

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Section 78 Appeal

Proof of Evidence on Landscape and Visual Matters

Produced by Stuart Ryder BA (Hons) CMLI
on behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

January 2025

Appellant: Bloor Homes (NW) Ltd

Appeal Site: Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle

LPA Reference: SMD/2021/0610

PINS Reference: **APP/B3438/W/24/3351035**



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List of RLC Appendices to Proof of Evidence (Bound separately)

- A – Ryder Landscape Consultants' LVIA/LVA Methodology
- B – Published Landscape Character Information
- C – TGN 2/21 –Table I – Valued Landscape Assessment
- D – Single Plate Illustrative Photography

I.0 Introduction, Authorship and Instruction

- I.1 My name is Stuart Ryder and I am a Chartered Landscape Architect and Director of Ryder Landscape Consultants Ltd (RLC). I have been a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute since 1995.
- I.2 I hold an Honours Degree and Post Graduate Diploma with Distinction in Landscape Architecture from Leeds Metropolitan University and I have been working in private practice since 1991 completing numerous Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) and design proposals for housing, commercial, mixed use and major infrastructure projects.
- I.3 During my career I have been seconded into Development Control Teams of Local Authorities and also within the Environment Agency National Environmental Advisory Service.
- I.4 I have sat on the Landscape Institute's Technical Committee reviewing and guiding technical matters that affect the wider profession. I examine Graduate Landscape Architects as they progress along the Landscape Institute's Pathway to Chartership process. Other education work has included being a visiting lecturer to the Landscape Architecture Department at Manchester Metropolitan University.
- I.5 I have been a member of the North East Design Review Panel and written design guidance documents for Defra and the Environment Agency including their Landscape and Environmental Design Guide and their Access for All Guide.
- I.6 I have reviewed proposals for residential properties in a variety of different locations around the country and have acted as an Expert Landscape Witness at a previous residential Inquiries within the wider Staffordshire Moorlands area.
- I.7 I have been appointed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (hereafter referred to as SMDC) to produce landscape evidence for this Inquiry. After satisfying myself of the nature of the proposals, the Application landscape consultation comments and touring the Site both virtually and physically I accepted the commission to produce this Proof of Evidence. My expert's declaration and statement of truth are set below at the end of this introductory section.
- I.8 I confine my evidence to landscape and visual matters. My evidence should be read in conjunction with that of Ms Jo Gregory Director of Chartered Planners & Urban Designers at Urban Imprint who provides evidence on planning and planning balance matters and Mr Mark Clifford, Principal Heritage Consultant at Paul Butler Associates who provides evidence on heritage matters.

Expert's Declaration

- I.9 I confirm that insofar as the facts stated in my report are within my own knowledge I have made clear which they are and I believe them to be true and that the opinions I have expressed represent my true and complete professional opinion.
- I.10 I confirm that my report includes all facts that I regard as being relevant to the opinions that I have expressed and that attention has been drawn to any matter that would affect the validity of those opinions.
- I.11 I confirm that in preparing this report I have assumed the same duty that would apply to me when giving expert opinions in a court of law under oath or affirmation. I confirm that this duty to the Inquiry overrides any duty to those instructing or paying me, that I have understood this duty and complied with it in giving my opinions impartially and objectively, and that I will continue to comply with that duty as required.
- I.12 I confirm that I am not instructed under any conditional fee arrangements and that I have no conflicts of interest other than any already disclosed in my evidence or reports.

2.0 Scope of Evidence

- 2.1 This Proof of Evidence (Proof) has been prepared to consider the landscape and visual effects of the proposed construction of residential properties set to the east side of Froghall Road to the north of Cheadle. These proposed works are hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development' or 'Proposals' and their location as the 'Site'.
- 2.2 The description of the works from the planning application (**CD 2.29**) reads:
- Outline application for residential development with access considered (all other matters reserved)*
- 2.3 The application's proposed dwelling numbers have been removed from the Application description given the doubt expressed by the SMDC Case Officer about the quantum of units that could be accommodated on the Site.
- 2.4 The Decision Notice, issued on the 15th April 2024, contains three reasons for refusal (RfR). It was RfR 2 that focused on the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development.

RFR2 - *In the Councils Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment the site lies within the landscape character type of Ancient Slope and Valley Farmland. Replacing open fields with a suburban housing estate could not be said to the (sic) respect or respond to key characteristics of this landscape character type. Although the plans show that some existing landscape features will be retained, the proposed roundabout will necessitate the loss of the whole frontage hedge. Furthermore there is no existing landscape feature defining the northern boundary. The landscape is relatively open and on rising ground and the site is visible not only from Froghall Road to the west but also from the south, in particular from Hammersley Hayes Road (also the route of Public Footpath Cheadle 40) and in longer views from Public Footpaths Cheadle 38 and 39. In these latter views Broad Haye Farm is seen in isolation from the urban area of Cheadle. The proposed development would encroach into the landscape setting of this isolated farmhouse, noting that isolated properties are one of the key characteristics of this landscape character type. Overall the proposal will not respect or enhance local landscape character and will result in a prominent visual intrusion into the countryside. As such there is conflict with Policy DC3 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and the NPPF which says that planning decisions should contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by amongst other matters recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.*

2.5 In reviewing the specific text of RfR2 and breaking it down into its constituent strands the following landscape and visual effects are deemed to arise by SMDC if the development was granted consent;

Landscape effects as contained in RfR2:

- Does not respect or respond to key characteristics of this landscape character type;
- The proposed roundabout will necessitate the loss of the whole frontage hedge;
- No existing landscape feature defining the proposal's northern boundary; and
- Overall the proposal will not respect or enhance local landscape character

Visual effects experienced from:

- From Froghall Road to the west;
- From the south, in particular from Hammersley Hayes Road (also the route of Public Footpath Cheadle 40);
- In longer views from Public Footpaths Cheadle 38 and 39;
- Encroach into the landscape setting of this isolated farmhouse; and
- Result in a prominent visual intrusion into the countryside.

Policy conflict cited with:

- Policy DC3 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan; and
- and the NPPF – Taken to be Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

2.6 These effects accord with the SMDC Statement of Case (SOC) which also expands the policy reference to include the following landscape orientated planning policies to be consistent with the Planning Officer's Committee Report (**CD 4.2 – Section 5**) and the Appellant's Statement of Case.

- Policy C3 Green Infrastructure
- Policy NE2 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- Policy SSI I Churnet Valley Strategy
- Policy DC4 Local Green Space

2.7 I confirm that I did not act as a consultee to the original application and did not input to the wording of RfR2 but agree that the cited landscape and visual effects would occur.

Structure of Evidence

2.8 The landscape and visual effects of the proposed development are presented in this Proof across the following sections:

- Section 3 briefly summarises the outline development proposals as proposed by the Appellant, recognising that it is Outline in nature as the basis of what is assessed in the remainder of the Proof;
- Section 4 summarise the previous landscape consultation and Officer's Report that informed the Planning Decision of the 15th April, 2024;
- Section 5 establishes the landscape baseline for the Site and its contextual landscape that the identified landscape effects of the Proposed Development are then judged against;
- Section 6 firstly discusses the visual baseline for the people that would experience visual change and considers the effects of that change;
- Section 7 is a review of the cited planning policies from RfR2 and the SOC and why the proposals in landscape and visual terms are considered in conflict or comply with them;
- Section 8 presents my conclusions.

2.9 Appendices are used for illustrations and bulkier items such as methodology and source landscape character information and are held in a separate Appendix Report. Summary boxes are presented at the end of the more substantial sections 3 to 7.

2.10 The scope of the Proof has been greatly assisted by the production of the topic focussed Landscape Statement of Common Ground (LSoCG) **(CDI3.3)** where the number of landscape and visual effects were honed down to the consideration of one landscape receptor and five visual receptors.

Methodology

2.11 I have attended the Appeal Site on the 26th November, December 5th and 10th, 2024 walked along Froghall Road, Hammersley Hayes Road, local footpath routes and drove the surrounding roads to consider the Site within its landscape context. The weather and visibility conditions were better during the November site visit with the weather in December being more overcast.

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- 2.12 Panoramic photography in accordance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note TGN 06/19 was taken on the first two site visits and some of the resulting representative panoramas are contained in my Section 6 considering visual effects of the proposals. I have also conducted a valued landscape assessment using Table I of the TGN 2/21 to explain why on balance I do not consider the Site a 'valued landscape' as per the NPPF 187 a) use of the term. This assessment is held at RLC Appendix C.
- 2.13 This has provided me with a good understanding of the area's landscape character and views to the Site from publicly accessible locations. I have not taken access onto the Site but have viewed it from around its edges including the neighbouring public open space and from the Froghall Road corridor.
- 2.14 In addition, I have studied relevant OS Mapping information, Staffordshire County Council's online version of the Definitive Map, aerial photography and published landscape character information for the area before compiling my Proof as presented.
- 2.15 Landscape and visual effects have already been identified as part of the Landscape SoCG comparison tables and shared with the Appellant. They have not been modified in this Proof.

Subject exclusions

- 2.16 I do not address spatial planning matters or planning balance which is the remit of Ms Jo Gregory as an experienced Chartered Town Planner. I do however consider aspects of planning policy with direct relevance to landscape and visual matters. Likewise I do not consider specific details of building form as this is an Outline application however I have made the assumption that the Parameter Masterplan 020-020-P004 Rev N by e*SCAPE (**CD 2.12**) indicates the approximate position of housing and open space on Site.
- 2.17 Finally my reference to historic features is with regard to their contribution to landscape character and visual amenity. Their heritage value and any effects they experience as a result of the development is explained in Mr Clifford's heritage evidence.

3.0 The proposed development

The Appeal Site

- 3.1 The site comprises a single whole pastoral field measuring approximately 5.97Ha and a 2.8Ha section of another pasture field to the north. The overall Site measures 8.77 Ha as stated in the Design and Access Statement – Rev G (DAS) (**CD 2.20 §1.2**) The two fields are separated by a hedge that has three prominent field trees along its length and a fourth smaller one nearer to Broad Haye Farm. The red line boundary forms a roughly rectangular site shape approximately 350m x 315m in dimension with its south east corner cut off by the alignment of Hammersley Hayes Road.
- 3.2 Both fields of the Site are currently put to improved pasture production and at the time of the Site survey were not being actively grazed, this is not unexpected at this time of year. The boundaries of the application red line area are:
- North – currently open and mid-field and which forms the highest point of the Site at a level of approximately 190 mAOD;
 - East – partly abuts a further arable field and Broad Haye Farm which is a working farm with the three storey farm house Grade II Listed;
 - South – abuts the rear of a mix of residential properties along Hammersley Hayes Road and the existing public open space set at its eastern end, the southern boundary is the Site's lower side at approximately 177 mAOD; and
 - West – the Site is defined by the rear gardens of a line of semi-detached properties for approximately 200m and Froghall Road itself for approximately 150m.
- 3.3 The southern Site field has an existing farm access from the east taken from the lane leading down to Broad Haye Farm. There is also another field access directly from the collection of farm buildings linking the barns and yard directly with the Site field.
- 3.4 The northern Site field has an access directly from Froghall Road but this is outside of the redline boundary of the application. The northern Site field currently measures approximately 7Ha in size so would be split 2.8Ha to development and 4.2Ha retained as pasture.
- 3.5 The Site is bounded by maintained hedgerows to its upper west boundary to Froghall Road and its eastern side where it abuts the lane to Broad Haye Farm. Taking the cardinal points around the Site the following boundary types are evident;

- North – open to an arbitrary mid-field line;
- East – mature native hedgerow with some gaps for access;
- South – mix of timber post and mesh fencing to the public open space at the east end and domestic garden boundary types to the end of the Hammersley Hayes Road gardens;
- Lower west side - domestic garden boundary types to the end of the Froghall Road gardens; and
- Upper west side – native field hedgerow separating the Site from Froghall Road as it climbs up out of Cheadle.

3.6 The three large, mature trees set between the fields are attractive open field trees and are read as a linear group within the landscape. They are recorded as an English Oak (Tree T4), Sycamores (Tree T5 & T6) in the Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment (pAIA) (**CD 2.3 Appendix 4**) and do not benefit from Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). The fourth smaller tree near to Broad Haye Farm is an Ash (Tree T3) and similarly does not hold a TPO. Trees T4-T6 are classified in the pAIA as Category A Trees of High Quality and Value, Tree T3 as a Category B Tree of Moderate Quality and Value. The three trees T4-T6 are the only Category A trees on Site.

Appeal proposals

- 3.7 The Appeal proposals' description is to develop an unspecified number of residential housing units. The Parameters Masterplan Rev N – dated February 24 (**CD 2.12**) was produced by e*SCAPE and shows one arrangement by which the housing units could be laid out.
- 3.8 **Main site access** - is from a new access point taken off Froghall Road (A521) approximately 300m to the north of Hammersley Hall Road and approximately 90m south of a bend in Froghall Road. The site access is shown on the Parameters Masterplan as a roundabout arrangement with the roundabout geometry set partially to the east of the current road alignment presumably to allow construction within land ownership constraints.
- 3.9 **Secondary site accesses** – two are indicated from the south, presumably pedestrian in nature they link with Hammersley Hall Road which is also the route of Footpath FP40 and an indicative connection to the allocated development CHI32 to the east.
- 3.10 **Housing blocks** - An indicative housing block arrangement is shown with a roughly one third – two third split. One third to the north of the retained field hedgerow and two thirds to the south of the same hedge. There is a swept curve to the northern housing parcel at its interface

- with the entrance roundabout. There is an area of self-build housing identified directly behind the existing northern eight houses on Froghall Road (house Nos 190-204).
- 3.11 **Trees and hedges** - The proposals show the retention of the existing inter-field hedge and Tree T3-T6 which acts as the separating element between the north and south housing blocks. The hedge that fronts Froghall Road from the end of the existing houses up to the northern bend in the road is largely removed including the trees it contains. This loss of hedgerow has been agreed in the LSoCG (**CD 13.3 §4.19**) as measuring 170m. Two trees T8 which is a Category B Oak and T9 a Category C Ash that stand within the highway hedge would also be felled.. The hedgerow that runs to the east of the Site along the rural access lane to Broad Haye Farm is shown retained by the indicative proposals.
- 3.12 **Public open space (POS)** – The primary area of POS is indicated to the south east of the proposals and is labelled Crescent Green on the Parameters Masterplan even though it is circular in shape. It builds upon the existing POS that lies outside of the Site’s redline boundary and increases it in size to an area that scales at approximately 100m x 85m. A ring of tree planting is indicated to give the POS some form.
- 3.13 A secondary area of POS is set around the retained inter-field hedge which ranges in typical width of 15 to 20m with the hedge splitting the space into two. A slight widening of the retained field hedge is titled Village Green and has the main access road set to its north, it scales at approximately 30 x 40m.
- 3.14 **Closed open space** – There is an area of open space to the east of the housing blocks separating Broad Haye Farm (Grade II Listed) from the structured tree belt. The open space measures approximately 70m and tapers to approximately 15m wide where it abuts the Crescent Green. The Parameters Masterplan annotates this area as
- ‘land retained as field or wildflower meadow with no footpath or public access,’*
- The DAS (**CD 2.20 §2.38 & §3.30**) explains that this is to provide Broad Haye Farm with a wider buffer area.
- 3.15 **Peripheral path** - Is proposed to run along the northern and eastern green fringes linking Froghall Road to the west with the main POS and the new allocated development CHI 32 to the south east where a new Primary School is proposed.
- 3.16 **Tree planting** - Is shown to the northern edge of the Site that faces out to the open countryside. There is some street tree planting indicated along the main access road and to augment the retained hedgerows. Two more structured areas of tree planting exist with the

first being the 10m wide landscape buffer indicated as a proposed hedgerow with trees planting to the east of the housing blocks separating them from the retained field area that bounds Broad Hay Farm. The second is the circle of tree planting in the proposed Crescent Green.

- 3.17 **SuDS Basins** - Finally in this summary description of the proposals two SuDS basins are indicated on the lower southern side of the Site one set within the Crescent Green POS and the other at the southern end of the closed open space. Both would require some form of level manipulation to achieve retaining basins on sloping ground.

Unknown elements

- 3.18 **Location of any electricity sub-station or pumping station** - The Parameters Masterplan does not show the position of either of these elements that may be required.
- 3.19 **Modified ground levels** – The site is sloping both with a general fall from north west to south east into the Cecilly Brook valley. No earthworks are indicated on the masterplan drawing nor spot heights.
- 3.20 **Garden sizes** – Not indicated as to whether private gardens are of a size to take trees or larger shrub planting.
- 3.21 **Street tree planting** – other than along main access route it is not indicated on Parameters Masterplan Rev N (**CD 2.12**) whether trees are proposed along the streets within the housing blocks. The DAS (**CD 2.20 §5.24**) indicates that there would be street trees along the secondary streets in the housing blocks explaining that they would be placed within private gardens. These do not constitute street trees and would be subject to the vagaries of domestic management or removal.
- 3.22 **Allotments** – Albeit some are indicated offsite on the nearby CHI 32 allocation. However it is understood that these are no longer proposed and the area is now indicated as an area of semi-natural POS.
- 3.23 **LEAPs and LAPs** – Neither of these play areas are located on the Parameters Masterplan but it is acknowledged that this is space within the Crescent Green to accommodate both.

Landscape focussed documents

- 3.24 All application documents are as listed in the Core Document index, with the following landscape focussed documents identified:

- Design and Access Statement Rev G, (DAS) **(CD 2.20)** produced by e*SCAPE and dated February 2024.
- Parameters Masterplan Rev N, dated February 2024 produced by e*SCAPE **(CD 2.12)** with its illustrative form of housing and external realm layout;
- Northern Boundary Linear Eco-Park, dated May 2022 produced by e*SCAPE **(CD 2.28)** with its illustrative form of boundary treatment to the housing area's northern edge;
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) by Landscape Architects FPCR **(CD 2.6)** dated May 2022 with supporting figures including viewpoint photography;
- Illustrative Photomontages again by FPCR set as Figures 16 to 24 in the LVA **(CD 2.6)**; and
- Preliminary Arboricultural Impact Assessment (pAIA) **(CD 2.3)** by Tyler Grange and dated 15th February 2024.

Section 3 Summary Box

- The Site comprise one whole improved pasture field (5.97Ha) and one part improved pasture field (2.8Ha) both currently used for dairy farming.
- There is existing housing to the south side of the Site along Hammersley Hayes Road and part way up its western side to Froghall Road.
- Three large, mature trees are set between the two Site fields and are attractive open field trees.
- A main access is proposed off Froghall Road with a new roundabout.
- There would be hedge removal measuring 170m along the Froghall Road corridor to create visibility splays.
- POS is primarily positioned to the south east of the Site.
- Landscape buffer planting is proposed to the east to provide separation with the Broad Haye Farm (Grade II Listed).
- Landscape buffer planting is also indicated to the north of the proposals to set the northern edge of the proposals behind.

