Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence

Land at White Cross Farm, Wallingford, Oxfordshire

Volume 1: Text

On behalf of London Rock Supplies Ltd.

Date: 17/06/2025 | Pegasus Ref: P25-1213

PINS Ref: U3100/W/25/3361505 | LPA Ref: MW.0115/21

Author: Neil Furber BSc (Dual Hons), PGDip LA, CMLI

Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
Final	17.06.25	NF	NF	

Contents.

1. Introduction 5
2. Updates to Landscape Character Baseline 9
3. Updates to Visual Amenity Baseline 12
4. Landscape Mitigation Proposals 16
5. Effects upon Landscape Character 19
6. Effects upon the Special Qualities of the National Landscape Designations 26
7. Effects upon Public Visual Amenity 28
8. Effects upon Private Visual Amenity 29
9. Landscape Planning Policy 34

Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – Extract of Willow Screen information from 'Yorkshire Willow'.

APPENDIX 2 – Assessment of impact of Proposed Development on the Special Qualities of the Chilterns National Landscape.

APPENDIX 3 – Assessment of impact of Proposed Development on the Special Qualities of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

APPENDIX 4 – Assessment of impact of Proposed Development on Visual Receptors.

Figures (see separate Volume 2)

FIGURE 1 – LANDSCAPE CHARACTER PLAN

FIGURE 2 – TRANQUILLITY PLAN

FIGURE 3 - LIDAR ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY

FIGURE 4 - PHOTOVIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

FIGURE 5 – ANNOTATED PHOTOVIEWS

FIGURE 6 – ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT PLAN

FIGURE 7 – VISIBILITY CROSS SECTIONS

1. Introduction

Witness Background

1.1. My name is Neil Robert Furber and I am a Landscape Director at Pegasus Group. I hold a Bachelor of Science (Dual Hons) in Landscape Design and Plant Science from Sheffield University (1992-1995) and a Postgraduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education (1997). I became a Chartered Landscape Architect of the Landscape Institute in 2002.

1.2. I have over 25 years' continuous experience as a Landscape Architect working on a wide variety of projects across all the major development sectors, including extensive experience of the landscape design and assessment of many consented mineral and associated restoration schemes. These schemes include Hope Quarry within the Peak District National Park, a China Clay recycling scheme, adjacent to the Dartmoor National Park, and a Brick Clay extraction adjacent to the Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB).

1.3. I have successfully acted as the landscape lead consultant for several nationally significant infrastructure projects in England, and Developments of National Significance in Wales, with major projects including onshore wind, electricity transmission, and power generation.

1.4. I have acted as a landscape expert witness on many occasions for both developer and Local Planning Authority clients since 2002. Until recently, I was a supervisor employed by the Landscape Institute for 8 years, where I assessed the submission of candidates and their mentors seeking to become Chartered Landscape Architects. I have also had inputs at the consultation stage of a number technical guidance notes issued by the Landscape Institute.

1.5. The evidence which I have prepared and provide in this proof of evidence is true and has been prepared and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution. I also confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

Scope of Evidence

1.6. My evidence addresses the single Reason for Refusal (RfR) issued by Oxfordshire County Council (**CD11.02**):

> ***"Due to its location, the proposed development would have an adverse landscape and visual impact on the River Thames, the Thames Path National Trail and on the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), contrary to the provisions of policy C8 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Part 1 Core Strategy and policy ENV1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035."***

1.7. My evidence also covers landscape matters raised in the Rule 6 Statement of Case, noting at paragraph 9, they state they will present evidence on:

> ***"Landscape impacts on the Chilterns National Landscape and its setting and on users of the River Thames and Thames Path – including visual, noise and tranquillity, views to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape…"***

1.8. My evidence will therefore also cover views to (and from) the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

1.9. At the time of writing it was not possible to reach agreement on landscape and visual matters with the Council; however it is intended that a Landscape Statement of Common Ground will be agreed and submitted a week after the submission of the Landscape Proofs of Evidence.

1.10. The separate planning proof of Mr Toland deals with matters related to need, the development plan and the planning balance.

Background

1.11. My evidence has been informed by the following:

a) My review of the Environmental Statement (ES) and documents submitted with the planning application with a particular focus on ES Volume 1 (**CD1.03**), the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment technical appendix in ES Volume 2 (**CD1.16**), and the planning application drawings (**CD1.06, CD1.07, CD1.09, CD1.27-37, CD1.41**);

b) My review of Regulation 25 request responses that covered minor amendments or clarification of the development proposals and landscape matters i.e., 1st Regulation 25 submission (**CD3.05-CD3.09, CD3.19, CD3.19, CD3.22),** the 2nd Regulation 25 submission (**CD7.05, CD7.09**), and the 3rd Regulation 25 submission (**CD9.01-9.04, CD9.05-9.06, CD9.10, CD9.11**);

c) My review of the statutory consultation responses relevant to landscape and visual matters, including the Committee Report (**CD11.02**), and responses from the:

- County Landscape Officer (**CD2.13, CD4.14, CD10.11**);
- Oxfordshire County Council Arboricultural Officer **(CD10.09, CD10.13, CD10.15)**;
- Oxfordshire County Council Biodiversity Officer **(CD10.10)**;
- South Oxfordshire District Council (**CD2.06, CD4.08, CD10.05**);
- Chilterns Conservation Board (**CD2.10, CD4.10**);
- Public Rights of Way Officer (**CD2.04**);
- CPRE (**CD2.07, CD4.09, CD10.07**);
- Crowmarsh Parish Council (**CD4.01**);
- Wallingford Town Council (**CD4.04**); and
- Joint response by Cholsey Parish Council and Wallingford Council (**CD10.04**);

d) Consideration of the recently updated landscape character assessment (**CD 16.02**) and tranquillity assessment (**CD 16.03**) prepared for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils to underpin the production of the Joint Plan, noting that both studies post-date the production of the landscape character assessments referred to in the LVIA submitted with the ES (**CD 1.16**). My **Figures 1 and 2** illustrate the context of the Site within these up to date assessments;

e) An updated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) of the processing plant and maximum stockpile height utilising LiDAR data (my **Figure 3**), was produced to supplement the bare earth ZTVs that were presented in the ES LVIA (**CD 1.16**).

f) I visited the Site and the surrounding area in May 2025, with representative viewpoints (**Figure 4**) recorded in a series of annotated Photoviews (**Figure 5)**;

g) Inclusion of an Illustrative Landscape Enhancement Plan at **Figure 6**, to address some of the consultation comments made by the Landscape Officer (**CD 4.14**) and Public Rights of Way Officer (**CD 2.04**); and

h) Inclusion of visibility cross sections at **Figure 7**, to demonstrate the relationship between the key visual receptors close to the Site and elements of the Proposed Development, including mitigation and enhancement measures.

Methodology and Approach to Assessment

1.12. I am familiar with the LVIA methodology adopted by Kedd in the ES (**CD1.16**), having worked with a similar methodology on past projects together.

1.13. During all consultation responses there were no queries related to the LVIA methodology, however it is relevant to note that best practice guidance is not prescriptive.

1.14. GLVIA3 states at paragraph 1.20:

> ***"The guidance concentrates on principles while also seeking to steer specific approaches where there is a general consensus on methods and techniques. It is not intended to be prescriptive; in that it does not provide a detailed 'recipe' that can be followed in every situation. It is always the primary responsibility of any landscape professional carrying out an assessment to ensure that the approach and methodology adopted are appropriate to the particular circumstances".***

1.15. LITGN-23024-01 **(CD 16.05)** states at page 1:

> ***"It should always be remembered that the purpose of undertaking LVIA (or LVA) is to express clearly to decision-makers the landscape professional's judgement about changes to the landscape and views. In particular, the purpose is to explain which aspects of landscape and visual change are more important to the decision to be made (and why), and which are not (and why). Achieving this outcome is more fundamental to good LVIA than the detailed mechanics of specific assessment methodologies.***
>
> ***Landscape and visual resources (and changes to them) are not easily measurable. Therefore, those undertaking LVIA have to proceed by a process of description, analysis and reasoning, leading to assessment conclusions"***

1.16. When judging the magnitude of an effect that is not continuously present, it is important to recognise that best practice guidance states that the period of time that an effect is experienced, contributes to the assessment of the magnitude of effect (or my preferred

terminology: magnitude of change)[1]. This is important when judging the magnitude of change (effect) of the extraction/infilling or 'operational' phase, due to the following:

1. The operational phase is relatively short, with an overall 5 year extraction period and a further year for full restoration;

2. There would be progressive infilling and restoration of the phases as outlined in Appendix 1 of Mr Toland's evidence;

3. There would be dynamic mitigation in the form of straw bales to the eastern extraction boundary that would screen operations in Phases 1 and 2. The bales in each location would be in place for less than 18 months;

4. In light of the consultation comments made by the Landscape Officer (**CD 4.14**) and Rights of Way Officer (**CD 2.04**), I have provided further detail to outline the enhancements to the 30m wide corridor alongside the River Thames identified in the LVIA ES Chapter, and these are set out in **Section 4** of my evidence, noting that the plan could form the basis for a future landscape planning condition. The timing of the landscape proposals is important for the judgements made in determining the magnitude of change. Enhancements would comprise advanced scrub clearance to allow realignment of the Thames Path on its definitive route, and advanced planting of a temporary willow screen between the Thames Path and the extraction limit, set behind secure agricultural post and wire fencing.

1.17. As part of the Landscape Statement of Common Ground, I will seek to identify any differences between myself and the Council on whether the temporary operational effects of the Proposed Development would give rise to significant effects on the following receptors:

a) Direct effects upon the landscape character of the Site and indirect effects on the landscape in the immediate vicinity of the Appeal Site, that includes consideration of visibility of the Proposed Development during day and night periods and the overall impact upon tranquillity, including increased noise and lighting levels over baseline levels;

b) The impact of the Proposed Development upon the Special Qualities of the Chilterns National Landscape (formerly AONB);

c) The impact of the Proposed Development upon the Special Qualities of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape; and

d) The visual amenity of recreational users of the Thames Path and the River Thames and other receptors in the surrounding landscape.

[1] LITGN 2024-01 – paragraph 3(8) page 9.

2. Updates to Landscape Character Baseline

Background

2.1. In this section of my evidence, I set out the most recent published landscape character and tranquillity guidance that was adopted by South Oxfordshire Council in 2024 and therefore post-dates both the planning application submission and the consultation responses.

