

WB LANDSCAPE APPENDICES LAB: VISUAL IMPACT AND LANDSCAPE IMPACT TABLES

- **Table 1:** Susceptibility to change of the landscape receptors for this appeal site.
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TABLE 1: SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE OF THE LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS FOR THIS APPEAL SITE.

Susceptibility to change: GLVIA3 para. 5.40 provides guidance on assessing the susceptibility to change of landscape receptors. In the light of that guidance, Table 1 below sets out the susceptibility to change of the landscape receptors for the appeal site and the type of development proposed, in this instance, 5 pitches each including the following: 1 No mobile home, 1 No touring caravan, 1 No day room, area of hardstanding and access from Hampton Norreys Road (B4009). The baseline for this assessment is based on the original condition of the appeal site, before any unauthorised development took place, although it is still referenced

Landscape receptor	Landscape susceptibility to change	Rational for classification
Land use: Grassland	<i>High</i>	Grassland, contained in a field. Strong landscape structure, good sense of place
Trees	<i>Medium/high</i>	Tree survey undertaken; Trees are part of a continuous hedgerow along the B4009, forming a linear feature and part of the hedgerow structure of this area. Adjacent the eastern appeal site boundary there is a woodland with a blanket TPO. Appeal site provides open setting for trees
Hedgerow – roadside (western appeal site boundary)	<i>High</i>	Mature hedgerow, contributes to network of hedgerows. A highway compliant access will require sight lines, which will require the removal of up to 20m of hedgerow to the north and removal of the hedgerow to the south for construction of the 1.5m pedestrian pavement
Appeal site landscape character	<i>High</i>	The appeal site would have been a small grass field, An open setting for adjacent mature trees. This area will be particularly susceptible to development. Generally strong landscape structure and characteristic patterns
Surrounding landscape character	<i>High</i>	Well defined edge of settlement character, with long views across landscape to the west to wooded hills (listed as important view within Hermitage Design guide.) This is an established landscape with a well-defined character where only well-considered changes could be accommodated without loss of key characteristics. Good sense of place
Hermitage settlement edge	<i>High</i>	The appeal site forms part of and contributes to the rural settlement edge character of Hermitage. Its intact form of a small grassed field, hedgerow with mature trees. There would have also have been views into the appeal site from the B4009, visible as a small field. Overall, a good sense of place with a strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and landcover
North Wessex Downs National Landscape Landscape Type 8: Lowland Mosaic Character Area 8A: Hermitage Wooded Commons	<i>High</i>	National Landscape. Appeal site forms a key characteristic and part of the special qualities which contribute to the landscape character of the National Landscape, Special qualities which are potentially incompatible with the development
WBLCA 2019 LCT WH Woodland and Heathland Mosaic LCA WH4: Cold Ash Woodland and Heathland Mosaic	<i>High</i>	Recognisable landscape structure, characteristics patterns and combinations of landform and landcover are evident. Distinct features worthy of conservation and are potentially incompatible with the development

TABLE 2: VALUE OF THE LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS FOR THIS APPEAL SITE.

The landscape receptors are set out below with a summary of: (1) their condition: whether they were intact and well maintained and in good health; (2) representativeness: importance to local character; (3) perceptual aspect: whether of cultural or historic significance and considered contributing to the attractive appearance, tranquillity or wildness of an area; and (4) any designations. The baseline for this assessment is based on the original condition of the site, before any unauthorised development took place

