

## **HARWELL CAMPUS**

**Landscape Study**

**by**

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**for**

**Vale of White Horse District Council**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Instructions**

1.1.1 Hankinson Duckett Associates has been appointed to undertake a landscape and visual appraisal of the land surrounding Harwell Campus, Oxfordshire (*Plan HDA 1*). This report assesses the relative capacity of parcels of land surrounding Harwell Campus to accommodate future residential development. The assessment includes two areas already assessed within the Landscape Capacity Study 2014: Site Options (Ref 1), commissioned by Vale of White Horse District Council.

### **1.2 Methodology**

1.2.1 National landscape guidance utilises landscape character as a basis for policy. Natural England, formally the Countryside Agency developed methodology for the character-based approach to landscape assessment (2002 – Ref 2). It describes the application of landscape character assessment at different scales: the national/regional scale, local authority scale and local scale. HDA's methodology includes consideration of landscape character along-side landscape and visual impact assessment. The third edition of the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Ref 3), published in 2013, sets out landscape and visual assessment methodology, which provides the basis, with adaptation, for use in project-specific landscape impact assessment.

1.2.2 The approach to this landscape and visual assessment is based upon this latest guidance, and upon HDA's extensive practical experience of assessment work. For consistency, HDA have used the same methodology, for the analysis of landscape capacity, as set out in the Capacity Study 2014: Site Options (Ref 1). The methodology is appended to this report in Appendix 1.

## **2 LANDSCAPE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

### **2.1 National planning policy**

2.1.1 In March 2012, the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF - Ref 4) was enacted. This supersedes the government's previous national planning documents including 'Planning Policy Statements' and 'Planning Policy Guidance' and will set the context for Local Authorities revised development plan policies.

2.1.2 Chapter 7 – Requiring good design

*'Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:*

- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.'*

These are the key points relevant to the proposed development.

2.1.3 Harwell Campus lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a nationally designated area. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that: *'Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.'*

AONB's are protected solely for their natural beauty, with the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage being important considerations.

## 2.2 Local policy

2.2.1 The saved policies of Vale of White Horse District Local Plan (Ref 5) represent the local planning policy for the district. Relevant policies include heritage policies HE1 and HE4 and landscape policies NE6 and NE9. Policies HE1 and HE4 relate to Conservation Areas and Listed buildings, along with their settings. Listed buildings should be retained and the character of Conservation Areas and the settings of both heritage assets should be conserved.

2.2.2 Policy NE6 relates to development within the AONB and states that: *'Development in the North Wessex Downs area of outstanding natural beauty will only be permitted if the natural beauty of the landscape will be conserved or enhanced. Development which would be visually prominent, would detract from views from public vantage points or would spoil the appreciation of the landscape quality of the North Wessex Downs area of outstanding natural beauty will not be permitted. Major industrial or commercial development will not be permitted in the area of outstanding natural beauty unless:*

- i) it is proven to be in the national interest and no alternative site can be found; and*
- ii) all steps are taken to reduce the impact of the development on the beauty of the area.'*

2.2.3 Policy NE9 states that: *'Development in the lowland vale will not be permitted if it would have an adverse effect on the landscape, particularly on the long open views within or across the area.'*

2.2.4 Within the Emerging Local Plan 2031 (Ref 6), the site has been put forward as a strategic housing site. This report assesses the suitability of the site and other sites around Harwell Campus, for development in landscape terms.

### **3 LOCAL LANDSCAPE CONTEXT**

#### **3.1 Location** (*Plan HDA 1 and 2*)

- 3.1.1 Harwell is located to the south-west of Oxford, approximately 3 km to the south-west of Didcot and approximately 5km south-east of Wantage. The A34 dual carriageway runs north-south, to the east of the campus, with the Chiltern junction adjacent to the south-east corner of the campus site. The escarpment of the North Wessex Downs, lies to the south of the campus and is a significant feature in the local landscape.

#### **3.2 Geology**

- 3.2.1 The northern edge of the North Wessex Downs is comprised of Downs Plain and Scarp landscapes, defined in their extent and form by the underlying geology. The plains are formed by the eroded surface of the relatively soft Lower Chalk, creating a low, level surface extending as a ledge at the foot of the high downs, which are linked to the distinctive steep escarpment to the south. The scarp and high downs landscapes are formed of the harder Upper and Middle chalk and create a recognisable and dramatic horizon from the lower lying landscapes to the north. Harwell Campus is located within the plain to the north of the main scarp and above the clay lowlands and the Thames valley landscapes which occupy the lower land to the north of the Downs.

#### **3.3 Landform and drainage** (*Plan HDA 1*)

- 3.3.1 The Downs form a dramatic southern edge to the study area with high points of 192m AOD to the south of Harwell Campus, on the Ridgeway, and 203m AOD at Cuckhamsley Hill, to the south-west of the campus. From the top of the downs escarpment, the ground falls away steeply to the chalk plain at a level of approximately 120-130m AOD. Harwell Campus and the land surrounding it are part of this flatter landform between 120 and 110m AOD. To the north-east and east of the study area are some local vantage points, including Hagbourne Hill, which rises to a height of 137m AOD, a hill to the south of Upton and Churn Hill, which is a much more significant landform, with a summit height of 160m AOD. Beyond these hills, to the north-east of the study area, the land falls away again towards the clay lowlands. East Hagbourne is located within these lowlands to the north-east of the site, at approximately 60m AOD.

#### **3.4 Local land use and vegetation** (*Plan HDA 2*)

- 3.4.1 Harwell Campus is developed as a science and business park, on a former airfield site, with some housing located to the north. The campus has areas of open space within it, particularly to the south and east and is well treed, with mature tree belts located in and around the campus boundaries. A new housing development has been built to the south of the campus. The land surrounding the campus comprises large agricultural fields in arable production. The land to the west of the campus has mature tree belts following field boundaries, whereas the land to the east of the campus is more open. New tree

belts have been planted in areas of the landscape to the east, to the south of the public footpath 'Icknield Way' and on the western slopes of Hagbourne Hill.

### **3.5 Designations (Plan HDA 3)**

3.5.1 The Harwell Campus lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and is subject to the constraints of relevant national and local plan policy, namely the conservation of the character and scenic beauty of the AONB.

3.5.2 Conservation Areas – Three of the villages within the study area have Conservation Areas. These include: Harwell, East Hendred and Blewbury.

3.5.3 Listed buildings – The majority of listed buildings in the area are located within the surrounding villages including Chilton, Upton, West Hagbourne, Harwell, East Hendred and Blewbury. There is an isolated listed building to the north of the campus, adjacent to the A4185. There is also a Grade II listed milestone adjacent to the campus, along the A4185.

### **3.6 Landscape character**

3.6.1 The North Wessex Downs AONB: Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (Ref 7) provides a comprehensive assessment of landscape character for the study area. The land surrounding Harwell Campus lies within the same character area: '5C Hendred Plain', which is within the 'Downs Plain and Scarp' Landscape Character type.

3.6.2 Relevant key characteristics include:

- *a generally level surface which dips gently to the north. A locally more undulating landscape near West Hendred where the Plain is cut by numerous valleys;*
- *largely under arable cultivation within large regular Parliamentary enclosure fields with insignificant boundary features;*
- *shelterbelts, 18th and 19th century plantations, ornamental and waterside woodlands provide a sense of enclosure. Orchards along the northern edge around East Hendred provide diversity in land cover;*
- *small landscape parks and mansions, e.g. Lockinge House, are a particular feature of the area;*
- *a settled landscape with many springline villages e.g. Letcombe Regis, East Hendred, West Hendred and Ardington which generally have a clustered form. Estate villages have a particular unity of character;*
- *a large number of stables and equestrian establishments and gallops;*
- *Wantage and Harwell, located on the boundary of the AONB, plus Harwell Business Centre, on a former air field site within the AONB;*
- *overall, a quiet rural character.'*

- 3.6.3 The landscape character of the land surrounding Harwell Campus is consistent with the AONB character assessment, although the Harwell Campus development itself is a distinctive anomaly in the landscape with regard to settlement pattern and general built form. The campus is generally contained by mature tree belts, but a number of buildings are open to view and are distinctive when viewed from the ridgeline of the Downs escarpment.
- 3.6.4 The fields surrounding the campus are large and in arable production, with fields to the west being more contained by linear shelterbelts. These more enclosed western fields are associated with the extensive tree planting on the Lockinge Estate. The additional enclosure of the shelterbelts contains views of local villages from within the fields, such that they are entirely rural in character.
- 3.6.5 Fields to the east are more open, with fewer significant boundary features. The openness of the landscape maintains a visual relationship with the larger settlements, such as Didcot and local infrastructure. The noise of the A34 and visibility of Harwell Campus and Didcot have an urbanising effect on the landscape along the northern edge of the AONB. Chilton lies to the south-east of the Harwell Campus and the A34 corridor. The treed nature of the village and its immediate environs largely contain views of the settlement and integrate the village into the local landscape.
- 3.6.6 The special qualities of the AONB and key issues surrounding the protected landscape are set out in the AONB's Management Plan. The Consultation Draft of the North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-19 was published in August 2013 (Ref 8). The special qualities set out in the Management plan are:
- *The sense of remoteness and tranquillity*
  - *An overall undeveloped and rural quality with only limited human intervention*
  - *All landscapes within the AONB are sensitive to change*
  - *Typically modest villages with distinctive and ancient settlement patterns*
  - *A landscape shaped by history and characterised by its quality and number of ancient monuments*
  - *Architectural styles that vary throughout the AONB but within specific areas create a sense of place and vernacular local character due to the availability of local building materials and traditional building styles.*
  - *The built environment forms an integral part of local character and distinctiveness and adds to the diversity of the AONB landscape as a whole*
  - *Its ecology, flora and fauna and space for bio-diversity.'*



3.6.7 Key issues set out in the Management plan include:

- *The threat of expansion of the main urban areas just beyond the boundary of the North Wessex Downs, including the main centres of... Wantage, Didcot... for example creating urban fringe pressures and impact on the setting of the AONB*
- *New housing developments on greenfield sites*
- *Development that results in a material loss of tranquillity and or impact on the dark night skies within the North Wessex Downs or its setting*
- *New road building, new road signage and new street lighting.*

Any proposed development would need to respond to the special qualities and issues set out within the AONB management plan.

## **4 VISUAL ASSESSMENT OF THE STUDY AREA**

### **4.1 Methodology**

4.1.1 A visual assessment of the site was carried out from public roads, bridleways and footpaths.

4.1.2 The visual assessment is based on a grading of degrees of visibility. There is, in any visual assessment, a continuity of degrees of visibility from not visible to fully open in the view. To indicate the degree of visibility of the site from selected locations, that continuum has been divided into four categories, as follows:

1. **Open view:** a clear view of a significant proportion of the site within the wider landscape.
2. **Partial view:** a clear view of part of the site: a partial view of the site; or a distant view in which the site forms a relatively small proportion of the wider view.
3. **Glimpse:** a transient view, of a distant view in which the site forms a small proportion of the view in the wider landscape.
4. **No view:** no view or the site is difficult to perceive.