Landscape Character Assessment - South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils – Sept 2024 (CD 16.02)

2.2. Hereafter known as the '2024 Landscape Character Assessment', the introduction states:

> ***"The Landscape Character Assessment is part of a suite of landscape evidence contributing to the Joint Local Plan that will guide development in the districts to 2041.***
>
> ***The aim of the Landscape Character Assessment is to create a comprehensive and up to date strategic scale landscape evidence. It provides a robust evidence base to underpin the production of the Joint Plan and to assist in the local planning process. It is intended to both inform work on policy development and development management, guiding development that is sympathetic to local character and the qualities/values of the landscape. It can help inform locational policies for strategic development as well as appropriate design and mitigation, providing a framework for more detailed landscape studies and sensitivity assessments as well as baseline evidence for more detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)."***
>
> (underlined – my added emphasis)

2.3. GLVIA3 states at paragraphs 5.13 and 5.14:

> ***"Existing assessments must be reviewed critically as their quality may vary, some may be dated, and some may not be suited to the task in hand. Before deciding to rely on information from an existing assessment a judgement should be made as to the degree to which it will be useful in informing the LVIA process….***
>
> ***Broad-scale assessments at national or regional level can be helpful in setting the landscape context, but are unlikely to be helpful on their own as the basis for LVIA - they may be too generalised to be appropriate for the particular purpose."***
>
> (Underlined: my emphasis)

2.4. In the context of the above, I focus my attention on the 2024 Landscape Character Assessment as the most up to date and detailed characterisation of the landscape baseline; however I have also reviewed and am mindful of the much older broader brush national landscape character assessment and the regional OWLS assessment that were covered in the ES LVIA (**CD 1.16**).

2.5. The Site and the parts of the study area from where there is any potential for significant effects upon Landscape Character are solely located within Landscape Character Type LCT 13: Lower Vale, and more specifically Landscape Character Area LCA 13D: South Thames Lower Vale. The key characteristics of the South Thames Lower Vale LCA are reproduced below with those that are most relevant to the landscape character context of the Appeal Site underlined:

> ***"A low-lying, gently undulating landform to the west of the River Thames; crossed by several small watercourses that feed the Thames, including Hakka's Brook, Mill Brook and Kibble Ditch.***
>
> ***Cholsey Hill is an isolated chalk and greensand outcrop that forms a local landmark rising from the floodplain.***
>
> ***A rural agricultural landscape of predominantly open large-scale arable farming, albeit with some smaller-scale permanent pasture concentrated in wetter areas next to the River Thames; hedgerow field boundaries are fragmented or missing in places which reinforces the open character.***
>
> ***Limited tree cover enables high intervisibility and extensive open views, including south towards the chalk escarpment of the North Wessex Downs and to the edge of the Chilterns National Landscape. Riparian woodland and smaller-scale field pattern along the river and other watercourses results in a greater sense of enclosure and intimacy.***
>
> ***Settlement pattern of small, nucleated villages, with clusters of Listed Buildings, and many with designated Conservation Areas ; the local vernacular includes thatch, red brick and weatherboard.***
>
> ***The Saxon origins of many of the villages, and the important walled burgh of Wallingford, provides evidence of a long history of settlement.***
>
> ***A well-connected network of public rights of way network enables recreational access to the landscape, including The Ridgeway, The Thames Path National Trails, and a cycle route on the dismantled railway line between Upton and Didcot.***
>
> ***Predominantly rural, tranquil, character, although busy transport corridors, railway infrastructure and electricity pylons are visual and aural detractors in the landscape."***

2.6. A record of the valued qualities and landscape strategy and guidelines for the South Thames Lower Vale LCA is set out in the 2024 Landscape Character Assessment' at pages 68-70 (**CD 16.02**). I consider that the published strategies and guidelines that are most relevant to this appeal are:

- Maintain the valued recreational use of the landscape and consider opportunities to introduce additional public rights of way connectivity;
- Consider impact of development on both close and distant views from both the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and the Chilterns National Landscape, and how any new development would impact on the special qualities of both;

- Manage grazing marsh habitats to enhance their biodiversity value and appearance; ensure best practice management through suitable grazing regimes and avoiding agrochemical and fertiliser inputs; manage recreational routes to avoid/minimise disturbance; and manage scrub vegetation appropriately to maintain the open character;

- Seek opportunities to enhance connectivity with other habitats nearby by creating green corridors and networks; and

- Maintain existing woodland cover and look to increase this to provide ecological value and help to limit the urbanising influence of development and busy roads, whilst maintaining characteristic open long views across the landscape.

2.7. I evaluate how the Proposed Development would impact the valued qualities of the South Thames Lower Vale LCA in Section 5 of my evidence and cover the impact upon the National Designations in Section 6. I also consider how the Proposed Development, together with the mitigation and enhancement measures, would respond to the landscape strategy and guidelines contained in the 2024 Landscape Character Assessment.

Tranquillity Assessment - South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils – Aug 2024 (CD 16.03)

2.8. Tranquillity is a key factor contributing to landscape character. It is likely that the baseline tranquillity of the Site and surrounding area has reduced over the years, evidenced by the Wallingford Bypass construction in the 1990's and more recently the construction of a solar farm to the west of Reading Road, opposite the Site and the commencement of the New Barn sand and gravel quarry, further to the west.

2.9. A Tranquillity Assessment was commissioned by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils, hereafter known as the '2024 Tranquillity Assessment'. The introduction to the assessment states:

> ***"South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils commissioned LUC to produce landscape evidence contributing to the Joint Local Plan that will guide development in the districts to 2041…. [a] requirement of this landscape evidence is to assess, describe and map relative levels of tranquillity across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils in a clear, consistent and comprehensive way. Tranquillity is a key factor contributing to landscape character and landscape value…***
>
> ***Tranquillity means different things to different people. There is a consensus for tranquillity to relate to audible (e.g. birdsong, natural sounds, moving water) and visual (e.g. stars and perceived wildness) peace. Tranquillity can support health and well-being and be a key contributor to quality of life. However, tranquillity can be impacted by changes in noise, visual intrusion and light pollution…"***

2.10. Tranquillity Mapping from the 2024 Tranquillity Assessment is included as my **Figure 2**. The overall tranquillity assessment is presented on a 5 point scale from least tranquil to most tranquil.

2.11. The overwhelming majority of the Site is located within an area of lower than average tranquillity. The northern end of the Site closest to the A4130, including the area of the proposed temporary plant site, is located in the least tranquil category. The majority of the remainder of the Site is located in the next lowest category of tranquillity with only very limited areas to the southwest and southeast of the Site recording average tranquillity (level 3 on the 5 point scale).

2.12. The Study Area beyond the Site follows a pattern of the least tranquillity associated with settlements, major road corridors and other elements including the solar farm and the New Barn quarry to the west of the Site. The areas of greatest tranquillity within the wider study area, include parts of the landscape around the village of North Stoke to the south of the Site and parts of the chalk escarpment near the Ridgeway, west of the Site.

3. Updates to Visual Amenity Baseline

Background

3.1. In **Volume 2** of my evidence I present illustrative material comprising:

- A Zone of Theoretical Visibility using LiDAR data (my **Figure 3**). The ZTV maps the visibility of the operational plant and stockpile and factors in intervening features in the landscape, thereby supplementing the bare-earth ZTV presented within the submitted LVIA (**CD 1.16**);

- Annotated photoviews of the key viewpoints (my **Figures 4 and 5**), that largely coincide with the viewpoints presented in the ES, avoiding any replication of views where there would be no discernible visibility of the proposals; and

- Visibility cross sections to illustrate the line of sight between receptors close to the Site and the Proposed Development, inclusive of mitigation proposals (see **Figure 7**). A plan illustrating the landscape mitigation proposals at **Figure 6** is described at Section 4 of my evidence.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

3.2. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (my **Figure 3**) assists in identifying potential locations where the operational phase of the development would be visible. The ZTV should be interpreted with caution as it still includes some areas within the ZTV, where in reality there would be no views of the Proposed Development, even in winter. LiDAR ZTVs, to a lesser extent than bare earth ZTVs, provide an exaggerated depiction of actual visibility, because LiDAR data does not always include smaller scale screening features such as fencing, walls and clipped hedgerows etc. In addition, as the LiDAR data is several years old, it has not included recently constructed development e.g. the new housing on the northeastern edge of Cholsey, or to the southwest of Wallingford.

3.3. The ZTV does not include perimeter mitigation of the earth bunds and straw bales. Whilst these temporary mitigation features would be lower than the processing plant and stockpile, the straw bales in particular, would have a role in reducing the visibility of the operational

elements from the closest receptors including the Thames Path and River Thames. Typical visibility of the Proposed Development from the closest receptors has been illustrated with visibility cross sections (my **Figure 7**) which are covered in more detail in Section 7 of my evidence.

3.4. Review of the ZTV in the field has assisted the selection of representative viewpoints and receptors which have been reduced in number, over those presented in the submitted LVIA (**CD 1.16**). My field assessment determined that there would be no potential for visibility of the Proposed Development, even in winter, due to notable planting and/or intervening development, along the following routes that partly fall within the ZTV:

- National Cycleway 5 on the eastern edge of Crowmarsh Gifford;
- The Ridgeway National Trail;
- Public rights of way east of the B4009 at Mongewell;
- The Cholsley and Wallingford Heritage Railway that runs along the northern edge of New Barn Quarry;
- New residential development on the northeastern edge of Cholsey; and
- The southwestern built-up edge of Wallingford adjacent to Bradford's Brook.

Annotated Photoviews

3.5. The Viewpoint Location Plan (my **Figure 4**) presents the key views where the ZTV indicates theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development. Many of these views are located in the same place as the LVIA ES views (**CD 1.16**), with the principal changes being the omission of views where there would be no predicted visibility of the Proposed Development. For cross referencing purposes, both the LVIA ES viewpoint and receptor references have been added in my **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Representative Viewpoints

Viewpoint	Coordinates	Frames	Title	ES Viewpoint	LVIA Visual Receptor
1	460788 188069	5A3A0888 - 5A3A0892	Thames Path at northeastern corner of Site	Photograph K (nearby)	Zone 1/5
2	460723 187843	5A3A0906 - 5A3A0915	Thames Path at eastern boundary of Site	Photograph C(i) (nearby)	Zone 1/5
3	460636	55A3A0946-	Thames Path near southeast	n/a	Zone 1/5

Viewpoint	Coordinates	Frames	Title	ES Viewpoint	LVIA Visual Receptor
	187488	5A3A0950	corner of the Site		
4	460826 187827	5A3A0960	St John the Baptist Church near Public footpath 181/36/10	Photograph B(i) (nearby)	Zone 1/2
5	460813 188103	5A3A0877 - 5A3A0881	A4130 bridge crossing of River Thames	Photograph L	Zone 4/24 & 25
6	460475 187998	5A3A0866 - 5A3A0875	A4130 near northwest corner of Site	Photograph M	Zone 4/26
7	460372 188030	5A3A0966 - 5A3A0970	Roundabout junction of A4130/A329 near northwest corner of Site	Photograph N	Zone 4/26
8	460352 187826	5A3A0971 - 5A3A0981	A329 Reading Road, opposite existing agricultural access to Site	Photograph O (nearby)	Zone 5/28
9	460335 187717	5A3A0982 - 5A3A0986	A329 Reading Road, near entrance to Elizabeth House	Photograph R	Zone 5/28
10	460339 187423	5A3A0987 - 5A3A0991	A329 Reading Road, near southwest corner of Site	Photograph T (nearby)	Zone 5/28
11	460123 187895	5A3A0992 - 5A3A0996	Wallingford Road, near The Lodge	Photograph Q	Zone 5/31

Viewpoint	Coordinates	Frames	Title	ES Viewpoint	LVIA Visual Receptor
12	460100 188239	5A3A0998 - 5A3A1002	A4130 near entrance to New Barn Farm Quarry	Photograph W	Zone 5/38
13	461793 187401	5A3A0958	A4074 Port Way	n/a	Zone 3/12
14	457501 188014	5A3A1009	Church Road, Cholsey Hill	Photograph V	Zone 6/35 & 37

3.6. Following review of the ZTV and appraisal in the field, I determined that the following public receptors have the potential to experience discernible changes to their views. These conclusions are similar to the ES which either identifies no effects from a number of receptors due to lack of visibility (e.g. within Visual Receptor Zones 2 and 3). Consequently, the key public receptors where there would be the potential for any significant visual effects, including my professional judgement of winter visibility, are identified as:

a) Users of the Thames Path and River Thames (Viewpoints 1-3);

b) Visitors to St John the Baptist Church and users of connecting Public Footpath 181/36/10 (Viewpoint 4);

c) Users of the A4130 (Viewpoints 5, 6, 7 & 12);

d) Users of the A329 (Viewpoints 8, 9, & 10);

e) Users of Wallingford Road (Viewpoint 11);

f) Users of the A4074 (Viewpoint 13); and

g) Users of Church Road, Cholsey Hill and nearby public rights of way (Viewpoint 14).

