderate Adverse** for the more open and elevated views from the south. For other more restricted and distant construction views from PROW the effects will be generally **Minor Adverse**.

12.291 From the open and elevated parts of Shoal Hill (within the Cannock Chase AONB) (P7) construction of the Proposed Development will be visible from those PROW and positions on Shoal Hill with existing views towards the Site. These are generally limited to those in the more open and elevated parts of the Hill. In these views, construction of the higher parts of the proposed buildings, including the construction cranes will be seen stretching across and above the existing woodland and trees within and surrounding the Site. Where visible, this construction activity will be seen within a context of other active and industrial elements and despite elements of the construction being seen above the existing woodland and trees, it will not be seen from these more elevated AONB positions breaking the more distant skyline landscape to the west.

12.292 It is unlikely that the lower level construction activities (e.g. earthworks and construction of roads, service yards, parking areas and building surrounds) will be visible from Shoal Hill as these will be effectively screened by existing intervening planting including the mature woodland and trees along the M6 motorway and around Junction 12. Heavily filtered views to some of the lower level activity may be possible, principally during the winter months, yet where this is the case any views will be limited. Views towards construction activity is likely to occur throughout the construction period, with the completed buildings and high level construction activity (e.g. cranes used for the construction process) being most readily visible.

12.293 Any construction activity will be distantly visible at typically 3 – 5.5km from Shoal Hill. The significance of the visual effects for users of the PROW and publicly accessible areas at Shoal Hill will be **Moderate Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development.

Other Visual Receptors

12.294 Users of Calf Heath Reservoir (V1) presently have views that are varied and generally quite contained by existing surrounding woodland and trees, most notably to the east and south. The reservoir boundary is more open to the north and west. Existing views are dominated by the existing surrounding mature woodland and trees and traffic on the A5 and Junction 12 approach.

12.295 Construction of the proposed building(s) closest to the reservoir will be visible through and to the side of the existing surrounding woodland and trees. The clearest views will be from the western end of the reservoir, where close views will be possible of construction activities associated with the perimeter earthworks and mounding in this corner of the Site and construction of the nearest buildings. All of these works form part of Development Zone A4, including the adjoining Green Infrastructure areas and following completion of these works any views towards construction activities within other Development Zones will be unlikely or limited and restricted by the new buildings, mounding and planting.

12.296 Once the perimeter mounding to Development Zone A4 has been formed in the area immediately to the west and south of the reservoir views towards lower level construction activity will be more restricted. The significance of the visual effects for users of Calf Heath



Reservoir will be **Moderate/ Major Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development. These construction visual effects will reduce following completion of the Development Zone A4 works.

- 12.297 There will be views towards construction of the Proposed Development from a number of other receptors surrounding the Site, including the Police Station and Highways Depot on the northern Site boundary (V2); the Garden Centre (V3) and public house at Gailey Roundabout to the north west; the playing fields and public house close to the Station Drive A449 junction (V4); the Four Ashes Industrial Estate, Veolia ERF and SI Works (V5); the playing fields and marina at Calf Heath (V6); and from Rodbaston College (V7) to the north.
- 12.298 The significance of the visual effects for workers and users of these facilities will be predominantly **Minor Adverse** or **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development.

#### *Night Time Lighting Effects*

- 12.299 A Lighting Impact Assessment of the Proposed Development has been undertaken and is included at Technical Appendix 12.8. This assessment has been undertaken on the basis of the proposed Lighting Strategy. This strategy is founded on the key principles of energy efficiency and minimising environmental effects. Overall, the night time visual effects during construction of the Proposed Development will be minimised through the adoption of the Lighting Strategy as detailed in the Lighting Impact Assessment.
- 12.300 The resultant night time effects will vary for the surrounding visual receptors yet are likely to be **Negligible to Moderate Adverse** during construction of the Proposed Development.

## Operational Development

- 12.301 The Proposed Development is expected to generate a range of potential significant direct and indirect landscape and visual impacts, with likely permanent effects. The stated operational effects are based upon the full completion of the Proposed Development and do not take into account the subsequent management and maturing of the existing and new landscape and planting proposals. These effects are considered in the subsequent Residual Effects section.

## Landscape

- 12.302 The predicted operational effects are considered with reference to the published landscape character assessments, designated landscapes, local landscape character and site-specific landscape features and components.

#### *Published Landscape Character Assessment Studies*

##### National and County

- 12.303 In the context of the national scale landscape character assessment study covering extensive landscape tracts as defined by the National Character Areas (NCA`s), the completed and operational development will have relatively contained implications and effects. For the county scale assessment the effects will be relatively greater yet these will still occur over parts of the relevant landscape character areas or types. In these terms and at these scales, the wider and indirect effects will generally dissipate with distance from the Site.
- 12.304 The Proposed Development will have a direct effect upon the south eastern part of the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA 61 (national scale) and upon parts of the Ancient Clay Farmlands and Settled Heathlands Landscape Character Types (county scale).
- 12.305 Other more limited and broader indirect effects will occur over the adjoining landscape character areas and types. These will include the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau NCA 66

and the Cannock Chase and Cank Wood NCA 67 (national scale) and Settled Plateau farmland Slopes Landscape Character Type (county scale).

- 12.306 The landscape effects arising upon all of these defined character areas and types will vary. Given the large scale and extent of most of these landscapes, the effects will be largely concentrated across the area including and surrounding the Site (up to a distance of 3-5km). The existing presence of active major infrastructure (M6 Motorway, A5, A449, West Coast Mainline (WCML) Rodbaston Wind Turbines) settlement (Cannock to the east) and industrial uses (Four Ashes Industrial Estate within this locality will moderate the effects of the Proposed Development, at these scales.
- 12.307 The effect of the Proposed Development upon these published Landscape Character Types and Areas will vary and at this scale will be **Minor Adverse**.  
South Staffordshire (Landscape Sensitivity Study for Employment Site Allocations)
- 12.308 This study is described in the Baseline section of this chapter. The Proposed Development will directly affect three Land Cover Parcels (LCP`s) identified in the study as FAE01, FAE02 and FAE03. These are relatively small landscape areas specifically identified as part of a study considering potential new employment allocations and have not been identified as part of a comprehensive District wide Landscape Character or Sensitivity Assessment. Whilst a landscape sensitivity judgement is made within the study for each of the identified LCP`s, these assessments are relative to the other LCP`s within the study and are not landscape sensitivity assessments based upon the Landscape Value and Susceptibility to Change as advocated in GLVIA3. Consequently, the stated landscape sensitivity of the LCP`s in the study is a relative judgement only in the context of the other LCP`s assessed in the study. In this case it elevates the sensitivity of the landscape. An assessment of the factors influencing the sensitivity of these LCP`s in relation to the Proposed Development has been undertaken in accordance with GLVIA3 and the methodology detailed at the beginning of this chapter and is detailed in Technical Appendix 12.5

##### LCP FAE01:

- 12.309 LCP FAE01 occupies land in the west of the Site sandwiched between the A449 and the WCML. The Proposed Development will change the character of this LCP from one of predominantly farmland, with a sports ground, public house and a number of residential properties on its southern edge, to one dominated by the new development and including the rail intermodal area. Whilst the existing LCP is open and include a number of hedgerow and trees largely defining the field boundaries it is also influenced by the adjoining A449, WCML and the Four Ashes Industrial Estate. The LCP is also strongly separated from Somerford Hall and the landscape to the south west by mature woodland yet is relatively more open to the north-west.

- 12.310 The Proposed Development will conserve the majority of the hedgerows and associated trees alongside the A449 yet will result in the removal of the existing hedgerows and trees away from the Site boundary. The proposals will include new mounding and woodland and other planting stretching along the eastern side of the A449 and across an area to the north of the sports ground, public house and residential properties (all outside the Site boundary). The gently rolling nature of the landform will be modified with large flatter areas formed to accommodate the buildings and rail area.

- 12.311 The magnitude of landscape change upon LCP FAE01 will be Medium/ High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.

##### LCP FAE02:

- 12.312 This LCP cover much of the central part of the Site, including a stretch of the canal, Calf Heath Wood and Calf Heath Reservoir. Impacts upon this LCP will arise from the direct effects of the Proposed Development across much of the landscape and indirectly from its influence. These impacts will include the loss of the existing farmland and mineral workings



and the removal of approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood and other hedgerows and trees throughout the LCP. There will be no direct effects upon the canal or the reservoir.

- 12.313 Existing trees and hedgerows and trees will also be conserved as part of the Proposed Development and will include woodland copses, trees and hedgerows to the west of the canal (west and south west of Croft lane), approximately one third of Calf Heath, canalside trees and planting, woodland and other vegetation close to Calf Heath Reservoir and the majority of the Site boundary hedgerows and trees. The existing landform is generally flat and the primary changes in this context will relate to the formation of perimeter planting s part of the Landscape and Green Infrastructure proposals.
- 12.314 Significant landscape areas will be conserved and created to both sides of the canal to minimise the effects upon this landscape feature and other notable landscape areas and corridors will be formed to the A5 and Calf Heath Reservoir to the north and north east. West of the canal, a Community Park will be formed, comprising a mix of existing and new planting and habitats, with footpaths and public access.
- 12.315 The magnitude of landscape change upon LCP FAE02 will be Medium/ High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- LCPFAE03:
- 12.316 LCPFAE03 encompasses land to the south and south east of Vicarage Road, extending southwards to the canalside and Calf Heath. Impacts upon this LCP will arise from the direct loss of farmland, trees and hedgerows and indirectly from the presence and influence of the proposals on this landscape. Existing trees and hedgerows to Vicarage Road and in the southern part of this LCP will be conserved where these lie within the Site. Some trees and hedgerows and the existing farmland fields will however be lost in the northern part of the LCP.
- 12.317 Where the LCP covers the southern part of the Site (beyond the southern limits of the proposed built development), the Proposed Development will include a Community Park, comprising a mix of existing and new planting and habitats, with footpaths and public access.
- 12.318 The magnitude of landscape change upon LCP FAE03 will be Medium/ High, resulting in a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.