### **4.2 Existing visibility of the site**

4.2.1 The Ridgeway is an historic route and a well-used public right of way that follows the top of the Downs escarpment. There are panoramic views of the landscape to the north of the Ridgeway from a significant length of the footpath; views include Didcot and the Thames valley and beyond to the Chiltern escarpment. These views and the popularity of the route within the AONB make it a significant and sensitive visual receptor for the purposes of this study. From the Ridgeway there are open views of the Harwell Campus and the land that surrounds it to the east, south and west. The campus itself and the planting around it screens views of the land to the immediate north of the campus. The new housing and the landscape to the south of the campus are the most visually prominent, particularly from the public car parks and section of the footpath to the immediate south of the campus. The land to the east of the campus is open to view, although some of the fields immediately adjacent to the campus are partially screened by

vegetation to the east of the campus and by trees lining the southern part of the A4185. The A34 dual carriageway, Milton Business Park and the settlement of Didcot are also visible within the view. The Didcot power station is also prominent in the view, although the prominence of the station will reduce as demolition continues over the next 2-3 years. The land to the west of the campus is more contained by the tree belts that run through the landscape. These tree belts also obscure any views of settlement e.g. East Hendred such that the landscape is entirely rural in outlook and character.

- 4.2.2 From the lower land, to the north of the ridgeway, views of the land surrounding the campus are localised and more contained. The land to the north-east of the campus is the most visible, with open views from footpaths BW243/16/10 and 243/16/20, Icknield Way, Hagbourne Hill and local roads, the A4185 and, to a much lesser extent the A417.
- 4.2.3 Views of the land to the immediate east of the campus are more contained. Open views are restricted to views from Hagbourne Hill and footpath 243/16/20, which runs through the area; views from Icknield Way, the A4185 and the A417 are screened by vegetation and, or, topography. There are transient open views across the area towards Harwell Campus, from the A34, mainly from the south running lanes, between the A417 over-bridge and the Chilton turn.
- 4.2.4 The land to the north of the site is more contained with views limited to Icknield Way, a section of the A4185 and parts of footpath 199/16/20, where there are gaps in field boundary vegetation.
- 4.2.5 The land to the west of the campus is the most visually contained. Open views are restricted to sections of the Ridgeway and local footpath 199/23/20. Where there are views they are of an expansive rural landscape with clear and uninterrupted views of the Downs escarpment to the south. There is little intervisibility between land within the Campus and the wider landscape.

## **5 LAND PARCEL ANALYSIS**

- 5.1 For the purposes of this study, the land identified as available for development surrounding Harwell Campus has been assessed as seven land parcels (see plan HDA 3). These include the two parcels that have been assessed within the VoWH capacity study, along with five further parcels, based on the land parcels assessed within the Strategic Housing Availability Assessment (SHLAA – Ref 9). In the following section each of these parcels has been assessed and given a landscape capacity (to accommodate future residential development). For consistency, the methodology used to assess capacity is the same as that used in the Capacity Study 2014: Site Options (Ref 1). The methodology is appended to this report in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 contains

the record sheets for each land parcel. The sheets for Parcels 1 and 2 (Sites 17 and 19 respectively) are the original data sheets used within the capacity study.

- 5.2 These survey results summarised on the data sheets have been used to assess the Landscape Sensitivity for each parcel. The Landscape Value for all parcels has been assessed as Medium/High given that all the parcels are located within the AONB. The resulting Landscape Capacity of each parcel has been given on each Parcel Analysis sheet.

## Parcel 1 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 1 is by far the largest parcel in the Baseline Study. It is made up of 9 large arable fields and peripheral set-aside land. The parcel lies between Harwell Oxford Campus (to the west) and the A34 (to the east). The western and southern boundaries are bound by mature vegetation. The eastern boundary has some vegetation associated with the A34, but there are significant gaps. The northern boundary is undefined and merges with the arable fields to the north of the parcel. The Icknield Way crosses the site from east to west, with a 2-2.5m hedgerow running along the southern edge of the right of way. A byway (footpath numbers 243/16/10 and 243/16/20) crosses the path from north to south. A small copse of trees is located at the intersection between Icknield Way and the byway. A shelterbelt of young trees separates two fields to the south of the Icknield Way.

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = Medium / High**

### Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:

- The parcel is open and highly visible from the surrounding landscape, including the Icknield Way and Ridgeway National Trail.
- The parcel has high intervisibility with other parts of the AONB, particularly to the north. The Downs escarpment is visible to the south.
- The landscape within the Parcel is characteristic of the Hendred Plain character area, but has few landscape features or habitats of note.
- There is a slight relationship to Harwell Oxford Campus but no relationship with residential settlement.
- Urban influences from Harwell Oxford Campus, local roads - particularly the A34 and the settlement of Didcot (when viewed from the Ridgeway).

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = No** - Parts of the Parcel are less visually sensitive than others. The southwestern part of the parcel is the most contained and has the closest relationship with the settlement edge of the campus. The northern and eastern parts of the parcel relate strongly to the surrounding landscape and are the most visually sensitive areas of the parcel.

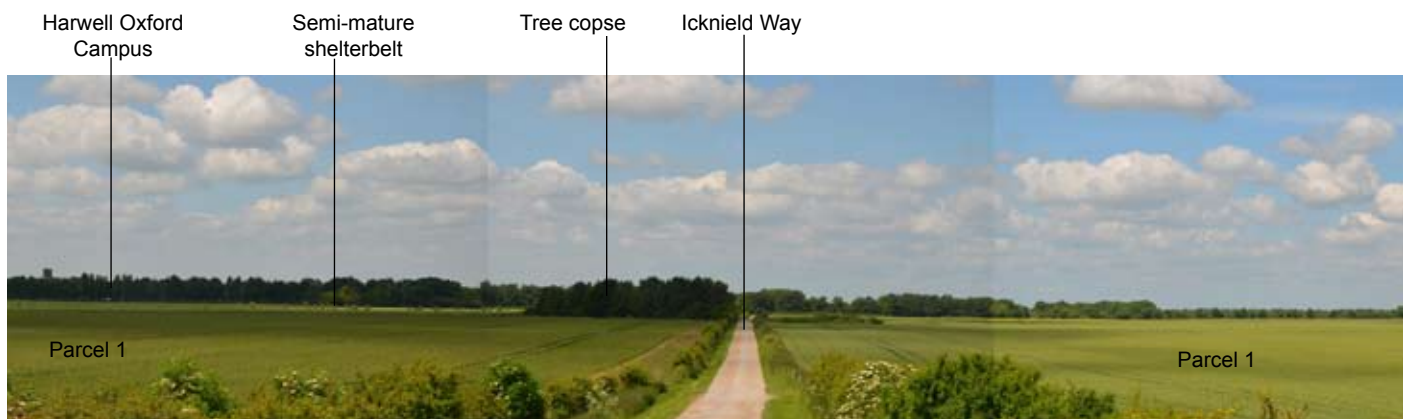
**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Low**

### Results of SHLAA - Developable

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Developing the whole parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. New housing would be out of context with the existing settlement pattern and highly visible from the surrounding rural landscape. Developing parts of the parcel may have less significant impacts.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - Landscape mitigation is more feasible in some parts of the parcel. The immature shelterbelt could be strengthened and replicated without significant change or erosion of landscape character. The existing hedgerow along Icknield Way could be strengthened and extended. The planting along the A34 could be strengthened, which would improve the character of the parcel.



View of Parcel 1 from the eastern end of Icknield Way, before the right of way crosses the A34

## Parcel 2 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 2 is located to the north of Harwell Oxford Campus and to the immediate north of a section of the Icknield Way. A small housing development lies to the east, beyond some small, enclosed fields and a sewage works is located to the south-east of the parcel. Industrial buildings within the campus are visible from part of the parcel. A mature hedgerow lies to the west, which separates the parcel from a restricted byway (footpath number 199/16/20). A belt of mature trees lies to the north-east of the parcel. A ditch runs through the parcel. The land falls towards the ditch from the south and rises away to the north.

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = Medium**

### Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:

- The parcel is contained from much of the surrounding landscape, with views limited to the Icknield Way, adjacent restricted byway and a section of the A4185.
- The landscape within the Parcel is characteristic of the Hendred Plain character area, and has hedgerow and treebelt features at the parcel boundaries which should be protected.
- Urban influences from Harwell Oxford Campus. The adjacent sewage works are a visual and noise detraction.
- The section of the parcel adjacent to the ditch is within floodplain.

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = No** - As described in the capacity study, the area to the south of the ditch would have a higher capacity for development, particularly if landscape mitigation were added.

**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Medium / Low**

**Results of SHLAA - Developable**

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Developing the whole parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. Developing the southern part of the parcel would have less significant impacts.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - There is scope to extend the treebelt to the north-east of the parcel, across the northern boundary of the parcel. This would be in keeping with local landscape character and would make any development difficult to perceive from the north and wider AONB landscape.



View of Parcel 2 from the A4185, adjacent to the Pumping station, looking south-west.

## Parcel 3 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 3 is located to the north-west of Harwell Oxford Campus and contains the southern and eastern parts of two large agricultural fields. A restricted byway runs to the east and south of the parcel, but is separated from the parcel by mature belts the remaining boundaries of the parcel are undefined and merge with the arable fields beyond. A bridleway (number 199/25/10) crosses the northern end of the parcel east-west and another bridleway (number 199/23/10) runs north from the south-western corner of the parcel. Oldfield farm lies beyond the parcel to the north-west.

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = High**

#### **Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:**

- The parcel is open and highly visible from the surrounding landscape, including the Ridgeway National Trail.
- The parcel has high intervisibility with other parts of the AONB, particularly to the north and west. The Downs escarpment is visible to the south.
- The landscape within the Parcel is characteristic of the Hendred Plain character area and has tree belt features at the parcel boundaries which should be protected.
- The landscape character of the parcel is wholly rural and there is no relationship with residential settlement or Harwell Oxford Campus.
- Two pylons cross the parcel, which are a visual detractor.

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = Yes**

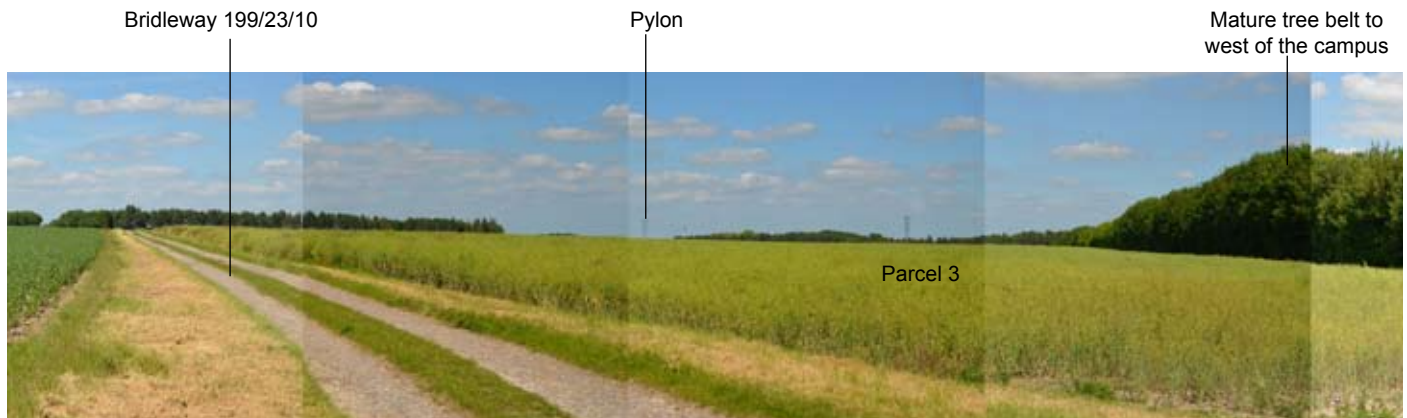
**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Low**

**Results of SHLAA - Undeliverable**

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Developing the whole parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. The landscape is completely rural and housing would be completely out of character.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - Landscape mitigation could be introduced in line with the tree belts adjacent to the parcel, however the addition of any mitigation would disrupt the pattern and openness of the landscape.