3.7. The potential for private views has been estimated from nearby publicly accessible locations and/or from the Site looking back towards the receptors. The potential for any discernible visual effects from publicly accessible locations is considered to be restricted to the receptors above, and I undertake an additional assessment of key private views from buildings at Section 8 of my evidence.

4. Landscape Mitigation Proposals

4.1. The phased mitigation strategy (**CD3.18**) and Concept Restoration Plan v3 (**CD9.04**) represent the mitigation scheme that was slightly modified from the original submission, with reference to consultee feedback. The Concept Restoration Plan, in all iterations, included reference to a 30m wide corridor described as *'an enhanced amenity experience along the Thames Path'*.

4.2. In line with similar minerals applications, the precise details of the landscape mitigation scheme would typically be subject to the submission of further details in order to discharge a landscape condition to any planning consent.

4.3. Given the subsequent refusal of the planning application, my evidence provides further details of the landscape enhancement that could be achieved within the 30m wide corridor, noting that the location of the extraction boundary and all other scheme elements including processing plant, stockpile, and soil storage bunds remain unchanged from the submitted scheme.

Straw Bales and Willow Screen

4.4. The Illustrative Landscape Enhancement Plan at my **Figure 6** identifies the indicative location of the temporary straw bales along the eastern boundary of the quarry extraction area (Phases 1 and 2) in order to screen views of the quarry workings and minimise any associated noise and negative effects upon tranquillity arising from the extraction and infilling operations.

4.5. Whilst I am not a noise expert, I consider that the impact upon baseline tranquillity experienced by users of the Thames and Thames Path, would not be significant in the context of the following:

a. The technical noise assessment (**CD 1.14**) considers that noise would be generated from a variety of sources including extraction, processing, haulage activities and infilling. The predicted noise levels during the operational phase of the Proposed Development upon nearby sensitive receptors including Elizabeth House and Carmel College, to the west of the Thames Path would not exceed statutory noise limits and was therefore concluded to be acceptable for fixed receptors;

b. The background noise level along the Thames Path was not measured but is likely to be similar if not slightly higher than the Carmel College receptors that were monitored to the east of the River Thames because much of the Thames Path within the Site lies closer the main road corridors (A4130 and A329). The low baseline tranquillity level of the Thames corridor in the vicinity of the Site is also covered in **Section 2** and my **Figure 2**; and

c. Straw bales and willow hedge planting were not factored into the technical noise assessment submitted with the ES and both elements may provide some additional noise mitigation for users of the Thames Path and the River Thames that represent transitory receptors, less sensitive than the fixed receptors included in the noise assessment.

4.6. The Landscape Officer (**CD 4.14**) and Public Rights of Way Officer (**CD 2.04**) expressed concerns over the stability and/or appearance of the straw bales. As detailed on my **Figures 6 and 7**, the straw bales would be located set back 5m from the extraction limit with space for a vehicle to move the straw bales along the phase, as each phase was completed and restored. Straw bales would not be expected to be in one location for more than 18 months. The 5m wide standoff and additional 4m wide corridor allows sufficient space to achieve safe stacking of bales up to a height of 4m where required, although as demonstrated in the sections at my **Figure 7,** typically only 3m height of bales is needed to provide visual mitigation.

4.7. Straw bales in excess of 4m high are regularly stacked across the U.K as part of agricultural operations and have been stacked on the Site in the recent past (see **Sheet 20 of CD3.05**). Standard practice is to tie the bales together, which is an additional safety measure in addition to allowing sufficient footprint at the base, when building the stack. In terms of public safety, a 1.8m high agricultural post and wire fence with deer proof netting would be installed on the Thames Path side of the bales, 3m from the base of the bales.

4.8. Within the 3m wide corridor between the straw bales and fencing, it is proposed to plant a double or triple staggered row of willow (*Salix viminalis* is a particularly fast growing native willow species that can achieve 3m height in the first season when planted as tall rods – see my **Appendix 1**). This temporary willow screen would partly filter views of the bales from the Thames Path, and should address the Landscape Officer's concerns, however I do not personally consider that temporary straw bales in themselves would be incongruous elements within an agricultural landscape, and do not require planning permission.

Reinstatement of the Thames Path definitive footpath route and enhancement of river views

4.9. A circa 200m long section of the Thames Path to the east of the Site has been diverted from its definitive route by the growth of blackthorn scrub. The informal diversion of the Thames Path along the edge of the field, does not currently allow users to enjoy clear views of the River Thames, unlike sections of the path further north that follow the definitive route, with only intermittent tree planting between the path and the river.

4.10. In order to enhance the recreational experience of footpath users, as illustrated on **Figure 7,** it is proposed that the blackthorn scrub that has encroached along the definitive footpath is removed. Selected riverbank trees and marginal planting along the river-bank would be retained and views to the river would be opened up, similar in character to the section of path to the north that follows the definitive alignment. The scrub to the west of the realigned footpath would be temporarily retained during the operational period to minimise views towards the Proposed Development from the Thames Path, and also the River Thames and Carmel College.

4.11. There is an opportunity to seed the 30m wide corridor with a wildflower meadow mix to improve biodiversity and amenity.

Final Restoration

4.12. There were three rounds of Regulation 25 requests during consideration of the application and the Appellant adopted changes to the Concept landscape restoration proposals in response to consultee comments, with the final plan contained at **CD.9.04**. The changes adopted were:

- Minor modification to the eastern extraction limit to allow retention of mature black poplar tree with appropriate root protection area;
- Removal of shallow scrapes and inclusion of reedbeds and wet woodland around the areas of open water in order to minimise the attractiveness of the restored landscape to bird species that could pose a risk to aircraft safety; and
- Clarification of management regime for flood plain and neutral grassland.

5. Effects upon Landscape Character

5.1. The updated Landscape Character baseline at Section 2 of my evidence, has helped inform my judgements concerning the landscape character effects of the Proposed Development.

5.2. My assessment approach follows the recommendation of GLVIA3[2] and reports the effects upon landscape character at different geographical levels i.e. the Site, the immediate context of the Site and finally at the wider landscape context.

Direct Effects on the Site: Sensitivity

5.3. Technical Guidance Note 02/21 published by the Landscape Institute in 2021 (**CD 16.16**) covers an assessment of landscape value outside national designations, which is relevant for the Site that lies outside of, but within the setting of, the Chilterns National Landscape (CNL). Indirect effects upon landscape character outside the designation (excluding the very small part of the Site within the CNL as a geographical anomaly), are assessed separately.

5.4. In terms of indicators of landscape value, with reference to Table 1 of TGN 02/21 (**CD 16.16**), I make the following conclusions:

- The Site does not have any particular natural heritage value and does not contain distinctive geological or geomorphological features, or any distinctive ecological communities and habitats;
- The Site does not make a formally recognised contribution to a nature recovery or green infrastructure network;
- There are no cultural heritage features of value on the Site, designed landscape elements, historic parks and gardens or natural time depth;
- In terms of landscape condition the Site is average at best, with no strong landscape structure, hedgerows that are fragmented in places and of low quality (Grade C), a dilapidated barn, and no mature specimen trees of particular note, apart from a black poplar tree near the eastern boundary;
- There are no known particular associations of the Site with literature, science, or links to notable historic events that I am aware of. The LVIA ES (**CD 1.16**) at paragraph 5.22 references the historic landscape classification by Oxfordshire County Council (2016)[3] which identifies the Site, in common with adjoining land as lying within Unenclosed rough ground 1540-1810;
- There is good public accessibility along the eastern boundary of the Site via the Thames Path and the wider land of the Site does form a setting to the route, however the primary focus for recreational users is considered to more likely focussed on activity on the river and features of interest beyond including glimpses of heritage

[2] Paragraph 5.50 of GLVIA3 (2013)

[3] https://oxfordshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=373201dd651c410bacef130ffb3d8d11

buildings e.g., disused Carmel College and the Julius Gottlieb Gallery and Boathouse (indirect effects covered separately below);

- Perceptual (scenic value) is ordinary in terms of the Site itself but elevated in terms of the River Thames and specific features to the east of the river, as covered above;

- Perceptual (tranquillity) is affected by noise from the A4130 and A329 road corridors and associated lighting columns. As set out in my **Section 2** and **Figure 2** of my evidence, the Site is at the lower end of the tranquillity spectrum, as independently assessed on behalf of South Oxfordshire Council. In terms of experience of existing tranquillity along the River Thames Path, people walking from Cholsey to Wallingford already experience over 2km of the Thames Path that has demonstrably greater tranquillity than the route section within the Site; and

- In terms of functional links to designated landscapes, it is recognised that the Site, in common with much of the adjoining land along the river beyond the Site, is part of the River Thames floodplain.

5.5. In terms of landscape value, I conclude that the Site that would be directly affected by the Proposed Development has an overall Medium sensitivity with only the functional link to a designated landscape and public accessibility value raising it above an otherwise low value with respect to all other indicators of landscape value that are suggested by best practice guidance.

5.6. In terms of susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed i.e. the extraction of sand and gravel and progressive restoration over a 6 year period, I assess that the landscape of the Site within the South Thames Lower Vale LCA has a Medium (or Moderate) Susceptibility to Change. The most susceptible landscape to the type of change proposed would typically be those landscapes that retain a higher level of intactness, would be in very good condition and typically contain distinctive elements of high historic or natural value.

5.7. A medium value and medium susceptibility to change result in a medium sensitivity. My judgement is broadly in line with the assessment contained in the LVIA ES Chapter at (**CD 1.16**).

Direct Effects on the Site: Magnitude of Change and overall Effect

5.8. Considerations related to the magnitude of change upon landscape character within the Site during the operational phase needs to consider best practice advice, and at paragraph 5.48 of GLVIA3 under the Magnitude of landscape effects it states:

> ***"Each effect on landscape receptors needs to be assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility."***

5.9. I consider each these three principal considerations in turn.

5.10. The scale of change would be moderated by the limited area of ground disturbance due to the phased extraction and restoration design of the scheme. The majority of the perimeter hedgerows and tree planting and internal belt of planting comprise the principal structural vegetation elements would be retained. There would be some temporary and intermittent adverse impact upon tranquillity experienced by the users of the Thames Path, however the effects should be judged in the context of the recognised low baseline levels of tranquillity

and the specific mitigation measures designed to minimise adverse effects i.e. the straw bales and willow screen planting.