#### *Designated Landscapes*

##### Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 12.319 The Site is not situated within the AONB yet there are views to/ from its south western extent on the north western edge of Cannock. The special qualities of the AONB landscape include its views and maintaining these is considered by the AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 to be one of many issues affecting this designated landscape.
- 12.320 The Proposed Development will have no direct effect upon the AONB landscape yet it will have an influence over its very south westerly extent and over the views to and from the AONB landscape. The effects upon views are addressed in the Visual Effects section. The influence of the Proposed Development will be limited to the south west corner of the AONB and the proposals will form one of a number of active and large scale infrastructure and development in this context (including the settlement of Cannock, M6 Motorway, Veolia ERF, Rodbaston Wind Turbines, Four Ashes Industrial Estate etc.).
- 12.321 The indirect landscape effects have been considered by reference to the special qualities and character of the AONB and the identified LCA` s as follows:

##### Open Hills and Heaths LCA – Heathland:

- 12.322 The Proposed Development will affect the views to surrounding countryside (identified as one of the special qualities of the 'Open Hills and Heaths LCA - Heathland') from a very limited part of the south-western extent of the AONB. In the context of the special qualities

for this LCA, it is relevant to note that the expansive and long ranging views from this far south-western part of the AONB are different in nature to the more characteristic 'sweeping views' over 'large tracts of open heathland' and 'wide expanse of heather and scattered birch' that are identified as a special quality of the 'Open Hills and Heaths – Heathland' LCA.

- 12.323 The nature of the existing views from Shoal Hill and elevated positions at the south western extent of the AONB are nevertheless an important quality of this part of the AONB. Where present, these views are generally expansive, varied and active in character as described above.
- 12.324 The Proposed Development will be seen within some of these views as detailed in the visual effects section (see Receptor Ref P7) and it will add to the built development influences that exist in the wider landscape to the south-west of the AONB.
- 12.325 Beyond the views, the other identified special qualities of this LCA are focussed on the large tracts of open heathland; enclosure of dark green edges to the adjoining conifer plantations; seasonal colour; and tranquillity/ remoteness. These qualities and characteristics stretch throughout much of the AONB yet are less pertinent to its very south-western extent and the broader landscape setting of the AONB in this direction.
- 12.326 The Proposed Development will have no more than a **Minor Adverse** indirect effect upon the special qualities of the LCA.

##### Open Hills and Heaths LCA – Forest:

- 12.327 The Proposed Development will have no more than a Negligible indirect effect upon the special qualities of this LCA, which are focussed upon the more ordered pattern of conifer forests and impression of enclosure and wooded horizons.

##### Clay Estatelands LCA

- 12.328 The landscape character and special qualities of this LCA include the 'Foreground vista up to the Cannock Chase edge' and long views both to and across neighbouring landscapes. In relation to the Site there is however, only a small part of this LCA (See AONB Management Plan Figure 3 within Technical Appendix 12.4) occupying the rising farmland slopes to the east of Hatherton Hall.

- 12.329 The Proposed Development will have no more than a **Negligible** indirect effect upon the qualities and characteristics of this limited part of LCA.

##### Designed Parklands LCA

- 12.330 This LCA recognises the historical significance of a number of historic buildings and parklands within the AONB including Hatherton Hall. The AONB Management Plan recognises that this existing parkland has deteriorated in quality. This landscape is relatively enclosed and separated from the Site by a combination of its lower lying position, landform variations and intervening planting and features.

- 12.331 The Proposed Development will have no more than a Minor Adverse indirect landscape effect upon the parkland landscape of Hatherton Hall. Further details on the effects of the proposed Development upon this particular parkland landscape are included within the Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage – Built Heritage.

##### AONB Summary

- 12.332 The Proposed Development will represent a new element and influence in the context of this corner of the AONB. However, it will be sited in a broad and varied landscape context that includes a number of other existing active and large scale elements. The Proposed Development will add to the built development influences within this part of the broader lower lying landscape surrounding the south-western extent of the AONB. It will form a significant element within the landscape context west of the M6 motorway and will add to the existing urban and industrial uses present in this general direction from the AONB. It will have an indirect effect upon the character of a very limited part of the AONB.

12.333 Despite the existing active uses and increased presence of large scale built development arising from the Proposals within the landscape to the west of the M6, this broad area will retain a varied character comprising gently rolling farmland, mature woodlands, scattered settlements and medium to large scale industry and transport infrastructure.

12.334 The magnitude of landscape change upon the Cannock Chase AONB will be Low/ Negligible, resulting in a **Minor Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.

#### *Registered Parks and Gardens*

12.335 There will be no direct or indirect landscape effect upon Chillington Registered Park and Garden. For further details on this Registered Park and Garden, refer to Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage.

#### *Community Forests*

12.336 The Proposed Development will result in the removal of approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood and other hedgerow and trees across the Site. It will also however include extensive new native woodland, tree, shrub and hedgerow planting and will be underpinned by a comprehensive management regime for all existing and new planting and habitats across the Site.

12.337 The Proposed Development will also include two new Community Parks that will improve public access as part of the Green Infrastructure (GI) proposals. Despite the direct loss of the existing woodland, trees, hedgerows and farmland, the conserved and new planting, alongside the proposed management regime and improved public access will offer some benefits in the context of the Forest of Mercia Community Forest. The significance of the effect upon woodland areas and trees is assessed under 'Site Landscape Features'.

#### *Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal*

12.338 The Proposed Development will result in changes to the landscape character of the canal corridor through the Site and for relatively short distances to the north and south of the Site. The most notable changes will occur for the stretch of canal between the A5 and the Gravelly Way Bridge crossing towards the centre of the Site. Other changes to will arise both beyond the Site to the north and over a short stretch to the south.

12.339 Whilst the existing varied and largely enclosed landscape character of the canal will not change notably, the Proposed Development will exert a marked influence over these limited stretches of the canal and add to the existing industrial influences and the level of enclosure. There will be limited loss of existing canalside planting and new appropriate planting and wetland habits will be created in close proximity to the canal along the stretch south of the A5.

12.340 Proposed built development has been set back from the immediate canalside beyond notable areas and corridors of GI, including the Croft Lane Community Park to the west and mounding, wetland and woodland planting to the east. The conserved and new planting and habitats will mitigate the influence of the Proposed Development upon the existing character of the canal. The presence of the existing industrial and large scale infrastructure uses in the immediate vicinity of the Site also moderate the nature of the resultant change.

12.341 The most notable direct effect upon the landscape of the canal will arise from the proposed road bridge crossing. This will be sited close to the north of the existing Gravelly Way road bridge (and adjacent older pedestrian bridge). Collectively, the combination of bridges will form an obvious interruption in the canal corridor landscape, yet careful attention to the design of the proposed road bridge has mitigated this effect.

12.342 It is also relevant that these existing and new bridges lie at the northern end of the existing SI Works and Bericote Development at a point where there is an existing change in the landscape character of the canal corridor. The proposed road bridge will thus not sever an existing unified or cohesive stretch of the canal.

12.343 The Proposed Development will deliver a package of environmental enhancements to the canal corridor. The nature of these works have been discussed and considered in consultation with the Canal and River Trust. Whilst the detail of these proposals will be agreed at a subsequent stage, it is anticipated that the enhancements to the canal corridor will include the removal of a series of redundant pipe bridges or crossings (that exist alongside the existing SI Works), boundary planting and improvements, towpath enhancement works and canalside habitat enhancement works. These will represent localised and beneficial changes.

12.344 The magnitude of change upon the landscape character of the canal will be Low/ Medium, resulting in a **Moderate Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development. This effect will occur over a limited stretch of the canal.

#### *Site Landscape – Character*

12.345 A description of the character of the Site landscape is provided in the Baseline section. It should be noted that the Site landscape broadly aligns with the three Land Cover Parcels (LCP`s) considered in the South Staffordshire Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Employment Site Allocations. Where there are differences between the extent of the relevant South Staffordshire LCP`s and the extent of the Site, these have been considered and where there are no notable differences in landscape character or features, an assessment has been undertaken based upon the LCP and including the additional Site landscape areas alongside the relevant LCP. This avoids repetition and 'double counting' of the landscape effects at this Site based scale.

12.346 Consequently, the assessment of the effects upon the relevant South Staffordshire LCP's provides the detailed analysis of and details the effects of the Proposed Development upon the Site landscape and this section provides an overview of the effects upon the character of the Site landscape.

12.347 The Proposed Development will result in some notable changes to the landscape character of the Site and its immediate context. The existing mix of farmland, mineral workings, woodland and other landscape features will change to a landscape containing large scale employment buildings, new roads, rail infrastructure and extensive landscape, planting and habitats, including two Community Parks.