4.0 Review of landscape consultations and officer’s report

4.1 Taking each of these in turn the following remarks concerning landscape and visual change and the appropriateness of the proposals for this location have been made during the determination of the original planning application.

SMDC Landscape consultation comments (CDs 3.12 & 3.13)

4.2 Landscape consultation comments were provided during the determination period by Derbyshire Landscape and Placemaking (DLP) who are a practice of independent Landscape and Urban Design advisors supporting local planning authorities in Derbyshire as they assess submitted applications acting as de facto Landscape or Urban Design Officers.

4.3 DLP’s first response of the 31st August 2022 (**CD 3.12**) was subsequently updated 30th September 2022 (**CD 3.13**) following the May 2022 revisions to the LVA and included consideration of VPI I from Bank Top Road.

4.4 The DLP consultation response dated 30th September 2022 runs to six pages. On reviewing it I have found the note to be thorough and reasonable. Table RLC I below summarises the DLP comments on visual effects and my own observations set against each.

RLC Table I – Review of Planning Application Consultation Response on Landscape and Visual Matters

Ref	DLP Comments	S Ryder Comments
Para 1	LVIA Methodology - used by FPCR is consistent with guidelines	I concur the LVIA Methodology is considered consistent with guidelines, primarily GLVIA3.
Section 2	Visual Envelope – generally agrees to its extent and description but seeks extra viewpoint to SE approaching Wood Hall Estate.	I too agree that the visual envelope is described in a reasonable fashion, An extra viewpoint is not necessary as picked up by VP’s 8, 9 & 10.
VPI Review	VPI – Residents of Hammersley Hall Road and Froghall Road – Does not agree that visual effects will reduce from Major Adverse , to Moderate Adverse due to lack of mitigation indicated on masterplan.	It is not stated which iteration of the Parameters Masterplan DLP were reviewing but the same lack of open space mitigation exists on Rev N of the masterplan and I agree that the visual effects would remain at Major, Adverse after 15 years.
VPI2 Review	VPI2 – Residents off Froghall Rd – Agrees with FPCR’s assessment	This Minor, Adverse visual effect is agreed in the LSCoG. It has been

Ref	DLP Comments	S Ryder Comments
	that residents running up into Cheadle town centre would have a Minor, Adverse at Year 15,	suggested that VP12 should also be used as a representative image for views from Froghall Road as a highway at this point.
VP2 Review	VP2 – Users of FP40 – Near to the Site. DLP agrees with the FPCR assessment that at Year 15 the users of this route would experience a Moderate/Minor, Adverse effect.	I disagree with this assessment and consider that users of this footpath as it passes near to the proposed Site would experience a Moderate, Adverse change to their views. This is discussed more in my Section 6 below.
VP3 Review	VP3 – Users of FP40 – Distant from the Site. DLP agrees with the FPCR assessment that at Year 15 the users of the more distant parts of this route would experience a Minor, Adverse effect.	Having taken the view from VP40 near Thornbury Hall I also agree that the users of this rural path would experience Minor, Adverse visual effects after 15 years. This effect is agreed in the LSoCG.
VPs6&7 Review	VPs6&7 – Users of FP31 – Set to the west of Site the users of this rural path were assessed by FPCR as experiencing Minor Adverse / Negligible visual effects at Year 15. DLP agreed with this assessment.	Having walked the FP31 route to the west of the Site I agree that where visible from this rural path the visual effects after the establishment of a new western boundary hedge would be Minor, Adverse at Year 15. There would be No Effects from other sections of path with more screening.
VP8 Review	VP8 – Users of FP39 – Set to the western end of this route the viewpoint takes in Wood End Farm and DLP agrees with the FPCR assessment of Minor, Adverse effects at Year 15.	It is agreed that the western lower end of FP39 will experience Minor, Adverse visual effects at Year 15 with a further influence of allocation CHI32 being built out in the foreground of the view changing its visual context.
VPs9&10 Review	VP10 – Users of FP38 & FP39 - DLP agrees with this assessment at completion but considers that visual impacts after 15 years will not reduce appreciably and would remain Moderate Adverse . DLP raise concerns regarding the setting of Broad Haye Farm in relation to development and a viewpoint photograph of their own is presented.	I recognise DLP's concerns about the under estimation of visual effects at Year 15 and similarly conclude that a Moderate, Adverse effect would remain. The reasoning for this assessment is provided in my Section 6 and includes reference to narrowing the open gap between Broad Haye Farm and the edge of Cheadle. I also consider a viewpoint on Cherry Lane

Ref	DLP Comments	S Ryder Comments
		would be useful to assess effects on FP48 that FP38 and FP39 connect to.
VP4 Review	VP4 – Road users on Froghall Rd DLP agrees with the Moderate / Minor, Adverse assessment given for visual receptors near the Site entrance and the new access roundabout on Froghall Road at Year 15.	I disagree with the Moderate/Minor, Adverse assessment of visual effects for Froghall Road users near the Site entrance and consider it a Moderate, Adverse effect at Year 15. The reasoning for this increased assessment of adverse effect is set below in my Section 6.
VP5 Review	VP5 – Road users on Froghall Rd DLP agrees with the Minor, Adverse assessment at Year 15 given for Froghall Road users set further north along the road corridor as they travel towards Cheadle through the rural gap that separates Kingsley Halt from the town.	I disagree with the Minor, Adverse assessment of visual effects from this part of Froghall Road as road users travel towards Cheadle. I consider it to be a Moderate/Minor, Adverse effect at Year 15, again my reasoning is explained in Section 6.
VP11	VP11 – Bank Top Road users DLP agreed that in this relatively distant view the proposals would have a Negligible visual effects at Year 15.	I agree that the proposals when viewed from this distance would have No Effects (RLC terminology for Negligible) at Year 15 for users of this section of Bank Top Road.

Landscape Setting of Broad Haye Farm

4.5 The next topic DLP cover in their consultation response is titled ‘Landscape Setting of Broad Haye’ and considers how the Listed farmhouse is perceived within and contributes to the local landscape. Set below as a series of bullet points is a summary of DLP’s response on Broad Haye Farm and its setting:

- Identifies the prominence and importance of Broad Haye in the landscape is recognised in the Heritage Statement;

- Draws upon the Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmlands (ASVF) Landscape Character Type¹ stating that *'One of the Key characteristics of this character area is isolated properties'* which DLP considers Broad Haye is consistent with;
- DLP goes onto cite the Assessment² also recommends that: *'Development and new tree planting should take account of the setting of the historic parklands, of the setting of important buildings and of important local views;'*
- DLP also quotes, *'Any proposals for development or land use change which impacts upon the setting of an historic parkland must take account of the unique character of that designed landscape;'*
- DLP explains, *'the relationship of Broad Haye in the landscape, to the urban edge and to proposed development is important.'*;
- DLP note that the Landscape and Visual Appraisal mentions Broad Haye but does not discuss the cultural heritage and significance of isolated farms in the landscape surrounding the Site;
- The Built Heritage Statement dated May 2022 discusses the setting and views of Broad Haye in the landscape in detail and the likely impacts of the development, referring to the photomontages included in the then updated LVA.
- DLP references a long-range photo (*'Plate 9: Long-range, north-west-facing view towards Broad Haye Farmhouse from the public right of way near Woodheadhall Farm'*) showing Broad Haye isolated in the landscape as taken from the Public Right of Way leading to Woodhead Hall.
- DLP identified that this view was not included in the LVA, they consider that it is important and that the proposed POS will be less effective in providing separation from the proposed development and Broad Haye from this angle of view.
- DLP suggested that an additional viewpoint and photomontage was required to explore likely visual effects upon the of landscape setting of Broad Haye from the PRoW leading to Woodheadhall Farm.

¹ Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment of Staffordshire Moorlands (2008) CD9.4

² Ibid

4.6 I can understand the basis of all the DLP comments on the landscape and visual effects associated with Broad Haye Farm with the exception of the fourth bullet which discusses the need to assess the impact on the designed landscapes of historic parkland. This is part of their reporting on the SMDC Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (LSCA) (**CD 9.4 – Page 27**). However I do not find that the landscape around Broad Haye Farm has ever been laid out as parkland with the farm at its centre. The landscape context to Broad Haye Farm appears to have been entirely rural in layout and land use with a medium scale, hedged field patterning rather than open, unbounded parkland.

DLP conclusions on landscape and visual effects

4.7 DLP's conclusions are presented across three paragraphs with only the first and last making substantive points with the middle paragraph a repeat of the Applicant's LVA conclusions.

4.8 The first concluding paragraphs addresses visual effects and lists out in a numeric fashion the varying numbers of visual receptors on a grade by grade basis. Contrasts are drawn with the then Applicant's LVA conclusions.

4.9 The third and final concluding paragraph is set below as a digital extract and in it DLP explain that they do not have confidence that the development would not result in any unacceptable long-term landscape and visual effects. They also state they,

'have concerns regarding the expansion of the existing settlement into the countryside.'

Whilst the masterplan has made considerations to reduce long-term visual effects, I am not confident that the development would not result in any unacceptable long-term landscape and visual effects and have concerns regarding expansion of the existing settlement into the countryside.

SMDC Officer's Reports

4.10 The initial Officer's Report (**CD 4.2**) was prepared by Jane Curley, Senior Planning Officer, and is dated 18th March 2024. A Supplementary Officer's Report (**CD 4.3**) was again prepared by Mrs Curley and was published on the 20th March 2024. it covers additional consultation remarks received after the initial report had been completed. There are no landscape and visual impact matters addressed in the Supplementary Officer's Report so it is not considered further in this Proof. The Officer recommendation to the Planning Committee was to approve the Outline Application subject to a Section 106 Agreement being signed and a list of 26 No. planning conditions.

4.11 'Landscape and Visual Impact' is first discussed across pdf pages 11 to 13 of the Officer's Report (CD 4.2). This reads as an accurate precis of the DLP's landscape and visual consultation response.

4.12 Matters relating to landscape policy is discussed in the Planning Officer's review of Policy and the Planning Balance in Section 7 of her Committee Report between CD 4.2 §7.41 and §7.56. The subjects of each of these paragraphs is summarised in RLC Table 2 below.

Para No	Topic discussed	S Ryder commentary
7.41	Ancient Slope and Valley Farmland (ASVF) Landscape Character Type's (LCT) key characteristics.	The summary is correct as per character assessment
7.42	Identifies that the ASVF is described 'as not being particularly sensitive to change' in the LCT description ³ and identifies that Broad Haye Farm is consistent with the isolated properties key characteristic.	The reference to not being particularly sensitive to change is a category of landscape identified in the SCC Planning for Landscape Change document (CD 9.5)
7.43	Determines the Site is not a valued landscape as per the then NPPF Para 174 now NPPF24 Para 187 meaning.	Agree the Site is not a valued landscape as confirmed in the LSoCG.
7.44	Reports there have been two iterations of the LVA and the inclusion of photomontages in the updated LVA.	No comments
7.45	Explains that Derbyshire Landscape and Placemaking (DLP) Consultants have advised on landscape and visual matters.	No comment
7.46	Summarises DLP's agreement to Minor, Adverse effects or less at Year 15 for VP's 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 & 12.	I agree with this summary of VP effects with the exception of VP5 – Froghall Road users to the north of the Site
7.47	Reports DLP's judgement that for VPI (residents of Hammersley Hayes Road and Froghall Road) visual effects would remain at Major Adverse at Year 15, not Major/Moderate as reported by the LVA.	I agree with this greater level of effect for local residents backing onto the Site field.
7.48	Explains the Applicant's LVA assessment that VP's 9 & 10 would experience Moderate /	I have assessed these visual effects at a higher level –

³ Ibid – pdf page 27 of this unpaginated document

Para No	Topic discussed	S Ryder commentary
	Minor, Adverse visual effects at Year 15 given the existing settlement edge and the new presence of the Ayr Road allocation (CH132 Site).	Moderate, Adverse at Year 15.
7.49	Draws out DLP's assessment for VPs 9 & 10 as Moderate, Adverse at Year 15.	I concur with this DLP assessment for these two viewpoints.
7.50	A long paragraph that summarises DLP's suggestion for another viewpoint from FP39 leading to Woodhead Hall to supplement VP10 given his concern about the effectiveness of the POS (now closed open space) in providing separation between the development and Broad Haye Farm. Mrs Curley explains the then Applicant chose not to provide that view as they considered VP10 was sufficiently representative of the experience gained from the path.	I have taken the view from the full length of the path and consider that the views identified by DLP nearer Woodhead Hall are more open and Broad Haye Farm is more evident in the view. A view from Cherry Lane I think would have been more useful.
7.51	Reports on DLP's criticism of the LVIA about its lack of discussion of Broad Haye Farm's cultural heritage and significance of isolated buildings in the landscape surrounding the Site.	I judge this as a fair reporting of DLP's criticism regarding cultural heritage contribution to landscape character.
7.52	Another long paragraph that summarises the LVA conclusions including landscape effects at Moderate, Adverse on completion reducing to Moderate/Minor at Year 15. It explains the LVA's commentary that the landscape effects are significantly below the trigger of Policy DC3 Landscape and Settlement Setting which is a significant adverse impact. Also reports on LVA conclusions that the proposals are well-related to the existing settlement and would not comprise a prominent intrusion into the open countryside.	I consider this a fair summary of the LVA's conclusions.
7.53	Challenges the LVA's conclusions pointing to hedgerow loss to Froghall Road, the land change from pastoral field to suburban housing estate, it references the specific landscape character assessment for Cheadle (CD 3.4 – Cheadle Setting Plan No. ST10553-2b) explaining the Site lies in a more open, larger scale landscape and notes that there are no landscape features	Clear expression of a difference of opinion with the LVA's conclusions.

Para No	Topic discussed	S Ryder commentary
	defining the development's northern boundary and refers to its northern extent as an arbitrary line.	
7.54	Raises the consideration that the proposals do not round off Cheadle, it instead extends it northwards beyond the existing ribbon development of Froghall Road. It concludes that the extension and loss of hedgerow will change the character and urbanise this part of the countryside.	Enters into a spatial planning matter but also recognises the urbanisation of the area.
7.55	Refers to the dichotomy of the ASVF LCT ' <i>as not being particularly sensitive to change</i> ' whilst at the same time recognising ' <i>localised residential development as an incongruous feature</i> '. Also cites expansion of neighbouring settlements as a key planning issue and isolated dwellings a key characteristic.	Draws on some of the ASVF character information presenting both sides of the character sensitivities. Again makes reference to the SCC Planning for Landscape Change (CD9.5) category of not being particularly sensitive to change.
7.56	As a final paragraph repeats the DLP conclusion that they have <i>'no confidence that the development would not result in any unacceptable long-term landscape and visual effects,'</i> concerns regarding expansion of the existing settlement into the countryside. Determines conflict with Policy DC3 and the NPPF as the development is not in keeping with the wider pastoral landscape character of the ASVF. It would not respect or enhance local landscape character and would result in a prominent intrusion into the countryside.	Reverts back to the DLP consultation advice and cites conflict with DC3 where the Applicant's advisors do not. Three strands of why conflict is found; 1. Development not in keeping with pastoral landscape. 2. It does not respect or enhance local landscape character. 3. Prominent intrusion into the countryside.

4.13 Mrs Curley addresses the Planning Balance in Section 8 of her Committee Report (**CD 4.2 §8.5**) where she reiterates her findings of landscape harm and assigns significant weight to the conflict with Local Plan Policy DC3.

- 4.14 As a Chartered Planner Mrs Curley goes on to assess the benefits of the proposals before concluding that they outweigh the significant weight of the DC3 conflict and other harm she found.
- 4.15 Mrs Curley does not identify any landscape or visual betterment within her discussion of benefits.

Section 4 Summary Box

This section assesses the Application stage landscape consultation response prepared by Derbyshire Landscape and Placemaking (DLP):

- I agree with the majority of the observations made by DLP who raised an objection on character and appearance grounds as part of their response.
- The points of disagreement relate to my assessment of more notable adverse visual effects for users of FP40 as it passes the Site and for road users near the entrance on Froghall Road.
- DLP express their concern about the relationship between the proposed development and Broad Haye Farm and how the latter's character as an isolated farm property would be diminished.
- DLP conclude with the phrase that they were '*not confident that the development would not result in any unacceptable long-term landscape and visual effects and have concerns regarding expansion of the existing settlement into the countryside.*'
- I consider this conclusion to be fair and reasonable and agree with its two key points.

The latter part of Section 4 reviews how Mrs Curley the then Planning Case Officer considered the advice presented in the DLP consultation and presented it to the Planning Committee.

- I believe she reports the DLP consultation fully and fairly.
- She recognises the landscape and visual harm that would occur and that there would be conflict with Local Plan Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting.
- In the planning balance exercise she conducts she assigns 'Significant' weight to the conflict with DC3.
- The result of the overall balance was to recommend approval for the proposals as she considered the landscape harm would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposals.

5.0 Landscape baseline and resulting effects




Landscape Statement of Common Ground (LSoCG) (CD 13.3)




- 5.1 The LSoCG Comparative Table of Landscape Effects at Appendix A has allowed parties to define that out of the three landscape receptors considered there is just one where there is disagreement about the effects that the development would bring about.
- 5.2 The two landscape receptors where the effects at Year 15 are agreed are;
- National Landscape Character Area NCA 64 'Potteries and Churnet Valley' **(CD 9.3)**
– **Negligible or No effect**
 - County/ District 'Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmlands' (ASVF) as defined in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment of Staffordshire Moorlands (2008) **(CD 9.4) – Minor, Adverse and Permanent**
- 5.3 These national and county level receptors are not referred to again other than in the discussion of the key characteristics of the ASVF and whether they apply to the Site.
- 5.4 The one landscape receptor that the Landscape Witnesses have a differing opinion about regarding the level of adverse effect is the Site and its contextual landscape. The rest of this Section 5 establishes;
- The landscape baseline for the Site and its contextual area to set the landscape effects against;
 - Defines its susceptibility and value to arrive at its landscape sensitivity;
 - Considers the magnitude of landscape effects that the proposals would bring about;
 - Combines the landscape sensitivity with the magnitude of effects to arrive at the end assessment of the landscape impact;
 - Assesses the landscape mitigation measures as defined on the application proposals;
 - Seeks to identify the positive landscape effects of the proposals to set the adverse ones against, to finally arrive at;
 - A balanced assessment of the overall landscape effects on the Site and its contextual area that the proposals would bring about.