Landscape receptor	Condition	Representativeness Importance to local character	Perceptual	Designation	Landscape value
Land use: Grassland	As shown on the most recent aerial photo, the grass could be fallow, but any revised management would improve its condition Overall intact	A characteristic small field often found on the edge of settlements which enhance their rural character and transition to a wider more open agricultural landscape. Part of the key characteristics and valued features and qualities of WBLCA 2019 - LCA WH4	Visible as a small field which forms the rural setting for the settlement edge of Hermitage and the rural character of the B4009 a key approach road into Hermitage	WBLCA listed as valued feature National Landscape	<i>High</i>
Trees	Adjacent trees to appeal site are in a good condition (mainly B category). The trees adjacent the eastern appeal site boundary have TPOs. Appeal site as a grass field provides open setting Overall intact	A key feature within this landscape providing the National Landscape with its woody intimate character	Trees contribute to the woody character for this part of the National Landscape.	TPO National Landscape	<i>High</i>
Hedgerow	Important mature roadside hedgerow. Was in good condition before the unauthorised development. Part of the rural character of B4009 and the edge of settlement character of Hermitage Overall intact, although presently damaged by the unauthorised development	Enhances and maintains established rural character of settlement edge	Part of the rural character of the B4009 and the woody character of the settlement edge. Intact	WBLCA listed as valued feature National Landscape	<i>High</i>
Appeal site character	Would have been in good condition (pre-unauthorised development) as an area of grassland, with intact field hedgerow and open setting for adjacent trees.	Small field on edge of settlement enhances the rural character of Hermitage	A visual and physical link with the wider rural area	National Landscape	<i>High</i>
Surrounding landscape character (Local)	The surrounding landscape character of the appeal site is in a good condition as open countryside within the NL, although traffic noise is apparent from M4; The area west of the B4009 provides long views over open countryside. The area to the east is a woodland with a blanket TPO. To the south, four properties extend residential development beyond the settlement edge boundary. Adjacent property is a low-lying bungalow	Part of the mixed mosaic and variable land cover of woodlands, pasture and heathland with a strong hedgerow pattern. Part of the key characteristics and valued features and qualities of LCA WH4 - WBLCA 2019	Contributes to the rural open character of this area	National Landscape	<i>High</i>

Settlement edge character of Hermitage	The appeal site as a small grass field provides a transition to the adjacent open landscape. Enhances Hermitage's rural settlement edge character	Contributes to Hermitage's rural character	Provides a rural setting. Connection to a rural landscape	National landscape	<i>High</i>
North Wessex Downs National Landscape Landscape Type 8: Lowland Mosaic Character Area 8A: Hermitage Wooded Commons	Good, although traffic noise from M4 is distracting, however due to the wooded character of area, there are only limited views which reduces its overall presence	Good	Mature wooded landscape, with some long views across farmland to wooded horizons	National Landscape	<i>High</i>
WBLCA 2019 LCT WH Woodland and Heathland Mosaic LCA WH4: Cold Ash Woodland and Heathland Mosaic	Physical condition is good, with recognisable landscape structure, characteristics patterns and combinations of landform and landcover are still evident	Contains key characteristic and valued features and qualities of LCA WH5 - WBLCA 2019	Area retains a rural identity on the edge of a settlement. The fields, hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and woodland areas are retained.	National Landscape	<i>High</i>

TABLE 3 LANDSCAPE IMPACT TABLE

1. My landscape impact assessment methodology is set out in **WB Landscape Appendices Appendix LAC**
2. Development for five pitches each with a mobile home, touring caravan and day room with a remodeled access off the B4009
3. Comments on the suitability and practicality of the proposed mitigation planting see **section 5** of WB Landscape PoE
4. Dark orange represents an effect which is significant and pale pink although not significant on its own, cumulative these effects on a wide range of receptors should be considered important in decision making

Landscape receptor	Susceptibility to change see Table 1	Value see Table 2	Overall sensitivity	Scale of effect	Extent of effect	Duration of effect	Overall magnitude of impact	Significance of effects in Year 1	Significance of effects in Year 15	Landscape mitigation taken into account – see comments within LA PoE on suitability
Land use: grass for grazing	High	High	<i>High</i>	Replaced by compacted surfaces, for mobile homes, touring caravans, utility buildings and access road. Very little identified remaining grass	Loss of circa 90% of the grass in a small field	Permanent	<i>High</i>	Substantial adverse effect	Substantial adverse effect	5m strips around perimeter of pitches proposed as meadow grassland and managed for conservation, which realistically will be used as garden/amenity space. Therefore, not achievable
Trees	Medium/High	High	<i>Medium/High</i>	Loss of tree within sight lines with remaining trees context and character urbanised/compromised	Small scale	Permanent.	<i>Medium</i>	Moderate adverse effect	Minor adverse effect	The 2.3m high acoustic fence will limit the locations for successful tree planting and tree growth
Hedgerow-Western appeal site boundary	High	High	<i>High</i>	Loss of 25m of hedgerow to accommodate sight lines and 1.5m wide pedestrian path	Prominent location on settlement edge	Permanent	<i>Medium/high</i>	Major adverse effect	Major adverse effect	Infill of gaps within hedgerow and limited new hedgerows across appeal site will not reduce the loss of the hedgerows for sight lines