12.348 In general, the existing Site occupies an enclosed and interrupted context comprising a surrounding framework of existing industrial and other developments, woodland and some generally small scale landform variations. The Site does not relate strongly to the wider surrounding landscape. It is well contained in landscape character as well as visual terms to the east and south west, yet relatively more open and connected to the immediate landscapes to the north and north-west. The existing Site is also influenced to differing degrees by the existing surrounding major roads, the WCML and the Four Ashes Industrial Estate.

12.349 The Proposed Development will site the new large scale buildings and infrastructure within a robust framework of new and existing landscape areas and corridors. The character of the Site landscape will change from being varied and mixed with a combination of farmland, mineral workings, woodland uses; active industrial and highway influences; and other features (e.g. canal and reservoir adjoining the Site), to a Site landscape dominated by the new built and rail related development, yet within a robust framework of landscape corridors and green spaces.

12.350 The magnitude of this change will be High yet it will not all be adverse. The two Community Parks and the landscape along the canal corridor will in particular offer some beneficial albeit localised change.

#### *Site Landscape Features*

##### *Landform*



- 12.351 Upon completion of the Proposed Development, the landform of the Site will have been modified by the construction works (as outlined in the preceding Construction Effects section). The resultant landform within the Site will include changes arising from the formation of the broadly flat development plots and rail area from the formation of some largely perimeter mounding.
- 12.352 The perimeter mounding proposals will include varying slope profiles, gradients and heights to assist in effectively assimilating these features and the outer facing and publicly visible slopes will include gentler gradients and more variations. Proposed woodland and tree planting along and across many of these mounds will also assist in integrating these localised changes.
- 12.353 The resultant changes to the landform will result in extensive yet largely localised and contained changes to the landform characteristics across the Site. The magnitude of landscape change upon the Site's landform will be Medium, resulting in a **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.

#### Woodland, Trees and Hedgerows

- 12.354 Details of those to be removed or retained are included within the Arboricultural Assessment which is included at Technical Appendix 12.7. Summary Schedules detailing the approximate extent of conserved, removed and proposed planting and habitats are also included at Technical Appendix 12.9.
- 12.355 Careful attention has been paid throughout the design process to minimise the potential effects upon woodland, trees and hedgerows as part of a balanced and well considered development solution. Upon completion of the Proposed Development, a significant number of new woodland areas, tree belts, other trees and tree groups, hedgerows and planting will have been implemented.
- 12.356 All of this new planting will add to that conserved within the Site and will form an extensive and well connected framework of planted corridors and green spaces stretching throughout and around the new built development plots. This new planting will comprise predominantly native and indigenous species that are appropriate to the Site's location and landscape characteristics and will satisfy other biodiversity aims.
- 12.357 The proposed GI, encompassing the new woodland, trees, hedgerows and other planting, habitats and open space will extend to approximately 36% of the total SRFI Site area and will comprise the approximate mix of landscape areas, planting and habitats as shown on the Green Infrastructure Parameters Plan and detailed in the Summary Schedules at Technical Appendix 12.9.
- 12.358 The phased and progressive removal of existing woodland, trees and hedgerows, is considered and assessed within the preceding section on the Demolition and Construction Effects.
- 12.359 Both during and upon full completion of the Proposed Development there will be an overall net gain in the areas of woodland/ tree groups/ trees and lengths of hedgerow across the Site. Whilst this does not directly replace for the loss of existing mature woodland, trees and hedgerows or for their current contribution to local landscape character, it will improve and extend the age profile of the planting and will be supported by a comprehensive and long term management regime that will include the existing conserved woodlands, trees and hedgerows.
- 12.360 A notable number of mature oaks and other trees will be lost (as detailed within the Arboricultural Assessment) and replaced with new trees that will take a considerable time to reach the same maturity. Consequently and despite the net increase in numbers and areas there will inevitably be an adverse effect upon this existing planting in landscape and arboricultural terms.
- 12.361 The numbers of veteran and near veteran trees to be lost as a result of the Proposed Development is outlined in the preceding section on the Construction and Demolition effects

and in more detail in the Arboricultural Assessment. The magnitude of landscape change upon the Site's woodland, trees and hedgerows will be Low/ Medium, resulting in a **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development. This takes into account the extensive new native and woodland planting that will be undertaken as part of the Proposed Development.

#### Water Features and Watercourses

- 12.362 There are a limited number of water features across the Site, comprising a number of field ponds and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. These features are considered in ecological, heritage and drainage terms in other Chapters.
- 12.363 The Proposed Development will include the formation of a number of water features and wetland areas largely as part of a Sustainable Drainage Strategy. These features will be designed to maximise their contribution in landscape and biodiversity terms alongside the drainage requirements. Many of these features will be sited in the Community Parks and alongside the canal and in these contexts will contribute towards landscape areas with a mix of habitats and uses.
- 12.364 The magnitude of landscape change upon the Site's water features and watercourses will be Low Beneficial, resulting in a **Minor Beneficial/ Negligible** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.

#### Visual

- 12.365 A comprehensive visual impact assessment of the Proposed Development has been undertaken to determine the potential effects upon surrounding receptors. This has considered the specific effects arising during the operational stage. Two assessments have been conducted for receptors during the operational stage of the Proposed Development. The first considers the effects upon full completion of the development and in the winter period (i.e. the screening effects of any deciduous foliage in the summer is not taken into account) and the second predicts the residual effects 15 years after completion and in the summer period (thus enabling the effectiveness of any planting to be evaluated).
- 12.366 A series of Photo Viewpoints, Photomontages, related plans and a Visual Effects Table are included and collectively detail and support the description of the likely visual effects arising from the Proposed Development. The following are included and should be referenced alongside the following description of visual effects:
- Figures 12.7 & 12.8 Photo Viewpoints and plan showing the location of the Photo Viewpoints;
  - Figure 12.9 Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
  - Figure 12.10 Visual Receptors;
  - Figure 12.13 Photomontages; and
  - Technical Appendix 12.6 Visual Effects Table.

#### *Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)*

- 12.367 The ZTV of the Proposed Development is the theoretical area from within which the Proposed Development will be visible. It is representative and is not an indicator of the significance of the visual effect. Two ZTV's are detailed on Figure 12.9. Firstly a ZTV based upon a computer model and Ordnance Survey landform data, taking no account of existing woodland, buildings or other structures, and secondly a ZTV that has refined and 'tested' the computer model version on site and by other desk based analysis e.g. cross sections. It is the latter, ZTV (Site Analysis) that is considered to be most representative of the areas from within which the Proposed Development is likely to be visible. Further details on the ZTV and methodology employed is included at Technical Appendix 12.2.
- 12.368 The ZTV of this Proposed Development is primarily defined by the topography surrounding the Site, with existing woodland, hedgerows and trees and industrial and settlement areas



also interrupting and screening potential views. The ZTV extends to varying degrees to the north, south, east and west of the Site. It extends over the relatively broadest area to the south and east yet is relatively more contained to the west and north.

- 12.369 To the south of the Site, the ZTV extends to the higher land close to the edges of the settlement at Featherstone, Shareshill and Little Sarendon. Notably it does not however include all but the edges of these settlements and the presence of other settlement, properties and other receptors are also relatively limited across this part of the ZTV.
- 12.370 To the east of the Site, the ZTV is more interrupted at a localised scale by the mature trees and woodland associated with the M6 motorway corridor and surrounding Junction 12. In this direction the ZTV does not extend across Cannock or any notable extents of settlement. Some housing to the south of Shoal Hill on the elevated north-western edge of Cannock does however lie within the ZTV.
- 12.371 To the north of the Site, the ZTV is restricted by the overlapping nature of existing mature tree belts and groups and hedgerow boundaries and by the gentle rolling nature of the landform. This restricts potential views from Penkridge to the north.
- 12.372 To the west and south-west of the Site, the ZTV is similarly restricted and interrupted by a combination of mature woodland and landform variations. From these general directions the nearby mature woodlands close to the south-west of the Site are important in limiting potential views.
- 12.373 In general, it is only the highest parts of the Proposed Development that will be visible across the ZTV and the lower and more active parts will be effectively hidden or screened by existing surrounding woodland and trees in combination with the landform variations.

#### *Effects upon Visual Receptors*

- 12.374 The effects of the Proposed Development upon visual receptors are set out in full in the Visual Effects Table (Technical Appendix 12.6). The following summarises the visual effects of the Proposed Development upon full completion. Receptor references are included in brackets and refer to the Visual Effects Table and the location of the Visual Receptors on Figures 12.9 and 12.10.

#### Settlement and Properties

- 12.375 Views towards the completed Development will be possible from settlement areas and properties surrounding the Site and will range from close and clear views to distant and restricted views.
- 12.376 From properties at Gailey Marina and on Croft Lane (Receptors R1 – R5) there will be varying views generally to the nearest proposed building(s) to both the east and west of the canal. For those properties with existing views to the east and south east beyond the existing trees and vegetation along the canal side, the higher parts of the proposed building(s) will be visible over the existing planting and other features and the proposed mounding and planting sited to the east of the canal. The latter will however in conjunction with the existing planting limit available views to the lower parts of the buildings and the associated activities. This will include restricting views towards the new access road to the east of the canal.
- 12.377 To the west and south west, the nearest proposed buildings(s) will be visible beyond existing and proposed woodland, tree and hedgerow planting. This existing and new planting together with other grassland and wetland habitats will form the key features of the proposed Croft Lane Community Park and will assist in screening and filtering views towards the Proposed Development in this direction. Proposed mounding sited alongside the nearest proposed building(s) will be effective in reinforcing screening of the lower parts of the buildings and the associated activities.