The landscape baseline



- 5.5 This section initially establishes the landscape baseline for the Site and its contextual landscape to allow the effects of the Proposed Development to be judged against. It does this in RLC Table 3 by defining the landscape elements of the Site itself and also within the contextual landscape area that the Site is part of.
- 5.6 The landscape context is the area surrounding the Site that it contributes to and is judged with. The landscape context that the Site contributes to can be summarised using the cardinal points as:
- **North** – Open rural landscape of predominately hedge bounded pastoral fields running up to a local ridge to the north near the turning to Long Croft Farm and the Cadent gas installation;
 - **East** – Further pastoral field running down then up the Cecilly Brook valley slope towards Woodhead Hall, beyond this lies the higher wooded ridge that acts as the valley definition for the Churnet Valley beyond. This eastern area includes Broad Haye Farm set in a prominent position half way down the east facing valley side;
 - **South** – The area of housing associated with Hammersley Hayes Road and the park homes of Broad Hayes Park and the soon to be developed portion of allocated housing site CHI 32; and
 - **West** – the Froghall Road corridor and the pastoral fields to the west dipping down to another brook valley before rising again to meet the A522 Leek Road.
- 5.7 Set overleaf in RLC Table 3 are the landscape elements that are typically reviewed to build-up a description of the overall landscape character for an area, in this case the Site and its context.


RLC Table 3 – Landscape elements at the Site and within its context

Element	At the Site	In the surrounding landscape context	Indicative photographs
Topography	Generally falling from the north west to the south east with Froghall Road set to the higher side of the Site. The change in level is approximately 15m falling from 190m AOD to 175m AOD. This fall can be appreciated from the POS to the north of Hammersley Hayes Road.	The dominant topography is one of an undulating valley form with Cheadle set to the lower south side of the Site lower down the small valley. The land continues climbing to the north. There is a sense of relative elevation to the east to the wooded higher ground that leads onto the Churnet Valley, To the west of Froghall another shallow valley exists.	
Land-Use	Pastoral fields put to improved pasture and grazed by dairy herd at varying times of the time but presumably most frequently in the summer months. Aerial photography regression also indicates silage crops are taken from the field.	Similar pastoral land use of fields to the north, east and west set to the other side of Froghall Road which also has single house depth of ribbon development up approximately half of the Site's west boundary. To the south there is a mix of residential built form at Hammersley Hayes Road and the park homes of Broad Hayes Park.	
Land pattern	The Site is formed from a whole field and part of a second field. There are no individual patterns on the Site. The three mature trees given their similar spacing and size acts as a point of recognition in the landscape.	The pair of medium scale, hedgerow fringed fields fit into an overall land pattern made up of other similar sized fields all generally hedge bounded. The field pattern is best appreciated from the east as the aspect of the land faces that way.	

Element	At the Site	In the surrounding landscape context	Indicative photographs
Vegetation	The ground plain of improved grass does not provide any vegetative interest but the three Category A mature inter-field hedgerow trees do. There is a fourth ash tree that is not as prominent. Hedgerow quality varies around the Site with gaps to the eastern hedge line to Broad Haye Farm.	Hedgerow trees are not uncommon in the landscape context but the three Category A trees on Site are a good example. There is a line of riparian trees following the Cecilly Brook to the east of the Site. Domestic planting and styles are seen in the rear gardens of the adjacent Froghall Road and Hammersley Hayes Road houses. There is a lack of immediate woodland but it is visible on higher ground to the east,	
Water and drainage	No surface water features noted on Site with the only ditch associated with the central hedgerow. The Site was observed to have wet ground conditions during the winter visits even with the fall of the slope.	Two small watercourses are evident in the landscape context draining from the higher ground to the north to the south to flow through Cheadle. The one to the east of Site is believed to be the Cecilly Brook and a name for the one to the west has not been defined. These two combine within the town to form Cheadlemill Brook.	
Boundaries	No boundary to the north of the Site and open to the retained part of the upper field. Native hedgerow to the east with breaks leading down to Broad Haye Farm. The southern boundary is a mix of wire fencing at the POS and varied domestic fencing along the backs of the houses. To the west is further domestic fencing leading to a native hedge running up Froghall Road.	General boundary types are native hedgerows or where absent timber post and wire mesh fencing. The hedgerows generally appear flailed maintained but help to retain both the rural character of the contextual area to the north, east and west and give it its pattern. To the south the general boundary type is domestic fencing associated with the existing and emerging houses. There is an absence of drystone walling which is more indicative of higher sections of the ASVF.	

Element	At the Site	In the surrounding landscape context	Indicative photographs
Built form	There is no built form within the red line Site boundary.	Built form in the contextual area is generally lacking to the north and east with the exception of the isolated farm dwellings of Broad Haye Farm directly to the east and other dispersed farms such as Woodheadhall Farm (east) and Lockwood Hall Farm (north east). To the south lies the mixed collection of houses off Hammersley Hayes Road and park homes of Broad Hayes Park. Froghall Road to the west has the ribbon of evenly spaced semi-detached houses.	
Openness	There is a sense of openness across the fields as a whole. The sloping aspect of the field faces to the south east.	There is a sense of greater openness to the north running up to distant hills that mark the Ipstone Edge and beyond that the south western portion of the Peak District National Park. To the east the landscape runs up to woods of Hawksmoor Wood a National Trust property which encloses the view in that direction before dropping down to the River Churnet.	
Linkages – Physical and Visual	Physical linkages from the lower east side of the Site onto the farm access that runs to the Broad Haye Farm. The connection between the two Site fields lies to the east with tracks indicate the most frequently taken route through the internal hedge near the small ash tree. Visually the Site is more visually linked with the landscape to the east and north than west and south.	The route of Froghall Road as it climbs past the ribbon of houses and the Site acts as local dividing line between the land to the west and to the east. The Site does not relate as strongly to the land to the west as it does to the east in which direction it is generally facing. There is both a physical and visual link to the rest of the northern field and the climbing land that continues beyond it. The housing area to the south acts as a physical boundary with no real sense of linkage in that direction.	

Element	At the Site	In the surrounding landscape context	Indicative photographs
Historical landscape assets	The two assets at the Site are the open field trees in the internal hedge which are handsome the hedgerows that surround parts of the fields, The hedgerows appear to be of largely mixed native stock, with a section to the north end of Froghall Road exclusively hawthorn suggestive of possible later planting or replacement. There is no ridge and furrow field patterning.	Broad Haye Farm (Grade II Listed) set to the immediate east of the Site is the most evident historic feature. The three storey, white painted farmhouse is set in a reasonably prominent location and is read as part of the wider rural landscape. Thornbury Hall to the north is similarly Grade II Listed. The woods around Hawksmoor Woods are Ancient and Semi-Ancient Woodland. There are no Registered Historic Parks or Gardens in the landscape context.	
Accessibility	There is no public access onto the Site. There is sight over it from Footpath FP40 that tracks its southern and eastern boundary. Likewise there is good visibility across it from the POS set to the north of Hammersley Hayes Road.	Other than FP40 to the south and east of the Site there are a series of other public footpaths to the north, east and west of the Site. Having walked the footpaths it is the ones to the east that have the greatest visual links with the Site and the adjacent Broad Haye Farm. The paths to the west (FP 31 & 33) are generally lower or have greater intervening vegetation, the path to the north is largely separated by the undulating land form.	
Perceptual characteristics	There is no sense of tranquillity or remoteness at the Site given the noise and movement of vehicles along Froghall Road. There is also some disturbance from movement of vehicles on Hammersley Hall Road accessing the park homes of Broad Hayes Park.	There is a sense of tranquillity to the east of the Site when away from the closer effects of the arterial road routes. This is most keenly felt on the Footpaths leading away from the Site to the east when there is an increased sense of removal from urban form and activity. Likewise the lack of large scale development to the north away from Froghall Road gives a sense of separation.	

Element	At the Site	In the surrounding landscape context	Indicative photographs
Lighting	There is no lighting on the Site.	The highway lighting on Froghall Road stops at the end of the ribbon development to the west of the Site. There is occasional street lighting down Hammersley Hayes Road leading onto Broad Hayes Park. To the immediate east of the Site there is Broad Haye Farm as an isolated light source. Similarly other dispersed farm businesses to the east and north will be points of light in a generally dark, rural landscape. The strongest and most multiple sources of light lie to the south with the housing, commerce and street lights of Cheadle.	

Published Landscape Character information

5.8 It is agreed that the Site is located in the Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmland (ASVF) landscape character type. It is also agreed that the following sources of landscape character information are pertinent;

- Staffordshire County Councils Planning for Landscape Change – 2000 (**CD 9.5**)
- Staffordshire Moorlands Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment – 2008 (**CD 9.4**)
- Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study (August 2016)

Planning for Landscape Change – 2000

5.9 The ASVF was identified in the Staffordshire County Council Planning for Landscape Change publication in 2000. The descriptor of the ASVF is presented across pdf pages 101 to 103 in Volume 3 of the Planning for Landscape Change document and is reproduced in as (**CD 9.5**). There is a sub-set of the ASVF character type called ASVF – Minerals Workings and Restoration. I do not consider the Site is part of this sub-set. The characteristic and incongruous features of this landscape type are listed at the bottom of page 101 (Vol 3) and have been reproduced below in RLC Table 4 along with my assessment of their applicability to the Site and its context.

RLC Table 4 – Characteristic and incongruous landscape features of the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmland LCT from the Planning for Landscape Change document

Characteristic landscape features	Incongruous landscape features
<p><i>Strong ridge and valley landform</i> Applicable – given sloping nature of Site and part of Cecilly Brook.</p>	<p><i>Expanding urban edge</i> Applicable - with allocated site CH132 nearby.</p>
<p><i>Small dissected stream valleys</i> Applicable – again with Cecilly Brook and unnamed stream to west of Site</p>	<p><i>Fencing</i> Part-Applicable – to the south and lower west boundaries of the Site where housing or play space stands. Native hedgerows elsewhere.</p>
<p><i>Small sunken lanes</i> Not applicable – lanes near to Site are not sunken in nature</p>	<p><i>Present and past quarrying and mining activities,</i> Not applicable – lacking from Site and contextual area.</p>
<p><i>Low intensity pasture farming</i> Applicable – with Site and surroundings to north, east and west put to dairy farming.</p>	<p><i>Busy roads</i> Applicable - Froghall Rd is a relatively busy whereas Hammersley Hayes Rd is not</p>

Characteristic landscape features	Incongruous landscape features
<p><i>Intact hedgerow pattern</i> Applicable – with native boundary hedges to Site and surrounding fields.</p>	<p><i>Power lines</i> Part-Applicable – to the south end of the Site is a low voltage transmission line but there are no larger pylon routes in area.</p>
<p><i>Drystone walls and stone buildings</i> Not Applicable – as they are absent from the Site and surrounding area.</p>	<p><i>Localised industrial expansion</i> Not Applicable – none at the Site or in its contextual area.</p>
<p><i>Hedgerow trees</i> Applicable – with the prominent inter-field trees and others set around the Site boundary hedge.</p>	<p><i>Localised residential expansion</i> Applicable - with the allocation of CHI 32 and the nearly completed Potters Gardens to the south.</p>
<p><i>Broadleaved valley woodlands</i> Applicable – with the riparian woodland following Cecilly Brook.</p>	<p><i>These cells are left intentionally blank</i></p>
<p><i>Conifer plantations</i> Not Applicable – with none present on Site or in the contextual area.</p>	
<p><i>Many isolated properties</i> Applicable - Broad Haye Farm is an example of such an isolated property that is separated from urban built form.</p>	

5.10 The ASVF character type description from the Planning for Landscape Change document is still applicable to the Site with a number of the incongruous landscape features also recognisable.

5.11 The area containing the Site was defined as having a landscape policy objective of ‘Landscape Enhancement’ at a county level which is a middle grading of landscape quality on a five point scale.

5.12 The county landscape policy objective for Landscape Enhancement areas is described at Page 8 of Vol I (**CD 9.5**) as;

Areas of somewhat lower landscape quality have as their objective landscape enhancement. These areas have suffered some erosion of strength of character and loss of condition of landscape elements. There is a particular need to encourage relatively small-scale landscape conservation schemes such as hedgerow maintenance, habitat creation and tree and woodland planting, to stem the decline in landscape quality that will otherwise become more evident.

5.13 I interpret this policy objective as to improve these declining areas with positive landscape interventions. There is no suggestion of targeting these areas as places of such low landscape quality that they would be less sensitive to development.

Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (LSCA) of Staffordshire Moorlands, 2008 (CD 9.4)

- 5.14 This document was prepared by Landscape Architects Wardell Armstrong and builds upon the ASVF description given in the earlier Planning for Landscape Change document. It provides further information on the various landscape character types in the district before considering the character of the setting to various settlements including Cheadle. It has a main overarching report and then a series of alphabetised extracts considering character matters for the individual settlements.
- 5.15 The ASVF landscape type is detailed in the main report from pdf page 25 to 29. It explains amongst other matters the following:
- That the ASVF covers a large proportion of Staffordshire Moorlands in the north of the district, there are two isolated areas from the main block, one surrounds Cheadle and the other lies to the east of Leek.
 - A set of similar key characteristics and incongruous features are presented as reviewed again in RLC Table 5 below for completeness.
 - Extensive views out from higher ground are contrasted with an intimate feel within the valleys, such expansive views are experienced from the higher parts of Froghall Road as it passes the north end of the Site.
 - Ancient field patterns remain intact although in places due to hedgerow removal field sizes have become enlarged and patterns less obvious.
 - Hedgerows mainly form field boundaries although these can be poorly maintained, left tall with frequent gaps.
 - The main land use for the area is low intensity pastoral farming.
 - Fields are generally enclosed with hedgerows although to the north of this character area, towards the Gritstone Uplands and Highland Fringe fields are bounded by dry stone walls – the fields at and near the Site are all hedge bounded.
 - Hedgerows and drystone walls are generally poorly maintained and tend to be replaced by or reinforced with post and wire fencing – suggesting hedgerow decline is broader across the character type.
 - There are numerous isolated properties with occasional rundown farmsteads linked by narrow winding lanes – reference to isolated properties such as Broad Haye Farm;

- The landscape can feel urbanised in places due to the high population density of the scattered farms, the expansion of nearby settlements and previous mining activities – the landscape is urbanised to the south but feels rural at the Site and in its other contextual directions;
- Expansion of neighbouring settlements and localised industry is cited as one of seven Key Planning and Management Issue, hedgerow replacement is another – both of these are applicable to the Site.

RLC Table 5 - Characteristic and incongruous landscape features of the Ancient Slope and Valley Farmland LCT from the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment 2008

Characteristic landscape features	Incongruous landscape features
<p><i>Strongly undulating or sloping landscape cut by small scale steep sided stream valleys</i></p> <p>Largely Applicable – with the exception of the steep sided stream valley as Cecilly Brook is more gentle in valley form-</p>	<p><i>Electricity pylons are intrusive features visible in the landscape.</i></p> <p>Not Applicable – the low voltage power line on Site is supported by timber telegraph pole style posts.</p>
<p><i>Small scale mainly ancient irregular fields bounded by trees and hedgerows</i></p> <p>Partly Applicable with the fields more regular in form and medium in scale at and around the Site.</p>	<p><i>Replacement of hedgerows and drystone walls by fences that are often poorly constructed.</i></p> <p>Partly Applicable around POS to the north of Hammersley Hayes Road.</p>
<p><i>Extensive views from higher ground</i></p> <p>Applicable with extensive views gained from the north end of the Site and adjacent Froghall Road.</p>	<p><i>Busy roads</i></p> <p>Applicable with Froghall Road (A521) to the west of Site.</p>
<p><i>Intimate wooded valleys</i></p> <p>Not Applicable at the Site but more so to the east nearer the Churney Valley.</p>	<p><i>Quarrying and mining activities.</i></p> <p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p><i>Stone buildings and drystone walls towards uplands</i></p> <p>Not Applicable at the Site.</p>	<p><i>Localised industrial development.</i></p> <p>Not Applicable.</p>
<p><i>Isolated properties</i></p> <p>Applicable with Broad Haye Farm.</p>	<p><i>Localised residential development.</i></p> <p>Applicable with CH001 & CH132 housing allocations to the south of the Site</p>
<p><i>Narrow winding lanes –</i></p>	

Characteristic landscape features	Incongruous landscape features
Partly Applicable - not frequent but with lane leading down to Broad Haye Farm and Woodheadhall Farm)	<i>These cells are left intentionally blank</i>
<i>Parklands</i> Not Applicable.	
<i>Quarrying</i> Not Applicable.	