View of Parcel 3 from bridleway 199/23/10, looking north.



## Parcel 4 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 4 is located to the west of Harwell Oxford Campus and comprises a medium sized, regular field in arable production. The eastern and western boundaries are formed by shelterbelts of mature trees and further shelterbelts are present across parts of the northern and southern boundaries. The southern shelterbelt is made up of semi-mature trees. Bridleway number 199/23/20 lies to the east of the parcel.

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = Medium / High**

### Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:

- The parcel is open although views from the wider landscape are generally screened by vegetation. The exception is the adjacent bridleway, which has open views of the parcel. There are glimpsed views of the parcel from the Ridgeway.
- The landscape within the Parcel is characteristic of the Hendred Plain character area and has tree belt features at the parcel boundaries which should be protected.
- The landscape character of the parcel is wholly rural and there is no relationship with residential settlement or Harwell Oxford Campus.
- There is a strong relationship with the rural landscape to the north, west and south.

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = Yes**

**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Low**

**Results of SHLAA - Undeliverable**

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Development within parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. The landscape is completely rural and housing would be completely out of character.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - Landscape mitigation could be introduced in line with the tree belts adjacent to the parcel, however any development would remain out of context with the surrounding rural landscape.



View of Parcel 4 from bridleway 199/23/20, looking north.

## Parcel 5 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 5 is located to the immediate south of parcel 4 and to the south-west of Harwell Oxford Campus. It consists of a large open and regular arable field, with a slight north-facing slope. Shelterbelts contain the field to the east, south and west, although the parcel remains visible from the elevated land of the ridgeway. Bridleway number 199/23/20 lies to the east of the parcel.

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = High**

### Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:

- The parcel is open and highly visible from the surrounding landscape, including the Ridgeway National Trail.
- The parcel has high intervisibility with other parts of the AONB, particularly to the north and west. The Downs escarpment is visible to the south.
- The landscape within the Parcel is characteristic of the Hendred Plain character area and has tree belt features at the parcel boundaries which should be protected.
- The landscape character of the parcel is wholly rural and there is no relationship with residential settlement or Harwell Oxford Campus.

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = Yes**

**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Low**

**Results of SHLAA - Undeliverable**

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Developing the whole parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. The landscape is completely rural and housing would be completely out of character.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - Landscape mitigation could be introduced in line with the tree belts adjacent to the parcel, however the addition of any mitigation would disrupt the pattern and openness of the landscape.

Bridleway 199/23/10

Downs escarpment

Parcel 5



View of Parcel 5 from bridleway 199/23/20, looking south.



## Parcel 6 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 6 comprises a medium sized, irregular pasture field, which has been subdivided by post and wire fencing on the western side, to create a number of horse paddocks. To the immediate west of the parcel is a residential dwelling and stables. Harwell Oxford Campus lies to the north. A line of single species conifer trees, encloses the parcel to the west and north-west and gappy hedgerows line the north-eastern and southern boundaries. The eastern and south-eastern boundaries are open to view. The new development at Chestnut Fields lies to the north-east of the parcel.

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = Medium / High**

### Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:

- The parcel is open and highly visible from the surrounding landscape, particularly from the Ridgeway National Trail.
- The parcel has high intervisibility with other parts of the AONB, particularly to the south. The Downs escarpment begins to the immediate south of the parcel.
- The landscape character of the parcel is rural, however there is intervisibility with Harwell Oxford Campus and the new housing development 'Chestnut Fields' to the north-east. The strong links to the AONB landscape to the south outweigh the impacts from the adjacent settlement.

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = Yes**

**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Low**

**Results of SHLAA - Undeliverable**

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Development within parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. The new housing development at Chestnut Fields is incongruous in the local landscape and any further development to the south of the campus would exacerbate this change in character and settlement pattern.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - Landscape mitigation could be introduced in line with the tree belts adjacent to the parcel, however any development would remain out of context with the surrounding rural landscape.



View of Parcel 6 from elevated ground on bridleway 199/23/30, looking north-east.

## Parcel 7 - Analysis

### Description

Parcel 7 lies on the footslopes of the Downs escarpment, to the immediate south of the 'Chestnut Fields' housing development and to the south-east of Harwell Oxford Campus. The parcel comprises sections of 3 large arable fields, set on a gentle north-facing slope. A hedgerow with hedgerow trees lies to the north of the parcel, whilst the remainder of the parcel has no defined boundaries and is open to the wider landscape. A mature tree belt separates the north-eastern corner of the parcel from the remaining arable land

**Results of Capacity Analysis** (using methodology from Capacity Study 2014: Site Options):

**Landscape Sensitivity = Medium / High**

### Rational for Landscape Sensitivity:

- The parcel is open and highly visible from the surrounding landscape, particularly from the Ridgeway National Trail.
- The parcel has high intervisibility with other parts of the AONB, principally to the south. The Downs escarpment begins to the immediate south of the parcel.
- The landscape within the Parcel is characteristic of the Hendred Plain character area, but has few landscape features or habitats of note.
- The landscape character of the parcel is rural, however there is some intervisibility with Harwell Oxford Campus and the new housing development 'Chestnut Fields' to the north. The strong links to the AONB landscape to the south outweigh the impacts from the adjacent settlement.

**Is there a uniform sensitivity across the land parcel? = No** - the north-eastern corner of the parcel is separated from the rest of the land by a mature tree belt. This small area is less sensitive than the rest of the parcel.

**Landscape Value = Medium / High**

**Resulting Landscape Capacity = Low**

**Results of SHLAA - Undeliverable**

**Potential impacts of housing development within this parcel** - Development within parcel would harm the character and appearance of the AONB. The new housing development at Chestnut Fields is incongruous in the local landscape and any further development to the south of the campus would exacerbate this change in character and settlement pattern.

**Potential for landscape mitigation and contribution to Green Infrastructure** - Any proposed mitigation would be out of character with the openness of the landscape and would adversely affect the existing field pattern.



View of Parcel 7 from elevated ground on the Ridgeway National Trail, looking north-east.

## **6 LAND PARCEL ANALYSIS – CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 The landscape analysis has shown all of the potential land parcels surrounding Harwell Campus to have a 'Low' landscape capacity, which reflects the high sensitivity and value of the land within the AONB. Parcel 2 has the highest capacity for new development, due to the containment of the site and the potential for appropriate mitigation planting. As identified in the analysis, Parcel 1 is the largest area of land assessed and has the potential to be broken down into smaller parcels, which have different sensitivities to development. The study will therefore focus on Parcels 1 and 2 as these have the highest potential to accept development.

## **7 DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF PARCELS 1 AND 2**

### **7.1 Site breakdown**

- 7.1.1 Whilst the landscape surrounding the Harwell Campus is generally uniform in its structure and scale, the initial landscape assessment of Parcels 1 and 2 has identified that there are local variations in topography and boundary and internal hedgerows and tree belts which could affect the capacity of some areas to accommodate future development.
- 7.1.2 It was apparent from the field work that some of the fields within Parcel 1 were less visible than others, particularly from the Ridgeway. The Campus buildings and mature vegetation around the Campus screen the southern and western parts of Parcel 1 from view, particularly from the elevated views from the Ridgeway. The hedgerow running to the south of Icknield Way across Parcel 1 is less noticeable in long distance views, but is an effective screen between footpath users of the Icknield Way and the land to the south of the footpath within Parcel 1. The young shelterbelt, running north-south within the middle of Parcel 1 is noticeable in the wider landscape and forms a useful marker as to the relative openness of parts of the site. Land to the north of the Icknield Way is much more open, with few hedgerow or woodland features and it is consequently more open to view and has a higher sensitivity to development. The urban influences of Harwell Campus, the A34 and other settlements also vary across the land parcel. Plan HDA 4 illustrates the conclusions of the site analysis for Parcels 1 and 2. The plan highlights the existing landscape structure surrounding the two sites and the areas of the sites that are more contained.
- 7.1.3 Following the initial visual assessment the two sites have been broken down into smaller areas for further analysis. Areas A – F are within Parcel 1 to the east of the campus and Areas G and H are located within Parcel 2 to the north of the campus (see plan HDA 5). Each area is discussed briefly below.

#### 7.1.4

##### Area A

- Rectangular arable field contained to the north and west by hedgerows. Partly contained to the east by an immature shelterbelt. Open to the south.
- Mature trees on Harwell campus, screen views of campus to west but some land has intervisibility with the campus to the south-west of the area.
- Screened from pedestrians on Icknield Way and other adjacent public rights of way.
- Vegetation and Harwell Campus development filters/screens views of area from the Ridgeway.
- Located on a gentle south-facing slope.
- Adjacent to A4185 – opportunity for access.
- Rural character but contained.
- Views from Hagbourne Hill.

#### 7.1.5

##### Area B

- Parts of two arable fields to the south end of Parcel 1.
- Hedgerow boundary to west screens road.
- Some intervisibility with the campus, particularly at the southern end of the area.
- Screened from pedestrians on Icknield Way but visible from bridleway 243/16/20 to the immediate east of the area.
- Vegetation screens views of area from the Ridgeway.
- Located on the lower slopes of a gentle south-facing slope.
- Adjacent to A4185 – opportunity for access.
- Rural character but contained and with some urban influences.
- Views from Hagbourne Hill.

#### 7.1.6

##### Area C

- Rectangular arable field contained to the west by an immature shelterbelt. Open to the north, south and east.
- Intervening vegetation screens views of campus to west, but area has some intervisibility with the campus to the south-west of the site. Intervisibility with the A34 to the east.
- Screened from pedestrians on the western section of Icknield Way but visible from sections of the Icknield Way to the east, as well as from bridleway 243/16/20 to the immediate east of the area.
- Vegetation filters some views of the area from the Ridgeway
- Generally flat topography.
- Rural and open character – typical of character area.
- Views from Hagbourne Hill.

#### 7.1.7

##### Area D

- Northern section of a rectangular arable field contained to the north by a hedgerow and prominent copses and to the west by an immature shelterbelt. Open to the south and east.
- Filtered views of the campus to the south-west and intervisibility with the A34 to the east.
- Screened from pedestrians on the western section of Icknield Way but visible from sections of the Icknield Way to the east as well as from bridleway 243/16/20 to the immediate east of the area.
- Visible as part of the skyline from the Ridgeway.
- Views from Hagbourne Hill.
- Located on the upper slopes of a gentle south-facing slope.
- Rural and open character – typical of character area.