5.11. In the context of an already low tranquillity baseline and a noise assessment that indicates any increase in noise level would not be unacceptable to the highest sensitivity receptors, in the wider locality (**CD 1.14**), the effects upon tranquillity experienced by transient users of the Thames Path within the Site could not legitimately be considered 'large' in magnitude.

5.12. In terms of the geographical extent of the Site that is influenced any one period of time. the direct changes to landcover are considered localised due to the phased extraction and progressive restoration (see Appendix 1 of Mr Toland's evidence). In addition, any perceptual changes to landscape character from within the Site are only experienced from the Thames Path. The changes would be greatest from the route section at the northern end of the Site where baseline tranquillity is already most compromised by traffic on the A4130 including the Wallingford bypass bridge across the River Thames. Further south, as set out within Section 4 of my evidence, the footpath would be realigned along the Thames and screening provided by retained scrub in addition to temporary willow planting and straw bales.

5.13. Finally, in terms of the duration and reversibility considerations that should be factored into the magnitude of change, I refer back to the short periods of time for completion of each phase as set out in Appendix 1 of Mr Toland's evidence. In practice this means that Phase 1 and 2 of the extraction closest to the Thames Path would each last approximately a year noting mineral extraction can't happen in winter when the Site floods. The extraction of mineral is considered a 'reversible activity' because the land would be infilled and restored back to the original or improved land cover. Furthermore, the concept restoration scheme (**CD 9.04**) would result in the landscape of the Site being restored to an improved state relative to the baseline, in landscape character terms. There would also be enhancements prior to the extraction/infilling phase as scrub would be removed along the River Thames and a section of the definitive footpath within the Site would be returned to its original route with restored views of the river.

5.14. In conclusion, my professional judgement following best practice guidance, is that there would be an overall localised adverse change to the landscape character of the Site. This change would occur over a relatively short period of time and mitigation measures have been proposed that would minimise the effects. All temporary changes to landscape character would be fully reversible, upon restoration.

5.15. In conclusion I assess that there would be a medium (moderate) magnitude of change and a temporary moderate adverse effect (not significant) on the landscape character of the Site, during the extraction/restoration phase.

5.16. My assessment conclusions broadly align with the judgement made by the Head of Strategic Planning of Oxfordshire County Council, who concluded that they were *"...satisfied that the most significant landscape impacts would be temporary for a relatively short time period"*[4]. The changes made by the Appellant during the consultation period, were acknowledged including removal of the haul road and restrictions with external lighting.

[4] **CD 11.02** Committee Report - paragraph 111

5.17. In terms of the long term effects upon the landscape character of the Site, I set out below a brief summary of the long term changes to landscape character and describe how these changes would align with the relevant published landscape strategies and guidelines for the South Thames LCA (taken from the 2024 Landscape Character Assessment, as set out in Section 2 of my evidence above).

a) Restoration of land levels to the same or similar level to existing;

b) Restoration of BMV farmland at the slightly higher western part of the Site and damp meadow to the east of the Site to enhance ecology and landscape character. This proposal aligns with the published strategy to manage grazing marsh habitats to enhance their biodiversity value and appearance;

c) Strengthening of the boundary planting with new trees and shrubs, including an area of woodland. This aligns with the published strategy to increase woodland cover to provide ecological value and help to limit the urbanising influence of development and busy roads, whilst maintaining characteristic open long views across the landscape;

d) Enhanced watercourses and creation of wetland area including scrub clearance along the River Thames which aligns with the published strategy to manage scrub vegetation appropriately to maintain the open character; and

e) Permissive footpath access across northern end of the site created linking Reading Road and the Thames Path. This aligns with the published strategy to maintain the valued recreational use of the landscape and consider opportunities to introduce additional public rights of way connectivity.

5.18. In terms of the long term effects upon the landscape character of the Site, I conclude that the above measures collectively would represent a Moderate beneficial magnitude of change (not significant) and a Moderate beneficial effect, that would clearly outweigh the temporary adverse effects of the operational phase over a relatively short period of time.

Indirect Effects on Landscape Character in the immediate context of the Site

5.19. The effects of the Proposed Development upon the landscape character, beyond the Site boundary would be indirect. This means that there would be no physical changes to any landscape elements (or features) that characterise the landscape beyond the Site and any indirect changes would be perceptual.

5.20. The potential sources of indirect effects upon landscape character beyond the Site boundary, are related to the perception of three key 'perceptual pathways' associated with the extraction/infilling phase that I examine in turn, firstly upon the landscape outside the Chilterns National Landscape (CNL), and secondly on the area to the east of the Site within the CNL.

1) Visibility of temporary structures, materials storage and vehicles/plant;

2) Reduction in baseline tranquillity as a result of noise; and

3) Reduction in baseline nighttime tranquillity from artificial lighting.

5.21. The principal mitigation measures designed to minimise impacts on both landscape character and visual receptors are illustrated on my **Figure 6** and the phasing plans (**CD 3.18**), and in summary would comprise:

- Processing plant, stockpile and associated activity located as close to the main road network as possible;
- Grass seeded soil storage bunds placed along the northwest boundary of the Site;
- New planting to strengthen existing planting around the perimeter of the Site;
- Progressive phased extraction and restoration to minimise the areas of disturbed land; and
- Temporary willow screen and straw bales between Phases 1 and 2 and the Thames Path to provide screening.

5.22. The landscape, in the immediate context of the Site can be divided into areas outside the Chilterns National Landscape (CNL) that have a medium sensitivity i.e. essentially the landscape in the immediate proximity of the Site to the north, south and west, and areas within the CNL to the east including the River Thames and Mongewell Park that have an elevated landscape sensitivity.

5.23. The landscape to the east of the Site within the CNL has a contrasting landscape character to the Appeal Site. The landscape comprises the enclosed and well treed parkland of Mongewell Park that has limited public access and contains listed buildings comprising the ruins of the St. John the Baptist Church at the end of public footpath 181/36/10 (see **Photoview 4**), and the post-war Julius Gottlieb Boathouse and Gallery overlooking an inlet to the River Thames. The nearby Wet Boathouse that sits on the banks of the River Thames is non-designated.

5.24. Overall I assess that the sensitivity of the landscape character within this part of the CNL is High to Very High. This sensitivity conclusion is reached on the basis of the Very High Value being located within the CNL and a High susceptibility to indirect changes to the type of development proposed.

Landscape Character Effects in the immediate context of the Site outside the Chilterns National Landscape

Visibility of temporary structures, materials storage and vehicles/plant

5.25. Views from the north would include fleeting glimpses of the extraction and infilling from the A4130 crossing the River Thames (**Viewpoint 5**) with more restricted views of the processing plant and stockpile potentially available from the entrance to the Site to the east of the junction with the A329, noting the existing mature trees along the southern embankment of the A4130 would be retained (**Viewpoint 6**).

5.26. Views from the west would be restricted to a short section of the A329 south of the roundabout junction with the A4130 (**Viewpoints 8 and 9**) and near the roundabout junction (**Viewpoint 7**). The upper parts of the processing plant and stockpile would be partially visible seen through retained boundary planting and above the grass seeded soil bunds. Further south along the A329, views of these elements would be increasingly screened, even in winter,

due to the maturity and height of this existing planting (**Viewpoint 10**). Public views further from the south are restricted by multiple layers of existing hedgerow and tree belts, set between the A329 and the River Thames.

Reduction in baseline nighttime tranquillity from artificial lighting

5.27. It was agreed with the Council by the Appellant that a planning condition would be used to limit the use of artificial lighting (**CD 7.08**), and it was stated:

> ***"It is no longer our intention to use external lighting around the offices during the hours of darkness. Modern CCTV cameras have negated the need for such lighting. We would accept a condition restricting/controlling the use of external lighting for the reasons of reducing potential impacts on the local landscape and ecological interests."***

5.28. I have observed that within the baseline context of the northern end of the Site, near the A4130 and A329 roundabout junction, there are a large number of highway lighting columns that extend south along the A329, close to the proposed new site entrance. In this context the restricted and controlled use of external lighting at the northern end of the Site would have a minimal additional effect upon tranquillity of the landscape beyond the Site.

Reduction in baseline tranquillity as a result of noise

5.29. The noise assessment (**CD 1.14**) considers the predicted worse-case noise levels upon nearby sensitive receptors to the north and east of the Site including Elizabeth House. The predicted noise levels arising from both short term and normal operations would be well below the acceptable limits outlined in the PPG.

5.30. Against existing background noise levels generated by traffic on the A4130 and A329, additional intermittent noise from the Proposed Development would reduce tranquillity for a relatively short period of time during the extraction and infilling phase. Whilst perceptible at times relative to existing background noise, I consider that elevated noise levels would only have a modest contribution to the overall magnitude of change upon landscape character.

Landscape Character Effects within the Chilterns National Landscape

Visibility of temporary structures, materials storage and vehicles/plant

5.31. Public views from the east include the River Thames.However, unlike views from the Thames Path within the Site that have been assessed above, the perception of the proposals would be reduced by intermittent planting along the banks of the river. The viewing elevation of people in boats, including rowers, is generally predicted to be lower than walkers using the Thames Path, further restricting views towards the Site.

5.32. Intermittent views of extraction/infilling activity in Phase A would be filtered by the advance planting of the willow screen. The extraction/infilling of Phases 1 and 2 would be screened by temporary straw bales set behind the willow planting. Following the infilling and restoration of Phases 1 and 2, the straw bales alongside each phase would be removed, and the willow screen would remain, to provide mitigation of the more distant views of the processing plant and extraction of Phase 3. (see **Cross sections A-A' to C-C'** at my **Figure 7**).

5.33. Views east of the River Thames from the public footpath 181/36/10 near St John the Baptist Church would be screened in summer and heavily filtered in winter by mature trees in Mongewell Park (**Viewpoint 4**), and further restricted by planting along the riverbank, retained blackthorn scrub west of the realigned Thames Path, the willow screen planting, and temporary straw bales when in place for Phases 1 and 2.

Reduction in baseline nighttime tranquillity from artificial lighting

5.34. Existing light sources close to the CNL include street lighting columns along the A4130 and the headlights of vehicles crossing the A4130 bridge over the River Thames.

5.35. As set out above it was agreed by the Appellant that a planning condition would be agreed to limit the use of artificial lighting (**CD 7.08**). In this context the proposed restricted and controlled use of external lighting at the northeast corner of the Site, typically over 300m east of the designation, would have a minimal additional effect upon tranquillity upon the landscape within the Chilterns National Landscape.

Reduction in baseline tranquillity as a result of noise

5.36. The noise assessment (**CD 1.14**) considers the predicted worse-case noise levels upon nearby sensitive receptors within the CNL comprising Founders House and Mansion House within Carmel College. The predicted noise levels arising from both short term and normal operations would be well below the acceptable limits outlined in the PPG.