Landscape receptor	Susceptibility to change see Table 1	Value see Table 2	Overall sensitivity	Scale of effect	Extent of effect	Duration of effect	Overall magnitude of impact	Significance of effects in Year 1	Significance of effects in Year 15	Landscape mitigation taken into account – see comments within LA PoE on suitability
Appeal site character	High	High	<i>High</i>	Across complete site, will change from a grass field to an area dominated by 2.3m high acoustic fences, caravans, mobile homes, utility buildings, parked vehicles and garden paraphernalia	Complete change of character to domestic residential site. The extent will be visible to a large number of people travelling on the adjacent B4009 approaching and leaving Hermitage	Permanent	<i>High</i>	Substantial adverse effect	Substantial adverse effect	The appeal site will be urbanised and will not relate to the surrounding countryside.
Surrounding landscape character (Local)	High	High	<i>High</i>	Visible from adjacent local landscape	Dilution of an intact rural character by the introduction of suburban features	Permanent	<i>Medium/high</i>	Major adverse effect	Major adverse effect	The landscape mitigation measures will not compensate for the loss of the field
Settlement edge character of Hermitage	High	High	<i>High</i>	Loss of rural character on settlement edge	On main access route into Hermitage	Permanent	<i>Medium/high</i>	Major adverse effect	Major adverse effect	The landscape mitigation measures will not compensate for the loss of the field
North Wessex Downs National Landscape Landscape Type 8: Lowland Mosaic Character Area 8A: Hermitage Wooded Commons	High	High	<i>High</i>	Localised	Visible location	Permanent	<i>Medium/high</i>	Major adverse effect	Major adverse effect	The landscape mitigation measures will not compensate for the loss of the field and the development proposals will not conserve and enhance the National Landscape

Landscape receptor	Susceptibility to change see Table 1	Value see Table 2	Overall sensitivity	Scale of effect	Extent of effect	Duration of effect	Overall magnitude of impact	Significance of effects in Year 1	Significance of effects in Year 15	Landscape mitigation taken into account – see comments within LA PoE on suitability
WBLCA 2019 LCT WH Woodland and Heathland Mosaic LCA WH4: Cold Ash Woodland and Heathland Mosaic	High	High	<i>High</i>	A small semi contained site, however is a valued landscape feature	The location adjacent a main route into Hermitage is sensitive, visible from a number of locations within immediate landscape.	Permanent	<i>Medium/high</i>	Major adverse effect	Major adverse effect	No mitigation measures or conservation or enhancements in line with landscape strategy for this area

TABLE 4: VISUAL IMPACT TABLE

- References are to photo viewpoints in WB Landscape Appendix LAA. The location of viewpoints are shown on WB Landscape Appendix LAA Figure LA3
- My visual impact assessment methodology is set out in WB Landscape Appendices Appendix LAC
- Dark orange represents an effect which is significant and pale pink although not significant on its own, cumulative these effects on a wide range of receptors should be considered important in decision making