- 12.378 The significance of the visual effects upon properties at Gailey Marina and on Croft Lane will be **Moderate or Moderate/ Major Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.379 A number of individual and small groups of properties along the A5 (R6 – R12) on the northern edge of the Site will also have varying views generally towards the nearest proposed building(s) and perimeter landscape proposals. The nature and significance of these effects does differ largely as a result of the existing position, orientation and extent of existing planting and features within and surrounding the property. Most of these properties and in particular those sited on the northern side of the A5 are heavily influenced in visual terms by the road and associated traffic.
- 12.380 For those properties with the clearest views in a southerly direction towards the Site, the nearest proposed buildings will be visible beyond existing conserved boundary hedgerows and planting and new mounding and woodland planting. The existing and new planting and mounding proposals along the northern perimeter of the Site will be effective in screening the lower parts of the buildings and associated activities from these properties.
- 12.381 The visible parts of the Proposed Development will vary between each of the properties situated along this roadside and including the small number of scattered properties close to the north. East of the canal crossing the views will be predominantly towards the higher parts of the nearest proposed building(s), beyond the existing and new planting and mounding. West of the canal and immediately to the east of the Gailey Roundabout, the available views will similarly be towards the nearest proposed building(s), in the north western part of the Site.
- 12.382 The significance of the visual effects upon properties along the A5 and close to the north will be predominantly **Moderate Adverse**, with a small number of properties with the clearest views experiencing a **Moderate/ Major Adverse** effect upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.383 Along the western side of the Site are a small number of properties situated alongside or a short distance west of the A449 (R14 – R17). Existing views eastwards and towards the Site from these properties varies with close clear views across the A449 possible from one property fronting on to this road and more restricted and limited views possible from other properties.
- 12.384 For those properties with views in this direction the Proposed Development will be visible beyond the existing conserved roadside hedgerow and trees and the proposed mounding and woodland planting along the western perimeter of the Site. The higher parts of the proposed building(s) in this western part of the Site will be visible beyond the existing and new planting, although the lower parts of the buildings and the associated activities will be effectively screened.
- 12.385 For a limited number of properties at these locations there are likely to be restricted views towards the vehicular access proposals leading into the Site from the A449 and towards the higher parts of the rail gantry cranes further to the south east. Views towards the container stacking area within the rail area are however unlikely from these properties due to the proposed mounding and associated landscape proposals along the A449 boundary.
- 12.386 The significance of the visual effects upon the properties along and close to the western side of the A449 will be **Major Adverse** for the single property fronting directly onto the road (R15) and **Moderate/ Major or Minor/ Moderate Adverse** for the other properties at this location.
- 12.387 At Station Drive, properties along the northern side of the road (R19) have views northwards from within their boundaries. These views are not expansive and encompass existing pasture and mature trees and hedgerows, the SI Works and the rail line. Existing hedgerows and trees in the foreground stretch east- west across the view and overlap to

- limit more any open and longer distance views. Available views are likely to vary between these properties subject to their existing respective boundary planting and treatments.
- 12.388 The Proposed Development is likely to be visible from the majority of these properties beyond the intervening small fields and planting. In these views, the existing and proposed planting and mounding will effectively screen views towards the lower and active parts of the proposals (including the container stacking area and service yard). The higher parts of the gantry cranes and nearest building(s) are however likely to be visible above and beyond the mounding and planting.
- 12.389 The significance of the visual effects upon the Station Drive properties (R19) with the clearest views will be **Moderate/ Major Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development. For those properties with more limited and restricted views northwards the visual effects will be reduced.
- 12.390 A single property (Wood View) on Vicarage Road (R20) has existing views northwards towards Calf Heath Wood and a limited part of the Site on the opposite side of the road. Existing views in this direction also include the Four Ashes Industrial Estate, a substation and the Bericote Development (under construction). The nearest proposed building will be clearly and closely visible on the opposite side of Vicarage Rd. Conserved roadside hedgerow planting will be reinforced with some mounding and new woodland planting beyond and this will be effective in restricting views towards the lower and active parts of the building from this property.
- 12.391 Three further properties on Straight Mile (R21) have views northwards across the Site south of Vicarage Rd and towards Calf Heath Wood and more oblique views are also available towards the Four Ashes Industrial Estate and the ERF. Views northwards across the Site are generally open yet are interrupted by the overlapping nature of the hedgerows and trees.
- 12.392 From these properties, the nearest proposed building(s) will be clearly visible to the north. Proposed mounding and existing and new planting (as part of the proposed Calf Heath Community Park) will be located between the property boundaries and the built development and will provide some screening and filtering to the lower and active surrounds to the proposed building(s).
- 12.393 The significance of the visual effects upon these four properties on Vicarage Road and Straight Mile will be **Major or Moderate/ Major Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.394 From Calf Heath, existing views in the general direction of the Site are limited and largely restricted by a combination of the orientation of the properties, landform variations and presence of mature woodland and trees, most notably along Woodland Lane and Stable Lane and to the south of Straight Mile.
- 12.395 Existing views from properties on the northern side of this small settlement (on Straight Mile, Stable Lane and northern end of Kings Rd) (R22) are principally filtered and short ranging in the direction of the Site. Existing woodland and trees predominantly alongside Woodlands Lane forms an effective visual screen yet there are filtered views (primarily in winter) through this planting. Clear and open views towards the Site are not however possible.
- 12.396 The Proposed Development will be partially seen through the existing intervening woodland/ trees, yet it will be filtered (relatively less so in winter) and proposed mounding and new woodland planting (as part of the Community Park) in the intervening area beyond the existing woodland will provide further visual screening, to the lower parts of the building(s). For any available views of the Proposed Development it is most likely to be the nearest units, south of Vicarage Rd that will be visible through the woodland and trees.
- 12.397 From the majority of properties in Calf Heath including properties further south on Kings Road and on Queens Road there will be no views towards the Proposed Development.
- 12.398 The significance of the visual effects upon the properties at Calf Heath (R22 - 24) with the clearest views towards the Site will be **Moderate Adverse** and for others with more restricted or channelled views e.g. along Kings Road will be **Minor Adverse**. For many properties at Calf Heath there will be no visual effects.
- 12.399 More distant views towards the Proposed Development will be possible from other settlement areas and properties within the wider context of the Site. From the south and east, there will be some views from a relatively limited number of generally elevated locations and scattered properties at Sharesill (R32), Great Saredon, and east of the motorway (R33). Where there are views towards the Proposed Development, it will generally be seen in the context of other existing industrial uses and active influences (e.g. Veolia ERF, Four Ashes Industrial Estate, Sewage Works, wind turbines, M6 motorway).
- 12.400 From these positions, the Proposed Development will also be seen within a wooded setting and views towards the lower and active parts of the proposals will be unlikely. For those properties with any views, the significance of the visual effects will be **Minor Adverse**.
- 12.401 From the majority of Brewood there are no views of or across the Site. However, from the more elevated central and eastern side of the settlement, some properties (R29 and R30) do have existing longer views eastwards across intervening farmland and woodland in the direction of the Site, approximately 3km away. In these existing views, the farmland and woodland dominate, yet the Veolia ERF, SI works, Bericote Development and wind turbines are also visible and Cannock Chase occupies the more distant skyline.
- 12.402 For those properties/ locations with views towards the Site, the most visible components of the Proposed Development are likely to be the higher parts of the building(s) and the rail gantry cranes in the south west of the Site. Where visible these will be seen in the context of the other existing industrial and active developments and within a wooded landscape setting. There are unlikely to be any views to the lower active surrounds to the proposed building(s).
- 12.403 The significance of the visual effects upon those properties with the clearest views from Brewood will be **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** and for others with more restricted views will be **Minor Adverse**. For the majority of properties at Brewood however, there will be no visual effects.
- 12.404 A limited number of properties/ locations on the eastern and north eastern edge of Coven (R31) have generally restricted views in the direction of the Site. These views are largely restricted by existing overlapping hedgerows, trees and woodlands and as a result these are no direct views of the Site. The tops of trees and woodland are discernible within and to the south of the Site. The Veolia ERF, SI works (stacks) and wind turbines are also visible in this direction.
- 12.405 From these edge of settlement properties and locations, the highest parts of the building(s) and rail gantry cranes in the south of the Site are likely to be visible just above and beyond the intervening woodland and planting. Where visible, the Proposed Development will be seen in the context of the Veolia ERF, SI Works (stacks) and power lines. There will be no views to any lower active parts of the development. The vast majority of Coven and nearby properties at Standeford will have no views towards the proposals.
- 12.406 The significance of the visual effects upon the very small number or settlement (Coven and Standeford) edge properties with the views of the Proposed Development will be **Minor Adverse**. For the majority of properties at Coven and Standeford there will be no visual effects.
- 12.407 The Proposed Development will not be visible from the vast majority of Cannock, including the majority of properties on its closest western settlement edge. Elevated and distant views towards the Proposed Development will however be possible from relatively limited locations and properties on the western edge of Cannock, to the east of Hatherton. Rising



land and the more elevated position of these properties enable some to have rather broad and long ranging views over the wider landscape to the west and north-west.