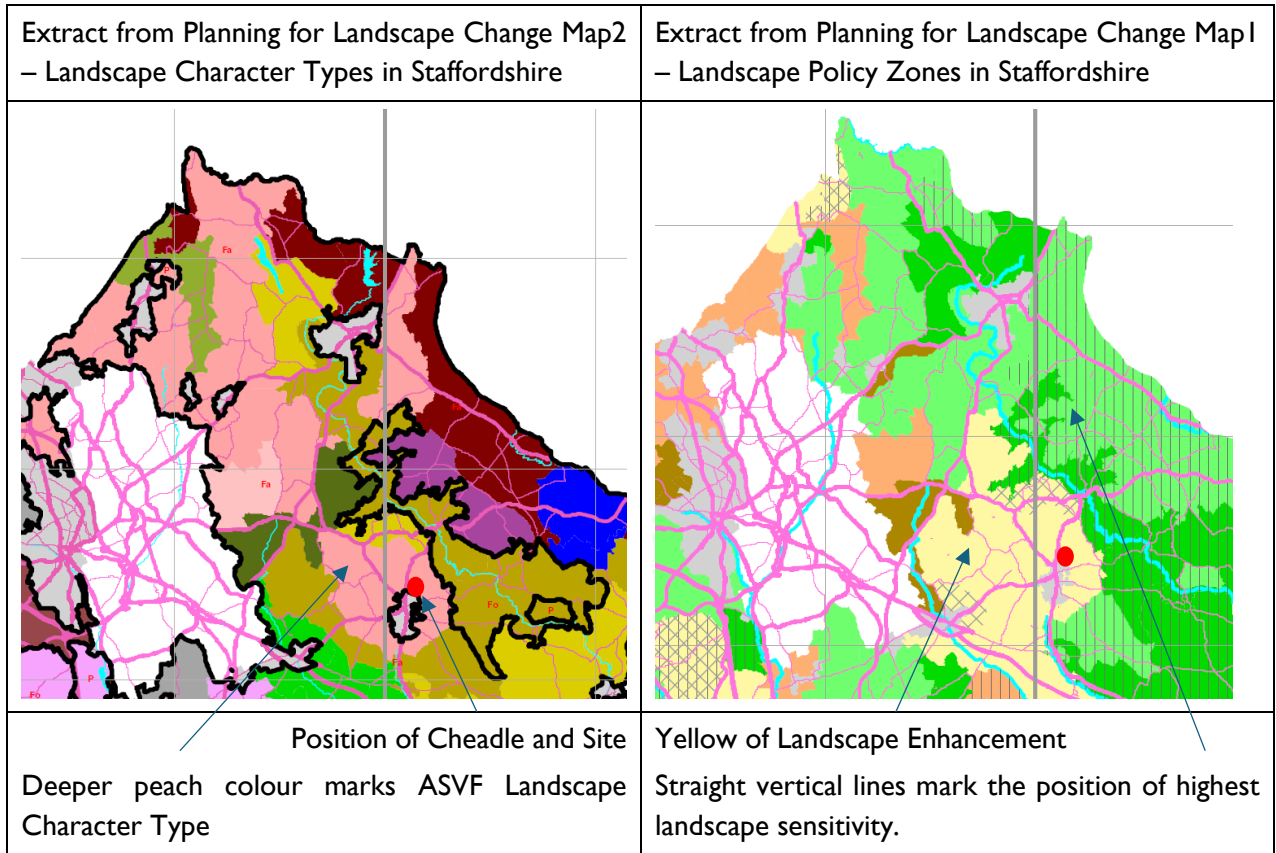
- 5.16 I consider the Site and its contextual displays sufficient characteristic features to be considered as part of the ASVF, It also displays some but not all of the incongruous landscape features but not to an extent that they dominate its intrinsic qualities as part of the rural ASVF.
- 5.17 Under a separate heading titled ‘*Capabilities and sensitivities of the landscape to accommodate change*’ the discussion of both is provided, it is produced in its entirety below as a digital extract.

Capabilities and sensitivities of the landscape to accommodate change

Planning for Landscape Change Supplementary Planning Guidance to Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan, identifies this landscape character areas as an area requiring landscape maintenance although that part of the character type around Cheadle requires landscape enhancement. It is not identified as an area that is particularly sensitive to change.

- 5.18 The reference in the last sentence to the area not being ‘*particularly sensitive to change*’ relates to an assessment shown on the Planning for Landscape Change mapping. Areas that are deemed sensitive to change were mapped with a black vertical hatch and the Site and its contextual area is not. However neither is the wider ASVF across the rest of the district with the exception of a small patch of ASVF that acts as the setting to the east of Leek. This is illustrated on RLC Figure I below.

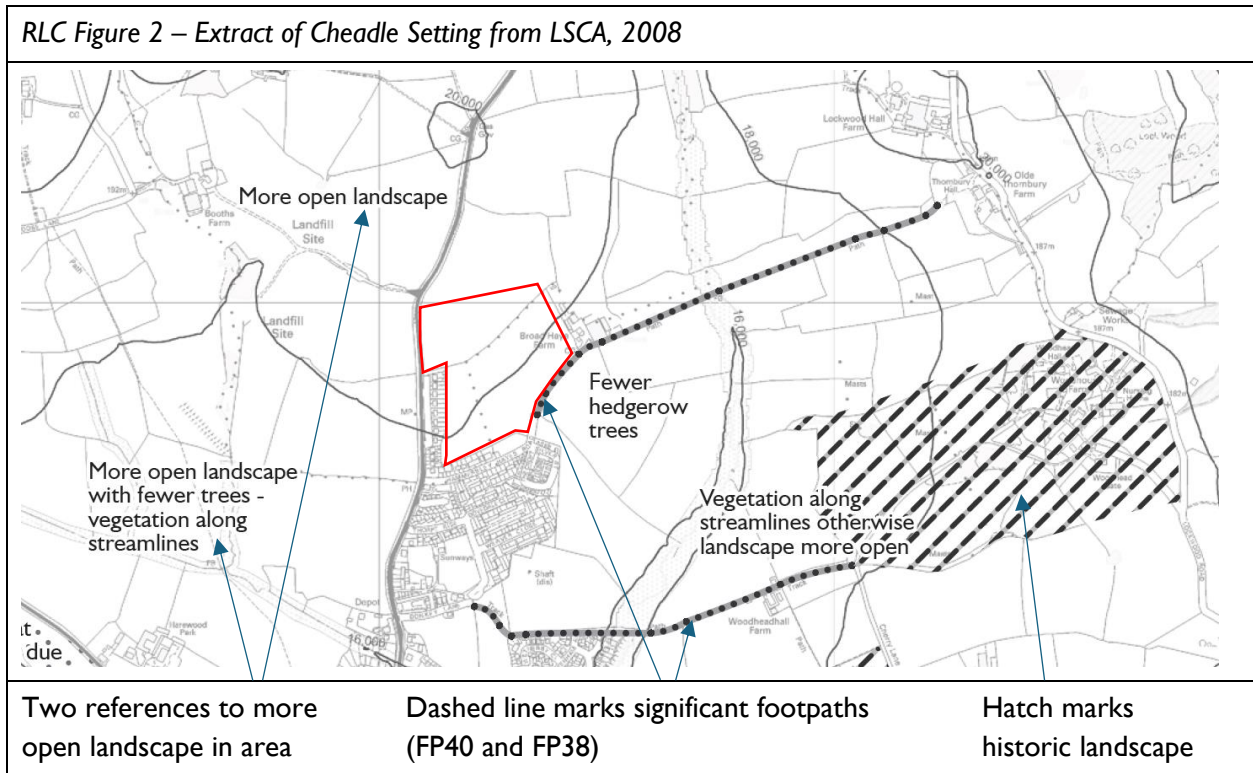
RLC Fig 1 – ASVF and Sensitivity Mapping



- 5.19 These comparison maps show that the greater part of the ASVF is not deemed the highest sensitive landscape and not just the part that surrounds Cheadle. This is a large area put to one typology and the sensitivity will vary across it. It cannot be judged as having a blanket lack of sensitivity.
- 5.20 The second part of §6.02 of the LSCA (**CD 9.4**) provides confirmation of this by explaining that, *‘In areas where the landscape structure is weak and eroded, areas of the original landscape can still be found intact. It is important that the landscape character descriptions are used as a guide to help articulate the features and character of the landscape.’*
- 5.21 This explains that original landscape can still be found in areas that are generally considered ‘weak and eroded’. It confirms that the character descriptions are a ‘guide’ or as I view it a starting point, or background information for understanding the landscape character of an area that requires further detailed observation and analysis. This approach of critically reviewing published landscape character assessments is recommended by our professions’ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments – Third Edition, typically referred to a GLVIA3 (**CD9.1 §5.13**).

Landscape character information for Cheadle

- 5.22 The next stage of the LSCA was to analyse the setting around the district's towns and Cheadle's is shown on Dwg ST10553-2b dated August 2008.
- 5.23 The comments that relate to the Site and its context are evident on RLC Figure 2 below which is an extract of the overall town map with the Site's extents marked by the red line.



- 5.24 The extract also states there are fewer hedgerow trees in the area making those that are present more notable and valued within the local landscape.
- 5.25 The broader map for the whole of Cheadle marks the wooded hills to the east of the town as an 'Important landscape setting to settlement'. This is marked by a polka dot hatch and does not extend to the Site or its contextual area. Likewise to the east of Cheadle a significant view is marked on the wider map on Hares Lane near Lambskindale and is simply labelled 'Views to Cheadle from higher ground.' There is only one such view marked on the Cheadle Setting map.
- 5.26 A series of 'Visual Open Spaces' (VOS) are marked on the Cheadle Setting map with the CH prefix for Cheadle. The VOS are spaces identified and assessed within built up areas that break up the urban form with some providing visual links out to the surrounding countryside. None are identified near the Site as it is not an urban area and they are not considered further in this Proof.

Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study (August 2016)

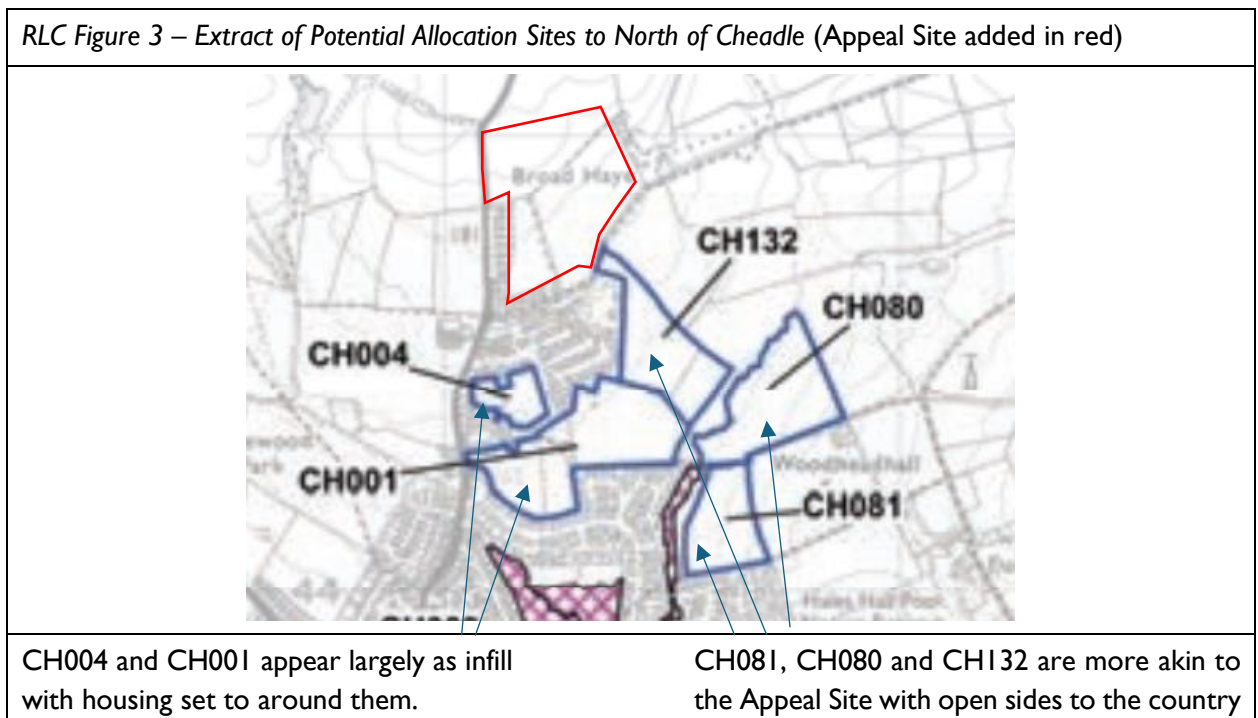
5.27 Produced to inform the then emerging Local Plan the Executive Summary to the study explains its three key aims as;

1. Assess the landscape sensitivity of the development allocations.
2. Assess the potential heritage impacts of the development allocations.
3. Review the VOS designations.

5.28 The Appeal Site was not included in the study. Nor did it come forward in an assessment of additional sites conducted in October 2017. It was however partly assessed in the July 2015 SHLAA process and was referred to as CH133. It was just the southern field that formed CH133 and this single field alone was considered unsuitable given it.

‘..would represent a significant intrusion into open countryside which is not well related to existing urban form.’

5.29 An extract of the Cheadle Map (Plan 3) is set as RLC Fig 3 below and positions the reviewed allocations in the vicinity of the Site.



5.30 The landscape summary for the three more settlement edge Sites are set below as digital extracts with the more pertinent comments highlighted by myself. CH132 Hammersley Hayes Road has

been allocated in the local plan whereas CH80 and CH81 which are both located on Woodheadhall Farm were not and were classified as Reserved.

CH132	<p>Hammersley Hayes Road</p> <p>Site comprises a large field on the northern edge of Cheadle, which slopes down from the settlement edge to Cecily Brook. Broad Hayes Park (mobile home park) is adjacent to the north-west site boundary. The site is open and visually prominent, particularly when viewed from the opposite side of the valley. However the existing settlement edge is urbanised. Development could be limited to the north of the site, on the higher land adjacent to the existing development, allowing planting to be undertaken on the edge of the development and landscaping on the lower ground adjacent to the brook. This could create a vegetated edge to the settlement. Building heights could be limited to reduce the prominence of the development, particularly on lower land.</p> <p>Site is of medium landscape sensitivity. Site-specific landscape mitigation measures could include limiting building heights, limiting development to the higher ground, and advanced planting on the southern boundary.</p>
CH080	<p>Woodheadhall Farm (north)</p> <p>Site comprises large fields adjacent to Cherry Barn (north of Woodheadhall Farm), to the north-east of the settlement. The site is separated from the settlement edge, which is currently well-defined and vegetated, and therefore does not relate to the settlement pattern. Development of the site would encroach on the surrounding countryside, and could adversely affect the wildlife corridor adjacent to Cecily Brook on the north-west site boundary.</p> <p>Site is of high landscape sensitivity.</p> <p>Please note that this study forms part of a wider evidence base to support SMDC's Local Plan. Therefore the conclusions within this report will be weighed against other evidence when determining the overall suitability of a site for development.</p>
CH081	<p>Woodheadhall Farm (south)</p> <p>Site comprises a field on the north-eastern edge of the settlement, enclosed by Cecily Brook to the west (with residential development beyond) and residential development to the south. The site has medium visual prominence, as screening is provided by the adjacent vegetation and development to the west and south. The western site boundary is set back from Cecily Brook, which forms a well-defined, vegetated edge to the settlement. However the settlement edge to the south is urban, although well-defined. The site sits well within the existing settlement pattern as it does not extend beyond the existing settlement edges to the north or east. Development of the site could provide a more vegetated settlement edge. Therefore if the site were to be developed planting should be undertaken on the northern and eastern boundaries in order to maintain or improve the vegetated edge to the settlement.</p> <p>Site is of medium landscape sensitivity. Site-specific landscape mitigation measures could include planting on the northern and eastern boundaries.</p>

5.31 The landscape element was just one part of the wider evidence base that informed the final allocation decisions. However it is interesting to note that;

- CH80 was considered a Site of High landscape sensitivity and separated from the settlement edge; but
- CH81 on the same farm only has Medium landscape sensitivity, likely due to the fact that CH81 sits well within the existing settlement pattern and does not extend beyond the existing settlement edges to the north or east; and
- CH132 has Medium landscape sensitivity and is considered open and visually prominent when viewed from the opposite side of the valley, this is presumably from Cherry Lane and footpaths to the east of the CH132 site.

Landscape designations

- 5.32 The Site is not a designated landscape and does not hold any designations for natural scenic beauty, heritage or design interest as confirmed in the LSoCG (**CD13.3 §4.10**)

Valued landscape

- 5.33 The 'valued landscape' reference in this section is to the NPPF 187a) meaning from Chapter 15 of the NPPF where '*decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ...' (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).*
- 5.34 The Landscape Institute has published a Technical Guidance Note (TGN) on how to assess valued landscapes outside of National Landscapes in England. This is TGN 02/21 and it was published in May 2021. Within it there is the Table I assessment process which lays down a series of nine factors to help judge the value of a landscape. It also helpfully identifies in its explanatory notes that a landscape is not just an individual site but also includes the area in which it is located and contributes to.
- 5.35 Having conducted a Table I assessment (RLC Appendix C) to this Proof I have judged the Site to not be a valued landscape. This does not mean it is a landscape without value and the Perceptual (Scenic) factor was graded as having a Good rating in my assessment. This reflects the Site's and the contextual area's attractive rural appearance. Likewise the Site has a Good rating for its Cultural Interest given that it acts as a agricultural setting for the Grade II Listed Broad Haye Farm.

Landscape sensitivity

- 5.36 A landscape’s sensitivity is defined by considering two factors – its susceptibility to the type of change brought about by the particular type of development and the value associated with the landscape.
- 5.37 The susceptibility of the Site to residential built form has been defined as **Medium**. This is due to the proximity of existing houses to its south side and partly along its western boundary as well.
- 5.38 Medium susceptibility is defined in our LVIA Methodology (Appendix A – Table 3) as:
- ‘Some ability to accommodate the proposed development without adverse consequences for the retention of the existing landscape baseline or the delivery of landscape planning policies and strategies.’*
- 5.39 The landscape value of the Site is also defined as **Medium**. This is based upon the earlier valued landscape assessment using the TGN 2/21 based assessment (see Appendix C). The positive landscape factors that add value and those that detract from it are set below in RLC Table 6.

RLC Table 6 – Factors that determine landscape value

Positive factors that add to value	Negative factors that reduce value
Characteristic rural land use and character	Proximity of settlement edge
Climbing and elevated topography	Mix of boundary quality to south
Contribution to wider undulating landform of localised ridges and valleys	Noise and movement from Froghall Road
Mature hedgerow trees	Low voltage power lines on timber poles
Hedgerow patterning	
Links to Broad Haye Farm Grade II Listed Building	
Ability to appreciate Site from FP40	
Ability to take long views over it (from Froghall Road)	
Acting as gateway location to Cheadle	

- 5.40 Combining a **Medium** level of landscape susceptibility with a **Medium** assessment of landscape value unsurprisingly returns a **Medium** landscape sensitivity judgement.

5.41 The definition of **Medium** sensitivity is explained in our LVIA methodology at Appendix A – Table 4. For convenience it is reproduced below as a digital extract. The description is apt for the landscape sensitivity of the Site.

<p>Medium A landscape area with some distinctive sense of place and character but not nationally rare.</p> <p>Landscape characteristic that makes a positive contribution to a landscape area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some scenic quality but also some less scenic elements. • Recognisable landscape character that has value. • Some tolerance to the type of proposed development. • A recognisably area or piece of designed landscape. • Possible cultural or heritage associations. • Some appreciation as a recreational resource. • Landscape characteristics that could be replaced with some effort. • Landscape in reasonable condition.
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5.42 The **Medium** landscape sensitivity of the Site is agreed between landscape witnesses in the LSoCG (CD 13.3 – Appendix A).

Magnitude of landscape effects arising from the proposals

5.43 The assessment of the magnitude of landscape effect at the Site and contextual area is not agreed between parties. RLC Table 7 below provides a comparison at the project life stages that the Application LVA (CD 2.6) assess at. These assessments are the same as the landscape comparison table from the LSoCG (CD 13.3 – Appendix A).