5.37. Against existing background noise levels generated by traffic on the A4130 and A329, additional intermittent noise from the Proposed Development would reduce tranquillity for a relatively short period of time during the extraction and infilling phase. I consider that the reduction in tranquillity from the River Thames and publicly accessible locations within the CNL, including public footpath 181/36/10 and St John the Baptist Church, whilst perceptible at times relative to existing background noise, would only have a modest contribution to the overall magnitude of change upon landscape character.

Conclusions on the indirect landscape character effects in the immediate vicinity of the Site

5.38. It is important to recognise that the area where indirect effects upon landscape character could be clearly perceived as a result of partial visibility of the extraction and infilling activity and associated increased noise and lighting, would be very localised. Beyond the Site boundary the effects would be primarily experienced to the north and west of the Site which lie outside the CNL. It is predicted that an overall Low magnitude of change would be experienced upon the A4130 corridor to the north and the A329 corridor to the west, resulting in a Slight adverse effect that is not significant.

5.39. The indirect magnitude of change experienced from the landscape covered by the CNL to the east of the Site, including the River Thames and the enclosed landscape of Mongewell Park, would be Very Low. The overall temporary indirect effect on landscape character, considering the elevated sensitivity of the CNL, would be Moderate adverse and not significant.

Indirect landscape character effects upon the wider landscape

5.40. The ZTV at my **Figure 3** indicates the theoretical visibility of the processing plant and stockpile as the tallest temporary elements of the scheme from the surrounding landscape. As reported at Section 3 of my evidence, the actual visibility of the proposed development, even in winter, would be reduced because the majority of land covered by the ZTV is not publicly accessible and the principal planning concern is public amenity and being able to perceive changes any indirect changes to landscape character, not private views.

5.41. There are localised and elevated views from the CNL along the A4074 Port Way (**Viewpoint 13**). The extraction area of the New Barn Farm Quarry is partially visible above the Site, although forms a barely discernible element in the view. The Site itself is fully screened in summer by intervening woodland and is predicted to be heavily filtered in winter, with a possibility of heavily filtered glimpses of the upper parts of the stockpile and/or processing plant.

5.42. West of the Site there are elevated and panoramic views from Cholsey Hill (**Viewpoint 14**) within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The extraction area of the New Barn Farm Quarry is partially visible and set below the Site, although the quarry workings form a barely discernible element in the view and could be missed by the casual observer. The ground level of the Site is not visible, being screened by intervening planting. The Proposed Development is not predicted to be discernible in summer, and in winter the very top of the stockpile and processing plant may be partially visible, heavily filtered by intervening trees.

5.43. The wider elevated landscape to the east within the Chilterns National Landscape and to the west, within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, as a High to Very High Sensitivity (Very High value and a High susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed).

5.44. It is concluded that the magnitude of change upon landscape character resulting from the Proposed Development from these wider locations would be so minimal as to be considered Neutral i.e. no perceived change in character of the receiving landscape. The resulting degree of effect upon the landscape character of the wider landscape is assessed to be Neutral.

6. Effects upon the Special Qualities of the National Landscape Designations

Chilterns National Landscape

6.1. With reference to the Chilterns National Landscape AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 (**CD 12.06**), I set out in **Appendix 2** my assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development upon the Special Qualities of the designation during the extraction/restoration and post restoration stages.

6.2. In conclusion, I assess that there would be some temporary effects during the extraction and infilling period, however of the 13 Special Qualities (SQs) identified for the Chilterns National Landscape only two SQs would be affected temporarily as follows:

- **Relative tranquillity and accessibility including unspoilt countryside and a sense of remoteness**. The National Landscape in the immediate vicinity of the Site has a low relative tranquillity and could not be described as remote or unspoilt. The Proposed Development would result in no direct effects upon the designation and the indirect effects on tranquillity from the progressive extraction and restoration would be minimised by the mitigation adopted. There would be temporary moderate adverse effects (not significant) upon a very localised part of the designation; and

- **A dense network of rights of way including the Thames Path National Trail**. There would be benefits in realigning the Thames Path on the definitive route and opening up views of the river. There would also be temporary moderate adverse effects upon the visual amenity of Thames Path users within the Site, outside of the designation. These effects would not be significant due to the mitigation measures adopted comprising straw bales with willow screen planting.

6.3. As stated above, during the extraction and infilling phase there would be indirect befits from the realignment of the Thames Path on its definitive alignment and removal of scrub along the banks of the River Thames in order that walkers have improved access to the riverbank and a better appreciation of the National Landscape.

6.4. Following full restoration of the Site, there would be Moderate indirect benefits on the setting of the National Landscape as follows:

- Improvements to the River Thames corridor with increased views of the River Thames through scrub clearance and realignment of the path on its definitive route and the potential for wildflower meadow corridor along the Thames Path within the Site;

- New woodland, tree and hedgerow planting around the perimeter of the Site and along an enhanced drainage corridor to reflect the landscape character within the setting of the National Landscape; and

- Creation of a new permissive path through the northern end of the Site connecting to the Thames Path.

North Wessex Downs National Landscape

6.5. With reference to the North Wessex Downs Management Plan 2019-2024 (**CD 12.08**), I set out in **Appendix 3** my assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development upon the Special Qualities of the designation during the extraction/restoration and post restoration stages of the Project.

6.6. In conclusion, I assess that the Proposed Development would have no adverse effect upon any of the 8 Special Qualities (SQs) identified for the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

7. Effects upon Public Visual Amenity

7.1. I identified in Section 3 of my evidence the receptors that I consider should be scoped into the assessment, on the basis of an updated LiDAR ZTV (**Figure 3**) and my assessment in the field.

7.2. When considering the impact upon visual receptors best practice advises that:

> ***"An LVIA should consider views from local communities focusing on the way that a community currently experiences views from public locations such as streets and open spaces and how those will change. Views from houses and individual properties are a matter of private amenity, noting that it is an established planning principle that there is no right to a view. However, it may be helpful for an LVIA to comment on changes to views that will be experienced from groups of properties, or in some cases individual properties, if these changes are likely to be significant. Where required , a residential visual amenity assessment (RVAA) should consider effects on private amenity for people in their homes and gardens in more detail (as set out in TGN 02/2019 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)"***

7.3. I have set out my assessment of the visual receptors identified for assessment following my site visit and review of updated ZTV which is documented at Section 3 of my evidence. The full assessment is contained at my **Appendix 4**, and a summary of effects set out below.

7.4. During the extraction/infilling and restoration phase of the project, lasting 6 years, there would be the following visual effects:

a) Users of the Thames Path and River Thames experiencing a Moderate adverse temporary visual effect that is not significant;

b) Visitors to St John the Baptist Church and users of connecting Public Footpath 181/36/10 experiencing a Slight adverse temporary visual effect that is not significant;

c) Users of the A4130 and A329 Reading Road experiencing a Slight adverse temporary visual effect that is not significant; and

d) Users of Wallingford Road experiencing a Minimal adverse temporary visual effect that is not significant.

7.5. Following restoration I assess that there would generally be neutral visual effects from the majority of receptors, relative to the current baseline, with users of the Thames Path and River Thames experiencing a Moderate beneficial permanent visual effect that is not significant.

Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects

7.6. The definition of cumulative effects is provided at paragraph 7.2 of the LVIA (**CD 1.16**). Schemes that were considered included the Grundon New Barn Farm Quarry, the new Barchester Waterside Court Care Home and the intensification of the CABI Site for residential development. All of these developments now form part of the baseline conditions as they

are either in operation (the Grundon New Barn Farm Quarry) or with respect to the Care Home and CABI residential properties have since been constructed.

7.7. Views towards the Appeal Site from a recent housing development under construction north of the A4130 on the edge of Wallingford would be largely screened by retained planting along the A4130.

7.8. I consider that there would be sequential cumulative visibility of New Barn Quarry and the Proposed Development from the A4130, however the road corridor is flanked by mature tree cover that separates the two schemes. I do not consider that the addition of the Proposed Development that would not be significant in isolation could be considered to result in a significant sequential effect when experienced by road users with the ongoing extraction at New Barn Quarry (see Viewpoint 12- my **Figure 5**).

7.9. In terms of other receptors set between New Barn Quarry and the Proposed Development, any views of both schemes are likely to be restricted to upper floor views from private dwellings, where there may be very limited views of the Proposed Development in one direction and New Barn Farm Quarry in the other direction. The potential properties identified are The Lodge and New Barn Farm off Wallingford Road, Elizabeth House off the Reading Road, and Barchester Waterside Court Care Home, closer to the Proposed Development. In all cases the presence of significant tree and shrub planting close to the buildings is predicted to largely prevent views from ground floor main living space and gardens and any limited and temporary cumulative effects experienced are not predicted to be significant.

8. Effects upon Private Visual Amenity

Background

8.1. Private Amenity encompasses a range of considerations including outlook (i.e., views), noise, and dust. The Planning Officer in their Committee Report (**CD11.02**) mentions the location of the closest dwelling to the south of the Site (Winward House) but did not identify residential visual amenity as a specific concern, and it does not form a reason for refusal. Residential Visual Amenity is also not mentioned in the Rule 6 parties Statement of Case; however it is acknowledged that the Rule 6 party have concerns over noise and air quality in relation to the Elizabeth House Nursery and Preschool.

8.2. In terms of consultation responses, South Oxfordshire District Council (**CD2.06**) did not raise any specific concerns in relation to private visual amenity, noting it simply cited the potential 'impact' of the gravel extraction on Carmel College to the east that has outline permission for conversion to 166 dwellings. The Council also identified noise and dust impacts (but not visual impacts) upon the users of the nursery and preschool to the east of the Site. The Wallingford Town Council response (**CD4.04**) considered the Site to be 'very visible' from the Carmel College site, at Mongewell, noting these buildings are currently disused.

8.3. The Oxfordshire County Council Landscape Officer (**CD4.14** – page 7) considered that the visual impact upon the residents and/or visitors to the Elizabeth House nursery and pre-school and the Wet Boat House, had been under-estimated in the LVIA ES. The Landscape Officer considered the effects to be notable/moderate adverse at both receptors, rather than the moderate adverse effect in the ES.

8.4. The following consultation responses did not raise any specific concerns with respect to the impact of the Proposed Development upon private views:

- Cholsey and Wallingford Parish Council (**CD 2.15**); and
- Crowmarsh Parish Council (**CD 4.01**).