- 12.408 For those properties with views over this landscape (R35), the Site occupies a wooded position on lower lying land beyond the M6 motorway. The Veolia ERF, SI works, wind turbines, M6 motorway and other settlement and developments are also visible within this landscape.
- 12.409 Where available views are possible towards the Site, the higher parts of the proposed building(s) will be seen set within a largely wooded setting with other active and industrial elements also visible. The lower active parts of the Site will not be visible due to the existing planting within and surrounding the Site and along the M6 corridor/ junction. The design and colour treatment of the higher building elevations and roofs will have implications for the degree of visual change/ presence of the building(s) in these views.
- 12.410 The significance of the visual effects for those properties with the views of the Proposed Development will be **Minor Adverse**. For the majority of properties at Cannock there will be no visual effects.
- 12.411 Other lower lying and distant views towards the higher parts of the Proposed Development are likely from a relatively limited number of properties and locations at Hatherton (including Hatherton Hall) (R34) and Pillaton (to the east of Penkridge) (R36). The significance of the visual effects for these properties is likely to be at most, **Minor Adverse**.
- 12.412 No views towards the Proposed Development have been identified from any properties or locations at Penkridge, approximately 2.5km to the north of the Site. The presence of intervening landform variations and existing woodland and tree planting restricts views southwards from this settlement. Other scattered and more distant settlements and properties may have the potential for views towards the Proposed Development. In these instances it is likely that only the very highest parts of the proposed building(s) will be partially visible as part of a broad, varied and largely wooded context and any resultant visual effects are likely to be at most **Minor Adverse**.

#### Roads/ Highways

- 12.413 Views towards the completed Development will be possible from a number of roads surrounding the Site and within the wider landscape.
- 12.414 Existing views from the short Croft Lane (H1) vary along its length but are generally contained and of the immediate landscape to the west and south west of this minor lane (and dead end). Existing views of the canal and towards the east and south east are restricted by existing intervening properties/ buildings.
- 12.415 The Proposed Development will be seen from this lane principally to the west and south west, yet beyond existing planting and the proposed Community Park. Proposed mounding and planting within and immediately beyond the proposed park will reinforce the existing screening and filtering of the building(s) in this direction.
- 12.416 The significance of the visual effects for users of this short and minor lane will be **Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.417 Existing views along the A5 (H2) to the west of Junction 12 are relatively contained and interrupted by existing roadside hedgerows, planting and existing buildings, yet there are breaks in this that allow generally short to medium ranging views over the largely flat landscape beyond. This is the case for both views to the north and south of the A5. Adjoining Junction 12, and to the south of the A5 there are views initially of the reservoir and then towards Calf Heath Wood, with the Veolia ERF and SI Works also visible through breaks in the roadside planting.
- 12.418 The Proposed Development will be visible to varying degrees from the A5, with the clearest opportunities from exiting Junction 12. At this point, views across the reservoir to proposed

building(s) in the north west of the Site will be possible. Proposed mounding and new woodland/ tree planting along the southern side of the road (in conjunction with conserved Site boundary hedgerows and trees) will be effective in screening and filtering views towards the lower and active parts of the nearest building(s), although the higher parts of the these will be visible.

- 12.419 From west of Gailey Roundabout, more distant and approaching views towards the Proposed Development will be possible from a limited stretch of the A5 west of the River Penk. Views from east of Junction 12 are screened largely by existing woodland/ trees surrounding the junction.
- 12.420 The significance of the visual effects for users of the A5 will be **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.421 Existing views towards the Site from the A449 (H3) are limited to the stretch of road adjoining the western boundary of the Site. These views are varied and encompass existing industrial uses (including the SI Works and Veolia ERF), farmland and woodland. The existing road views are relatively more enclosed along the southern half of this stretch by the SI Works and Industrial Estate (to the east) and woodland (to the west).
- 12.422 The Proposed Development on the western side of the Site will be visible immediately to the east of this part of the A449. Proposed perimeter mounding and planting will generally screen views of the lower and active (e.g. service yards) parts of the nearest proposed building(s), yet the higher parts will be visible beyond the new and conserved planting and mounding. Views towards the highest parts of the rail gantry cranes are also likely for road users, although the lower container stacking area will be effectively screened.
- 12.423 The significance of the visual effects for users of the A449 will be **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development. Similar effects will be experienced by users of Four Ashes Road (H4) over a very short distance (approx. 350m) to the north west of its junction with the A449, with limited other views from this road further to the west. Any visual effects for users of Station Drive and Station Road (H5) will be very limited with only brief glimpses of the Proposed Development in the context of the existing Industrial Estate and SI Works. Any effects upon these road users will be **Minor Adverse**.
- 12.424 Vicarage Rd (H6) extends through the southern part of the Site and existing immediate views are primarily of farmland and hedgerows and trees. Traveling in a south westerly direction the Industrial Estate, SI Works and the ERF are also prominent and existing views are generally focussed along this straight road.
- 12.425 The Proposed Development will be closely and clearly visible to both sides of the road. Whilst existing roadside hedgerows and trees will be largely conserved, proposed building(s) and service yards and other elements will be visible beyond. Some additional planting will reinforce that existing and conserved. However, the views from the road will be dominated by the proposals where they lie to both sides. The significance of the visual effects for users of Vicarage Rd will be **Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.426 Straight Mile (H7) also extends in a straight line yet sits to the south of the Site. Existing views are focused along the road although there are views beyond the roadside hedgerows to farmland and woodland/ trees. Traveling in a westerly direction the Industrial Estate, SI Works and the Veolia ERF are clearly visible.
- 12.427 The Proposed Development will be clearly visible from Straight Mile, west of Calf Heath. In these views the nearest building(s) on the southern edge of the Site will be visible beyond the existing hedgerows and trees and planted mounding. Some of these units will be set further back from the road and in general the Proposed Development will be seen in the context of the other existing Industrial buildings and features. The significance of the visual effects for users of Straight Mile (west of Calf Heath) will be **Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.



- 12.428 There will be views towards the Proposed Development from many other roads in the wider landscape surrounding the Site. In most instances, these views will be confined to relatively short stretches of mainly minor roads. The Proposed Development is likely to result in no more than **Minor Adverse** visual effects upon these more distant road users (H8, H11-H14).
- 12.429 The M6 Motorway (H10) extends broadly north – south close to the eastern edge of the Site. This major road corridor and the associated Junction 12 include mature woodland and tree belts to both sides and this existing planting is notable in restricting clear views in the general direction of the Site. Towards the west the Veolia ERF and wind turbines are visible at breaks in the existing planting. Views from the M6 in the general direction of the Site are limited.
- 12.430 The highest parts of the proposed building(s) nearest to the motorway are likely to be briefly visible at a short number of breaks in the existing roadside woodland/ planting. Where visible the higher parts of the nearest proposed building(s) will be seen in a wooded context and there are unlikely to be views to the lower and active areas surrounding the buildings (e.g. service yards). Views towards the Proposed Development from Junction 12 close to the north east corner of the Site are effectively screened by surrounding woodland and trees.
- 12.431 The significance of the visual effects for users of the M6 motorway will be **Minor Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- Public Rights of Way (PROW), Public Open Space and Other Footpaths
- 12.432 The towpath of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal (P1) extends through the Site in a broadly north – south direction. Existing views from the stretch of canal and towpath from between north of the Site (east of Rodbaston College) and south of the Site (at Hatherton Marina, Calf Heath) vary considerably in character and extent. From north of the A5 the views are generally mid ranging of farmland interrupted by overlapping hedgerows and woodland with the wind turbines (at Rodbaston College) prominent and power lines, pylons and the M6 also visible. South of the A5 (within and adjacent the Site), the initial stretch of canal (including Gailey Marina) is relatively more visually enclosed by properties and mature trees and vegetation to the canalside. South of Gravelly Way views are more strongly enclosed, channelled and dominated by the SI works and industrial development. South of Station Rd, the Veolia ERF is prominent in some close views from the towpath and approaching Hatherton Marina views include more farmland and mature canalside planting.
- 12.433 In addition to views from the towpath, views for boat users (either travelling along the canal and/ or moored at locations along the canal) have been assessed. The nature and value of these views and the susceptibility to change of the boat users are considered to be comparable with the towpath users and therefore the following assessment applies to all of these canal users.
- 12.434 The Proposed Development will be visible to varying extents along this stretch of towpath. From north of the A5, the proposed building(s) will become increasingly visible approaching the Site from the north. In these views, it will be the higher parts of the building(s) closest to the A5 and east of the canal that will be most visible at this point.
- 12.435 From Gailey Marina and the initial stretch of towpath to the south of the A5, the higher parts of the building(s) nearest to the east of the canal will be visible either above or through the existing and new trees and planting along the eastern side of the canal. Proposed mounding beyond the existing canalside planting will effectively screen lower level views to the proposed access road and active parts of the Proposed Development.
- 12.436 Views westwards from the towpath will also be possible towards the proposals. In these views and where the building(s) are visible they will generally be seen more distantly and beyond existing and new woodland and tree planting. The clearest views in this direction will be from the towpath north of Gravelly Way Bridge (VP4).
- 12.437 The proposed development road bridge crossing of the canal will be visible as a prominent element along a limited stretch of the canal and towpath close to the existing Gravelly Way road bridge crossing. The proposed road bridge will be largely screened or filtered in more distant and approaching views due to the varying alignment of the canal and the existing canalside trees and planting that will remain, close to the north and south of the crossing.
- 12.438 South of the existing and new bridges, views towards the Proposed Development will be limited due to the existing industrial uses and buildings to both sides of the canal.
- 12.439 More limited and restricted views will be possible from south of the Station Rd bridge, with the clearest views occurring for a short stretch of the towpath immediately to the east of Long Molls Bridge (south of Straight Mile) (VP7). From this position, the higher parts of the building(s) south of Vicarage Rd will be visible beyond intervening fields. There would be however no views to any lower active parts of the development from this part of the towpath. Views from the towpath at and approaching Hatherton Marina are likely to be limited and restricted.
- 12.440 Overall, the nature and significance of the visual effects for towpath users will vary with the most notable visual change arising between Gailey Marina and Gravelly Way Bridge and for a very short stretch immediately to the east of Long Molls Bridge (south of Straight Mile). The significance of the visual effects for towpath users along these limited stretches of the canal will be up to **Moderate/ Major Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development. From other parts of this section of canal and towpath the visual effects will be reduced.
- 12.441 Views from other Public Rights of Way (PROW) surrounding and in the wider Site context are quite limited due in part to the limited existence of PROW over this particular landscape and to the natural screening provided by landform variations and woodlands. Views towards the Proposed Development will however be possible from generally limited stretches of PROW (footpaths) north of the Site (east and west of Rodbaston College) (P2); west and south west (including at Coven (P3)); south, including at Shareshill (P4 and P5) and east and north east (P6).
- 12.442 In the majority of these views, where the Proposed Development is visible it will be the higher parts of the building(s) that will be visible above intervening woodland/ trees and lower level activity associated with the proposals is unlikely to be visible. From the elevated PROW on the northern side of Shareshill, the Proposed Development will be seen as part of an expansive view, set within this a wooded and varied context in the middle to longer distance.
- 12.443 The significance of the visual effects for users of the PROW in this broader landscape context will be **Minor** or **Minor/ Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.444 Existing views from the open and elevated parts of Shoal Hill (within the Cannock Chase AONB) are expansive across the lower lying landscape, generally seen arcing around from the west to the north east of the Hill. These existing views (VP32) include a variety of uses and elements, with woodland and heathland in the foreground and a mix of typically farmland, woodland, industry, power lines, settlement and transport corridors beyond. The Site lies approximately 3km to the west of Shoal Hill and beyond Junction 12 in these views.
- 12.445 From this position, the higher parts of the woodland and trees within the Site are visible as part of a much broader and lower lying wooded landscape. There are no existing discernible views of the fields or ground within the Site. In the more immediate context of the Site, the Veolia ERF, SI Works, wind turbines and M6 motorway are visible.
- 12.446 The Proposed Development will be visible from those PROW and positions on Shoal Hill (P7) with existing views towards the Site. These are generally limited to those in the more open and elevated parts of the Hill. In these views, the higher parts of the proposed buildings will