	Visual Receptor Name/Type/Location	Distance from appeal Site (M)	Sensitivity	Views prior to the development	Comments on impact of development	Proposed mitigation	Magnitude of Change	Impacts Year 1 winter	Impacts Year 15 summer
PV LA1	B4009	40m	Medium Sus = L Value = H	Country road with well treed hedgerows and glimpsed view of grass field beyond (Appeal site)	<u>Year 1: Winter views:</u> Due to the required visibility splays and construction of the 1.5m wide pedestrian pavement there will be open views into the appeal site of the acoustic fence, mobile homes, caravans, utility buildings, parked vehicles, post and rail fencing and garden paraphernalia <u>Year 15: Summer views:</u>	New hedgerows/ trees within appeal site and on boundaries	High	Major/ Moderate adverse effect	Major/ Moderate adverse effect
PV LA2	B4009	Adjacent	Medium Sus = L Value = H	Country road with well treed hedgerows and view of grass field beyond (Appeal site), enclosed by woodland	<u>Year 1: Winter views:</u> Framed views into whole of appeal site, with views of acoustic fencing, mobile homes, caravans, utility buildings, garden paraphernalia and parked vehicles. These elements are totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the view <u>Year 15: Summer views:</u> The limited internal hedgerows and trees maturing will not adequately mitigate the proposed development	New hedgerows/ trees within appeal site and on boundaries	High	Major/ Moderate adverse effect	Major/ Moderate adverse effect
PV LA3	Eling Way	8m	High Sus = H Value = H	Winter view up embankment through trees (TPO) to fence line (eastern appeal site boundary) terminating in open sky. This once would have been a simple rural view with no buildings or structures, which would add to the rural character of the Eling Way.	<u>Year 1: Winter views:</u> View up to the appeal site through woodland to eastern area of appeal site, with the proposals visible on the skyline <u>Year 15: Summer views:</u> Intervening woodland will semi screen views within the summer months. It will be difficult to establish a hedgerow under the tree canopy along the appeal site boundary	New hedgerow/ trees on appeal site boundary	Medium/ high	Major/ Moderate adverse effect	Minor adverse effect, due to off-site intervening woodland and not proposed mitigation measures

PV LA4	Adjacent the Play Area	30m	High Sus = H Value = H	Originally before any unauthorised development, the appeal site would have been visible as a small grass field, with open farmland beyond	<u>Year 1: Winter views:</u> numerous framed views through intervening woodland of proposed development including the acoustic fence, caravans, mobile homes, utility buildings, parked cars and garden paraphernalia. <u>Year 15: Summer views:</u> The intervening woodland will screen the views. It will be difficult to establish a hedgerow under the tree canopy along the appeal site boundary	New hedgerow on appeal site boundary	Medium	Moderate adverse effect	Minor adverse effect due to off-site intervening woodland and not proposed mitigation measures
PV LA5	Sandhill - no photo	Garden adjacent House 43m	Medium/ High Sus = M Value = H	Originally before any unauthorised development, the appeal site would have been visible as a small grass field,	<u>Year 1: Winter views:</u> Views from first floor windows across the whole of the appeal site which would include the acoustic fence, caravans, mobile homes, utility buildings, parked cars and garden paraphernalia. <u>Year 15: Summer views:</u> There is proposed tree and hedgerow planting along the northern appeal site boundary. This would need to work with the alignment of the 2.3m high acoustic fence for any plants to grow successfully	New hedgerow and tree planting on appeal site boundary	High	Major/ Moderate adverse effect	Major/ Moderate adverse effect

TABLE 5: AS PER APPENDIX 5 OF THE WBLCA 2019 ASSESSING THE SUITABILITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS ON THE APPEAL SITE