#### 7.1.8

##### Area E

- Large triangular arable field bound to the east by the A34, to the west by a public right of way (bridleway 243/16/20) and bound to the north by the Icknield Way. The area is visible from the road and both rights of way.
- Filtered views of the campus to the south-west.
- Prominent in views from the Ridgeway – the area forms part of the visual separation between the campus and the settlement of Didcot.
- Visual links with the wider countryside to the east, including Hagbourne Hill.
- Noise from the A34.
- Located on a gentle south-facing slope.
- Rural and open character – typical of character area, although A34 is a visual detractor and source of noise.

#### 7.1.9

##### Area F

- Extensive area made up of five arable fields with no discernable vegetated boundaries. Defined by the Icknield Way to the south. Another public right of way (bridleway 243/16/10) runs north-south through the centre of the area. The A34 lies to the east and the A4185 lies to the west.
- The area is open and expansive with open views to adjacent footpaths and the Ridgeway, where the land forms part of the downs plain skyline.
- The land to the north of the area forms a local high point and skylines when viewed from the Icknield Way to the south.
- Views from Hagbourne Hill.
- The area forms part of the separation between the village of Harwell and the Campus.
- Rural and open character – typical of character area.

#### 7.1.10 Area G

- Located within Parcel 2, the area comprises the southern section of a medium sized, regular arable field. The field is bound by the Icknield Way to the south, a hedgerow to the west, a collection of small pasture fields to the east and a ditch to the north. A tree belt lies to the north-east.
- Visual links with the campus to the east.
- Links to the wider countryside to the north.
- Located on a gentle north-facing slope, with the ditch forming a localised low point. The ditch is within flood zone 3.
- Open views into the area from the Icknield Way and some views from the A4185 to the north-east. Otherwise the area is well contained. Views of the area from the Ridgeway are screened by the campus and intervening vegetation.
- Views from the wider landscape to the east and west are contained by shelter belts and mature trees and hedgerows.
- Rural character but contained and with some urban influences.

#### 7.1.11 Area H

- The northern section of a medium sized, regular arable field. The field is bound by a ditch to the south, a hedgerow to the west, a collection of small pasture fields and a tree belt to the east and north-east. The northern edge of the area is open to the wider landscape.
- Visual links with the campus to the east.
- Links to the wider countryside to the north.
- Located on rising ground, with the ditch forming a localised low point to the south. The ditch is within flood zone 3.
- Open views into the area from the Icknield Way and some views from the A4185 to the north-east. Otherwise the area is well contained. Views of the area from the Ridgeway are screened by the campus and intervening vegetation.
- Rural character with some urban influences.

## 7.2 **Conclusions**

7.2.1 Analysis of the assessment areas A – H, indicated that there is variation in landscape sensitivity across Parcels 1 and 2. Areas A and B within Parcel 1 are relatively well screened and are the most closely related to Harwell Campus. These areas are largely screened by vegetation when viewed from the Ridgeway to the south and from the Icknield Way to the north. Areas C and D have a higher sensitivity and are more prominent in views from the wider landscape, including from the Ridgeway. Areas E and F are both large open areas of arable land, are highly visible from the surrounding landscape and would therefore be the most sensitive to potential development. Furthermore, development in these areas would compromise the perceived separation of

settlement between Harwell Campus and Didcot when viewed from the elevated Berkshire Downs escarpment and would form a significant change in the character of local views.

- 7.2.2 Area G is less sensitive to development as it has a strong relationship with the built form of the campus, is generally well contained from the surrounding landscape and there are opportunities for mitigation that would be consistent with the local landscape character. Area H is on rising ground and is more prominent from viewpoints to the north, resulting in a higher sensitivity to development than Area G, however further analysis is required to determine its sensitivity relative to parcels A-D.

## **8 AGREED VIEWPOINTS**

*(See plan HDA 5 and Appendix 4)*

- 8.1 The assessment of Areas A – G and subsequent allocation options are based on views from six agreed viewpoints, which consist of:
- One viewpoint from the Icknield Way, to the east of the A34 and on the western slopes of Hagbourne Hill (viewpoint 1).
  - One viewpoint looking south towards Parcel 1 from bridleway 243/16/10 (viewpoint 2).
  - One viewpoint looking south from the section of the A4185 adjacent to the pumping station, to the north of Harwell Campus (viewpoint 3).
  - Three viewpoint locations on the Ridgeway National Trail to the south of the study area, one to the east of the Bury Lane (viewpoint 4), one from the car park to the west of Bury Lane (viewpoint 6) and one from the parking area at East Hendred Down (viewpoint 5).
- 8.2 The rationale behind the selection is threefold. The agreed viewpoints are representative of:
- 1) the most sensitive viewpoint locations;
  - 2) locations with the highest intervisibility with the areas being assessed;
  - 3) a range of visual receptors.
- The selection represents the worst case scenario for the assessment of proposed development.
- 8.3 The views from the Berkshire Downs are panoramic and highly sensitive. The chosen viewpoints from the Ridgeway National Trail, along the ridgeline of the Berkshire Downs escarpment, provide a representative cross-section of the various views from the wider landscape to the south and allow an appreciation of the context for any development in respect of the surrounding settlements particularly Didcot. The Ridgeway National Trail is well used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The car park at viewpoint 6 is a

popular stopping destination and represents the highest volume of visual receptors from this section of the Ridgeway.

- 8.4 The view from the edge of Hagbourne Hill (viewpoint 1) is the clearest and open view of Areas A to F, from the east and provides an indication of the intervisibility between the receptors on public rights of way, including the Icknield Way and footpath 243/16/10.
- 8.5 The view from footpath 243/16/10 to the north of Parcel 1 (viewpoint 2) is currently very rural and the assessment considers the effect that housing may have on views of the ridge line to the south and the character of the AONB to the north of Areas F, A, D and E.
- 8.6 The viewpoint on the A4185 (viewpoint 3) provides a viewpoint of the northern Areas G and H and the northern edges of Area F.
- 8.7 This is a high level Landscape Study and consequently does not analyse all possible visual receptors or viewpoints. A more detailed assessment should be carried out as part of any future housing development. The aim of this study is to provide a robust landscape assessment to analyse the suitability of the different areas for inclusion in any future housing allocation.

## **9 OPTIONS FOR ALLOCATION**

*(See plan HDA 6)*

- 9.1 Areas A-G have been modelled in 3D Autocad and combined within verifiable photomontages from the six agreed viewpoints in order to assess the sensitivity of each area to development. The purpose of the modelling was to assess the visual sensitivity of each area, the contribution that each makes to the wider AONB character and the capacity of each to accept development in the form of new housing. Within the model, different combinations of the Areas were tested in order to develop three possible options for allocation. The modelling in combination with the field assessment of the area provided a greater understanding of the possible impacts of development.
- 9.2 The three options considered for review are:  
Option 1: All proposed Areas (A – G)  
Option 2: Areas A, B and G  
Option 3: Areas A, B, C, D and G
- 9.3 Option 1 covers the area that the Vale of White Horse have put forward for development as part of a focussed additional housing consultation in February 2014. It explores the impacts of developing both Parcels 1 and 2, if the proposed allocation were adopted. The initial analysis showed that some of the Areas included in this option (E and F) were



highly sensitive and that other options with a lower dwelling provision should be considered.

9.4 Option 2 consists of the Areas that comprise the least sensitive areas of the overall site being considered.

9.5 Option 3 considers the least sensitive areas to development in conjunction with adjacent Areas C and D in order to assess the potential impacts of a more significant development, avoiding the most visually intrusive potential areas for development. This information would be used to judge whether there is the potential within these areas for:

- additional housing;
- other land uses (for example a school or open space);

or whether the areas should be retained in their existing agricultural land use.

9.6 Appendix 4 contains photomontages of the three options, from each of the six agreed viewpoints. The photomontages show blocks of development for simplicity. The parameters used to create the photomontages are listed at the front of Appendix 4.

## **10 PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES**

*(See plan HDA 7)*

10.1 The initial modelling of the Areas did not include mitigation and assesses the worst case scenario for development to the north and east of Harwell Campus. The resulting visualisations were used to develop a landscape mitigation strategy for the two Parcels. The mitigation strategy was then incorporated into the model, to assess the effectiveness of the strategy from the agreed viewpoints.

10.2 The proposed landscape mitigation is based on an extension of the existing landscape character to the west of Harwell Campus. This involves the addition of hedgerows and linear tree belts, which are characteristic of the 5C Hendred Plain character area. The proposed features have been located at field boundaries or form a continuation of existing features. The design intent is to screen potential development, without compromising the openness of the landscape or blocking views of the Ridgeway from existing viewpoints. The landscape mitigation proposals are shown on plan HDA 7.

10.3 The mitigation strategy extends an existing landscape character eastwards towards the A34. The character created by the mitigation strategy would continue to be in keeping with the 5C Hendred Plain character area. The mitigation strategy in itself would not harm the character or appearance of the AONB. Instead it would build on existing character to create a landscape structure that is continuous from west to east across the campus and surrounding landscape. The mitigation strategy would also filter views of

the A34 and would strengthen the visual separation between Harwell Campus and Didcot, particularly when viewed from the Ridgeway.

- 10.4 No mitigation has been introduced to Areas E and F within Parcel 1. The character of these areas is of large open arable fields with no defining features. Introducing mitigation planting to these areas would adversely affect the character of the AONB.

## **11 ASSESSMENT OF OPTION 1**

### **11.1 Landscape impacts**

- 11.1.1 The development of Option 1 would see the removal of approximately 150ha of land from arable production, to be replaced with housing and associated open space, new infrastructure and a primary school. The land in question is Grade II agricultural land, which is high quality farmland and the scale of land to be removed from production is significant.

- 11.1.2 The landscape has few additional landscape features, therefore it would be possible to facilitate a housing development on this land without adversely affecting existing features. The notable exception to this is the loss of the existing agricultural fields, which would have a detrimental impact on the local landscape. The location of any access would need to be carefully considered to ensure that removal of peripheral hedgerows and trees is minimised. Following the implementation of the landscape scheme, the quantity and quality of landscape features would increase, leading to an overall increase in potential habitat and Green Infrastructure.

- 11.1.3 The landscape character of the site is highly sensitive due to its location within the AONB. The land in question is typical of the character of this area of the AONB and is highly sensitive to change, due to the openness of the landscape, particularly to the north and east of Parcel 1 (Areas E and F). The change of use from agricultural land to housing on such a large scale and in such prominent locations, would be a significant adverse impact on the character of the AONB. The implementation of the mitigation strategy would reduce the impacts of some parts of the development on the wider landscape but the resulting change in character would be significantly adverse.

### **11.2 Visual impact assessment**

- 11.2.1 The visual impacts of the development of Option 1 for housing have been assessed against the six agreed viewpoints and are demonstrated by the photomontages provided in Appendix 4.
- 11.2.2 There would be open views of Option 1 from the Ridgeway National Trail on the Berkshire Downs escarpment (viewpoints 4 – 6). The changes would be to the mid-

ground of the view and the photomontages indicate that the majority of the mid-ground would change from arable fields to a housing development. The development of this option would remove the visual separation between Harwell Campus and Didcot. There would be no perceived change within the foreground of the views and the Chilterns would remain visible in the distance to the east. From viewpoints 4 and 6 it is Areas E and F that would have the most impact on the merging of settlements with the potential housing dominating the chalk plain horizon. From viewpoint 5, Areas G and H lie between the campus and Didcot, but the existing woodland backdrop to these areas provides the essential separation between the two settlements.