RLC Table 7 – Difference in magnitude of landscape effects at the Site and contextual area

	Construction	On Completion	Year 15
Appellant’s witness	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Moderate / Minor Adverse
SMDC witness	Major/Moderate Adverse	Major/Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse

5.44 The Site and contextual area as a landscape receptor is made up of the sum of its constituent landscape parts, sometimes referred to as landscape elements. The magnitude of landscape effects is considered on each of the constituent parts below in RLC Table 8 before all the effects are drawn together to provide a conclusion on the overall magnitude of effect to the Site and contextual landscape receptor. For clarity this magnitude of effects assessment is for the construction and on completion stages. It does not take account of the landscape mitigation proposals that are reviewed later in this Section.

RLC Table 8 – Magnitude of effect on the constituent parts of the Site and contextual area

Constituent Part	Geographical extent	Contrast or Integration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude
Hedgerow	The pAIA refers to this Hedge as H5 with an agreed 170m removed to form visibility splays on Froghall Road. Approx. 250m of the inter-field hedge is enclosed by the new housing and an estimated 10m wide break placed in its centre for the main access road. The hedge to the east of the Site remains unaffected.	The removal is a Contrast with general landscape character as is the change of setting to the retained inter-field hedge.	The Froghall Road hedge removal is reversible with planting the changed setting to inter-field hedge is not. The new Froghall Road hedge would appear as a domestic boundary and not a field hedge.	The magnitude of effect on hedges is considered to be of Medium/Large scale. It is considered to be an Adverse type of effect. The hedge to Froghall Road is the most prominent on Site given its location adjacent to the busy road corridor.
Trees	There are 2 No. recognisable trees set within the Froghall Road hedgerow (T8 & T9) that will be felled and the notable 4 No. trees in the inter-field hedge that will be retained but in a new setting. There is also a single tree set to the south east corner of the Site in the eastern hedge leading to Broad Haye Farm that will be kept in an open situation. Trees next to Broad Haye Farm would be retained.	The proposals are in Contrast with the character of the individual trees that appear as open field, or highway corridor trees. The retained inter-field trees will have new settings within an urban area. The single south eastern tree on the lane and those next to Broad Haye Farmhouse would be kept in the open.	The felling of the highway trees is technically reversible but in the very long term to allow replacements to reach a similar scale. The changed setting to the three larger inter-field hedge trees is not reversible.	The proposals retain the more prominent trees in the centre of the Site but in an urban setting rather than a rural one. The trees felled along Froghall Road reduce the visual amenity along the road corridor and reduce the sense of entering a rural landscape. The trees to the south east and next to Broad Haye Farmhouse are not prominent. Overall magnitude is judged as Medium/Large .
Landform on Site	The areas of housing set out on the Parameters Masterplan will	Modification of land form is considered to be in	The change to the landform of the Site is	The scale of the change is considered to be Large with the

Constituent Part	Geographical extent	Contrast or Integration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude
	<p>experience change to the landform to allow the formation of development platforms. There will be localised levelling and possible use of retaining walls given the sloping nature of the Site. The platforms will have to tie into existing levels at the retained central hedge and to the edges of the Site. The overall fall of the Site to the south east into the valley will be retained, but less obvious to experience with houses set on it.</p>	<p>Contrast to the general valley form that the Site contributes to. There will be a rawness to the disturbance.</p> <p>The mass housing in the contextual area is generally set on lower ground and not reaching as high up the hills to the north and east of Cheadle.</p>	<p>permanent and not reversible. The retained landform around the Site is not worked and remains unchanged.</p>	<p>sloping form of the Site changed with platforms but the general valley form with the fall to the south east towards the Cecilly Brook retained.</p>
<p>Openness</p>	<p>The Site’s openness will fundamentally be lost for all the housing area shown on the Parameters Masterplan. There is the smaller eastern portion of the Site which is proposed as the stand-off to Broad Haye Farm that is left open. The proposed circular POS to the south east will appear as almost entirely enclosed by built form. The retained inter-field hedgerow would have no sense of openness or connection to the wider landscape given the proximity of adjacent housing. There is also the sense of</p>	<p>Contrast with the current open nature of the Site and limiting its connectivity to the wider open landscape within its contextual area.</p> <p>The stand-off to the east of the Site that has been kept open to act as a setting to Broad Haye Farm will not appear as extensive of as open with the presence of houses to its western side.</p>	<p>The loss of openness is not reversible.</p> <p>There will be a small degree of visual connection between the proposed POS open space and the wider agricultural landscape to the north east if people look out to 2 o’clock if the space is considered as a clockface.</p>	<p>Large magnitude of effect for the housing areas and Medium/Large for the eastern stand-off to Broad Haye Farm and the Crescent Green POS when compared to the baseline of an open, rural landscape.</p> <p>The loss of appreciable openness from Froghall Road and VP40 is more fully described in Section 6 on visual effects for both these receptor groups.</p>

Constituent Part	Geographical extent	Contrast or Integration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude
	openness from Froghall Road and FP40 to be considered as the built form truncates that experience.			
Land-use	<p>The defined housing area up to and including any buffer planting would change from pasture field grazing or silage production to urban built form. The eastern stand-off may also change from pasture grazing to wildflower meadow that would be managed differently to the current dairy grazing according to the Parameters Masterplan.</p> <p>The inclusion of the SuDS element at the bottom of the stand-off needs to be considered and its increased sense of separation from similar pasture fields.</p>	<p>Contrast with the rural land-use to the north, east and west. Some Integration with the housing along Froghall Road and Hammersley Hall Road but likely Contrast as to architectural appearance, density and general layout.</p> <p>Integration with regards to the open, grass part of the eastern stand-off but Contrast in terms of field size as it will appear small with the contextual pattern being medium scale fields.</p>	The housing is not reversible and neither will be the change in land use post construction.	The magnitude is considered Large with a fundamental change of land-use even with the retained eastern stand-off.
Existing Public Open Space (POS)	The existing open space set to the south east of the Site would be expanded by the proposals by approximately 200% if the Crescent Green is kept to the same size. There would also be the opportunity to walk around the development around the	There would be both Integration and Contrast with the expansion of the POS. Integration in the sense of more POS being provided (albeit with a SuDS element) but also	The presence of houses around the POS is not reversible. The integration should remain as long as the POS is kept functioning as that.	The magnitude of change to the existing POS is considered to be Medium in scale. The new POS would larger but enclosed. The linear space around the Site is such that it would only provide use as a movement corridor rather than a

Constituent Part	Geographical extent	Contrast or Integration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude
	boundary fringe and along the retained inter-field hedgerow. The perceived linkage of the existing open space with the wider landscape would be restricted to views to the north east.	Contrast in terms of enclosing the previous open space with housing to its north side where none currently stands.		space to stop and to experience the wider landscape.
Footpath FP40	FP40 will not be diverted by the proposals as it lies outside of the redline boundary and construction access is unlikely to be taken down Hammersley Hayes Road as a residential street. However the setting and experience of using FP40 will be altered by first the construction activity and then the presence of the unscreened houses to the north and west of the route from the existing POS to Broad Haye Farm which is a distance of approx. 300m.	The proposals would be in Contrast to the existing experience of walking along this path that acts as a transition from urban to rural landscapes when walking north out of Cheadle. Houses are evident from the path already but once past Broad Hayes Park they are no longer part of the footpath route but will be on completion.	The change to the setting of FP40 is irreversible. There will also be a cumulative effect with the new development of allocated site CHI32 being appreciable at the same time as the Appeal Site.	Footpath FP40 is marked as a Significant Footpath on the Cheadle Setting maps contained in LSCA (CD 9.4 – Cheadle Setting Plan). The sense of rurality that is experienced from this part will be lost and there would be a Large scale of effect during the construction period and at the point of completion before any mitigation proposals have had a chance to establish. This magnitude is for the 300m section of path that passes the Site.
Broad Haye Farm	Broad Haye Farm has a substantial farm house, with a strong presence in the landscape and currently appears separate from the urban edge of Cheadle. It adds time depth to the local area even with the collection of	The new housing area given its density, difference in architectural styling and residential function will be in Contrast to the older	The presence of the housing and the resulting change to the setting of Broad Haye Farm is irreversible.	The magnitude of effect is considered Large at the outset. The effect has two strands with a physical and perceptual reduction in the amount and quality of the pastoral landscape setting to the

Constituent Part	Geographical extent	Contrast or Integration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude
	<p>more modern barns set around it. The proposals include the eastern standoff that provides for a 100m separation between built form of the new housing edge and the Listed farmhouse. The farmhouse and associated sheds are not physically altered by the house building but they will have a new context to their west.</p>	<p>form and isolation of the Listed farmhouse.</p>		<p>farm and in the amount of visual interest and time-depth that the farm provides to the wider landscape.</p> <p>It will not be physically subsumed into the housing area but it will appear that the new urban edge of Cheadle has expanded out to almost meet it.</p>
<p>Froghall Road corridor</p>	<p>From junction with Hammersley Hayes Road to beyond the northern extents of the Site. The new housing will be seen between in the gaps between the existing ribbon properties indicating the increased depth and density of development where currently open ground is sensed. The roundabout and new houses beyond the ribbon housing will be clearly evident during construction and on completion.</p>	<p>Contrast with regard to the roundabout on the previously straight, more rural road. Contrast also with the sense of new built form where previously open ground and long views existed. A degree of Integration is provided by the presence of the existing ribbon houses but also Contrast in terms of depth of built form and density.</p>	<p>The change to highway geometry and character of the road corridor through permanent housing is considered irreversible.</p>	<p>Magnitude of effect is considered Medium/Large at the outset with both the introduction of the roundabout, the front of development construction and change to the sense of a gateway arrival to Cheadle. This is where most people will be able to appreciate the intrusion into the countryside from.</p>
<p>Perceptual qualities of tranquillity / remoteness / wildness</p>	<p>The Site does not display any sense of wildness. Currently there is only a limited sense of tranquillity at the Site with traffic movement on Froghall</p>	<p>Contrast as the proposals during construction and at completion will remove the relative sense of tranquillity</p>	<p>The change to the perceptual qualities of tranquillity and</p>	<p>The magnitude of the change to the current limited degrees of landscape tranquillity and</p>

Constituent Part	Geographical extent	Contrast or Integration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude
	<p>Road and Hammersley Hayes Road stopping any sense of tranquillity to the west and south of the Site. Where a degree of tranquillity and relative remoteness occurs is once past Broad Hayes Park on FP40 where there is limited appreciation of traffic movement or residential activity. This relative tranquillity is experienced for the approximately 200m route up to Broad Haye Farm.</p>	<p>and remoteness for the 200m stretch of FP40. It is regained once past the farm buildings. There will also be Contrast with the dark nature of the Site at night.</p>	<p>remoteness is irreversible.</p>	<p>remoteness is considered to be Medium/Large. The urban edge of Cheadle as perceived by a lack of tranquillity and remoteness will extend towards Broad Haye Farm where the sense of rural tranquillity and remoteness would re-establish itself.</p>

5.45 A summary of all the above assessments of magnitude of effects during construction and at completion for the constituent parts of the Site;’ landscape character is;

- Hedgerows – Medium/Large
- Trees – Medium/Large
- Landform on Site – Large
- Openness – Large
- Land-use – Large
- Existing Public Open Space – Medium
- Footpath FP40 – Large
- Broad Haye Farm – Large
- Froghall Road Corridor – Medium/Large
- Perceptual qualities of tranquillity and remoteness – Medium/Large

5.46 In combining all of the above magnitudes of change into one I judge that the resulting magnitude of change for the overall Site is Large during the construction period and at the point of completion.

5.47 The resulting assessment of the landscape effect on the Site and contextual area can be made for these two first phases of the project;

- Landscape sensitivity of the Site and contextual area is – **Medium**
- Magnitude of landscape change has been assessed as – **Large**
- The resulting significance of landscape effect is **Major/Moderate, Adverse** for these two assessment periods.

Landscape Mitigation Measures

5.48 These are the proposed works that are suggested to either remove or reduce the identified landscape effects. They typically comprise soft landscape planting to try to best set, or assimilate the proposals into the landscape that they are located in. There is also the passage of time to take into account with the newness of building materials weathered and planting more established. This is why Year 15 after completion is typically chosen as an assessment point to better understand long-term or residual effects of proposed development.

5.49 The soft landscape proposals that are indicated on the Parameters Masterplan Rev N (**CD 2.12**) and included on the Northern Boundary Eco-Park drawing consist of:

- Replacement hedgerow planting behind the visibility splay at the main Site access roundabout at Froghall Road;
- Tree planting lines associated with the main access road through the proposed housing;
- A 10m minimum landscape buffer set to the east side of the housing to create separation between the housing and Broad Haye Farm;
- Circular tree planting arrangement at the Crescent Green as the main area of POS on the scheme;
- Hedge and associated tree planting to form a new northern edge to the development, width of planting circa 10m up to the edge of the access lane / shared surface required to access the properties;
- Retention of the inter-field hedgerow and the hedgerow to the east of the Site that follows the farm track and FP40 leading down to Broad Haye Farm; and
- Supplementary tree planting in the hedgeline leading to Broad Haye Farm.

5.50 Two general comments first about the mitigation before re-examining their effects on the constituent parts of the Site and its context as the landscape receptor under consideration.

5.51 The nature of the landscape at this location is open with fewer trees than other parts of the ASVF, this fact is noted in the LSCA (**CD9.4 Cheadle Setting plan**). Trees are generally thought of as positive landscape features and hold wider environmental benefits but this does not immediately mean that they are appropriate to the individual landscape character of an area. The existing trees at the Site and its contextual area are generally limited to hedgerows and riparian trees along the valley bottom. The proposed tree planting, particularly the eastern buffer, but also the northern boundary would not appear in keeping with the prevailing tree planting in the area.

5.52 Secondly the proposed development will appear as an urban area and any assessment of long-term change against the original rural baseline will return large scale effects even with mitigation. The proposals therefore need to be considered in terms of what are their effects on the wider contextual landscape and whether these effects (with the aid of mitigation) are in keeping with it, or tolerable in the planning balance.

Landscape effects at Year 15

5.53 These are shown in RLC Table 9 below where the 'at completion' landscape effects (as summarised for the individual elements in §5.45 above) are listed out again before discussion of any associated mitigation and then arriving at an end magnitude of change for the at 15 year period.

RLC Table 9 – Magnitude of landscape effects at Year 15

Receptor / At completion Magnitude of change	Proposed mitigation (if any)	Year 15 Magnitude of Change
Hedgerows – Medium/Large	Replanted Froghall Road hedge behind splay would have established but on new angled lines and backed with housing reducing its potential to appear as an agricultural hedge. Change to setting of retained inter-field hedge cannot be mitigated as it will still appear set in an urban environment rather than in a rural location. New hedges planted in eastern and northern planted buffers will not appear as agricultural hedges but rather as new planting lines generated by and subservient to the housing development that led to their planting.	Medium
Trees – Medium/Large	The three major inter field trees will still appear as remnants of the former agricultural landscape and different to the residential development that encloses them given their age and height compared to the development or new tree planting within the development. They will effectively have been severed from the wider landscape that they previously contributed to. The new trees planting should have established and started to have a greater presence in the landscape after 15 years. As stated in my general comments the contextual landscape is generally open and the 10m wide buffer planting will appear incongruous when compared to other tree planting in the area. It will be read as screen planting associated with the development behind it.	Medium
Landform on Site – Large	The landform change on Site will still be changed as the houses are permanent features. There is no mitigation to address this necessary change to allow development however the rawness of the change would have dissipated.	Medium/Large

Receptor / At completion Magnitude of change	Proposed mitigation (if any)	Year 15 Magnitude of Change
	When judged against the contextual landscape the contrast would still be evident and add to the sense of long-term change.	
Openness – Large	The openness of the development field would still be lost. The openness in the stand-off to Broad Haye Farm would be reducing with increased growth of the landscape buffer replacing the physical enclosure of the housing edge with the trees planted to the west of the space. The effects on the appreciation of an open landscape with long views from Froghall Road and open ground to the north of FP40 would remain lost and the buffer planting would further truncate the views.	Large
Land-use – Large	The land-use change of the built portion of the Site would remain unchanged and there is no landscape mitigation for this part of the effect. The stand-off to the east would have either its wildflower meadow in a final state of management or still be a small field but with the beneficial mitigation effects of the eastern screening buffer making it appear more like a rural field with some increased separation from the urban edge.	Medium/Large
Existing Public Open Space – Minor	The POS would have had time to mature and start to appear as a settled landscape area for residents to use. It would still be overlooked by development around most of its edge and does not provide extensive viewing opportunities to provide a visual link to the wider countryside given its position lower down the Site slope.	Minor
Footpath FP40 – Large	The impression of walking through a rural landscape would have partially returned with the increase of plant growth of the eastern buffer planting but there will still be a sense of walking past an urban development and the loss	Medium/Large

Receptor / At completion Magnitude of change	Proposed mitigation (if any)	Year 15 Magnitude of Change
	of openness and visual connectivity to open countryside further north would not have been replaced. Also dependent on the end screening mitigation for allocated Site CHI32 and how effective that is to reduce cumulative effects.	
Broad Haye Farm – Large	The encroachment towards Broad Haye Farm would still exist and the width of the perceived space in the stand-off would be reducing with the growth of the proposed landscape buffer. It may start at 100m but it will reduce to an estimated 80m of open ground. The Farm will still appear to have lost its open western setting and sense of isolation from the edge of Cheadle. In landscape terms the buffer planting is better to be associated with than a new housing line leading to the slight reduction in the magnitude of change. There is also the consideration that other isolated farms in the area are generally in open settings and do not have curving buffer tree lines planted near them.	Medium/Large
Froghall Road Corridor – Medium/Large	The apparent mitigation is the replanting of the removed hedgerow to the rear of the visibility splay and tree planting in a road side stand-off near the new roundabout. There is no mitigation indicated with regards to disguising the increased sense of development experienced through the gaps of the existing ribbon properties. There is no mitigation possible for the loss of openness or the more abrupt gateway into Cheadle.	Medium/Large
Perceptual qualities of tranquillity and remoteness – Medium/Large	The perceptual qualities of relative tranquillity and remoteness will still be affected by the proposals compared to the original Site baseline and the intrinsic qualities of the rural area as experienced from FP40. The eastern buffer planting will reduce but not remove this changed perception to this part of the landscape. Upper storeys will still be evident as will an intensification of residential activity, noise and lights at night.	Medium

5.54 In listing the various magnitudes of landscape effects on the Site and its contextual area after 15 years the following bullets show a decline but not a removal of the sense of landscape change. A summary of all the above assessments of magnitude of effects at Year 15 for the constituent parts of the Site's landscape character is;

- Hedgerows – Medium
- Trees – Medium
- Landform on Site – Medium/Large
- Openness – Large
- Land-use – Medium/Large
- Existing Public Open Space – Minor
- Footpath FP40 – Medium/Large
- Broad Haye Farm – Medium/Large
- Froghall Road – Medium/Large
- Perceptual qualities of tranquillity and remoteness – Medium

5.55 In combining all of the above individual magnitudes of change into one judgement I consider that the resulting magnitude of change for the overall Site is **Medium/Large** at Year 15 after completion.