Assessment Approach

8.5. The Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/19 covering Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA), hereafter referred to as TGN 2/19 (**CD 16.04**), states at paragraph 2.1 that the guidance was produced to provide *"an informed, well-reasoned answer to the question: 'is the effect of the development on Residential Visual Amenity of such nature and/or magnitude that it potentially affects living conditions or residential amenity'…this is referred to as the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold* (or RVAT)*"*

8.6. TGN 2/19 states that residential *visual* amenity should not be confused with judgements on residential amenity because the latter is a planning matter. Paragraph 1.5 of TGN 2/19 (**CD 16.04**) states:

> ***"…In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that no one 'has a right to a view'. This includes situations where a residential property's outlook / visual amenity is judged to be 'significantly' affected by a proposed development, a matter which has been confirmed in a number of appeal / public inquiry decisions."***

8.7. Paragraph 1.6 of TGN 2/19 (**CD 16.04**) goes on to explain that it is not uncommon for development to have a significant effect on visual amenity and *"in itself this does not necessarily cause planning concern"*. It is however, recognised that there are sometimes situations where the changes are so great that it *"is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."*

Assessment

8.8. Following careful review of the private receptors from publicly accessible locations in the field, I have assessed the height and proximity of proposed temporary bunds, straw bales, stockpiles, the processing plant and vehicle movements to these receptors. I have also produced supplementary cross sections to illustrate the relationship between the dwellings and the Proposed Development (my **Figure 7**).

8.9. In light of the specific concerns on underassessment of some properties raised by the Oxfordshire County Council Landscape Officer, I have focussed my analysis on the likely effects that would be experienced at the following three receptors:

- The Wet Boat House (see Section A-A' of my **Figure 7**);
- Elizabeth House Day Nursery and Pre-School (see Section D-D' of my **Figure 7**) and
- Potential future effects from Carmel College to the east that has permission for conversion to 166 dwellings.

8.10. Following review of the SZTV and my assessment in the field I consider that the overall assessment of effects on the other private receptors set out in the LVIA (**CD 1.16**) to be fit for purpose, given the generally limited likelihood for visibility of the Proposed Development from main living space or gardens, even in winter.

8.11. I have not visited the private properties in person, and a Step 3 RVAA does not require this. I have, however, carefully considered likely views from the buildings with reference to the surrounding publicly accessible locations, together with the visibility cross sections (my **Figure 7**). I consider that this approach is adequate in order for me to assess the likely visual impacts and whether any visibility has the potential to breach the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold (RVAT) as set out in TGN 2/19 best practice guidance (**CD 16.04**). In accordance with best practice guidance, I have considered the sensitivity of current and future occupier of the buildings as high (high susceptibility and high value of views).

8.12. I set out below, whether the temporary presence of the plant, stored materials and vehicle and plant movements associated with the operational phase of the proposals would have a significant visual effect. Only users with views from buildings and external amenity space experiencing the highest magnitude of change would trigger a Step 4 RVAA to determine whether the significant effect was so great as to potentially breach the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold (RVAT), however for the purposes of completeness, I state my conclusions with respect to the RVAT based on my Step 3 assessment.

The Wet Boat House

8.13. The dwelling is located on the banks of the River Thames at the northern edge of Mongwell Park. The building is understood to be currently unoccupied being part of the disused Carmel College site, however for the avoidance of doubt, potential occupation is assumed.

8.14. A single window and terrace would appear to have the potential for views towards the Proposed Development. At the highest level, extraction and infilling activity in Phase 1 would be screened by the temporary straw bales and willow screen mitigation. There is the potential for views of the upper parts of the grass seeded temporary storage mounds beyond Phase 1, with the top of the processing plant being visible approximately 340m distant and comprising a very small element in the view. The fast growing willow screen is expected to reach almost the height of the straw bales at the end of Year 1, and would be around 5m tall by the end of Year 2. At this stage, the distant views to the top of the processing plant would be fully screened in summer and heavily filtered in winter.

8.15. The magnitude of change during the extraction /restoration phase would be low and the effect Moderate and not significant. I assess that there is no potential for the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold to be breached, and following restoration the visual effects would be neutral.

Elizabeth House Day Nursery and Pre-School

8.16. The building is located to the west of the Reading Road and the exit road is located approximately 80m south of the proposed new site entrance to the Proposed Development where vehicles would access the Site via a left turn only arrangement i.e. travelling from the north.

8.17. The frontage of Elizabeth House adjoining the Reading Road comprises a mature hedgerow with trees and a closeboard fence, behind which there is in an area of dense tree and shrub

planting comprising a mix of deciduous and evergreen shrubs and trees including laurel, holly, yew and pine. The overall combined canopy width is approximately 15-20m between the open ground within the curtilage of Elizabeth House and the trees overhanging the Reading Road.

8.18. Following review of aerial photographs and observations from the Reading Road, the outdoor areas of the nursery, likely used by children for play, comprises two main areas. The area to the west of the main building is fully enclosed by built form with no views of the Proposed Development possible. The other external area to the south of the main building is flanked by mature evergreen yew trees, and in combination with the dense planting along the frontage to the Reading Road, is predicted to prevent any views of the Proposed Development.

8.19. Views from users on foot or in vehicles exiting Elizabeth House to the south may experience views of the upper parts of the raised stockpile, however this would be set behind existing boundary planting, reinforced with new advance planting to strengthen its screening function, and beyond that a low level grass seeded soil storage mound.

8.20. Restricted views from the upper floors of Elizabeth House are predicted to be limited to the upper parts of the temporary stockpile and very oblique views of the upper parts of the processing plant, typically heavily filtered by intervening tree planting on both sides of the A329 Reading Road (see Section D-D' -my **Figure 7**). Views of the stockpile, whilst representing an adverse impact are assessed at the maximum height, noting that this would reduce as the mineral is processed from each phase.

8.21. I assess the overall magnitude of change during the temporary extraction/infilling period would be Low to Medium adverse and the overall effect Moderate adverse and not significant. I assess that there is no potential for the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold to be breached, and following restoration the visual effects would be neutral.

Redevelopment of Carmel College (ref. P11/W2357)

8.22. A consent for the redevelopment of the disused Carmel College (ref P11/W2357) was approved in March 2016. Nearly a decade later there has been no evidence from the online planning database on South Oxfordshire Council's website that all of the conditions have been discharged. Outline permissions generally last 5 years, so it appears doubtful that the development as designed would be implemented.

8.23. Notwithstanding the low likelihood that any development at Carmel College would be occupied by the time the extraction and infilling at the Appeal Site has been completed, should the appeal be allowed, for the purposes of an unlikely impact upon future residents, an assessment has been undertaken.

8.24. Existing buildings that would be re-purposed and proposed buildings would all be set back from the River Thames behind retained mature tree cover. Views towards the River Thames and the Site beyond are limited in summer when mature tree and shrub planting are in leaf (see my Viewpoint 4 at **Figure 5**) . A photograph within the LVIA (Photograph B at PDF page 59 of **CD 1.16**) was taken in winter within the environs of the Boat House. This view indicates that views towards the Site in winter would typically be partially filtered by mature trees within Mongewell Park and along the banks of the River Thames.

8.25. The extraction and infilling activity in Phase 1 would be screened by the temporary straw bales and willow screen mitigation. From upper floors of any occupied building there would

be the potential for heavily filtered views of the upper parts of the grass seeded temporary storage mounds beyond Phase 1, with the top of the processing plant being barely perceptible, approximately 400m distant. The fast growing willow screen is expected to reach almost the height of the straw bales at the end of Year 1, and would c.5m tall by the end of Year 2. At this stage, the distant views to the top of the processing plant would be fully screened in summer and heavily filtered in winter.

8.26. The magnitude of change during the extraction /restoration phase would be Very Low and the effect upon potential future residents Slight and not significant. I assess that there is no potential for the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold to be breached, and following restoration the visual effects experienced by any future residents would be neutral.

9. Landscape Planning Policy

9.1. The two Development Plan policies cited in the reason for refusal were Policy C8 of the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Part 1 Core Strategy, and Policy ENV1 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

9.2. I leave it to Mr Toland to undertake a judgement of policy compliance in the context of the whole development plan and the weight of any compliance or non-compliance to be afforded in the planning balance. In order to assist the Inquiry, I set out my interpretation below of how the Proposed Development would perform against policies cited in the reason for refusal, in relation to landscape and visual matters only.

Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Part 1 Core Strategy

9.3. Policy C8 States:

> ***"Proposals for minerals and waste development shall demonstrate that they respect and where possible enhance local landscape character, and are informed by landscape character assessment. Proposals shall include adequate and appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts on landscape, including careful siting, design and landscaping. Where significant adverse impacts cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, compensatory environmental enhancements shall be made to offset the residual landscape and visual impacts.***
>
> ***Great weight will be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and high priority will be given to the enhancement of their natural beauty. Proposals for minerals and waste development within an AONB or that would significantly affect an AONB shall demonstrate that they take this into account and that they have regard to the relevant AONB Management Plan. Major developments within AONBs will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest, in accordance with the 'major developments test' in the NPPF (paragraph 116). Development within AONBs shall normally only be small-scale, to meet local needs and should be sensitively located and designed."***

9.4. I consider that the Proposed Development respects and where possible enhances local landscape character for the following reasons:

a) Minerals can only be extracted where they are found. The Proposed Development respects landscape character by:

    a) Locating the operational plant site and the majority of vehicle movements as far away from the River Thames as possible and close to the main road network where tranquillity is already low;

    b) Adopting a phased extraction and restoration scheme of working, in order that only a relatively small area of land would be disturbed at any one time;

    c) Minimising the time to extract the mineral and progressively restore the land (5 years) with full restoration achieved in an additional year;

d) Utilising a dynamic mitigation strategy to minimise adverse effects upon users of the Thames Path and River Thames by the placement of temporary straw bales, potentially softened by temporary willow screen planting, within a 30m wide buffer to the River Thames; and

e) Minimising temporary lighting impacts (see **CD 7.08**).

b) The Proposed Development would, where possible, enhance landscape character because:

a) During the operational phase the Thames Path would be realigned on its definitive route within the Site, involving localised scrub clearance in order that a greater proportion of the river would be visible from the path. Scrub to the west of the path would be temporarily retained to provide screening of the operational phase of the development. There is also the potential to plant a wildflower meadow within the 30m wide corridor to enhance visual amenity and biodiversity; and

b) During the restored phase, the long term landscape character (see **CD9.04**) would represent an enhancement on the baseline landscape character because:

- the ditch corridor through the centre of the site would be reinstated and strengthened with planting of native black polar and willow species;
- an area of reedbed and wet woodland would be introduced at the northern end of the Site;
- an area of enhanced woodland would be planted at the southern end of the Site;
- New native tree and hedge planting would bolster existing field boundary planting;
- A floodplain grazing marsh and area of neutral grassland would be created that would be more species diverse than the current planting (see page 12 of the Ecological Appraisal **CD 1.20** describing the semi-improved grassland and the species poor area of grassland along the River Thames);
- a new permissive path would be introduced across the northern part of the site; and
- The dilapidated barn would be replaced with a new barn in a similar location.

9.5. The Proposed Development would not be located within the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB), although a very small part of the Appeal Site that would not be developed is erroneously located within the designation.

9.6. In terms of Policy C8, overall I consider that the Proposed Development in both its operational and restoration design has had regard to the Chilterns AONB (National Landscape) Management Plan, noting a range of measures that would minimise adverse temporary effects on the designation have been adopted as outlined above, and long term enhancement of the landscape character of the Site, within the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape would be achieved.