11.2.3 From viewpoint 1, the development within Option 1 would dominate the view, extending to the north and south of the Icknield Way. The most visible Areas would be E and F. The existing view of rural fields with Harwell Campus visible beyond, would be replaced by views of a housing development. The Berkshire Downs escarpment would remain visible in the background.

11.2.4 Option 1 would also be highly visible from the north, particularly from Footpath 243/16/10 (viewpoint 2). The housing within Area F would dominate the view. The proposals within Area F would also be visually prominent from viewpoint 3. At this viewpoint location there would also be open views of Area H.

11.2.5 The landscape mitigation proposals would screen some areas of Option 1, but the visual impacts would be significantly adverse. The proposals would foreshorten the existing views of open countryside. The views from the Ridgeline are more distant but would still constitute a dramatic change in the character of the view and the extent of visible development. Any mitigation planting to the north and east of Areas E and F, would screen close range views of housing but would have no impact on the distant views from the Ridgeway.

### **11.3 Cumulative impacts**

11.3.1 The largest cumulative impacts would be when viewing the proposals from the Ridgeway National Trail. The development within this Option would visibly merge with the proposals at Great Western Park and the additional housing allocations proposed to the south-west of Didcot, adjacent to the A34. There would be an urbanising effect on viewpoint 1, looking north from Hagbourne Hill as both the Option 1 housing and development at Didcot would be visible from this location. Similar impacts would be observed at viewpoint 3 where an existing rural view would alter to contain significant expanses of housing. The cumulative impacts of development at viewpoint 2 would be lower but the development within Option 1 would dominate the view.

## **11.4 Conclusions**

- 11.4.1 Option 1 is not suitable as an allocation as the impacts of the potential development area are substantial and would be significantly adverse. Areas E and F are particularly sensitive and contribute significantly to the visual separation between the Campus and Didcot and to local character, both in views from the Ridgeway and from adjacent footpaths. The open and expansive character of these fields could not be replicated or replaced. This option would significantly damage the character and appearance of the AONB.

## **12 ASSESSMENT OF OPTION 2**

### **12.1 Landscape impacts**

- 12.1.1 Option 2 is approximately one third of the potential allocation area with the remainder being retained as agricultural land.

- 12.1.2 The existing landscape features are generally located at the periphery of Option 2, meaning that it would be possible to facilitate a housing development on this land without adversely affecting these existing features. The location of the access would still need to be carefully considered to ensure that removal of peripheral hedgerows and trees is minimised. Following the implementation of the landscape scheme, the quantity and quality of landscape features would increase, leading to an overall increase in potential habitat and Green Infrastructure.

- 12.1.3 The land within Option 2 comprises large arable fields with linear tree belts. Some boundaries are open and undefined but the majority are hedgerows. The fields within Option 2 are more contained than the surrounding landscape, are located on lower lying land and are influenced by the close proximity of Harwell Campus. The change of use from agricultural land to housing would be a moderate adverse impact on the character of the AONB. Following the establishment of the mitigation strategy, the change in character within Option 2 would be screened from much of the wider landscape, with any permanent changes relating closely to the existing settlement of Harwell Campus.

### **12.2 Visual impact assessment**

- 12.2.1 The reduction in developable area would reduce the visibility of the potential housing from the surrounding landscape. From the Ridgeway (viewpoints 4 – 6), the existing vegetation filters views of Option 2, with the development forming a small part of the wider view and much of the option being hidden from view. Open ground would still be visible beyond the potential housing and the visual separation between Harwell Campus and Didcot would be maintained. The housing within Option 2 would be seen in the context of existing development, particularly within Areas A and B. Following the establishment of the mitigation strategy the development would be screened further.

- 12.2.2 From viewpoint 1, there would be open views of the development within Option 2 to the south of the Icknield Way. These views would be in the context of the A34 and existing views of Harwell Campus. The Berkshire Downs escarpment would remain visible in the background of the view. The addition of the tree belts within the mitigation strategy would link the wooded character of the landscape to the south of the viewpoint, with the well treed edge of the campus. Area F would be retained as open arable land, which would maintain the openness of the view. The landscape to the north of the Icknield Way would remain unchanged.
- 12.2.3 The existing vegetation along the Icknield Way would screen much of the proposed housing within Option 2, from viewpoint 2. Views would be limited to glimpses of rooftops over the existing hedgerow and hedgerow trees, to the west of footpath 243/16/10. The change to the character of the view would be slight. The majority of the view would continue to be of open arable fields with a vegetated mid-ground and the Berkshire Downs escarpment forming the skyline to the view in the background. The establishment of the mitigation strategy would strengthen the belt of vegetation in the mid-ground, further screening the Option 2 development from view. The mature mitigation vegetation would screen some views of the Berkshire downs escarpment to the south.
- 12.2.4 From viewpoint 3, only glimpses of the development within Areas A and B would be possible. There would be open views of Area G until the mitigation proposals matured, when they would screen the development from view.
- 12.2.5 Option 2 would have much lower visual impacts than Option 1. While views of proposed housing would be possible, these would be in the context of the existing settlement at Harwell Campus. The character of the views from key viewpoints would be maintained outside the development. With this scale of development the mitigation strategy would be highly effective at maturity and there could be the opportunity to scale back some of the mitigation proposals to further retain the existing landscape character of open fields with hedgerow boundaries, to the north and east of Option 2.
- 12.3 Cumulative impacts**
- 12.3.1 The cumulative impacts of additional housing development within Option 2 would be significantly less than in Option 1. Assessed with the additional development at Didcot there would be no visual coalescence between Harwell Campus and Didcot.

## **12.4 Conclusions**

12.4.1 Option 2 is a more appropriate scale of development and is better related to Harwell Campus. The land within this option is more enclosed, with boundary features that could be strengthened and augmented, in order to create an effective mitigation strategy. The most open and sensitive Areas (E and F) would be retained as agricultural land. The separation between Harwell Campus and Didcot when viewed from the Ridgeway would be maintained.

12.4.2 The mitigation strategy would screen the majority of the views of the development at maturity (20 years). The character within the Option 2 land would change, but the overall character of Parcel 1 would be consistent with the landscape character of the wider landscape to the west of the campus. The character of the AONB would change but these changes would be compatible with the management plan and would not constitute significant harm to the wider AONB landscape.

## **13 ASSESSMENT OF OPTION 3**

### **13.1 Landscape impacts**

13.1.1 The potential development area remains centred on the least sensitive areas of Parcels 1 and 2, but with the inclusion of Areas C and D. This results in a land take of approximately 66.32 ha. The most sensitive areas of Parcel 1 would be retained as agricultural land (Areas E and F).

13.1.2 As with the two previous options, it would be possible to facilitate a housing development on this land without adversely affecting existing features although careful consideration of the proposed access location should be given, to ensure that removal of peripheral hedgerows and trees is minimised. It is also assumed that the implementation of the landscape scheme would lead to an increase in potential habitat and Green Infrastructure.

### **13.2 Visual impact assessment**

13.2.1 There would be open views of Option 3 from the Ridgeway National Trail on the Berkshire Downs escarpment (viewpoints 4 – 6). The changes would be to the mid-ground of the view and the development would be visually prominent, particularly in Area D and parts of Area C; the change would constitute a highly visible shift from arable fields to a housing development. There would be no perceived change within the foreground of the views, the Chilterns would remain visible in the background and the separation between the settlements of Harwell Campus and Didcot would be conserved. From viewpoint 5, Area G lies between the campus and Didcot, but the existing woodland backdrop provides the essential separation between the two settlements.

- 13.2.2 The proposed mitigation strategy would reduce the visual impacts from the Ridgeway National Trail. At maturity the planting would screen a proportion of the proposed development and the view from the Ridgeway would be partial views of rooftops and upper floors of the development.
- 13.2.3 From viewpoint 1, there would also be open views of development within Option 3, extending to the south of the Icknield Way. The existing views to the north of the Icknield Way would be retained. The existing rural view south with glimpses of Harwell Campus, would be replaced by views of a housing development. However, the Berkshire Downs would remain visible in the background and the foreground to the view would remain as a rural agricultural landscape. The addition of the tree belts as part of the mitigation strategy would link the wooded character of the landscape to the south of the viewpoint, with the well treed edge of the campus, screening views of the proposed housing, when the vegetation establishes.
- 13.2.4 The visibility of Option 3 would be similar to that of Option 2 from viewpoint 2 to the north, although the proposals would extend further east, with rooftops visible initially over the existing vegetation. Area D would be the most visible and would extend the settlement up to the edge of Footpath 243/16/10. The change to the character of the view would be moderate. The majority of the view would continue to be of open arable fields with a vegetated mid-ground and the Berkshire Downs escarpment forming the skyline to the view in the background to the east and west of the proposals. The establishment of the mitigation strategy would strengthen the belt of vegetation in the mid-ground, further screening development from view, although the mitigation planting would also screen views of the Berkshire Downs.
- 13.2.5 From viewpoint 3, only glimpses of the development within Areas A - D would be possible. There would be open views of Area G until the mitigation proposals matured, when they would screen the development from view.

### **13.3 Cumulative impacts**

- 13.3.1 The cumulative impacts of additional housing development will fall somewhere between Option 1 and Option 2 in terms of significance. Development within Areas C and D would mean that there is very little visible rural countryside left as separation between the campus and Didcot. The view from the Ridgeway to the east of the campus would become considerably more settled, particularly at construction with new development prominent in the view. Over time the planting within the mitigation strategy would, to an extent, soften the views from the escarpment.

## **13.4 Conclusions**

- 13.4.1 The inclusion of Areas C and D results in higher visual impacts than Option 2 from viewpoints 1 – 6. The visual prominence of the proposals would be lower than in Option 1 as the most open and sensitive Areas (E and F) would be retained as agricultural land. The separation between Harwell Campus and Didcot when viewed from the Ridgeway would be maintained in part but development would be prominent in the views from the south. The significance of the impacts caused by the inclusion of Areas C and D would be significantly reduced if these areas were used as the location for such uses as a school and/or informal public open space.
- 13.4.2 The mitigation strategy would reduce the visibility of the development at maturity (20 years). The effects of the development at construction would be more significant and it is recommended that areas C and D within this Option be pursued as an allocation for open space, education or recreation. These alternative land uses would have lower impacts on the surrounding landscape than housing development within these areas and would form a transitional landscape between the agricultural fields and the potential housing located within Areas A and B.

## **14 PREFERRED OPTION**

### **14.1 Description**

- 14.1.1 The preferred option for development at Harwell Campus is to promote Areas A, B, G and H for housing development, with the option to include school provision in Area C and informal open space within Area D. While Area H was not included within Options 2 or 3, the analysis of Option 1 (which included all potential Areas) showed that development within Area H would not have significant impacts on the surrounding landscape, once the mitigation planting had established.
- 14.1.2 It would be a significant advantage if the mitigation proposed to the north of Area H was advanced planting. The development could be phased with the first phase occurring in Areas A and B along with the implementation of the mitigation planting for the whole scheme. This would reduce the potential impacts of the development on the wider landscape.
- 14.1.3 Higher density development should be concentrated in Areas B, G and the southern part of Area A, with lower density along the northern edge of Area A and within Area H. There is the potential for site access to enter Parcel 1 from the existing roundabout to the east of the campus. The land to the east of the access could become the 'hub' of the development.