5.56 The judgement of the landscape effect at Year 15 have been assessed as;

- Landscape sensitivity of the Site and contextual area is – **Medium**
- Magnitude of landscape change has been assessed as – **Medium/Large**
- The resulting significance of landscape effect is **Moderate, Adverse** at Year 15

Positive landscape effects

5.57 In assessing the effects of any development the positive landscape effects that arise need to be set against the adverse ones to present a balanced judgement of the overall effects.

5.58 For this development the positive landscape effects are not that obvious but I have reviewed the Parameters Masterplan Rev N to seek potential landscape improvements. These are tabulated in RLC Table 10 below where they are identified, discussed and a judgement made as to the

level of positive landscape effect that may arise. For the sake of clarity these positive landscape effects are all judged at 15 years post completion to have allowed mitigation planting to establish.

RLC Table 10 – Summary of potential positive landscape effects.

Effect description	Discussion of effect	Magnitude of positive effect (if any)
Tree planting to Froghall Road corridor – net gain compared to trees felled to create access and visibility splays.	Trees would be established in new hedgerows but the greater character change to the road corridor is the proposed roundabout that outweighs the additional trees.	Trees are positive but the overall new road character is a Moderate, Adverse effect on the character of the road corridor
New street tree planting - along main access road is indicated and is typically required by NPPF.	The trees here would be set within the urban form of the new housing and subservient to it as street trees. They would not have any beneficial effect on the wider landscape.	Not a positive effect on wider landscape but Beneficial to internal amenity of the proposals.
Larger POS at Crescent Green – with formal tree planting indicated and potential for other facilities such as LEAP and LAP. Beneficial to new and existing residents.	Increased amount of POS with indicative connection to allocated site CH132 to aid off road journeys. Poor visual connection to wider countryside and likely use for SuDS.	Minor, Beneficial effect with limited wider landscape effect as it is largely enclosed built form.
Wildflower Meadow – in stand-off to Broad Haye Farm. The retention as a dairy field is not a positive change as it is that already.	Assuming that a wildflower meadow can be created on this nutrient enriched soil, that it is cut and managed properly it will deliver positive landscape benefits for the flowering period only.	Minor, Beneficial for flowering only. Greater ecological benefit of having a longer sward but still largely a grass field.
Landscape buffer to east – shown as a new hedge with new tree planting set either side to form a 10m wide planted buffer.	As stated above tree planting in a curving band of standard width is not considered in keeping with the tree planting in the area. Putting aside the difficulties of cutting a hedge under trees a 10m width will not provide effective separation as it is too narrow. It will have Green Infrastructure benefits but in landscape terms appear artificial.	This feature is such that it is meant to mitigate the narrowing of the gap between the new housing and heritage asset but draws more attention to it with an uncharacteristic landscape feature. Moderate, Adverse.
Landscape buffer to north – again shown as a new hedge with a variety of tree planting and paths to	Titled on drawings as an ‘Eco-park’ this buffer at Year 15 would have largely screened the lower part of the	Given that the 10m wide landscape buffer is better in landscape and

Effect description	Discussion of effect	Magnitude of positive effect (if any)
the southern, development side of the hedge.	northern housing line but not the first storey and roofscape of the houses. It has no characteristic of a park and instead will be a narrow planting buffer that will not effectively screen the houses or stop their form and lighting being visible from Froghall Road. High hedges as illustrated on the 'Eco-park' drawing are not characteristic of the area.	visual amenity terms than an unscreened, blunt housing line face the open countryside and forming the entrance to Cheadle it still cannot be classed a landscape benefit.
Village Green & Square as indicated in the centre of the masterplan, the village green is taken as a space put to grass and the Square as a hard landscape feature.	Both spaces are insubstantial in scale and will only benefit the residents of the new development. The view to St Giles Church, if achieved will be a visual link to the Cheadle town centre for residents.	They provide no benefit to the wider contextual landscape.

5.59 The above review of potentially positive landscape effects has identified no meaningful positive landscape benefits to set against the landscape harm to the Site and its contextual area. The two **Minor, Beneficial** effects at Year 15 are the creation of the wildflower meadow should this be pursued instead of retaining the eastern stand-off as a pasture field and the enlargement of the existing POS.

5.60 The two **Minor, Beneficial** landscape effects do not in my opinion reduce the wider **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** landscape effect on the Site and its contextual area that I defined earlier.

In summary

5.61 As this is a particularly long section that contains many tables I have listed out in a simple fashion the landscape harm that I consider would occur to the different landscape elements at the Site and within the surrounding area that underpins my assessment of overall harm. After this list a shorter section summary box is presented. The assessment of harm is at Year 15 with mitigation in place.

5.62 **Hedges** - loss of Froghall Road hedge to form visibility splays and removal of the inter-field hedge from the wider landscape pattern of the area resulting in a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** change – replacement of Froghall Road hedge will not appear as an agricultural hedge but rather as a boundary hedge to an urban development.

- 5.63 **Trees** – are low in number across site with two felled on Froghall Road but the three notable field trees in the inter-field hedge are retained but are set within a housing area and lost to the wider landscape – this loss of trees and change to the setting of the three notable mature trees is considered part of a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** change.
- 5.64 **New tree planting** – proposed to create buffers to the east and north are not typical elements within the local landscape character that is primarily hedgerow and riparian trees and they will appear out of keeping in the area and in the form proposed. This is considered to compound the presence of the houses and is judged a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** landscape change.
- 5.65 **Landform** – on the Site would be permanently changed as development platforms will be required and the finished housing would be perceived as running up the slope increasing its prominence in the landscape. This is considered a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect.
- 5.66 **Openness** – the presence of built form across the greater part of the Site removes its openness as perceived locally with its connection to adjacent rural land, or looking upon it from a distance from the east. Where the stand-off is retained to keep separation to Broad Haye Farm the field will be narrower and enclosed initially by housing to the west, or latterly the buffer tree belt considerably reducing its openness and contribution to the wider landscape. This effect is considered to remain as a **Major, Adverse and Permanent** effect.
- 5.67 **Rural land use** – The dairy farming pasture land use and rural land qualities of the larger part of the Site would be fundamentally and permanently changed. The land use of the stand-off for dairy farming may be retained or possibly changed to a less intensive wildflower meadow management. The overall landscape effect is judged as a **Major/Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect.
- 5.68 **Public open space** – The open landscape setting to the north of the existing POS would be fundamentally altered by building houses on the adjacent field and its visual connection to the wider rural landscape greatly reduced. At the same time it is shown as being expanded too with a more formal layout and possible play facilities. The overall landscape effects are considered to be **Minor, Beneficial and Permanent**.
- 5.69 **Footpath FP40** – Will pass near to more housing and the visual effect of this for its users is explored in Section 6 below. In landscape setting terms the path's rural setting would change with both the Appeal Site and allocated site CHI32 evident changing the rural character of the

- section of path from Broad Hayes Park to Broad Haye Farm to one more dominated by settlement edge. This change is judged as **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent**.
- 5.70 **Broad Haye Farm** – as a feature within the rural landscape will no longer appear as an isolated rural farm but as a property that the settlement edge has moved out to meet. The stand-off will not be as effective as the whole Site field in providing a clear, functioning piece of active agricultural landscape as a buffer between the farm and the urban area. The presence of the farm as a separate and characteristic feature in the local ASVF landscape will be considerably diminished as the clear space to the west has been largely, but not totally removed. This effect on it as an element of the landscape is considered to be **Major/Moderate, Adverse and Permanent**. The time-depth that the farm adds to the local landscape would also be reduced by placing contrasting contemporary development within its setting.
- 5.71 **Froghall Road corridor** – the inclusion of a new roundabout on this section of rural road corridor will be a large contrast and add to the sense of urbanisation to this portion of the route. The corridor would have built form set to its east side and none to its west side where the Green Belt protects the openness of the land. This one sided development and the increased sense of housing density experienced in views between the existing ribbon properties will add to the sense of intrusion out into the rural landscape to the north of Cheadle. It will make the gateway sense of arrival and leaving the settlement less gradual and remove the longer views from the higher sections of Froghall Road that help provide links to the wider landscape. This change to the character of the Froghall Road character is considered a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect.
- 5.72 **Perceptual qualities** – the relative tranquillity and sense of rural remoteness experienced to the east of the Site from FP40 would be diminished by the proposals. There is also a cumulative effect of wider landscape change to be taken into account with CHI32 also likely to be experienced from the FP40 route. This is judged as a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect to the perceptual qualities.
- 5.73 All of the above landscape effects combine to create the **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** landscape effect to the landscape of the Site and surrounding area as a single landscape receptor. This is as stated in the LSoCG (**CDI3.3 – Appendix A**).
- 5.74 The topic of intrusion into the rural landscape has not been touched upon in this analysis of landscape effects but occurs due to changes in many of the landscape elements listed above. It is however discussed as a visual effect considering who would appreciate the encroachment and from where.

Section 5 Summary Box

With regards to the landscape effects that would occur at the Site and in its context the following points are made:

1. Establishes the rural character of the Site and contextual landscape to the north, east and west.
2. Recognises the urban character to the south of the Site and the ribbon of development part way up the west side of the Site.
3. RLC Table 3 describes the individual landscape elements of the Site and its context.
4. Provides a review of the Staffordshire County Council Planning for Landscape Change, 2000 publication defining which of the Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmland (ASVF) characteristic and incongruous features are applicable to the Site and context.
5. Identifies that like most of the ASVF character type it is not deemed to have the highest landscape sensitivity at a county level.
6. An analysis of the SMDC local Landscape Character and Settlement Assessment (LSCA) 2008 that the landscape at and around the Site is a more open landscape compared to other parts around Cheadle with fewer hedgerow trees.
7. The Landscape, Local Green Space and Heritage Impact Study from August 2016 is reviewed and landscape comments on allocated housing site CH132 and reserved sites CH080 and CH081 are found to be pertinent given their proximity to the Appeal Site.
8. The section confirms that there is no landscape designation at or near to the Site.
9. The Site and context is confirmed as not a valued landscape for the purposes of NPPF 187a).
10. After detailed analysis of the susceptibility of the individual elements of the Site's landscape character they are combined to confirm its overall **Medium susceptibility** to development of this sort.
11. RLC Table 6 provides lists of positive factors that add to landscape value and negative elements that reduce value.
12. The combined judgement is a **Medium value** for the overall Site's landscape and its context.
13. The judgements on landscape susceptibility and value are combined to arrive at a **Medium sensitivity** rating for the Site's landscape and its context.
14. The section then reviews the magnitude of change on the individual landscape elements during the construction and at completion concluding that the overall magnitude of landscape change is **Large**.
15. The resulting significance of landscape effect is **Major/Moderate, Adverse** for the construction and at completion stages.
16. The identifiable landscape mitigation measures are reviewed and listed at §5.49.
17. A contrast in tree planting form between the existing hedgerow and riparian trees and the proposed tree belts is identified.
18. RLC Table 9 conducts an assessment of the magnitude of change at Year 15 on the Site's individual landscape elements with the mitigation established.
19. The magnitude of landscape change to the overall Site and contextual area at Year 15 is assessed as **Medium/Large**.

20. The resulting significance of landscape effect with the mitigation in place at Year 15 is assessed as **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent**.

21. The positive landscape effects of possibly creating a wildflower meadow in the eastern stand-off and expanding the POS are considered as **Minor, Beneficial and Permanent** effects but do not reduce the assessed **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect on the Site and its context.

22. A summary of the significance of landscape effects on the individual Site elements is provided between §5.62 and §5.72 for completeness.

23. The topic of urban encroachment into the countryside and where it is perceived from is addressed within the visual effects section.

6.0 Visual baseline and resulting effects

- 6.1 This section establishes the visual baseline for the Site and the surrounding area to establish who could have the opportunity to see the proposals and from where. The Appellant’s submitted Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) models the same (**CD2.6 Figure 6**) and I accept it as a good starting point to establish potential visibility to the Site.
- 6.2 The application LVA (**CD2.6 §4.14-§4.27**) identifies 12 No. representative viewpoints around the Site and I consider that the locations are fair and reasonable. After I attended Site for the first time I added a thirteenth from the A521 - Leek Road in the vicinity of Harewood Park Care Home.
- 6.3 The following table identifies visual receptors around the Site.

RLC Table 11 – Identification of visual receptor groups

Receptor Type	Receptor groups affected	Representative viewpoint
Local Roads (vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians)	Froghall Road – various places Hammersley Hall Road Leek Road	VPs 4, 4a, 5 & 12 VPI
Public Rights of Way	FP40 to south and east FP38, FP39 and FP48 to south east FP31 to the west	VPs 1, 2 & 3 VPs 10, 8 & 9 respectively VPs 6 & 7
Local Residents	Residents on Froghall Road Residents to north side of Hammersley Hayes Road Residents of Broad Hayes Park Residents in local farms including Broad Haye Farm	None taken as private VPI VP2 None taken as private
Cultural & Civic Areas	None	N/A
Sports & Leisure	Public Open Space to north of Hammersley Hall Road	VPI

Employment locations	Workers in adjacent fields	None taken
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Promoted viewpoints, protected views, designed vistas and scenic views

- 6.4 There are no promoted viewpoints as marked on OS Maps or within local authority literature that take views across the Site.
- 6.5 Protected views are rare in planning terms and unsurprisingly there are none in the area. SMDC do not follow a policy of proscribing which views are worthy of protection but their LSCA, 2008 does identify significant views with regards to the setting of towns in the district. Only one significant view is identified for Cheadle and this is from Hare Lane to the east of the town. The Site does not form a prominent part of the view from this elevated viewpoint.
- 6.6 Designed vistas are also lacking in the area but the siting of Broad Haye Farm in a prominent position on the valley side with its principal elevation facing east to take in the panoramic view across the Cecilly Brook valley appears intentional.
- 6.7 Longer scenic views that take in the Site are available from Froghall Road largely when travelling southwards towards Cheadle. There are also scenic, panoramic views from the east side of the Cecilly Brook valley looking back west towards Broad Haye Farm and the Site fields.

Agreement and disagreement with regards to visual effects

- 6.8 The LSoCG (**CD13.3 §5.2 & Appendix B**) has narrowed down differences of opinion with regards to visual effects considerably meaning that there are only five visual receptors where a difference of professional opinion exists, these are listed below with the visual receptor reference from the Appellant's LVA used for consistency:
- Receptor Group A – Residents of Froghall Road and Hammersley Hayes Road adjacent to Site;
 - Receptor Group C – Footpath FP40 users close to the south and east sides of the Site;
 - Receptor Group G – Footpath FP38 and FP39 users to south east of Site on the opposite side of the Cecilly Brook valley;
 - Receptor Group H – Froghall Road users near to the Site's main entrance and western flank; and
 - Receptor Group I – Froghall Road users north of the Site.

Representative viewpoint photography

- 6.9 I have attended Site on three occasions now and taken panoramic photography of representative viewpoints to illustrate how the Site appears at the moment and to consider what visual changes would occur if the proposals are built out in their indicated form. The viewpoints where there is a disagreement as to the scale of visual effects are presented overleaf on A3 sheets. One for each viewpoint.
- 6.10 Also presented in Appendix D are a series of single plate photographs that illustrate particular points of interest about the Site and in the surrounding area. They are not meant to represent views but rather capture features and characteristics.

Representative viewpoint photographs

Contents

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24-537 - Land to east of Froghall Road

Figure I - Representative Viewpoint Photography Location Plan



Key to Viewpoint Photographs

Taken 26th November and 5th December, 2024

The viewpoint numbering reflects the same viewpoints in the Application LVA (CD2.6)

- 1 - View west from Public Open Space towards rear of Froghall Road properties.
- 2 - View west from Footpath FP40 approaching Cheadle.
- 4 - View south east across the Site looking towards high ground east of Cheadle.
- 4a - View east across the Site at the approximate location of main Site access.
- 5 - View south towards Site and Cheadle from Froghall Road.
- 8 - View north west towards Site and west valley side from Footpath FP39.
- 9 - View north west from Cherry Lane (FP48) towards Site and western valley side

Viewpoint I – View west from Public Open Space to rear of Froghall Road properties



Rear of properties on Hammersley Hayes Road	Rear of Froghall Road ribbon properties	Limited planting in rear gardens	Three mature open field trees in inter-field hedge	Local ridge
Amenity grass of public open space	Open views to Site across post & wire fence	Hedge marks position of Froghall Road	Sense of sloping ground rising to the north	

Date of photography – 26/11/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/2.8
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – Adjacent

Notes

1. This is not a view from any of the Froghall Road or Hammersley Hayes Road properties as they are private views and should not be included in LVA work.
2. It is included to represent the close relationship of the rear gardens and rear elevations for residents backing onto the Site.
3. View taken from the edge of the Public Open Space set to the north of Hammersley Hall Road that abuts the proposed Site.
4. The blue arrow denotes the approximate extent of the proposed development in the view, at this close location it would extend further north (right) of the panorama as presented.
5. The view is open and the land is rising away from the viewer.
6. The Froghall Road properties appear quite prominent in the view as they are set on the local ridge and form part of the skyline.
7. The local ridge that the Site fields run up to prevent further sight to the west of Froghall Road.
8. There is a close and immediate view of the Site fields from the rear of this collection of properties. It is however recorded that private residents very rarely have a legal right to a view.
9. Visual receptors here are considered to be residential and they have a **High Sensitivity** to the change in view from their properties.
10. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Major** as there is no current or proposed separation between the rear of the and new dwellings.
11. On completion there would be a **Major, Adverse** visual effect for the residents.
12. Given the lack of any indicated stand off or landscape screening the visual effect at Year 15 remains at a **Major, Adverse and Permanent** visual effect.
13. The Appellants landscape advisors also consider there would be a *Major, Adverse* effect on completion but this would reduce to *Moderate, Adverse* after 15 years.