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035

9.7. Policy ENV1 is set out in tabular form below, with my response to each policy element added, as appropriate.

Policy ENV1	**My response**
1. The highest level of protection will be given to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Chilterns and North Wessex Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs):	Noted, however this statement does not preclude appropriate development within the protected areas or their setting.
• Development in an AONB or affecting the setting of an AONB will only be permitted where it conserves, and where possible, enhances the character and natural beauty of the AONB;	The Proposed Development is not within an AONB/National Landscape but would temporarily affect to a not significant degree, a very localised part of the setting. The analysis of conserving and enhancing landscape character is covered under Policy C8 above.
• Major development in an AONB will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated to be in the public interest;	The Proposed Development is not located within an AONB/National Landscape.
• Development in an AONB will only be permitted where it is appropriate to the economic and environmental wellbeing of the area or promotes understanding or enjoyment of the AONB; and	
• Development proposals that could affect the special qualities of an AONB (including the setting of an AONB) either individually or in combination with other developments, should be accompanied by a proportionate Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	The application was accompanied by a proportionate LVIA. The setting of the AONB and its special qualities would not be materially affected by the Proposed Development.

Policy ENV1	My response
AONB Management Plans will be a material consideration in decision making.	The restoration design reflects the AONB Management Plan – see analysis under Policy C8 above.
2. South Oxfordshire's landscape, countryside and rural areas will be protected against harmful development. Development will only be permitted where it protects and, where possible enhances, features that contribute to the nature and quality of South Oxfordshire's landscapes, in particular:	See below.
i) trees (including individual trees, groups of trees and woodlands), hedgerows and field boundaries;	A small number of low quality trees would be removed to facilitate access and would be more than compensated by new tree planting elsewhere across the Site.
ii) irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland;	No ancient woodland or veteran trees are present on or adjacent to the Site. The root protection area of a mature black poplar tree near the eastern boundary of the Site would be protected in accordance with BS:5837.
iii) the landscapes, waterscapes, cultural heritage and user enjoyment of the River Thames, its tributaries and flood plains;	The views of the River Thames from the Thames Path would be enhanced by local scrub removal. Views of the temporary operational phase of the development would be screened by straw bales and willow screen planting.
iv) other watercourse and water bodies;	Protection and enhancement of central watercourse through the Site. Creation of an enhanced waterbody at the northern end of the Site.
v) the landscape setting of settlements or the special character and landscape setting of Oxford;	Not relevant as the proposals would not be readily discernible from Wallingford (separated by the A4130 and screen planting) or Cholsey.
vi) topographical features;	There are no readily identifiable topographical features within the Site.

Policy ENV1	My response
vii) areas or features of cultural and historic value;	There are identified features beyond the Site however Historic England (**CD 4.18**) did not object and considered the harm to listed buildings for the temporary duration of the mineral extraction and beyond the extraction period, they considered the proposed landscape reinstatement would provide a setting that would have a neutral impact.
viii) important views and visually sensitive skylines;	There are no visually sensitive skylines or identified important views. The impact of the operational phase on views from the Thames Path and River Thames would be minimised and no significant visual effects are predicted.
ix) aesthetic and perceptual factors such as tranquillity, wildness, intactness, rarity and enclosure.	Relative to the baseline tranquillity levels, the proposals would not have a material adverse impact upon tranquillity during the operational phase. The Site is not considered to have attributes of wildness or rarity. Enclosure would be reinforced with new planting and intactness upon restoration would be improved.
3. Development which supports economic growth in rural areas will be supported provided it conserves and enhances the landscape, countryside and rural areas.	The analysis of conserving and enhancing landscape character is covered under Policy C8 above.
4. The Council will seek the retention of important hedgerows. Where retention is not possible and a proposal seeks the removal of a hedgerow, the Council will require compensatory planting with a mixture of native hedgerow species.	No important hedgerows would be affected by the proposals. Localised removal of short sections of non-important hedgerows would be more than compensated by new mixed native species hedgerow planting.

9.8. In terms of Policy ENV1, overall I consider that the Proposed Development would broadly comply with part 1 of the policy, acknowledging that whilst the Proposed Development is not within an AONB/National Landscape it would temporarily affect to a not significant degree, a very localised part of the setting. In terms of part 2 of the policy the Proposed Development would comply with all criteria that seek to protect and where possible enhance landscape valuable features.

Yorkshire Willow

CUTTINGS, RODS & LIVING WILLOW

Search GO

Advanced Search | Search Tips

MAIN WEBSITE HOME | Shop Home | Contact Us | Shipping & Returns | Blog

Categories

- WILLOW RODS
- WILLOW SPILING
- WILLOW FEDGE KITS
- WILLOW TUNNEL KITS
- WILLOW WIGWAM KITS
- WILLOW ARBOUR KITS
- WILLOW DOME KITS
- WILLOW MAZE
- WILLOW CUTTINGS
- ORNAMENTAL WILLOW
- BIOMASS FUEL HYBRIDS
- Gardenware
- Garden Novelty
- Ground Membrane
- Garden Tools
- Guards, Ties, Pegs
- ** SERVICES OFFERED **

Home › WILLOW RODS › 100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips
Home › BIOMASS FUEL HYBRIDS › 100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips
Home › WILLOW SPILING › 100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips
Home › WILLOW RODS › 2.5m - 4.0m Long Rods › 100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips

100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips

Price: [redacted]
Rating: [redacted]
Shipping: Calculated at checkout
* **BUNDLE SIZE:** ○ 10 x Rods ◉ 100 x Rods
Quantity: 1 ADD TO CART

This is seasonal product not currently available, expected release date is 1st Nov 2025. ORDERS PLACED NOW WILL BE SHIPPED SECOND WEEK NOVEMBER.

Product Description

100 x 2.75m Rods Fast growing yellow/green variety, long shoots but lower number of shoots than other varieties. Hardy vigorous variety, producing long straight stems with growth up to 3m a year, traditionally used to make baskets for fishing and agriculture. Other uses include living structures, furniture, drawing charcoal, wind-breaks, soil stabilisation, waste filtration, and fuel. The stems or Rods are very tough and flexible, ideal for construction of living willow structures. Happy in full sun or part shade and thrives on regular watering. It will tolerate a wide variety of soil types.

Add to Wish List

Click the button below to add the 100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips to your wish list.

ADD TO WISH LIST

Related Products

10 x Ecomatt Bio Weed Mats 50cm x 50cm Square with x 50 Pegs
[redacted] (inc VAT)
[redacted] (ex VAT)
Not Rated

100 x Ecomatt Bio Weed Mats 50cm x 50cm Square with x 500 Pegs
[redacted] (inc VAT)
[redacted] (ex VAT)
Not Rated

You Recently Viewed...

100 x Salix Viminalis 2.75 metre Rods / Whips
[redacted] (inc VAT)
[redacted] (ex VAT)
★★★★★
Pre-Order Now

APPENDIX 2: Assessment of impact of Proposed Development on the Special Qualities of the Chilterns National Landscape.

Summary of Special Quality of the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB)	Relevance to Proposed Development	Effect of Proposed Development: Operational Phase	Effect of Proposed Development: Post Restoration
1. Panoramic views from and across the escarpment interwoven with intimate dip-slope valleys and rolling fields	No views of the Proposed Development from the Chalk Scarp – only very limited views from the lower Scarp Foothills and Vale Fringes (e.g. A4074 corridor at **Viewpoint 13**)	The Proposed Development would not restrict or prevent views from or across the escarpment.	Neutral effect.
2. Relative tranquillity and peace on the doorstep of ten million people, one of the most accessible protected landscapes in Europe; relatively dark skies, of great value to human and wildlife health; unspoilt countryside, secret corners and a surprising sense of remoteness.	The National Landscape in the immediate vicinity of the Site has low relative tranquillity (see my **Figure 2**).	The Proposed Development would result in no direct effects upon the designation and the indirect effects from the progressive extraction and restoration would be minimised by the mitigation adopted, represent moderate adverse effect (not significant) on a localised part of the designation	Neutral effect.
3. Significant ancient hedgerows, and hedgerow and field trees, orchards and parkland weaving across farmland that covers approximately 60% of the Chilterns	No direct effects as trees and hedgerows within the designation are located beyond the Appeal Site.	Appropriate management of scrub adjacent to River Thames and the designation boundary to open up views of the River.	Moderate beneficial effects to woodland, tree and hedgerow planting within the Site to reflect the landscape character within the setting of the National Landscape.
4. Nationally important concentrations of chalk grassland, extremely diverse in flora and fauna and home to scarce and threatened	May be present in the wider study area but no potential for indirect	Not applicable	Not applicable

Summary of Special Quality of the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB)	Relevance to Proposed Development	Effect of Proposed Development: Operational Phase	Effect of Proposed Development: Post Restoration
species. Once extensive, the chalk grassland now only covers 1% of the AONB mostly in small fragments	effects from the proposed development.		
5. One of the most wooded landscapes in England with 23% woodland cover.	No direct effects as trees and hedgerows within the designation are located beyond the Appeal Site.	No removal of woodland cover within the setting of the designation.	Moderate beneficial effects from addition of woodland planting within the setting of the designation to reflect the landscape character guidelines.
6. A dramatic chalk escarpment, a globally rare landscape type which gives rise to rare ecology and distinctive cultural heritage	No indirect effects on the chalk escarpment.	Not applicable	Not applicable
7. Nine precious Chalk Streams	Not located within the study area	Not applicable	Not applicable
8. Extensive and diverse archaeological landscape including ancient parish boundaries, medieval field patterns and Iron Age Hillforts.	Archaeological landscape of interest located within the wider study area	No direct or indirect effects on the archaeological landscape.	No direct or indirect effects on the archaeological landscape.
9. Over 2000 hectares of common land, heaths and green rich in wildlife and cultural heritage and 3,700ha of open access land.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

Summary of Special Quality of the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB)	Relevance to Proposed Development	Effect of Proposed Development: Operational Phase	Effect of Proposed Development: Post Restoration
10. A dense network of 2,000km of rights of way; two national trails; the Ridgeway and Thames Path; notable regional routes such as the Chiltern Way and Chilterns Cycleway.	A section of the Thames Path is located within the Site but outside the designation apart from several metres of the route near the northeast corner of the Site.	Indirect moderate adverse effects on visual amenity (not significant) of Thames Path users within the Site, predominantly outside of the designation. These effects are not considered to be significant due to the mitigation measures adopted comprising straw bales with willow screen planting.	Moderate indirect beneficial effects from inclusion of permissive path through the northern end of the Site connecting to the Thames Path.
11. An industrial heritage around wood-working, furniture making, chalk quarrying, brick making and food production with windmills and watercress beds.	Not on the Site or prevalent within the study area and ZTV of the Proposed Development.	No indirect effects.	No indirect effects.
12. Distinctive buildings made from local brick, flint and clay tiles; many attractive villages, popular places to live in and visit; many notable individual buildings including stately homes, monuments and mausoleums; a wealth of medieval churches, many built from flint.	Medieval Church - St John the Baptist Church located east of the Site (Viewpoint 4). Views restricted by tree cover.	No direct effects and indirect heritage effects covered by others and do not form part of the reason for refusal.	Neutral
13. Numerous ancient routeways and sunken lanes including the Icknield	The Ridgeway lies within the study area	No indirect effects as no visibility of proposals from the Ridgeway or	Neutral

Summary of Special Quality of the Chilterns National Landscape (AONB)	Relevance to Proposed Development	Effect of Proposed Development: Operational Phase	Effect of Proposed Development: Post Restoration
Way, considered by many to be the oldest road in Britain.		other ancient routeways and sunken lanes.	