14.1.4 The mitigation strategy could be refined for the preferred option, using the photomontages to improve the mitigation provided. The tree belt proposed to the north of the Icknield Way, could be reduced to a hedgerow to the east of the existing shelterbelt between Areas A and D. There would no longer be a requirement for a tree belt to the east of Icknield way, to the north of Area E. Instead the existing hedgerow could be widened and strengthened with new planting. These changes would ensure that the screening of the proposals remained robust, whilst allowing views from the north and east, to retain more of the open character of the existing landscape. Additional planting could be allowed for to the south and west of Areas G and H, affording improved screening when viewed from the Ridgeway. During the course of any future planning application a landscape and visual assessment should be undertaken for the proposal, which may include further mitigation refinements. These refinements should be given consideration within the planning application process in order to provide a response which has the lowest possible impacts on the AONB landscape.

## REFERENCES

- Ref 1 - Vale of White Horse District Council (2014); *'Landscape Capacity Study 2014: Site Options'*
- Ref 2 - Countryside Agency (now Natural England)/SNH (April 2002), *'Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland'*
- Ref 3 - The Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), *'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'* (third edition).
- Ref 4 - Department for Communities and Local Government (March 2012), *'National Planning Policy Framework'*
- Ref 5 - Vale of White Horse District Council (2006); *'Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011'*
- Ref 6 - Vale of White Horse District Council (2013); *'Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 Consultation Draft'*
- Ref 7 - North Wessex Downs AONB Board (2002); *'North Wessex Downs AONB: Integrated Landscape Character Assessment'*
- Ref 8 - North Wessex Downs AONB Board (2013); *'North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-19 Consultation Draft'*

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Capacity study - Methodology**



**VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY 2014: SITE OPTIONS**

Vale of White Horse District Council  
Kirkham Landscape Planning Limited  
The Terra Firma Consultancy Limited

20-02-14

## STAGE I: DETERMINATION OF VISUAL SENSITIVITY

3.3.2 This assessment is set out in the Record Sheets and Reports for each contingency site, or sub-division.

3.3.3 The assessment considers the types of **views**, the nature of the **viewers** and the **potential to mitigate** visual impact on the identified viewpoints. The more viewpoints, the more exposed the site, the greater the sensitivity of the viewers (based on GLVIA) and the greater difficulties in screen planting to mitigate the impact without harm to the landscape and visual attributes of the site, the higher the sensitivity. As a final test all 38 sites were revisited to assess the relative visual sensitivity of the sites and ensure that professional judgements have been consistent along the way. At this stage each level has been given a score from low = 1 to high = 5 and the scores are added up. Total scores for the contingency site, or sub areas, are grouped as shown.

### Matrix I: Visual sensitivity

<b>General visibility</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Population</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Mitigation</b>	L (1)	M/L (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>OVERALL VISUAL SENSITIVITY</b>	<b>3-4 = low; 5- 7 = Med/low; 8-10 = Med; 11-13 = Med/high; 14-15 = High</b>				

**Table 1: Notes on Visual Sensitivity Assessment**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Higher sensitivity</b>	<b>Lower sensitivity</b>
<b>General Visibility</b>	Sequenced and exposed views toward site	Fleeting and limited views
	Most of site area visible	Little of site area visible
	Site is a key focus in available wider views	Site is an incidental part of wider views
	Site includes prominent and key landmarks	No landmarks present
	Important vistas or panoramas in/out of area	Unimportant or no vistas
	Prominent skyline	Not part of skyline
<b>Population</b>	Large extent or range of key sensitive receptors	Lack of sensitive receptors
	Large number of people see site	Few can see site
	Key view from a sensitive receptor	Views of site are unimportant
	Site is part of valued view	Site does not form a part of a valued view
	Site in key views to/across/out of town	Not part of setting of settlement view
<b>Mitigation</b>	Mitigation not very feasible	Mitigation possible
	Mitigation would interrupt key views	Would not obscure key views
	Mitigation would damage local character	Mitigation would not harm local character

## STAGE 2: DETERMINATION OF LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

3.3.4 This assessment is set out in the Record Sheets and Reports for each contingency site or sub-division.

3.3.5 The assessment considers the **natural** physical factors which make up the landscape character of the site, the **cultural** and built form aspects and the **perceptual** features. The greater the incidence of landscape interest and diversity, historically important features and cultural associations, and the greater the levels of access and perceptions of tranquillity and strong landscape pattern, the greater the sensitivity. As a final test all 38 sites were revisited to assess the relative landscape sensitivity of the sites and ensure that professional judgements have been consistent along the way. At this stage each level has been given a score from low = 1 to high = 5 and the scores are added up. Total scores for the contingency site, or sub areas, are grouped as shown.

### Matrix 2: Landscape sensitivity

<b>Natural factors</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Cultural factors</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Perceptual features</b>	L (1)	M/L (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</b>	<b>3-4 = low; 5- 7 = Med/low; 8-10 = Med; 11-13 = Med/high; 14-15 = High</b>				

**Table 2: Notes on Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Higher sensitivity</b>	<b>Lower sensitivity</b>
<b>Natural</b>	Native woodland	Plantation
	Significant tree/groups	Insignificant/young trees
	Strong hedgerow structure with hedgerow trees	Weak structure and no trees
	Species rich grassland	Arable field
	Significant water feature(s)	No water feature(s)
	Varied landform and distinctive feature of the area	Uniform landform and lack of topographical features
	Pronounced Geology	Lack of geological features
	Soils significantly contribute to landscape features	Soils are not an important feature
	Complex and vulnerable landcover	Simple robust landcover
	Presence of other significant vegetation cover	Absence of other significant vegetation
	Presence of valued wildlife habitats	Absence of valued wildlife habitats
	Significant wetland habitats and meadows	Poor water logged areas
	Presence of common land	No common land
	Presence of good heathland	Lost heathland
<b>Cultural</b>	Distinctive good quality boundary features	Generic or poor boundary features
	Evidence of surviving part of an historic landscape	No evidence
	Complex historic landscape pattern with good time depth	Simple modern landscape
	Evidence of historic park	No evidence
	Important to setting or in a Conservation Area	No relationship
	Includes a Scheduled Ancient Monument or Important to setting	No relationship
	Locally distinctive built form and pattern	Generic built form
	Important to setting of a Listed building	No relationship
	Distinctive strong settlement pattern	Generic or eroded pattern
	Locally significant private gardens	Poorly maintained gardens erode the character
	Evidence of visible social cultural associations	Lack of social cultural associations



<b>Factor</b>	<b>Higher sensitivity</b>	<b>Lower sensitivity</b>
<b>Perceptual</b>	Quiet area	Noisy area
	Absence of intrusive elements	Intrusive elements present
	Dark skies	High levels of light pollution
	Open exposed landscape	Enclosed visually contained landscape
	Unified landscape with strong landscape pattern	Fragmented/'bitty' or featureless landscape
	Well used area or appreciated by the public	Inaccessible by public
	Important rights of way	None present
	Well used and valued open air recreational facilities	None present
	Open access land	None present

### STAGE 3: DETERMINATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY

3.3.6 The landscape sensitivity and visual sensitivity are combined, as shown in Matrix 3, to give the **landscape character sensitivity**. The results of the assessment are set out in the Reports for each contingency site or sub-division.

**Matrix 3: Landscape character sensitivity**

<b>VISUAL SENSITIVITY</b>	High	M	M/H	M/H	H	H
	Med/High	M/L	M	M/H	M/H	H
	Medium	M/L	M/L	M	M/H	M/H
	Med/Low	L	M/L	M/L	M	M/H
	Low	L	L	M/L	M/L	M
		Low	Med/Low	Medium	Med/High	High
<b>LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</b>						

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## STAGE 4: DETERMINATION OF WIDER SENSITIVITY – THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE STRATEGIC SITE TO THE WIDER LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT EDGE PATTERN

3.3.7 Stages 1 to 3 have led to a comprehensive assessment of the intrinsic landscape sensitivity of the individual contingency sites. However the sensitivity of each site to development is also affected by its importance, and contribution, to the adjacent wider rural landscape and the influence of, and pattern of uses within, the settlement edge. The relative wider sensitivity of each contingency site is assessed as follows:

**Low wider sensitivity** – The site is heavily influenced by the built form of the adjacent urban settlement and not an important part of the adjacent wider landscape

**Medium/Low wider sensitivity** – The site is heavily influenced by urban fringe uses and has views of the some parts of the adjacent urban settlement but shares some of the characteristics of the adjacent wider landscape

**Medium wider sensitivity** – The site is partly influenced by urban fringe uses but shares many of the characteristics of the wider landscape, with good physical and visual links to the wider landscape

**Medium/High wider sensitivity** – The site has strong physical and visual links to the wider landscape and these outweigh any minor impacts from the adjacent urban settlement

**High wider sensitivity** – The site is an important part of the wider landscape with which it has strong visual and landscape links. The nearby settlement has little impact on the site.

3.3.8 The results of the assessment are set out in the Reports for each contingency site or sub-division.

## STAGE 5: DETERMINATION OF OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

3.3.9 The **overall landscape sensitivity** is determined by combining the landscape character sensitivity with the wider sensitivity as shown in Matrix 4. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report Sheets for each contingency site or sub-division.

**Matrix 4: Overall landscape sensitivity**

LANDSCAPE CAHARACTER SENSITIVITY	High	H	H	M/H	M/H	M
	Med/High	H	M/H	M/H	M	M/L
	Medium	M/H	M/H	M	M/L	M/L
	Med/Low	M/H	M	M	M/L	M/L
	Low	M	M	M/L	M/L	L
		High	Med/High	Medium	Med/Low	Low
WIDER SENSITIVITY						

## STAGE 6: DETERMINATION OF LANDSCAPE VALUE

3.3.10 The model for this work follows GLVIA 2013.

**Table 1 - LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA**

Value	Typical criteria	Typical scale	Typical examples
<b>High</b>	Very High importance (or quality) and rarity. No or limited potential for substitution	International	World Heritage Site SAC
<b>Medium/high</b>	High importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	National	National Park/ AONB SSSI EH Register of Parks and Gardens Grade I and II* listed buildings and their settings National recreational route or area e.g. Thames Path/Open Access
<b>Medium</b>	Medium importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Regional	Setting of AONB / National Park Local landscape designation Landscape value identified in the Local Plan SINC/Conservation Areas and their setting Grade II listed buildings and their setting Local Wildlife sites Regional recreational route/area e.g. Oxford Greenbelt Way
<b>Medium/low</b>	Local importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Local	Undesignated but value expressed through publications such as Village Design Statements Local buildings of historic interest and their settings Local recreational facilities of landscape value
<b>Low</b>	Low importance (or quality) or rarity		Area of little value and identified for improvement

**Designations:** The location of the site within a designated area, or the presence of a designated area within the site, is an important measure of the value society gives to the landscape of the site. These include landscape, historic and ecological designations and recreational routes at a national/international level, regional or district level, or at the local level.

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**Local Associations:** These are included as far as possible using available data. In addition to the more formal designations above, sites may sometimes have special scenic value, associations or meanings to the local community and therefore make a contribution to the value of the local landscape. This has been assessed through a review of readily available evidence of community value. Further research may be required as part of any detailed landscape and visual impact assessment.