RYDER
 LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS

Client
 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Project
 Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle

Figure Title
 Viewpoint – N/A

Date 17/12/24	Scale Not to scale
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Job No 24-537	Figure No 01 - Sheet I	Rev
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Viewpoint 2 – View west from Footpath FP40 approaching Cheadle



Rear of Hammersley Haye Road properties

Open improved pasture field with tyre tracks after 'muck spreading'

Development would enclose view uphill to west

Inter-field hedgerow with notable trees

Froghall Road properties on lower west side part of Site

Foreground would be tapering part of eastern stand-off

Northern field of two is visible in part above the inter-field hedgerow



View east down FP40 that runs along the access to Broad Haye Farm

Date of photography – 26/11/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f2.8
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – Adjacent

Notes

1. View taken Footpath FP40 looking west across the lower Site field to the rears of the Froghall Road and Hammersley Haye Road properties.
2. The lower Site field is totally open and presents a piece of rising ground to the viewer on the footpath.
3. This viewpoint of FP40 is facing the current edge of Cheadle and is representative of the most visible section of residential development from this route.
4. The inset picture shows an illustrative picture of the scene facing east away from Cheadle.
5. The proposed housing would be infill the open ground of the field that provides the setting to FP40.
6. The eastern offset is immediately adjacent to FP40 so there is some open space running up to a proposed 10m wide landscape buffer before the housing blocks start.
7. Given the fact that the houses are set higher than the viewer on the rising ground they will be readily visible and will screen out sight to the west removing Froghall Road properties and the inter-field trees from the view. The appearance will be as walking through a more urbanised area.
8. Visual receptors here are considered to be leisure users choosing to walk on a rural path but with some appreciation of housing meaning they have a **Medium/High Sensitivity** to housing.
9. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Medium/Large** as the greater portion of the open field that forms the fore and mid-grounds of the view would change to housing.
10. On completion there would be a **Major/Moderate, Adverse** visual effect for users of Footpath FP40 along this stretch of the route.
11. With time and planting growth to the eastern buffer to the estate the houses would still be visible at a first floor level resulting in a **Moderate, Adverse** visual effect at year 15.



Client
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Project
 Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle

Figure Title
 Viewpoint 2

Date 17/12/24	Scale Not to scale
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Job No 24-537	Figure No 01 - Sheet2	Rev
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Viewpoint 4 – View south east across the Site looking towards high ground east of Cheadle



Field gate entry to southern Site field

Broad Haye Farm

Low highway field edge allows long views to east

Three notable inter-field trees

Edge of Cheadle set down on lower part of view

Housing proposals extend part way across the upper Site field


Hedge and tree removed to create site entrance

Unbroken rural landscape running up to high ground to east of Cheadle

Date of photography – 26/11/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 105mm f-stop f/2.8
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – 35m

Notes

1. View taken from the junction of the access road to recycling business and Froghall Road to the north of the Site access.
2. There is an attractive long view to the east over the low highway hedge with the upper site field forming the foreground of the view.
3. Hammersley Hall Road and the northern end of Froghall Road ribbon properties are visible set lower down in the view with a rising wooded backdrop that lies to the east of the town.
4. The proposed development would fill in the middle part of the upper field presenting a broadside of development to road users and truncating the longer, scenic view south east.
5. The openness of the Site's fields and the three hedgerow trees would be lost from view.
6. Visual receptors here are considered to be road users on Froghall Road, they have an agreed **Medium Sensitivity** to this form of development.
7. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Medium/Large** from this stretch as they would have the new houses set within the foreground and loss of the scenic long distance view as well.
8. On completion there would be a **Major/Moderate, Adverse** visual effect for people travelling on this stretch of Froghall Road.
9. With time and planting growth to the northern fringe to the estate the broad line of northern houses would still be clearly visible at first floor level above the tall hedge and occasional tree planting creating a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** visual effect and continued loss of the more attractive view to the south east.
10. This view would effectively become the gateway view into Cheadle for people entering the town from the north, there will be a sense of extension of built form up the hill both in the day and at night as well with house and street lights evident.

		
Client Staffordshire Moorlands District Council		
Project Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle		
Figure Title Viewpoint 4		
Date 17/12/24	Scale Not to scale	
Job No 24-537	Figure No 02 - Sheet3	Rev

Viewpoint 4a – View east across Site at the approximate location of main Site access



Lockwood Hall Farm Broad Haye Farm and outbuildings	Inter-field hedge with notable hedgerow trees	Long scenic views over the Site fields to the east	CHI32 beyond park homes	Low voltage power lines cross Site
	Field slopes away from western boundary	Broad Hayes Park adjacent to Hammersley Hayes Road		Tall part of roadside hedge to be felled

Date of photography – 26/11/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/2.8
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – Adjacent

Notes

1. View taken from the approximate position of the Site's proposed main access road about off Froghall Road.
2. The view from Froghall Road, where it available, is across the Site to the wooded high ground to the east of Cheadle.
3. It is a scenic view that currently has limited influence from built form in its make-up.
4. Broad Haye Farm is visible in the view and there is a clear visual separation between the urban edge of Cheadle and the farm put to active agricultural use.
5. Broad Haye Park which is the community of park homes is set to the east (left) of Hammersley Hayes Road and appears lower than the neighbouring houses. The allocated CHI32 site is set behind the park homes and will be partially visible lower down the valley side.
6. The new houses would extend into the upper field that forms the foreground to the view and block the longer view east.
7. Visual receptors here are considered to be road users on Froghall Road, they have a **Medium Sensitivity** to this form of development.
8. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Large** from this position as they look upon the centre of the proposals' western flank including the new access round about.
9. On completion there would be a **Major/Moderate, Adverse** visual effect for people looking to the south east and Broad Haye Farm as an isolated property would be lost from the view.
10. With time and planting growth to the western flank of the proposed development (Year 15) the houses would still be clearly visible, as would the new road arrangements but the visual effect would reduce to **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** with the aging of the estate's rawness and growth on the perimeter planting.



Client
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Project
Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle

Figure Title
Viewpoint 4a

Date 17/12/24	Scale Not to scale
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Job No 24-537	Figure No 02 – Sheet4	Rev
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Viewpoint 5 – View south towards Site and Cheadle from Froghall Road



Three hedgerow trees in inter-field hedge

Higher wooded ground to east of Cheadle

Existing built form of Cheadle set well down below eastern skyline


Low hedge with breaks allows appreciation of view

Froghall Road cresting hill and allowing establishment view of Cheadle

Date of photography – 5/12/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/5.6
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – 125m

Notes

1. View taken from Froghall Road to the north of the Site at the point where the road crests a local ridge and the view to the built form Cheadle is established.
2. The built form of Cheadle is seen set lower down the land form with high ground set above it to the east and south.
3. The mid ground of the view beyond the road side hedge would form a new, more prominent northern edge to the town at this gateway location.
4. Visual receptors here are considered to be road users on Froghall Road travelling through the rural gap between Kingsley Halt to Cheadle, they have a **Medium/High Sensitivity** given this is their establishment, gateway view towards Cheadle. This is slightly higher than other parts of the road but reflects the increased value of the view and susceptibility of the viewers after travelling through a rural gap.
5. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Medium** from this position as they look upon the new unscreened northern housing line to the development, set on the highest point of the Site.
6. On completion there would be a **Moderate, Adverse** visual effect for people looking south from this position as they travel towards Cheadle.
7. With time and planting growth to the northern fringe the upper parts of the houses would remain visible as would the sense of development reaching up the high ground but the visual effect would reduce to **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent**.
8. The northern housing line, combined with the developing screening will reduce the amount of the eastern higher ground visible and the three notable inter-field trees.

		
Client		
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Project		
Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle		
Figure Title		
Viewpoint 5		
Date	Scale	
17/12/24	Not to scale	
Job No	Figure No	Rev
24-537	02 - Sheet5	

Viewpoint 8 – View north west towards Site and west valley side from Footpath FP39




Farm track leading to Woodheadhall Farm	CHI32 Allocation field	Froghall Road ribbon discrete in view	Broad Haye Farm and outbuildings	High ground that the Site runs up
Riparian trees following Cecilly Brook	Broad Hayes Park	Lower Site field with three trees and upper field beyond		Cattle grazing as typical ASVF land use

Date of photography – 26/11/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f4.5
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – 730m

Notes

1. This view is taken from Footpath 39 which at this point runs along the access track to Woodheadhall Farm seen to the left of the view.
2. Broad Haye Hall Farm is set in a prominent position on the western valley side within a collection of pasture fields giving the farm its separation for the edge of Cheadle and its sense of isolation.
3. The high ground of the local ridge that runs to the west of Broad Haye Farm forms the skyline and restricts views further west in that part of the view.
4. The open ground of the Site's twin fields can be seen running up the local ridge and the proposals would be clearly visible in the view extending urban built form up the slope and away from the current settlement edge of Cheadle.
5. The collection of houses at the Site would also narrow the gap between Broad Haye Farm and the current edge of Cheadle reducing the farm's appearance as an isolated, rural property.
6. The CHI32 allocated site is seen on the lower ground to the south east of Broad Hayes Park but running down the hill below existing settlement.
7. Visual receptors here are considered to be rural path users but with view to existing built form so have a **Medium/High Sensitivity** to the development of this form.
8. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Medium/High** as the proposals would extend up the high ground and effectively tie Broad Haye Farm into the edge of settlement..
9. On completion there would be a **Major/Moderate, Adverse and Temporary** visual effect for this section of Footpath 39.
10. With time and growth of the eastern buffer planting the visual effect would reduce to a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** level but the sense of an open valley side would be lost as would clear pasture field gap to Broad Haye Farm.

		
Client Staffordshire Moorlands District Council		
Project Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle		
Figure Title Viewpoint 8		
Date 17/12/24	Scale Not to scale	
Job No 24-537	Figure No 02 - Sheet6	Rev

Viewpoint 9 – View north west from Cherry Lane (FP 48) towards Site and western valley side



Allocated site CHI32

Open ground of twin fields at the Site

Broad Haye Farm and outbuildings

Rounded land form can be seen dipping back down to north

Woodland block on horizon

Cecilly Brook at lowest point of valley

Date of photography – 26/11/24
 Camera – Canon EOS 6D
 Height of lens – 1.5m
 Lens focal length – 50mm f-stop f/4.5
 No. of photographs stitched – 4
 Approximate distance to Site – 760m

Notes

1. This view is taken from FP48 that runs along Cherry Lane near its junction with FP39.
2. It looks straight across the Cecilly Brook valet towards Broad Hayes Fram mid-wau up the opposite valley side in a prominent position central on the local undulating land form.
3. The proposed houses would be seen running up the local land form and closing the gap with Broad Haye Farm.
4. They would be seen extending higher up the rounded land form than Broad Haye Fram which in visual terms will add to their notability when compared to the existing edge of Cheadle and Broad Haye Farm further down the valley side.
5. The view from this side of the valley would also experience removal of the hedged field patterning to the south of Broad Haye Farm and replacement with urban form.
6. Visual receptors here are considered to be rural path users but with sight to existing built form so have a **Medium/High Sensitivity** to the proposed development type.
7. The magnitude of visual change is considered to be **Medium/High** as the proposals would extend up the high ground and effectively tie Broad Haye Farm into the edge of settlement..
8. On completion there would be a **Major/Moderate, Adverse and Temporary** visual effect for this section of Footpath 39.
9. With time and growth of the eastern buffer planting the visual effect would reduce to a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** level but the sense of an open valley side would be lost at the Site as would the clear pasture field gap to Broad Haye Farm.

RYDER
 LANDSCAPE CONSULTANTS

Client
 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Project
 Land to east of Froghall Road, Cheadle

Figure Title
 Viewpoint 7

Date
 17/12/24

Scale
 Not to scale

Job No
 24-537

Figure No
 02 - Sheet7

Rev

Visual intrusion into the countryside

- 6.11 RfR2 explains that the proposals will lead to a prominent visual intrusion into the countryside.
- 6.12 Intrusion in a landscape and visual sense occurs where a feature, or in this case residential development, extends into an area and leads to notable change. There are several factors to consider when determining if a development is intrusive or not. I list the factors I would typically consider and then review each in turn:
- Is the proposed development in keeping or in contrast with the existing surroundings?
 - Do the proposals extend beyond existing physical, or perceived boundaries?
 - Do the proposals spatially fill in or round off an area of development?
 - Is there a difference in form, scale, colour, texture and pattern?
 - How the proposals relate to existing levels?
 - Is the intrusion actually appreciable from public locations?
 - Is it in a prominent or discrete location?
 - Can the intrusion be mitigated and visual integration achieved?
- 6.13 **In keeping or contrast?** - I consider the proposals are out of keeping with the rural landscape that surrounds the north side Cheadle and the majority of the Site. There is a degree of consistency in terms of matching existing residential built form with two storey dwellings. However the spatial arrangement of the proposed contemporary housing area will be in contrast to the ribbon form of development along Froghall Road, the varying architectural style of properties along Hammersley Hall Road and the lower regular layout of the park homes on Broad Hayes Park.
- 6.14 **Extending boundaries I** - The proposals extend both physically and perceptually up the hill from the Froghall Road ribbon of semi-detached properties for a distance of 150m measured from the end Froghall property to the proposed redline boundary in the higher northern field. There will a perceived sense of extending up the hill and out into the countryside as experienced by vehicle users who see this boundary marked by the national speed limit sign and street lighting stopping at the end of the housing ribbon. If the extension is measured from the end of the CHI32 allocation near Broad Hayes Park which will be the foreseeable development edge then the physical extension is greater at approximately 250m.

- 6.15 **Extending boundaries 2** - Travelling southbound along Froghall Road, the current sense of entering Cheadle is achieved at the 30mph speed signs next to the ribbon of houses. There is also an alteration to the first sighting of Cheadle further north of the Site, again from Froghall Road as discussed for VP5. The impression of the settlement being set down in the lower parts of the valley as currently experienced will change significantly with a prominent, straight edge of development set closer to the crest of the hill that allows the first appreciation of the town when travelling from the north. There is also a notable change to the road corridor should a roundabout be constructed as they are not prevalent at the edges of the town.
- 6.16 **Extending boundaries 3** – Broad Haye Farm acts as a perceptual marker in the landscape. Its appearance as a prominent isolated rural property in views, particularly from the east, gives it an almost ‘rural milestone’ quality that people can judge development extent against. The Appeal proposals may not reach as far as the farm but they clearly reduce the physical gap to the farm and shorten the distance between the urban edge and the rural milestone.
- 6.17 **Filling in or rounding off** – the proposals do neither. The extension northwards required to accommodate the proposed access to Site prevents any sense of rounding off. In purely spatial terms it could be argued that there is a degree of infilling between Froghall Road and Broad Hayes Park but this does not take account of other landscape and visual changes associated with the change of use of this land.
- 6.18 **Form, scale, colour, texture and pattern** – given that the proposals are purely in outline with no prescribed up to figure these factors cannot be specifically commented upon and many of these elements are controllable through Reserved Matters processes. However it is fair to acknowledge a probable increase in density and different housing form between the existing dwellings and the likely contemporary estate that would come forward if granted consent.
- 6.19 **Relation to existing levels** – encroachment can occur when development is seen to climb up or down existing topographic features. In this case there would be clear climbing of the local ridge that Froghall Road runs up. There is housing on other high areas in Cheadle such as off Leek Road (up to 200m AOD) but it would be seen to be extending up a prominent local ridge to the north of the town. It would also be the largest area of contemporary housing set at a high level within Cheadle with the Site ranging between 175m-190m AOD. Existing ‘high’ housing is typically single lanes and smaller in numbers.
- 6.20 **Appreciable from public locations** – the extension of built form will be readily appreciable from public locations. Working from west to east users on Froghall Road will experience the extension whether travelling north or southbound, walkers on FP40 will see the expansion as

they look onto the east side of the proposals and likewise users of Cherry Lane and Footpaths FP38, FP39 and FP48 will all be able to see and appreciate the extension.

- 6.21 **Prominent or discrete location** – The proposals are positioned in a prominent location towards the upper part of a local ridge line that is appreciable from an adjacent busy road (Froghall Road) and from rural footpath across the valley to the east where with distance the local landform is even more evident.
- 6.22 **Mitigation to achieve assimilation** – I conclude that it would not be possible to achieve full assimilation of the proposals within the surrounding open landscape in this part of the ASVF. Road users on Froghall Road will always be aware of the built form they are travelling past. Users of FP40 may eventually have reduced sight to the development's eastern edge given the tree belt but visual receptors across the valley to the east will see over the top of the buffer planting and appreciate the scale and extents of the development extending up the valley side.
- 6.23 **In summary** – taking all of the above points on intrusion into account I consider that it is fair and reasonable to describe the proposals as a prominent visual intrusion into the countryside.

Section 6 Summary Box

Section 6 addresses matters associated with the visual effects the proposals would cause;

- It starts by considering which visual receptor groups would experience change to their views.
- By reference to the Landscape Statement of Common Ground (**CD 13.3 §5.2**) it is able to narrow the discussion to five visual receptor groups.
- By use of panoramic photography of representative viewpoints analysis of the visual changes each of the five groups would experience is presented.
- They confirm that I consider there would be a greater visual effects experienced by all of these receptor groups at Year 15 even with established mitigation proposals than assessed in the Application LVA (**CD 2.6**).
- Through the use of a series of questions regarding intrusive development into the rural landscape I find that the proposals do lead to a prominent visual intrusion into the countryside.
- It further concludes that the mitigation proposals as indicated on the Parameters Masterplan would not be successful at preventing the prominent sense of intrusion into the countryside to the north of Cheadle.

7.0 Review of the cited planning policies from RfR4

7.1 The planning policies from RfR2 with a landscape dimension have been agreed between parties in the LSoCG (**CDI3.3 §3.1 & §3.2**) and are listed below:

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted September 2018)

- Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting;
- Policy C3 – Green Infrastructure;
- Policy NE2 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows; and
- Policy SS10 - Other Rural Areas Area Strategy.

The Council also consider the following two Local Plan policies to be of relevance to landscape and visual matters and the appeal proposals:

- Policy SSI 1 - Churnet Valley Strategy; and
- Policy DC4 - Local Green Spaces.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Paragraph 135 Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

Paragraph 187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

7.2 Before discussing the landscape elements of the cited policies I reiterate the fact that I am not a professional Planner and am not conducting a weighting, or planning balance exercise. That is the task of Ms Jo Gregory as an experienced Chartered Town and Country Planner who will be looking at the policies and the NPPF as a whole. I seek to draw attention to how the landscape and visual effects may be taken into account when deciding if there is conflict or compliance with these various policies.

DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting

- 7.3 This is the only Local Plan policy that is explicitly cited in RfR2. It consists of five sub-points as listed in the digital extract of the policy box below.