be seen above the existing woodland and trees within and surrounding the Site. These higher parts of the Proposed Development will be seen above the existing woodland and trees. However, where visible, it will be seen within a context of other active and industrial elements and despite being seen above the existing woodland and trees, it will not be seen from these more elevated AONB positions breaking the more distant skyline landscape to the west.

- 12.447 It is unlikely that the lower and active parts of the development will be seen from Shoal Hill as these will be effectively screened by existing intervening planting including the mature woodland and trees along the M6 motorway and around Junction 12. The higher parts of the rail gantry cranes may be distantly visible at approx. 5.5km. The design and colour treatment of the higher building elevations and roofs will have implications for the degree of visual change/ presence of the building(s) in these views.
- 12.448 From much of Shoal Hill and from within the more extensive wooded areas on and surrounding the Hill, there are no opportunities for views for unrestricted and expansive views of the landscape to the west and north.
- 12.449 The significance of the visual effects for users of the PROW and publicly access areas at Shoal Hill will be **Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.

#### Other Visual Receptors

- 12.450 Users of Calf Heath Reservoir (V1) presently have views that are varied and generally filtered by existing surrounding woodland and trees, most notably to the east and south. The reservoir boundary is more open to the north and west. Existing views are dominated by the existing surrounding mature woodland and trees and traffic on the A5 and Junction 12 approach. Views towards the Site are clearest from the north-west part of the reservoir, closest to the A5. More filtered and restricted views are possible through the surrounding woodland/ trees to the south and south west. The existing mineral workings in close proximity and Veolia ERF more distantly are visible through and beyond this existing planting fringing the south and south -west of the reservoir.
- 12.451 The proposed building(s) within Development Zone A4 and closest to the reservoir will be visible through and to the side of the existing mature trees and planting. The clearest views will be from the western end of the reservoir, where close views will be possible to the nearest building(s). New mounding and woodland/ tree planting will be sited around this part of the Site`s perimeter and will offer some filtering/ screening of the lower active parts of the development, although the higher parts of the building(s) will remain clearly visible.
- 12.452 The significance of the visual effects for users of Calf Heath Reservoir will be **Moderate / Major Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.453 There will be views to the Proposed Development from a number of other varying receptors surrounding the Site, including the Police Station and Highways Depot on the northern Site boundary (V2); the Garden Centre (V3) and public house at Gailey Roundabout to the north west; the playing fields and public house close to the Station Drive A449 junction (V4); the Four Ashes Industrial Estate, Veolia ERF and SI Works (V5); the playing fields and marina at Calf Heath (V6); and from Rodbaston College (V7) to the north.
- 12.454 The significance of the visual effects for workers and users of these facilities will be **Minor or Minor/ Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.

#### Photomontages

- 12.455 In addition to the Photo Viewpoints (Figure 12.8) that support the baseline description of the landscape and visual amenity of the Site and its surroundings, a number of Photomontages for the Proposed Development have been prepared and are included at Figure 12.13. These have been prepared for ten viewpoints from locations agreed with Natural England, SCC and SSDC.

- 12.456 The Photomontages aim to simulate the likely visual changes that will result from the Proposed Development. They have been prepared in accordance with accepted guidance, as set out in The Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 *'Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment'* and detailed in Technical Appendix 12.2.
- 12.457 The Proposed Development depicted within the Photomontages is illustrative only. It is however based upon the Illustrative Masterplan and does depict the proposed maximum height of the buildings and rail infrastructure on the maximum height (ie. maximum finished floor levels (FFL`s)) for the development plots/ Zones, as detailed on the Floor Levels and Heights Parameter Plan (Document 2.6). In this regard, the results present the potentially worst case scenario in terms of the visible extent of the proposals within the views.
- 12.458 The design and elevational treatments of the proposed buildings is based upon the approach detailed in the Design and Access Statement. This is illustrative only and the subsequent design and detailing of the buildings and other structures (elevational treatments, colours, rooflines etc.) will be subject to subsequent approvals under the requirements in the DCO following approval of the order.
- 12.459 Photomontages have been prepared for each of the agreed viewpoints and depict the scheme upon full completion of all the earthworks, buildings, rail and road infrastructure and landscape proposals etc. Two photomontages are included for each viewpoint, namely;
- Upon full completion; and
  - 15 years post full completion.
- 12.460 The 15 years post full completion photomontage is used to convey the residual effect of the landscape and planting proposals after 15 years of growth.

#### Night time Lighting Effects

- 12.461 A Lighting Impact Assessment of the Proposed Development has been undertaken and is included at Technical Appendix 12.8 This assessment has been undertaken on the basis of the proposed Lighting Strategy. This strategy is founded on the key principles of energy efficiency and minimising environmental effects. The proposed Lighting Strategy will:
- Minimise spill light to surrounding areas;
  - Minimise upward sky pollution; and
  - Ensure appropriate illumination levels on-site.
- 12.462 The Lighting Strategy incorporates the latest energy efficient directional luminaires that prevent sky glow, glare and light spillage. The detailed lighting scheme will be designed to satisfy the Lighting Strategy and to minimise upward light pollution and to comply with the Institute of Lighting Professional (ILP) best practice.
- 12.463 The following factors largely influence the extent of the night time visual effects arising from the lighting proposals:
- the existing extent, sources and levels of lighting in and around the site;
  - the location of receptors and areas of settlement with views towards the proposals; and
  - the adoption of best lighting design practice.
- 12.464 Overall, the night time visual effects of the Proposed Development will be minimised through the adoption of the Lighting Strategy and further attention at the detailed design stage to the lighting proposals. The presence of existing locally notable light sources (e.g. surrounding major roads, SI Works and Four Ashes Industrial Estate and Veolia ERF) in the Site`s context will moderate the adverse night time visual effects as detailed in the Lighting Impact assessment.
- 12.465 The resultant night time effects will vary for the surrounding visual receptors yet are likely to be predominantly **Negligible to Moderate Adverse** upon completion of the Proposed Development.



## Mitigation and Residual Effects

- 12.466 The residual effects consider the effects after the incorporation of the mitigation measures. In the context of the landscape and visual assessment, primary mitigation measures and considerations have been incorporated as an integral (or 'embedded') part of the design and layout of the Proposed Development. These include attention to the siting, layout and heights of the Proposed Development and consideration of the earthworks and ground modelling proposals. All of these aspects and features have been taken into account in the design of the Proposed Development and the development parameters and have therefore been assessed as part of the construction and operational stages.
- 12.467 This section considers the effects of the maturing of the planting proposals and any specific secondary mitigation measures (specifically incorporated to address any remaining adverse effects) e.g. screen fencing. The residual operational effects assessment considers the Proposed Development 15 years after full completion. These effects are detailed in Technical Appendices 12.5 and 12.6 and summarised below.