## STAGE 7: DETERMINATION OF LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

3.3.11 Landscape capacity is the ability, or otherwise, of the contingency sites to accommodate a certain amount of development. The landscape capacity is determined by combining the overall landscape sensitivity with the landscape value as shown in Matrix 5. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report Sheets for each contingency site or sub-division.

### Matrix 5 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	M	M/L	L	L	L
	Med/High	M/H	M	M/L	L	L
	Medium	H	M/H	M	M/L	L
	Med/Low	H	H	M/H	M	M/L
	Low	H	H	H	M/H	M
		Low	Med/Low	Medium	Med/High	High
LANDSCAPE VALUE						

3.3.12 The results from the matrix are subsequently tested against the following classifications for each level of landscape capacity, building on classifications used by the authors of this Report for other capacity studies.

**Low capacity** – The landscape character area could not accommodate areas of new development without a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character. Occasional, very small scale development may be possible, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

**Medium / Low capacity** – A low amount of development can be accommodated only in limited situations, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

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**Medium capacity** - The landscape character area could be able to accommodate areas of new development in some parts, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. There are landscape constraints and therefore the key landscape and visual characteristics must be retained and enhanced.

**Medium/ High capacity** – The area is able to accommodate larger amounts of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. Certain landscape and visual features in the area may require protection.

**High capacity** – Much of the area is able to accommodate significant areas of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.



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**STAGE 8: DETERMINATION OF LANDSCAPE CAPACITY WITHIN THE SITE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

- 3.3.13 Each site is examined in detail to determine the potential area for development in the light of the landscape capacity and landscape and visual constraints on the site. In some cases the whole site will be ruled out for development. In others the whole site will be included as a potential contingency site, subject to the provision of Green Infrastructure. However in many cases we recommend a 'reduced development area' which identifies a part of the site that could be considered further a potential contingency site subject to the provision of Green Infrastructure. The 'reduced development area' is that part of the site that could be developed whilst conserving (and potentially in some cases indirectly enhancing) the key landscape and visual characteristics of the site and its landscape setting; and whilst conserving and reinforcing the influence of the underlying landscape on the settlement pattern of the adjacent town or village. The policy constraints affecting sites within the AONB and the Green Belt have also been taken into account. Where the whole or a part of the site is recommended for further consideration, we have indicated a preferred access point to the site in order to minimise the landscape and visual impact.
- 3.3.14 For each site that we have recommended should go forward for further consideration, we have indicated the approximate location and extent of strategic site Green Infrastructure. This is designed to retain and enhance key landscape features and link open space into the adjoining Green Infrastructure provision. It should be regarded as additional to the provision of open space to serve the needs of the development and future residential amenity. However it should also be integral to the landscape masterplan for these sites and the delivery of Green Infrastructure to serve the existing and future community.
- 3.3.15 Each site report contains an overall plan showing the landscape capacity classification of the site at the beginning of the site report; and an overall plan showing the extent of the site recommended for further consideration as a contingency site, the recommended location and extent of Green Infrastructure and the preferred access point at the end of the site report.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Capacity study – Record sheets for sites 17 (parcel 1) and 19 (parcel 2)**

## VALE OF WHITE HORSE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY 2013 RECORD SHEET

<b>Site:</b>	Site 17 East Harwell Oxford Campus
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	20.8.13
<b>Surveyors:</b>	AG KB
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<p><b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a generally level surface which dips gently to the north. A locally more undulating landscape near West Hendred where the Plain is cut by numerous valleys; numerous springs, with small streams flowing down into the River Ock on the Vale;</li> <li>largely under arable cultivation within large regular Parliamentary enclosure fields with insignificant boundary features; shelterbelts, 18th and 19th century plantations, ornamental and waterside woodlands provide a sense of enclosure. Orchards along the northern edge around East Hendred provide diversity in land cover;</li> <li>small landscape parks and mansions, e.g. Lockinge House, are a particular feature of the area;</li> <li>a settled landscape with many springline villages e.g. Letcombe Regis, East Hendred, West Hendred and Ardington which generally have a clustered form. Estate villages have a particular unity of character;</li> <li>built form varies and includes blue flint and tile (east) plus stone and clunch (west);</li> <li>a large number of stables and equestrian establishments and gallops;</li> <li>Wantage and Harwell, located on the boundary of the AONB, plus Harwell Business Centre, on a former air field site within the AONB; overall, a quiet rural character</li> <li>almost exclusively in intensive arable cultivation with loss of environmental assets including biodiversity (e.g. chalk grassland) archaeological features and landscape character with creation of large 'prairie' fields;</li> <li>absence of hedgerow enclosure and woodlands, plus poor management of remaining hedgerows creating a very open landscape;</li> <li>need for management of the small woodlands and the linear riparian tree belts;</li> <li>management of the numerous historic parklands and designed landscapes;</li> <li>open landscape with particular vulnerability to large scale development - high visual impact of existing buildings including Harwell Business Centre on a former air field site. Potential impact of tall structures (e.g. masts or turbines);</li> <li>development pressures within the attractive small spring line villages, with expansion from their traditional clustered form;</li> <li>development on AONB boundaries at Harwell and Wantage - with visual and other associated impacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB

**VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> AONB Ridgeway National Trail Icknield Way A34 A4185 Harwell Estate Houses at Harwell	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists Residents Users of A34 and A4185 Workers at Harwell	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Limited structure to build on
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> Didcot AONB	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> Regional cycle path/National Trail	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Loss of openness but screen negative views
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> Yes	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within and AONB expectation of beauty	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> Yes		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> High		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

**LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY**

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Flat	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> Post and wire Post and rail	<b>Tranquillity – Noise levels:</b> A34 traffic noise
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity – Visual intrusion / detractors:</b> Didcot power station Cranes at reservoir to east A34 Harwell
<b>Soil quality:</b> None available	<b>Parkland features:</b>	<b>Tranquillity – Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Sky glow from Didcot and Harwell
<b>Water features:</b> Ditch		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Arable and pasture	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b> Tree belts	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b> N/A	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> Gappy hedgerows	<b>Built form:</b> House within garden on western boundary of site between Curie and Thomson Avenues	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> Yes and by cycle route. national trail
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> Small mixed woodland to centre of site	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> None	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> No	<b>Recreational areas:</b>
<b>Common land:</b> None	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> No	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> Heavily wooded garden to west of site between Curie and Thomson Avenues	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity - Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Open and exposed
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Icknield Way crosses site. Pre-Roman road. Adjacent to former Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity – landscape pattern:</b> Large, irregular and simple
<b>BAP/Phase I records:</b> BAP Priority Habitats: Deciduous woodland to west of	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> None visible	

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
site (garden) Available survey data: No		
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b>		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Low / medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium		
<b>Additional comments:</b> None		

**Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape**

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Harwell Campus and Chestnut Fields (new development to south-west of site)
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-screened with avenues of mature trees</li> </ul>
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Good connections to north and east
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Harwell Campus former air-force base then Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, with some housing along A4185. Modern development known as Chestnut Fields to south-west of site.
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b> Icknield Way long distance road from Norfolk to Wiltshire
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b> None known
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> The Icknield Way forms part of the National Cycle Network and connects via a network of rights of way with the Ridgeway
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>

## VALE OF WHITE HORSE LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY 2013 RECORD SHEET

<b>Site:</b>	Site 19 North West Harwell
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	20.8.13
<b>Surveyors:</b>	AG KB
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<p><b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a generally level surface which dips gently to the north. A locally more undulating landscape near West Hendred where the Plain is cut by numerous valleys;</li> <li>numerous springs, with small streams flowing down into the River Ock on the Vale;</li> <li>largely under arable cultivation within large regular Parliamentary enclosure fields with insignificant boundary features;</li> <li>shelterbelts, 18th and 19th century plantations, ornamental and waterside woodlands provide a sense of enclosure. Orchards along the northern edge around East Hendred provide diversity in land cover;</li> <li>small landscape parks and mansions, e.g. Lockinge House, are a particular feature of the area;</li> <li>a settled landscape with many springline villages e.g. Letcombe Regis, East Hendred, West Hendred and Ardington which generally have a clustered form. Estate villages have a particular unity of character;</li> <li>built form varies and includes blue flint and tile (east) plus stone and clunch (west);</li> <li>a large number of stables and equestrian establishments and gallops;</li> <li>Wantage and Harwell, located on the boundary of the AONB, plus Harwell Business Centre, on a former air field site within the AONB;</li> <li>overall, a quiet rural character</li> <li>almost exclusively in intensive arable cultivation with loss of environmental assets including biodiversity (e.g. chalk grassland) archaeological features and landscape character with creation of large 'prairie' fields;</li> <li>absence of hedgerow enclosure and woodlands, plus poor management of remaining hedgerows creating a very open landscape;</li> <li>need for management of the small woodlands and the linear riparian tree belts;</li> <li>management of the numerous historic parklands and designed landscapes;</li> <li>open landscape with particular vulnerability to large scale development - high visual impact of existing buildings including Harwell Business Centre on a former air field site. Potential impact of tall structures (e.g. masts or turbines);</li> <li>development pressures within the attractive small spring line villages, with expansion from their traditional clustered form;</li> <li>development on AONB boundaries at Harwell and Wantage - with visual and other associated impacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB



**VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> Footpath / Cycle route / Icknield Way Hungerford Road (track)	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Good, build on existing and opportunities to screen negative views and contribute to OWLS landscape strategy through planting of hedgerows, trees and copses
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> Harwell Campus Sewage works	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> Cyclists and walkers on Icknield Way and Hungerford Road	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Screen negative views
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> Yes	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within AONB, expectation of beauty, however degraded by presence of sewage works	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> No		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / low	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Low
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> Medium / low		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

**LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY**

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Gently sloping down to small valley in the north	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> Post and wire	<b>Tranquillity – Noise levels:</b> Noise from sewage works
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity – Visual intrusion / detractors:</b> Sewage works
<b>Soil quality:</b> Grade 2, urban	<b>Parkland features:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity – Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Possible sky glow from Harwell Campus
<b>Water features:</b> Stream to north of site		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Arable	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b>	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b>	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> Hedgerows	<b>Built form:</b> No	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> PROW adjacent to southern boundary (Icknield Way)
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> No	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> No	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> No	<b>Recreational areas:</b> No
<b>Common land:</b> No	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> None	
<b>Heathland:</b> No	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity - Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Semi-enclosed
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Icknield Way adjacent to site. Pre-Roman road.	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity – landscape pattern:</b> Simple, regular, medium scale
<b>BAP/Phase I records:</b> BAP Priority Habitats: None Available survey data: None	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b>	
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b> No		
<i>Other information</i>		

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / Low	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Low / medium
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium / Low		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

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**Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape**

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> North Drive housing, Harwell Campus
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-screen by mature trees</li> </ul>
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> Small linear section adjacent to stream in north of site
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Connected to countryside in the north
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Historic villages of East Hendred to the north-west and Harwell to the north-east are well separated from the site by vegetation and the A4185
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b> Icknield Way long distance road from Norfolk to Wiltshire adjacent to site
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> The Inkfield Way forms part of the National Cycle Network and connects via a network of rights of way with the Ridgeway
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **HDA – Record Sheets for parcels 3-7**