Landscape Character Area	LCA WH4 Cold Ash Woodland and Heathland Mosaic
How will the proposals contribute to the <u>Landscape Strategy</u> ?	Liz Allen (West Berkshire Council's landscape consultant) Response
<p>1) Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the nationally designated landscape of the North Wessex Downs AONB <i>Conserve and enhance the valued features of the North Wessex Downs AONB, including its varied landscape of woodland, heathland and farmland. Restore and enhance any features which have been lost or degraded. Ensure that changes in the landscape including land use change and development are sensitively sited and designed so as not to detract from the special qualities of the landscape.</i></p>	<p>The overall management objective for this Landscape Type is to conserve and enhance the distinctive small scale and enclosed landscape including field patterns and hedgerows. The proposed development will result in the loss of a small grass hedged field which contributes to this mosaic.</p> <p>Non-compliant</p>
<p>4) Conserve and strengthen existing boundary elements <i>Seek to prevent further loss or decline in the quality of boundary hedgerows, and encourage restoration/reinstatement of hedgerows within expansive arable fields and around horse paddocks. Preserve the wooded context of settlements, to contain and filter the impact of built form.</i></p>	<p>The appeal scheme will have an adverse landscape effect on the boundary roadside hedgerow due to the requirement for visibility splays and a pedestrian pavement. Proposed mitigation measures include hedgerow planting around the appeal site boundary, which will not compensate for the length of hedgerow permanently lost</p> <p>Non-compliant</p>
<p>5) Retain the distinction between and individual identity of settlements <i>Retain a sense of distinction between individual settlements through a clear understanding of the role of landform, tree cover and rural buildings in characterising settings and in forming boundaries that conserve and enhance distinctions in character... Avoid extended linear development along roads, which creates a more developed character resulting in the loss of individual settlement identity. More small-scale focused development set back from main routes often has less impact on character and can be more readily contained by landscape.</i></p>	<p>Presently the appeal site as a small field contributes to Hermitage's rural character and rural setting within the National Landscape</p> <p>Due to the linear shape of the appeal site, the proposed development will form ribbon development beyond the settlement boundary of Hermitage, extending development out into the open countryside</p> <p>The appeal site is located on a main approach road into Hermitage which due to the required sight lines and requirements for the appeal site, cannot be adequately contained by the proposed landscape mitigation measures</p> <p>Non-compliant</p>
<p>6) Conserve elements that mark a transition between settlement and countryside <i>Where possible retain small, enclosed fields around villages, and farm buildings which contribute positively to rural character.</i></p>	<p>The appeal site as a small grassed field contributes positively to the settlement edge character of Hermitage. The proposed development will result in a change of character of the appeal site from a grass field to a suburban site dominated by acoustic fencing, mobile homes, buildings, caravans, parked cars and garden paraphernalia. The development proposals will not retain the small enclosed field character, which would have contributed positively to Hermitage's rural character</p> <p>Non-compliant</p>

Will any <u>Key Characteristics</u> be affected by the proposal?	Liz Allen (West Berkshire Council's landscape consultant) Response
<p>3) Complex pattern of land cover, dominated by woodland and with remnant heaths <i>The area is distinctive for its varied geological pattern of clays, silts, sands and gravels, which result in nutrient-poor soils. The mixed sand, clay and gravel substrate creates a mosaic of land cover including damp pasture, paddocks and heathland, the latter concentrated in Bucklebury, but woodland is a prominent landscape element. Most former heathland is now tree-covered, with coniferous plantation and regenerated woodland, and interlinked linear woodland extends down the slopes from the ridge across the clay towards the valley landscape, including thin wooded valleys centred on minor tributary streams such as The Bourne.</i></p>	<p>YES: The appeal scheme will result in the direct loss of a grass field and change the landscape character of the field to an area of suburban development.</p>
<p>4) Varied field pattern with strong hedgerows <i>There is a varied field pattern with irregular fields, interspersed with parcels of woodland and commons indicative of medieval and post-medieval assarts. Fields with parallel and sinuous boundaries predominate, and represent 'ladder' fields probably resulting from the 17th and 18th century informal enclosure. Field boundaries include dense and intact hedgerows with trees, with larger amalgamated fields present in some areas.</i></p>	<p>YES: The appeal scheme will also require a modified point of access with visibility splays which will require the removal of 25m of existing hedgerow. This will degrade the existing intact hedgerow field boundary.</p>
<p>6) Relatively densely settled, particularly along the ridge, but with woodland containment <i>A fairly well-populated area with numerous, mostly linear, villages along the ridge (including Bradfield Southend, Beenham, Cold Ash and Hermitage), with further settlement spread out along the roads during the 20th century. Smaller hamlets and farmsteads are often located on the mid slopes, whilst larger private residences and large institutional buildings, such as Douai Abbey and several private schools, are scattered throughout the woodlands. The main building material is brick and tile, although timber framing and thatch also occur. Tree cover means that settlements typically feel rural and isolated, with many houses set back from the road and fronted by trees (this is particularly the case at Upper Bucklebury), although modern development is more evident towards the western end of the character area at Cold Ash, Ashmore Green, Hermitage and along the B4009.</i></p>	<p>YES: The appeal site contributes to the wooded setting and containment of Hermitage. The development proposals will result in the weakening of this intact rural setting</p>
<p>7) A minor road network contained by the wooded landscape <i>Busier roads, notably the M4, are limited to the fringes of the character area, and within the area the undulating and wooded landscape contains and limits the influence of roads. On the ridge slopes, winding rural lanes pass through open and wooded landscapes, and are frequently overhung by deep grassy or woodland banks.</i></p>	<p>The M4 is located circa 115m to the north of the appeal site. However, due to the well wooded character of this area, its influence is lessened and only limited to traffic noise</p> <p>However, due to the noise from the M4 this will require mitigation measures and acoustic noise fences within the appeal site, adding additional suburban features to the appeal site</p>
<p>8) An accessible landscape <i>An extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and byways pass through this landscape, connecting the small settlements, and many of the woodlands and commons have open access.</i></p>	<p>YES: The development proposals will have an adverse visual effect on users of the Eling Way which runs adjacent to the appeal site</p>