## Construction

### Landscape

- 12.468 Well managed and controlled site activities and the application of good practices throughout the construction process will minimise the potential adverse effects arising from construction. This will include the protection of all trees and vegetation to be conserved in accordance with BS5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction-Recommendations).
- 12.469 The early implementation of some of the outer and perimeter landscape and associated earthworks proposals will assist in minimising some of the indirect influences over the immediately surrounding landscape. Overall, the residual landscape effects during construction will remain as stated for construction stage in the earlier Potential Effects section.

### Visual

- 12.470 The phased and early implementation of some of the outer and perimeter landscape and associated earthworks proposals will assist in minimising the resulting visual effects during the construction period, particularly along the western and northern Site perimeters. The additional and selective use of temporary screen fencing may also be considered along Site boundaries at particular times during the construction period.
- 12.471 The use, location, extent and design of any temporary fencing will be determined at the detailed design stage and in consultation with the relevant authorities. Particular attention will be paid to the potential visual effects upon those properties and receptors with the clearest views towards the construction activity including those surrounding the Site on Croft Lane, A5, A449, Station Drive, Vicarage Road and Straight Mile.
- 12.472 Well managed and controlled site activities and the application of good practices (as outlined within the ODCEMP) throughout the construction process will minimise the potential adverse visual effects arising from construction. Overall, the residual visual effects during construction will remain as described for construction stage in the earlier Potential Effects section.

## Operational Development

### Landscape

- 12.473 In general, the landscape effects of the completed and operational Proposed Development will reduce over time following the establishment and subsequent maturing of the proposed planting and habitat creation. The comprehensive management of not only the proposed planting and habitats but also the existing conserved woodland, trees, hedgerows and other habitats will also assist in reducing the initial operational landscape effects.
- 12.474 An assessment of the residual landscape effects of the Proposed Development (15 years post completion) on the identified receptors is included in the Landscape Effects Table at Technical Appendix 12.5.
- 12.475 The main benefits in landscape terms will arise from the maturing of the outer and perimeter landscape and planting proposals which will assist in mitigating the influence of the Proposed Development on its immediate context and in assimilating the landform and built development proposals in the Site's landscape context.
- 12.476 Alongside the existing conserved woodland, trees, hedgerows and other planting, the extensive new woodland, tree and other planting proposals will grow to form a robust and connected framework of landscape corridors and areas, with notable landscape areas centred around the two proposed Community Parks (including the canalside areas to the north) and tree belts and woodland planting along the Site's perimeters, particularly to the north and west.

### Visual

- 12.477 In general, many of the visual effects of the completed and operational Proposed Development will reduce over time following the establishment and subsequent maturing of the proposed planting and habitat creation. The comprehensive management of not only the proposed planting and habitats but also the existing conserved woodland, trees, hedgerows and other habitats will also assist in reducing the initial operational visual effects.
- 12.478 The maturing and management of the existing and new planting will offer the most notable visual improvements to some of the receptors immediately surrounding the Site or with close views encompassing proposed planting and mounding in between the receptor and the proposed buildings of other infrastructure.
- 12.479 The residual visual effects for many of the properties on Croft Lane, A5, A449 and Station Drive will reduce as a result of the increased natural screening and filtering of the Proposed Development. Views from the majority of these properties will still be possible after 15 years. However, these are more likely to be increasingly limited to the higher parts of the buildings and in some instances even these views will be filtered, particularly in the summer.
- 12.480 At this stage and for properties close to the Site boundary on these roads the residual effects are likely to be up to Moderate Adverse, with properties with more limited and restricted views experiencing Minor or Minor/ Moderate Adverse effects. A similar reduction in the level of visual effects will generally be experienced by other properties and receptors close to the Site and benefitting from intervening proposed mounding and planting.
- 12.481 From the Canal Towpath, particularly where this stretches south from Gailey Marina, the maturing of the new woodland, trees and other planting and positive management of that conserved, both within the adjacent Community Park and along the canalside to the east will increasingly reduce the visual effects of the Proposed Development over time. After 15 years, the visual effects upon towpath (and canal boat) users will be Minor/ Moderate Adverse.



12.482 In most instances, the residual visual effects for properties and receptors with more distant views towards the Proposed Development will not differ from the effects as stated for the (completed) operational development. The principal reason for this is that the distant views towards the Proposed Development upon completion are generally limited to the highest parts of the proposed buildings and rail gantry cranes only, with the lower and active parts screened by existing intervening woodland, trees and in some instances landform.

12.483 In these more distant and limited views, the proposed mounding and planting after 15 years will result in little discernible change to the nature of the view upon completion. This is a reflection of the existing wooded context of the Site and the existing natural visual screening that is present in the longer ranging views. The visual effects upon those properties with views from Brewood towards the Proposed Development will not differ after 15 years. Similarly, distant and elevated views from Shoal Hill to the north east of the Site will not discernibly change as a result of the planting proposals after 15 years.

## Summary of Mitigation Measures

12.484 In the context of the landscape and visual assessment, primary mitigation measures and considerations have been incorporated as an integral (or 'embedded') part of the design and layout of the Proposed Development. These include attention to the siting, layout and heights of the Proposed Development and consideration of the earthworks and ground modelling proposals. All of these aspects and features have been taken into account in the design of the Proposed Development and the development parameters and have therefore been assessed as part of the construction and operational stages.

## Summary of Residual Effects

12.485 Table 12.2 provides a tabulated summary of the outcomes of the landscape and visual of the Proposed Development.

Table 12.2: Summary of Residual Effects							
Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect*					
		Significance**	+	D	P	R	St
Construction							
Landscape							
Site Landscape Character (including Sensitivity Study LCP's FAE01-03)	Direct effect upon the character of the Site landscape	Moderate/ Major Adverse	-	D	T	I	St
Site Landscape Features – Woodland/ Trees/ Hedgerows	Direct effect and loss of existing woodland, trees and hedgerows, including approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood.	Moderate/ Major Adverse	-	D	T	I	Lt
Site Landscape Context (County Scale Landscape Character Types)	Direct and indirect effect upon the character of the Site landscape context	Minor Adverse	-	D/I	T	I	St

Table 12.2: Summary of Residual Effects							
Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect*					
		Significance**	+	D	P	R	St
Construction							
Visual							
Cannock Chase AONB	Indirect effect upon the character and special qualities of the AONB landscape	Minor Adverse	-	I	T	I	St
Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal	Direct and indirect effect upon the landscape character and features of the canal corridor	Moderate Adverse	-	D/I	T	I	St
Settlement and Properties (Near Views)	Generally close positions and mix of relatively clear and more restricted views; generally to the nearest construction activity. Typically scattered groups and not large numbers or extensive settlement areas	Minor/ Moderate to Major Adverse	-	D	T	I	St
Settlement and Properties (Distant Views)	Generally distant positions and mix of more expansive and restricted views over a varied landscape. Views generally confined to construction of the highest parts of the buildings. Lower level construction activity effectively screened by wooded context	Minor to Minor/ Moderate Adverse	-	D	T	I	St
Highways/ Roads A5, A449, Station Drive, Vicarage Rd, Straight Mile	Generally close positions and mix of relatively clear and more restricted views; generally to the nearest construction activity.	Minor to Moderate / Major Adverse	-	D	T	I	St
PROW/ Footpaths Canal Towpath (incl. boat users)	Varying views though generally limited stretches of the canal. Most notable effects between Gailey Marina and Gravelly Way bridge with proposed bridge and nearest buildings under construction	Moderate/ Major Adverse	-	D	T	I	St

Table 12.2: Summary of Residual Effects							
Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect*					
		Significance**	+ -	D I	P T	R I R	St M t Lt
PROW/ Footpaths Shoal Hill footpaths/ open space	Distant (approx. 3km) and elevated views to construction of the highest parts of the buildings. Visible within an active, varied and lower lying wooded context. Lower level construction activity effectively screened by wooded context	Moderate Adverse	-	D	T	I R	St
PROW/ Footpaths Generally	Generally a limited number of PROW within and surrounding the Site. Limited and varying views generally towards construction of the higher parts of the buildings	Minor to Moderate Adverse	-	D	T	I R	St
Other Calf Heath Reservoir	Close clear views to nearest construction activities to the west; visible in the context of the A5 traffic and Junction 12	Moderate/ Major Adverse	-	D	T	I R	S T
Completed Development (based upon Proposed Development 15 years after full completion) Landscape							
Site Landscape Character (including Sensitivity Study LCP's FAE01-03)	Direct effect upon the character of the Site landscape. Significant change to the landscape, encompassing adverse (high magnitude) and beneficial (low magnitude) change. Maturing and management of extensive landscape and GI proposals will reduce effects over time.	Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt
Site Landscape Features – Woodland/ Trees/ Hedgerows	Direct effect and loss of existing woodland, trees and hedgerows, including approximately two thirds of Calf Heath Wood. Notable new woodland, tree,	Minor Adverse/ Negligible	-	D	P	I R	Lt