**HARWELL OXFORD CAMPUS, BASELINE STUDY 2014 RECORD SHEET – reproduced from Landscape Capacity Study 2013 record sheet**

<b>Site:</b>	Parcel 3
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	12/06/2014
<b>Surveyors:</b>	TM
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB

**VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> AONB Ridgeway National Trail Bridleways 199/25/10 and 199/23/10 Oldfield Farm	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists Horse riders	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Tree belts and vegetation structure to build on but would disrupt regular field pattern
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> AONB and ridgeway	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> National Trail / locally important bridleway	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Loss of openness but screen negative views
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> Yes	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within and AONB expectation of beauty	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> Yes		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Flat	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> None	<b>Tranquillity –Noise levels:</b> Tranquil
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Visual intrusion/ detractors:</b> Pylons – otherwise rural landscape
<b>Soil quality:</b> None available	<b>Parkland features:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Possible Sky glow from Harwell – generally screened by vegetation
<b>Water features:</b> None		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Arable fields	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b> Tree belts to perimeter of field	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b>	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> None	<b>Built form:</b> Oldfield Farm	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> Yes and by restricted byway and Bridleway
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> Shelterbelts surround field	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> None	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> No	<b>Recreational areas:</b>
<b>Common land:</b> None	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> No	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity -Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Open with a backdrop of trees
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Adjacent to former Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus – not visible from parcel	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity –landscape pattern:</b> Large, regular and simple
<b>BAP/Phase 1 records:</b> BAP Priority Habitats: woodland shelterbelts and parkland to south-west	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> None visible	

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
site (garden) Available survey data: No		
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b>		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium		
<b>Additional comments:</b> None		

### Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Harwell Campus and Oldfield Farm (Isolated farm settlement)
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> • Thick shelterbelt of mature trees – Harwell Campus is not visible from Parcel
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Good connections to north, west and south
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Harwell Campus former air-force base then Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, with some housing along A4185. Separated from the site by tree belts.
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b> Shelterbelts of mixed trees
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> Connected to the Inknield Way and the ridgeway via restricted byways and bridleways.
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>



**HARWELL OXFORD CAMPUS, BASELINE STUDY 2014 RECORD SHEET – reproduced from Landscape Capacity Study 2013 record sheet**

<b>Site:</b>	Parcel 4
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	12/06/2014
<b>Surveyors:</b>	TM
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB

**VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> AONB Bridleways 199/23/20 and 199/23/30	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists Horse riders	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Good: mature tree belts and vegetation structure to build on.
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> AONB – open farmland	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> Locally important bridleways	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Loss of openness but screen negative views
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> No	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within AONB - expectation of beauty	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> No		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Low / Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Low /Medium
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> Medium / Low		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Flat	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> Post and wire fencing	<b>Tranquillity –Noise levels:</b> Tranquil
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Visual intrusion/ detractors:</b> Tranquil
<b>Soil quality:</b> None available	<b>Parkland features:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Possible Sky glow from Harwell – generally screened by vegetation
<b>Water features:</b> None		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Arable fields	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b> Tree belts to perimeter of field	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b>	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> None	<b>Built form:</b> None	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> By Bridleway
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> Shelterbelts surround field	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> None	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> No	<b>Recreational areas:</b>
<b>Common land:</b> None	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> No	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity -Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Open with a backdrop of trees
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Adjacent to former Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus – not visible from parcel	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity –landscape pattern:</b> Medium, regular and simple
<b>BAP/Phase 1 records:</b> BAP Priority Habitats: woodland shelterbelts and parkland to south-west	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> None visible	

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
site (garden) Available survey data: No		
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b>		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium		
<b>Additional comments:</b> None		

#### Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Harwell Campus
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> • Thick shelterbelt of mature trees – Harwell Campus is not visible from Parcel
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Good connections to north, west and south
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Harwell Campus former air-force base then Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. Separated from the site by tree belts.
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b> Shelterbelts of mixed trees
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> Connected to the Inknield Way and the ridgeway via restricted byways and bridleways.
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>

**HARWELL OXFORD CAMPUS, BASELINE STUDY 2014 RECORD SHEET – reproduced from Landscape Capacity Study 2013 record sheet**

<b>Site:</b>	Parcel 5
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	12/06/2014
<b>Surveyors:</b>	TM
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB

**VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> AONB Ridgeway National Trail Bridleways 199/23/20 and 199/23/30	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists Horse riders	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Mature tree belts and vegetation structure to build on.
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> AONB – open farmland	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> National Trail and locally important bridleways	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Loss of openness but screen negative views
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> No	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within AONB - expectation of beauty	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> No		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Gentle north-facing slope	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> Post and wire fencing	<b>Tranquillity –Noise levels:</b> Tranquil
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Visual intrusion/detractors:</b> Tranquil
<b>Soil quality:</b> None available	<b>Parkland features:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Possible Sky glow from Harwell – generally screened by vegetation
<b>Water features:</b> None		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Arable fields	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b> Tree belts to perimeter of field	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b>	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> None	<b>Built form:</b> None	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> By Bridleway
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> Shelterbelts surround field	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> None	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> No	<b>Recreational areas:</b>
<b>Common land:</b> None	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> No	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity -Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Open with a backdrop of trees
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Adjacent to former Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus – not visible from parcel. Adjacent to area of parkland.	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity –landscape pattern:</b> Large, regular and simple
<b>BAP/Phase 1 records:</b> BAP Priority Habitats: woodland shelterbelts and parkland to west	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> None visible	

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
site (garden) Available survey data: No		
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b>		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High		
<b>Additional comments:</b> None		

#### Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Harwell Campus
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> • Thick shelterbelt of mature trees – Harwell Campus is not visible from Parcel
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Good connections to north, west and south
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Harwell Campus former air-force base then Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. Separated from the site by tree belts.
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b> Shelterbelts of mixed trees
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> Connected to the Inknield Way and the ridgeway via restricted byways and bridleways.
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>

# HARWELL OXFORD CAMPUS, BASELINE STUDY 2014 RECORD SHEET – reproduced from Landscape Capacity Study 2013 record sheet

<b>Site:</b>	Parcel 6
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	12/06/2014
<b>Surveyors:</b>	TM
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB

## VISUAL SENSITIVITY

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> AONB Ridgeway National Trail Bridleway 164/21/10 and 199/23/30 Byway 164/5/30	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists Horse riders	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Some hedgerows and tree belts to build on.
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> AONB – the Ridgeway to the south. Harwell campus to the north and new housing development of Chestnut Fields	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> National Trail and locally important public rights of way	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Loss of openness but screen some negative views
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> No	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within AONB - expectation of beauty	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> From parts of the parcel		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> High		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Flat	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> Post and wire fencing	<b>Tranquillity –Noise levels:</b> Tranquil
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Visual intrusion/ detractors:</b> Harwell campus and Chestnut Fields visible
<b>Soil quality:</b> None available	<b>Parkland features:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Possible Sky glow from Harwell – generally screened by vegetation
<b>Water features:</b> None		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Field in pasture and horse paddocks.	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b> Tree belt to north-west of field	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b>	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> Hedgerow with hedgerow trees to south-east of site	<b>Built form:</b> Farmhouse to west and Chestnut Fields development to north-east beyond intervening field	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> By Byway and Bridleway
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> None	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> None	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> Line of Grims Ditch Scheduled Monument visible to the south	<b>Recreational areas:</b>
<b>Common land:</b> None	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> No	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity -Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Open with a backdrop of trees
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Adjacent to former Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity –landscape pattern:</b> Medium, irregular and simple
<b>BAP/Phase 1 records:</b>	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> Line of Grims Ditch Scheduled Monument visible to the south	



<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
site (garden) Available survey data: No		
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b>		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / Low	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium		
<b>Additional comments:</b> None		

#### Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Harwell Campus and new housing at Chestnut Fields
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mature trees screen much of the campus. Immature planting to northern edge of new housing, with mature trees to the south. Some intervisibility with site</li> </ul>
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Good connections to east and south
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Harwell Campus former air-force base then Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. Chestnut Fields is a new housing development to the south-east of the campus, separated from the land parcel by open fields.
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> Connected to the ridgeway via a network of restricted byways and bridleways.
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>

# HARWELL OXFORD CAMPUS, BASELINE STUDY 2014 RECORD SHEET – reproduced from Landscape Capacity Study 2013 record sheet

<b>Site:</b>	Parcel 7
<b>Site character areas:</b>	No sub-division
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	12/06/2014
<b>Surveyors:</b>	TM
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Fine / clear
<b>LCA:</b>	<b>AONB LCA5C Hendred Plain</b>
<b>Landscape designations:</b>	The site is within the North Wessex Downs AONB

## VISUAL SENSITIVITY

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<b>Views into the site from:</b> AONB Ridgeway National Trail Bridleway 164/2/40 Byway 164/5/30 A34 dual carriageway	<b>Types of viewers:</b> Walkers Cyclists Horse riders	<b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Limited structure to build on.
<b>Views out of the site to:</b> AONB – the Ridgeway to the south. Harwell campus to the north and Upper Farm to the north	<b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> National Trail and locally important public rights of way	<b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Loss of openness but screen some negative views. Mitigation would adversely affect existing field pattern
<b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> No	<b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> Within AONB - expectation of beauty	
<b>Panoramic views:</b> Yes		
<b>Landmark features:</b> No		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> High
<b>Visual sensitivity score:</b> High		
<b>Additional comments:</b>		

## LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Topography and landform:</b> Gentle north-facing slope	<b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b> Post and wire fencing	<b>Tranquillity –Noise levels:</b> Tranquil
<b>Geological features:</b> No	<b>Historic landscapes:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Visual intrusion/ detractors:</b> Harwell campus and Chestnut Fields visible Noise from A34
<b>Soil quality:</b> None available	<b>Parkland features:</b> No	<b>Tranquillity –Light pollution/dark skies:</b> Sky glow from Harwell and Chestnut fields
<b>Water features:</b> None		
<b>Landcover and land use:</b> Arable fields	<b>Conservation Area:</b> N/A	
<b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b> Tree belt to north-east of parcel	<b>Landscape features of CA:</b>	
<b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b> Hedgerow with hedgerow trees to north of parcel	<b>Built form:</b> Harwell Campus and Chestnut Fields development to north	<b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b> By Byway and Bridleway
<b>Woodland and copses:</b> None	<b>Setting of listed buildings:</b> No	<b>Open access areas:</b> No
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> None	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> Line of Grims Ditch Scheduled Monument visible to the south	<b>Recreational areas:</b>
<b>Common land:</b> None	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> No	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity -Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Open and exposed
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> Adjacent to former Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity –landscape pattern:</b> Medium, irregular and simple
<b>BAP/Phase 1 records:</b>	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> Line of Grims Ditch Scheduled Monument visible to the south	

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
site (garden) Available survey data: No		
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b>		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / Low	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium / High
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium		
<b>Additional comments:</b> None		

#### Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape

<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Harwell Campus and new housing at Chestnut Fields
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mature trees screen much of the campus. Immature planting to northern edge of new housing, with mature trees to the south. Some intervisibility with site</li> </ul>
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Good connections to east and south
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> Harwell Campus former air-force base then Atomic Energy Research Establishment now Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. Chestnut Fields is a new housing development to the south-east of the campus, separated from the land parcel by open fields.
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b>
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> Connected to the ridgeway via a network of restricted byways and bridleways.
<b>VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:</b>