Will the proposal adversely affect any of the <u>Valued Features and Qualities</u> or exacerbate any of the <u>Detractors</u> ?	Liz Allen (West Berkshire Council's landscape consultant) Response
<p>VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES:</p> <p>1) Nationally valued landscape which forms part of the North Wessex Downs AONB The eastern half of the character area, and land to the north of the southern edge of the ridge between Cold Ash and Woolhampton forms part of the nationally designated landscape of the North Wessex Downs AONB. The mosaic of ancient semi-natural woodlands, plantations, remnant heathland and open farmland, deriving from the area's varied geology, and the sense of seclusion often engendered from this mix, are noted as special qualities relating to this character area. Historic parklands are also noted as being a particular feature of the lowlands above the Kennet Valley.</p>	<p>YES: The appeal site is located within the National Landscape. The appeal scheme will extend development and suburban features into the open landscape of the National Landscape.</p>
<p>3) The varied land cover mosaic and important habitats The variety of woodland forms, including valley woodlands and wooded ridgelines, the presence of heathland, rivers and the varied field pattern, make this an interesting and intimate landscape. The ecological importance of heathland, ancient woodland and grassland habitats adds to landscape interest.</p>	<p>YES: The appeal site as a small grass field adds to landscape interest and an intimate landscape on the settlement edge of Hermitage</p>
<p>4) A very rural character away from major roads and urban edges Landform and tree cover mean that away from the urban edges of Thatcham and Newbury and from the M4 there is a rapid transition upslope to a more intimate rural landscape, with small traditional villages and farmsteads and dark skies. The transition in character along Stoney Lane between Shaw and Ashmore Green is an example of this. The wooded context of settlements and roads helps integrate their built form into the landscape.</p>	<p>YES: The appeal site as a grass field contributes to the rural location of the recreation ground and rural character of the Eling Way. The visibility of the proposed development will have an adverse effect on the amenity value of these areas</p>
<p>DETRACTORS:</p> <p>7) Loss of gradation between settlement and countryside Farm buildings and small pasture fields adjacent to settlements have proved vulnerable to development (typically of small residential clusters), due in the former case to presence of existing structures and in the latter to the screening/containment provided by boundary features. However, farm buildings, even when development has left them adjacent to settlement edges, contribute to rural character when they retain a relationship with farmland; and small enclosures, even when used as paddocks, form a transition between settlement and countryside that can contribute positively to landscape character, particularly when they retain a relationship with a historic settlement core.</p>	<p>YES: The loss of this small field of grassland to development will exacerbate an identified detractor</p>
<p>8) Increased traffic on the rural lane network There is pressure on the network of rural lanes, many of which are single track with few passing places. Heavy traffic on narrow lanes has a significant impact on countryside character, but standard highway improvements such as widening, kerbing, signage and broad visibility splays can create a more urban character which is out of context as well as encourage greater usage.</p>	<p>YES: Extensive visibility splays and a pedestrian footpath requiring the removal of 25m of hedgerow will create a more suburban character</p>

* Special qualities derived from The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan. These are supplemented by the information contained in the North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2002)