Table 12.2: Summary of Residual Effects							
Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect*					
		Significance**	+ -	D I	P T	R I R	St M t Lt
	hedgerows and other planting and comprehensive management						
Site Landscape Context (County Scale Landscape Character Types)	Direct and Indirect effect upon the character of the Site landscape context. Maturing and management of extensive landscape and GI proposals will reduce effects over time.	Minor Adverse	-	D/ I	P	I R	Lt
Cannock Chase AONB	Indirect effect upon the character and special qualities of the AONB landscape.	Minor Adverse	-	I	P	I R	Lt
Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal	Direct and indirect effect upon the landscape character and features of the canal corridor	Minor/ Moderate Adverse	-	D/ I	P	I R	Lt
Completed Development (based upon Proposed Development 15 years after full completion) Visual							
Settlement and Properties (Near Views)	Generally close positions and mix of relatively clear and more restricted views. Maturing and management of extensive landscape and GI proposals will increasingly screen and filter views and reduce effects over time.	Minor to Moderate/ Major Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt
Settlement and Properties (Distant Views)	Generally distant positions and mix of more expansive and restricted views over a varied landscape. Views generally confined the highest parts of the buildings. Lower level activity effectively screened by wooded context	Minor to Minor/ Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt
Highways/ Roads A5, Croft Lane, A449, Station	Generally close positions and mix of relatively clear and more restricted views;	Minor to Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt



Table 12.2: Summary of Residual Effects							
Receptor	Description of Residual Effect	Nature of Residual Effect*					
		Significance**	+	D	P	R	St M t Lt
Drive, Vicarage Rd, Straight Mile	generally to the nearest construction activity.						
PROW/ Footpaths Canal Towpath (incl. boat users)	Varying views though generally limited stretches of the canal. Most notable effects between Gailey Marina and Gravelly Way bridge with proposed bridge and nearest buildings under construction	Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt
PROW/ Footpaths Shoal Hill footpaths/ open space	Distant (approx. 3km) and elevated views to construction of the highest parts of the buildings. Visible within an active, varied and lower lying wooded context. Lower level construction activity effectively screened by wooded context	Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt
PROW/ Footpaths Generally	Generally a limited number of PROW within and surrounding the Site. Limited and varying views generally towards construction of the higher parts of the buildings	Minor to Minor/ Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt
Other Calf Heath Reservoir	Close clear views to nearest construction activities to the west; visible in the context of the A5 traffic and Junction 12	Moderate Adverse	-	D	P	I R	Lt

Notes:

\* - = Adverse/ + = Beneficial; D = Direct/ I = Indirect; P = Permanent/ T = Temporary; R=Reversible/ IR= Irreversible; St- Short term/ Mt –Medium term/ Lt –Long term.

\*\*Negligible/Minor/Moderate/Major

## Likely Significant Environmental Effects

12.486 As detailed in the methodology for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment at the beginning of this chapter and in Technical Appendix 12.1 and for the purposes of this assessment a likely Significant Effect is an effect that has been assessed as Major or Moderate/ Major.

12.487 The Proposed Development will result in a number of likely Significant Effects, comprising effects upon the following landscape and visual receptors at the following stages.

### Construction Stage

#### Landscape

- Landscape character of the Site and its immediate context; and
- Existing woodland, trees and hedgerows.

#### Visual

- Some residential properties on Croft Lane, A5, A449, Station Drive, Vicarage Road and Straight Mile;
- Towpath and boat users of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal;
- Users of Calf Heath Reservoir; and
- Users of Croft Lane

### Operational Stage (Upon Completion)

#### Landscape

- Landscape character of the Site and its immediate context.

#### Visual

- Some residential properties on Croft Lane, A5, A449, Station Drive, Vicarage Road and Straight Mile;
- Towpath and boat users of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal; and
- Users of Calf Heath Reservoir.

### Operational Stage (Residual Effect – 15 Years Post Completion)

#### Landscape

- No likely significant effects. (It should however be noted that there will be Significant overall change to the landscape character of the Site and its immediate context at this stage. This change will encompass some beneficial change (of a Low magnitude) arising from the management and maturing of the GI proposals (occupying approximately 32% of the Site) and adverse change (of a High magnitude) arising from the effect and influence of the Development Zones. The resultant combined Medium magnitude of change results in a Moderate Adverse effect upon the landscape character of the Site and its immediate context.

#### Visual

- A single residential property on the A449 and three residential properties on Straight Mile

## Decommissioning

12.488 It is not clear how decommissioning of the Proposed Development would take place or at what stage. It would however be expected that the Proposed Development will have been operational for a long period of time. As a result the existing and proposed planting and the green infrastructure and community parks would be mature and have strengthened as positive landscape features of the Site.

12.489 Assuming that decommissioning would seek to return the Site to predominantly similar mixed farmland uses, then the established landscape and planting areas will provide an

appropriate and robust landscape framework within which restored farmland and other uses could be assimilated.

## Cumulative Effects

- 12.490 This cumulative effects assessment considers the combined effects of the Proposed Development along with the 'other development(s)' on landscape and visual receptors.
- 12.491 For the purposes of this landscape and visual cumulative effects assessment, the following definitions reflecting GLVIA3 apply:
- Cumulative landscape effects may arise from adding new types of change or from increasing or extending the effects of the main project. The concern is with the accumulation of effects upon landscape character and the components that contribute to it. Cumulative landscape effects are likely to include effects: on the fabric of the landscape; on the aesthetic aspects of the landscape; and, on the overall character of the landscape.
  - Cumulative visual effects are the effects on views and visual amenity enjoyed by people, which may result either from adding the effects of the project being assessed to the effects of the other projects on the baseline conditions or from their combined effect. This may result from changes in the content and character of the views experienced in particular places.
- 12.492 The study area for the assessment of cumulative effects has been identified as the ZTV (Site Analysis) (as illustrated on Figure 12.9) of the Proposed Development plus any predicted overlapping ZTV for the other relevant identified projects. This has been determined through desk top review of relevant plans and information included as part of the other development projects and/or from the review and use of existing baseline visual studies and fieldwork.
- 12.493 The relevant cumulative schemes considered in this assessment are identified in the table below:

Table 12.3: Cumulative Effects Projects	
Scheme	Reason for Consideration of Cumulative Effect
Land off Gravelly Way, Four Ashes (Bericote Development)	Adjacent to the scheme

12.494 The Bericote Development is located adjoining the Site and is currently under construction.

## Construction

12.495 The Bericote Development is currently under construction and will introduce a new area of industrial development immediately adjoining the Site. It is not anticipated that there will be any overlap in the timescales for construction of the Bericote Development and the Proposed Development. Therefore, no cumulative landscape or visual effects are anticipated during the construction of the Bericote Development.

## Completed Development

### Landscape

- 12.496 The Bericote Development is of a similar large scale industrial character to the Proposed Development. In cumulative terms, the Bericote Development will extend the overall area of industrial development across the local landscape. However, given the presence of the existing Four Ashes Industrial Estate and that of the Proposed Development the additional effect of the Bericote Development is considered to be limited in landscape character terms.
- 12.497 This development occupies a relatively enclosed location contained by the existing and proposed industrial areas and in landscape terms it would not result in any additional change or effects to alter the stated effect on the landscape character of Site and its immediate context following completion of the Proposed Development.
- 12.498 There will also be a potential limited and localised cumulative landscape effect on the landscape character of the canal corridor, yet this would similarly not alter the stated effect on the landscape character of the canal corridor following completion of the Proposed Development.

### Visual

- 12.499 There is the potential for some additional cumulative visual effects arising from the Bericote Development. These would potentially arise for a limited number of receptors in close proximity to this development and a number of more distant and elevated receptors. Potentially the most notable cumulative visual effects will arise for canal users who would be likely to experience sequential views of the Bericote Development and the Proposed Development.
- 12.500 The Bericote Development will be visible along the stretch of canal to the south of the existing Gravelly Way road bridge and will be seen on the opposite side of the canal to the Four Ashes Industrial Estate and SI Works. The scheme will be seen in an existing enclosed and industrialised context and it will add to this existing character.
- 12.501 The Proposed Development will be principally viewed by canal users to the north of the Gravelly Way road bridge and in these views it will be set further back from the canal than either the existing Four Ashes Industrial Estate and SI Works or the Bericote Development. The resultant cumulative effect will principally be as a result of the sequential viewing of the developments for users travelling along the canal or towpath. There will potentially be the opportunity for the Bericote Development to be seen by canal users alongside a limited part of the Proposed Development to the north of Vicarage Road. This will not result in any more than a limited and localised effect, largely given the enclosed and industrial dominated context of this part of the canal corridor.
- 12.502 In terms of the sequential cumulative effects for canal users the addition of the Bericote Development will result in no discernible visual change for canal users passing along this stretch of the canal. Consequently, it will not alter the stated visual effect of the Proposed Development upon the canal users.
- 12.503 The Bericote Development will potentially also be seen from a limited number of distant elevated locations alongside the Proposed Development. These are likely to include some properties or Public Rights of Way at Brewood to the west and Shareshill to the south. From these positions, the higher parts of the Bericote Development buildings are likely to be distantly visible alongside and occupying the same general position as the higher parts of the buildings (and gantry cranes) of the Proposed Development.
- 12.504 There will however be no discernible additional visual effect on these distant receptors. The addition of the Bericote Development will not alter the stated visual effects of the Proposed



Development upon any of the distant and elevated receptors with views towards both developments.