APPENDIX 3: Assessment of impact of Proposed Development on the Special Qualities of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Summary of Special Quality of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (AONB)	Relevance to Proposed Development	Effect of Proposed Development: Operational Phase	Effect of Proposed Development: Post Restoration
Open Downland extending from Roundway Down near Devizes to Lardon Chase overlooking the Thames at Streatley is dissected by dry valleys and long steep scarps, with limited tree cover and a sense of remoteness and tranquillity.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral
Downland with Woodland on the dip slope descending to Kennet Valley and south across the Hampshire Downs, offering softer contours, woodland cover and a mix of field patterns.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral
Centred on Savernake Forest and West Woods, the **Wooded Plateau** consists of extensive tracts of semi-natural ancient woodland, wood pasture with majestic veteran trees, and 18th and 19th century Beech plantations, as well as more recent coniferous plantations.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral
At the northernmost tip of Salisbury Plain, the open rolling landform of the **High Chalk Plain** creates a bleak, spacious landscape under arable production and devoid of settlement, with long views and a strong sense of remoteness and isolation.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral
The distinctive northern **Downs Plain and Scarp** plunges down from the chalk plain to the Vale of White Horse, creating a dramatic recognisable horizon.	None: the Proposed Development would have no indirect effect on the horizon of the National Landscape. In addition, from my experience, the horizon of the North Wessex Downs National	Neutral	Neutral

Summary of Special Quality of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (AONB)	Relevance to Proposed Development	Effect of Proposed Development: Operational Phase	Effect of Proposed Development: Post Restoration
	Landscape cannot be appreciated from the Thames Path, within the Site, contrary to the Rule 6 Party claims.		
The **Vales** of Pewsey and sections of the Thames Valley floor adjoining the Chilterns AONB offer productive loamy and alluvial soils where springs issue from the chalk and compact settlements contrast with scattered farmsteads.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral
The **River Valleys** of the Kennet, Lambourn, Pang and Bourne form very distinct linear landscapes, characterised by a rich mix of grazed pastures, water meadows, wetland and woodland. Steeply rising slopes create an intimate and enclosed character.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral
The **Lowland Mosaic**, curving around Newbury and the Lower Kennet Valley has a varied geology of clays, silts and sands giving rise to a diverse mix of soils and, in turn, a mosaic of ancient semi-natural woodlands, plantations, remnant heathland and more open farmland areas where sunken lanes heighten the sense of seclusion.	Outside study area.	Neutral	Neutral

APPENDIX 4: Assessment of impact of Proposed Development upon Visual Receptors.

Receptor	Sensitivity (Value/ Susceptibility)	Magnitude of Effect	Effect and Significance (only effects Notable or above considered Significant)
Users of the Thames Path and River Thames (Viewpoints 1-3)	High (High/High)	**Operational:** Intermittent views of extraction/infilling activity in Phase A would be filtered by the advance planting of the willow screen. From the majority of the route within the Site, the extraction/infilling of Phases 1 and 2 would be screened by temporary straw bales set behind the advance willow planting or the willow planting (**Viewpoints 1 and 2**). Following the infilling and restoration of Phases 1 and 2, the straw bales alongside each phase would be removed, and the willow screen would remain, to provide mitigation of the more distant views of the processing plant and extraction of Phase 3. (see **Cross sections A-A' to C-C'** at my **Figure 7**). Views of the River Thames from a c.200m section of the Thames Path within the Site (the southernmost extent), are limited by the growth of scrub. Prior to any extraction, the proposed selective scrub clearance and realignment of the path, where required, on its definitive route would allow enhanced views of the river. The temporary retention of any scrub left to the east of the realigned Thames Path would assist in screening views towards the Site (see Typical Section 01 – my **Figure 7**). From the southernmost end of Phase 2 (**Viewpoint 3**), where views from the Thames Path are more intermittent due to planting along the route, straw bales and willow planting are not used, noting that the southern end of Phase 2 extraction is a shallow deposit and is understood likely to be extracted and restored within approximately 2 months. Thereafter visibility of Phase 3 would be largely screened by the retained existing planting between Phases 2 and 3. Magnitude: Medium to Low Adverse	**Operational:** Moderate adverse
		Restoration:	**Restoration:**

Receptor	Sensitivity (Value/ Susceptibility)	Magnitude of Effect	Effect and Significance (only effects Notable or above considered Significant)
		There landscape mitigation scheme to be agreed could include wildflower meadow within the 30m wide enhancement zone and the floodplain grazing marsh and neutral grassland on the restored part of the extraction area would typically contain a proportion of wildflower species. The ditch corridor would be strengthen with planting of native black poplar and willow species and additional tree and shrub planting to the northern and western site boundaries would assist in screening views of traffic on the A329 and A4130, particularly in winter. Magnitude: Low Beneficial	Moderate beneficial
Visitors to St John the Baptist Church and users of connecting Public Footpath 181/36/10 (Viewpoint 4)	High (High/High)	**Operational:** Views towards the Thames and the Site beyond are extremely limited in summer when mature tree and shrub planting are in leaf. A photograph within the LVIA (Photograph B PDF at page 59 of **CD 1.16**) was taken in winter within the environs of the Boat House. This view indicates that views towards the Site would be partially filtered by mature trees and shrubs within Mongewell Park and along the banks of the River Thames. Magnitude: Very Low Adverse	**Operational:** Slight adverse
		Restoration: No readily discernible changes from the baseline views are predicted. Magnitude: Neutral	**Restoration:** Neutral
Users of the A4130 (Viewpoints 5, 6, 7 & 12)	Low (Low/Low)	**Operational:** There are potential for fleeting elevated views across part of the Site for road users and pedestrians using the footway where the road crosses the Thames	**Operational:** Slight adverse

Receptor	Sensitivity (Value/ Susceptibility)	Magnitude of Effect	Effect and Significance (only effects Notable or above considered Significant)
		(**Viewpoint 5**). At this location the extraction area and views towards the plant site would be available. There are also predicted to be limited glimpses of the upper part of the processing plant and stockpile from the site exit road from the Proposed Development and the roundabout junction with the A329 (**Viewpoint 7**), although views of lower level activity within the site would be screened by retained planting, and low level earth mounding set behind. Further afield, views are predicted to be screened by intervening planting, including opposite the junction with New Barn Quarry (**Viewpoint 12**). Magnitude: Medium to Low Adverse	
		Restoration: Strengthened planting along the northern boundary of the site would limit views across the restored site, particularly in winter, and views of the new planting within the site would be largely confined to fleeting views from the Thames overbridge (**Viewpoint 5**). Magnitude: Very Low beneficial	**Restoration:** Minimal beneficial
Users of the Reading Road A329 (Viewpoints 7, 8, 9, & 10)	Low (Low/Low)	**Operational:** At the roundabout junction with the A4130 (**Viewpoint 7**) and from the northern end of the A329, there are predicted to be localised views of the upper part of the processing plant and stockpile. These would be most apparent close to the site entrance (**Viewpoint 8**) with visibility diminishing further south (**Viewpoint 9**), noting that the upper parts of the stockpile (up to 10m high) would be visible, particularly in winter, behind trees retained within the Site, that screening function would be strengthened with additional planting (see Revised Phasing Plans **CD3.18**).	**Operational:** Slight Adverse

Receptor	Sensitivity (Value/ Susceptibility)	Magnitude of Effect	Effect and Significance (only effects Notable or above considered Significant)
		Cross Section D-D in my **Figure 7** illustrates how views of lower level activity within the site would be screened by retained planting and low level grass seeded earth mound with views of the stockpile set back into the Site (at maximum height) extending above. Further south, views are predicted to be fully screened by intervening planting, (**Viewpoint 10**) and new planting around the site perimeter would assist in improving screening , particularly in winter (see Revised Phasing Plans **CD3.18**). Magnitude: Medium to Low Adverse	
		Restoration: Strengthened planting along the western boundary of the site would limit views across the restored site, particularly in winter. Existing glimpses of dilapidated barn would be replaced by new barn closer to the roundabout junction. Magnitude: Neutral	**Restoration:** Neutral
Users of Wallingford Road (Viewpoint 11)	Low (Low/Low)	**Operational:** Intervening hedgerows and trees between the road and the Proposed Development are anticipated to fully screen views from the majority of the route, noting at more open sections near the Lodge, the closer tower of Elizabeth House (c.16m tall) is only just visible between intervening trees (**Viewpoint 11**). The ZTV indicates the potential for visibility of the Proposed Development that would be confined to very fleeting views of the upper parts of the processing plant and potentially upper parts of the mineral stockpile. Magnitude: Very Low Adverse	**Operational:** Minimal Adverse

Receptor	Sensitivity (Value/ Susceptibility)	Magnitude of Effect	Effect and Significance (only effects Notable or above considered Significant)
		Restoration: No discernible change from the baseline situation. Magnitude: Neutral	**Restoration:** Neutral
Users of the A4074 (Viewpoint 13)	Low (Low/Low-Medium)	**Operational:** There are localised and elevated views from the A4074 Port Way (**Viewpoint 13**) within the Chilterns National Landscape. The extraction area of the New Barn Farm Quarry is partially visible above the Site, although forms a barely discernible element in the view. The Site itself is fully screened in summer by intervening woodland and is predicted to be heavily filtered in winter, with a possibility of heavily filtered glimpses of the upper parts of the stockpile and/or processing plant, although given intervening distance these elements would not be discernible to the casual observer. Magnitude: Neutral (unlikely to be discernible)	**Operational:** Neutral
		Restoration: No discernible change from the baseline situation. Magnitude: Neutral	**Restoration:** Neutral
Users of Church Road, Cholsey Hill and nearby PRoW (Viewpoint 14)	PRoW: High (High/High)	**Operational:** West of the Site there are elevated and panoramic views from Cholsey Hill (**Viewpoint 14**) within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The extraction area of the New Barn Farm Quarry is partially visible and set below the	**Operational:** Neutral

Receptor	Sensitivity (Value/ Susceptibility)	Magnitude of Effect	Effect and Significance (only effects Notable or above considered Significant)
		Site, although the quarry workings form a barely discernible element in the view and could be missed by the casual observer. The ground level of the Site is not visible, being screened by intervening planting. The Proposed Development is not predicted to be discernible in summer, and in winter the very top of the stockpile and processing plant could be partially visible, heavily filtered by intervening trees although given intervening distance these elements would not be discernible to the casual observer. Magnitude: Neutral (unlikely to be discernible)	
		Restoration: No discernible change from the baseline situation. Magnitude: Neutral	**Restoration:** Neutral

Figures

(see separate Volume 2)

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Expertly Done.

DESIGN | ECONOMICS | ENVIRONMENT | HERITAGE | LAND & PROPERTY | PLANNING | TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Pegasus_Group pegasusgroup Pegasus_Group

PEGASUSGROUP.CO.UK