Policy DC 3

Landscape and Settlement Setting

The Council will protect and, where possible, enhance local landscape and the setting of settlements in the Staffordshire Moorlands by:

1. Resisting development which would lead to prominent intrusion into the countryside or have a significant adverse impact on the character or the setting of a settlement or important views into and out of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;
2. Supporting development which respects and enhances local landscape character and which reinforces and enhances the setting of the settlement as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character evidence;
3. Supporting developments which conserve or enhance the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, walls, watercourses or ponds;
4. Supporting opportunities to positively manage the landscape and use sustainable building techniques and materials which are sympathetic to the landscape;
5. Ensuring that development does not adversely affect the wider setting of the Peak District National Park.

- 7.4 Of these sub-points it is Points 1, 2 & 3 that are directly applicable to the proposals. Point 4 is partly applicable as described below and Point 5 is not applicable as development at the Site does not affect the wider setting of the Peak District.
- 7.5 **Point 1** - The finding of a prominent intrusion into the countryside in my Section 6 means that there is clear conflict with Point 1. The proposals will have an adverse effect on the setting of Cheadle as experienced from the north on Froghall Road (VP 5) with the change to the gateway into the town and the presentation of a broad side of development higher up the local ridge. The single important view from Hare Lane as identified in the Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (LSCA) 2008 (**CD 9.4 – Cheadle Setting Plan**) would not be affected by the proposals. On balance there appears to be more conflict than compliance with Part 1 of DC3.

- 7.6 **Point 2** seeks to support development which respects and enhances local landscape character. It is a matter of common ground that the proposals will lead to Adverse effects on the Site and its immediate context and they cannot be seen to respect or enhance local landscape character. There is conflict with Part 2 so support cannot be given to the proposals.
- 7.7 **Point 3** requires the conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity qualities of any natural or man-made features within the landscape, such as trees, woodlands and hedgerows amongst other listed features, I take this policy to mean the conservation and enhancement of existing features found within the landscape and not the creation of new ones such as the landscape buffers. The proposals do not respect the hedgerows on Site with either their removal for the sake of creating visibility splays or enclosure within housing area. Two trees (T8 & T9) are also felled to create the visibility splays whilst the setting of the three prominent hedgerow trees (T4 to T6) is reduced by enclosing them within built form to their north and south lessening their contribution to the wider landscape character. I consider that bio-diversity qualities of existing trees and hedges is not conserved or enhanced by the proposals.
- 7.8 I acknowledge that numerically more trees, hedgerow and scrub planting is proposed than removed but I have concerns about the appearance of this planting in the ASVF and how appropriate it will look. The bio-diversity value of the proposals is addressed by Policy C3 – Green Infrastructure.
- 7.9 The partial applicability of Point 4 is that given the outline nature of the application with no definitive indication of the use of sustainable building techniques and appropriate materials yet the landscape effect cannot be determined at this stage. The potential land management of the eastern stand-off as a wildflower meadow could be classed as a beneficial effect but it is not definitive that this will occur as it may be retained as a smaller field for dairy farming.
- 7.10 Of the clearly applicable points (Points 1 to 3) the proposals appear to be in conflict with all three.

C3 - Green Infrastructure

- 7.11 Policy C3 has six points labelled a) to f) as contained in the digital extract of the policy box below. Of these all of them could be considered potentially applicable to the proposals. Given the outline nature of the design it cannot be definitively confirmed at this stage whether the scheme if granted consent would comply with the individual parts of the policy or it read as a whole.

Policy C 3

Green Infrastructure

The Council will, through partnership working with local communities, organisations, landowners and developers, develop an integrated network of high quality and multi-functional green infrastructure that will:

- a) Support and improve the provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities for local communities and enhance the settings of neighbourhoods;
- b) Link existing and potential sites of nature conservation value and historic landscape features, create new wildlife habitats, increase biodiversity, and increase tree cover where it is appropriate to the landscape;
- c) Enhance the natural, man-made and cultural features that are crucial to the local landscape and create opportunities for the restoration of degraded landscapes and the enhancement of the urban fringe;
- d) Mitigate the negative effects of climate change and maximise potential climate change benefits including effective flood risk and waterways management;
- e) Create appropriate access for a wide range of users to enjoy the countryside, including improved linkages to and provision of formal and informal recreation opportunities and accessible woodland areas, encouraging walking, cycling and horse riding;
- f) Contribute to the diversification of the local economy and tourist development through the enhancement of existing, and provision of new facilities.

The Council will identify, protect and enhance Green Infrastructure assets through the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

- 7.12 **Part a)** – partial compliance as open space provision is included with the proposed Crescent Green but no defined sports facilities at this stage.
- 7.13 **Part b)** – the proposals do not link any existing or potential sites of nature conservation value. Arguably they reduce the appreciation of Broad Haye Farm as a historic landscape feature and reduce the appearance of the hedgerow network as older patterning in the landscape. The last three elements of new wildlife habitats, increase biodiversity and tree cover is achievable given the proposed buffer planting. However it is telling that the caveat ‘*where appropriate*’ is included after increasing tree cover which recognises that for certain landscapes tree planting is not appropriate, or can appear uncharacteristic as expressed about planting in this open field system.
- 7.14 **Part c)** – the proposals diminish the landscape setting of Broad Haye Farm as a cultural feature in the rural landscape. The landscape is not degraded so does not require restoration.

7.15 Part d) – the SuDS proposals may be indicated as a flood risk management action but this benefits the development scheme and not wider flood risk or climate change. Insufficient details at this Outline stage to judge potential compliance or conflict.

7.16 Part e) – a linkage to Footpath FP40 is provided that will allow access to the wider countryside to the east but no areas of accessible countryside or woodland are created by the proposals. Indeed people will be excluded from the eastern stand-off to Broad Haye Farm

7.17 Part f) – the contribution to the tourism economy does not appear applicable unless some new feature is included as the Parameters Masterplan is developed. Cheadle is identified as Character Area 8 in the Churnet Valley Masterplan as a gateway to the area and its visitor facilities.

Policy NE2 – Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

7.18 As a Policy NE2 seeks to retain these features, particularly seek protection of ancient woodland or veteran trees and where felling is necessary requires replacement ideally on Site and to create a greater canopy quantum than that which has been removed.

Policy NE 2

Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

The Council will protect existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, in particular, ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows from loss or deterioration.

This will be achieved by:

- Requiring that existing woodlands, healthy trees and hedgerows are retained and integrated within a proposed development unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh their loss;
- Requiring new developments to provide tree cover that secures a good level of sustainability through tree retention, planting and soft landscaping, including where possible the on site replacement of any trees that are removed with sufficient tree planting to replace or increase the canopy cover on-site as appropriate. Landscaping schemes will also be required to mitigate against negative landscape impact and complement the design of new development and make provision for future maintenance. Where it is not possible to secure this new or replacement tree planting within the site, the Council will work with applicants to ascertain if a suitable site(s) can be found off-site for replacement planting in the locality;
- Resisting development that would directly or indirectly damage existing ancient woodland, veteran trees and ancient or species-rich hedgerows.

The Council will refer to its adopted Tree Strategy in the consideration of proposals; and will in general seek to retain as many trees and as much hedgerow on site as possible.

- 7.19 The proposals are both in compliance and conflict where trees and hedgerows are concerned. As woodland is not a feature of the Site and its context this part of the policy is not applicable.
- 7.20 Conflict in terms of removal of 170m of native hedgerow and 2 No. trees to create the main access onto Site.
- 7.21 Compliance with largely retaining the inter-field hedgerow, the three handsome Category A trees it contains and other occasional trees and hedges around the Site. Compliance also by replacing the felled stock on Site through the planting of landscape buffers.
- 7.22 Subject to any detailed design proposals the development appears to have the ability to comply with this Policy when taken as a whole.

Policy SS10 - Other Rural Areas Strategy

- 7.23 SS10 is a multi-faceted policy that addresses many topics regarding development within the countryside. It's policy box runs over two pages and is not repeated in entirety but rather the part that relates to landscape character is set below.

Policy SS 10

Other Rural Areas Strategy

The other rural areas comprise the countryside and the green belt outside of the development boundaries of the towns and larger villages and the open countryside surrounding the smaller villages.

These areas will provide only for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside, supports the rural diversification and sustainability of the rural areas, promotes sustainable tourism or enhances the countryside. The Council and its partners will achieve this through the following actions:

3. Enhance and conserve the quality of the countryside by:
 - Giving priority to the need to protect the quality and character of the area and requiring all development proposals to respect and respond sensitively to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape;

- 7.24 It is common ground that the proposals lies outside the development boundary for Cheadle.
- 7.25 The proposals have been found to not respect or respond sensitivity to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape so are in conflict with this part of the Policy SS10 – Part 3. However the policy needs to be considered as a whole by a Planner to understand the overall level of compliance and conflict so a balanced application of the policy is applied.

Policy SS I – Churnet Valley Strategy

- 7.26 The intention of this strategy is promote sustainable tourism and rural regeneration in this distinctive valley. It references the Churnet Valley Masterplan as a comprehensive framework for development in the Churnet Valley and that development should be in accordance with the Masterplan.
- 7.27 The whole of Cheadle is shown on policy mapping as set within the Churnet Valley Masterplan area. It is given the character area No.8 in the Churnet Valley Masterplan document and is recommended for promotion as a gateway to the Churnet Valley. However Cheadle is not included in the Churnet Valley Landscape Character Assessment which starts approximately 300m north of the Site. It is fair to say that the Site lies on the closer side of Cheadle to the more distinctive landscape areas of the Churnet Valley. Visitors using Froghall Road to access locations in the valley will pass the Site and indeed brown tourism signs direct people down the road to reach Froghall and there is a waymarked cycling route on the road as well. The Site will form the last impression of the town as people leave Cheadle or the first if they are travelling out of the valley to use the services of the promoted gateway town.
- 7.28 In reviewing the policy box towards its end the following two landscape orientated points are apparent.

Policy SS 11

Churnet Valley Strategy

The Churnet Valley is identified as an area for sustainable tourism and rural regeneration. The Churnet Valley Masterplan provides a comprehensive framework for development in the Churnet Valley and development should be in accordance with the Masterplan.

Any development should be of a scale and nature and of a high standard of design which conserves and enhances the heritage, landscape and biodiversity of the area. Strong sustainable development and environmental management principles should also be demonstrated. The consideration of landscape character will be paramount in all development proposals in order to protect and conserve locally distinctive qualities and sense of place and to maximise opportunities for restoring, strengthening and enhancing distinctive landscape features.

Complementary and sensitive highway improvements to access routes and/or measures to support other alternative means of access will be required to serve any developments which generate significant additional demand for travel.

- 7.29 The consideration of landscape character is described as paramount and the proposals will cause harm to the local landscape character at and around the Site.

- 7.30 The placement of a roundabout on the edge of the settlement to access the proposed housing is not considered complimentary to the character of Froghall Road, nor a particularly sensitive highway improvement but one that is necessary to facilitate the development at this location.
- 7.31 The weight given to these effects and the policy as a whole is a matter for the Planners assisting the Inquiry and the Inspector as they take their decision.
- 7.32 For the purpose of clarity there is no alleged harm caused to the Churnet Valley as a landscape resource in itself. The change would occur within the approach to the valley that lies within the overall Churnet Valley Masterplan area.

Policy DC4 – Local Green Space

- 7.33 This is a relative short policy requiring development proposals within identified Local Green Spaces (LGS) to be tested against national Green Belt policies,

Policy DC 4

Local Green Space

The Council has identified and will protect from inappropriate development Local Green Space shown on the policies maps and listed in Appendix 4. Development proposals within a Local Green Space will be assessed against national Green Belt policy.

- 7.34 I have used the SMDC Interactive Policy Mapping web-pages⁴ and checked the list on Appendix 4 to confirm that the Site is not part of any LGS, is not adjacent to any LGS and the nearest being the Cecilly Brook Corridor.
- 7.35 The proposals would not affect the landscape character or function of the Cecilly Brook Corridor LGS and there is compliance from a landscape perspective with this policy.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

- 7.36 Recognising that the NPPF has to be read as a whole and that not all of its contents are applicable to these proposals I find the following paragraphs as being the most relevant when considering landscape and visual matters.

⁴ [Interactive planning map - Staffordshire Moorlands District Council](#) – accessed 18/12/24

- 7.37 **Paragraph 135 c) - Sympathetic to local character** and history, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities) – there is no notable innovation from the proposals and they are not sympathetic to local character. There is apparent conflict with this part of the Framework;
- 7.38 **Paragraph 180 a) – Valued landscape** is not applicable as it is common ground between parties that the Site and immediate surroundings are not a valued landscape for the purpose of this paragraph; and
- 7.39 **Paragraph 180 b) – Intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside** is applicable and how the proposals affect it is a key consideration of the landscape and visual effects of the proposals. As there is both landscape and visual harm identified to the Site and its contextual area there is apparent conflict with this part of the Framework.

Section summary

- 7.40 In reviewing the proposals against the landscape orientated sections of policy DC3 cited in RfR2 I have found clear conflict with its applicable parts. The summary box below addresses all the local and national planning policies cited in the LSoCG (**CD13.3 §3.1 & §3.2**) as being most relevant to landscape and visual matters and these appeal proposals.

Section 7 Summary Box

That the proposals are in conflict with Points 1,2 & 3 of Policy **DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting** as stated in RfR2. With regards to the other policies with a landscape or visual dimension this section found.

- **C3 – Green Infrastructure** - that there is both conflict and compliance with the six strands of the policy.
- **NE4 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows** - Subject to any detailed design proposals the development appears to have the ability to comply with this Policy when taken as a whole.
- **SS10 – Other Rural Areas Strategy** – that the adverse effects to landscape character is applicable to Sub-point 3 – Bullet 1 but the overall policy needs to be judged as a whole by a Planner.
- **SS11 – Churnet Valley Strategy** – The Site is within the Churnet Valley Masterplan area where the consideration of effects on landscape character is paramount. The policy also requires complimentary and sensitive highway improvements which is of concern regarding the potential effects of the main access roundabout.

- **C4 – Local Green Space** - The proposals would not affect the landscape character or function of the Cecilly Brook Corridor as the nearest LGS and there is compliance with this policy.

With regards to the NPPF policies the following conclusions are drawn:

- **Paragraph 135 c) - Sympathetic to local character** – the proposals are not sympathetic to local character. There is apparent conflict with this part of the Framework; and
- **Paragraph 187 b) – Intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside** is applicable and there is apparent conflict with this part of the Framework as the intrinsic character and natural beauty of the Site and its context is not retained.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 My evidence is in relation to landscape and visual matters as primarily contained in Reason for Refusal No.2 (RfR2) which addresses the character and appearance effects that would be brought about by the proposals to build housing on land to the east of Froghall Road, Cheadle.

8.2 The landscape and visual harms referenced in RFR2 are summarised below:

Landscape effects:

- Proposals do not respect or respond to key characteristics of this landscape character type;
- The proposed roundabout will necessitate the loss of the whole frontage hedge;
- No existing landscape feature defining the northern boundary; and
- Overall the proposal will not respect or enhance local landscape character

Visual effects experienced from:

- From Froghall Road to the west;
- From the south, in particular from Hammersley Hayes Road (also the route of Public Footpath Cheadle 40);
- In longer views from Public Footpaths Cheadle 38 and 39;
- Encroach into the landscape setting of the isolated farmhouse (Broad Haye Farm); and
- Result in a prominent visual intrusion into the countryside.

8.3 All of the above character and appearance harm was found to amount to a conflict with Local Plan Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting and the NPPF which has taken to include Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

8.4 I conclude that SMDC were correct in citing conflict with DC3 and the NPPF given the following notable landscape and visual effects.

Landscape effects

8.5 That building up the local landscape ridge which forms the west side of the Cecilly Brook valley expands Cheadle away from its current lower valley positions where it appears more appropriate in the landscape.

- 8.6 That the proposals will present a new 'blunt end' of development towards the top of the local ridge and extend the sense of built form away from the settlement gateway which currently stands at the end of the Froghall Road ribbon of houses.
- 8.7 Froghall Road will experience a notable, adverse change in its character with the formation of the new entrance roundabout, removal of roadside hedgerow and trees and setting urban form to its eastern side for an additional 150m.
- 8.8 The proposals would reduce the rural open space to Broad Haye Farm that provides an agricultural setting to the Grade II Listed building and that the remaining offset will not appear as large an area of functioning farmland as the current series of fields. With Broad Haye Farm losing its sense of separation and being tied closer to the urban edge of Cheadle it reduces the sense of time depth that it provides to the local landscape compared to when it is experienced with a fully rural context.
- 8.9 The three Category A trees (T4 to T6) that stand as mature hedgerow standards between the two Site fields will be effectively removed from contributing to the wider landscape even though they are not identified to be felled. Their enclosure within the proposed built form will remove them as a local landmark and their scale and form will only be appreciable from within the new development.
- 8.10 It is accurate to state that more trees can be planted than are felled, or even that currently exist in total around the Site fields. However this does not address the fact that tree planting as proposed in the northern and eastern tree belts is uncharacteristic to this more open part of the Ancient Slopes and Valley Farmlands. The planting as indicated will exacerbate the loss of openness from the landscape.
- 8.11 I conclude that the level of landscape effects with the mitigation in place at Year 15 is of **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** significance and that the proposed landscape mitigation measures would not be effective at assimilating the proposals with the adjacent rural landscape.

Visual effects

- 8.12 The landscape changes described above will form a clear and prominent intrusion into the rural landscape to the north of Cheadle and would be clearly evident from a number of public locations as well as the residential properties that fringe the Site to the south and west. Working in a west to east direction the public locations that will experience the greatest visual change are described below.

-
- 8.13 Road users on Froghall Road will experience at close hand the new housing and changed road layout. The houses and northern tree belt restrict the scenic open views to the east that currently exist from the higher part of Froghall Road.
- 8.14 Road users on Hammersley Hall Road and particularly the users of Footpath FP40 that follows the road and then the rural track to Broad Haye Farm will have their view of the open field system to the north replaced with the built form of the development reducing the rural quality of their view and sense of entering into the countryside.
- 8.15 Finally the view from the east side of the Cecilly Brook valley that is taken from Footpaths FP38, FP39 and FP48 as well as Cherry Lane have the benefit of distance. This allows sight of the development within its wider context and these viewpoints will clearly see its encroachment up the local ridge and away from Cheadle's settlement edge. This view of the Appeal proposals rising up the valley side would still occur with the allocated site CH132 built out. The narrowing of the gap between settlement edge and Broad Haye Farm would also be evident with the farm not appearing as isolated or within a recognisable pasture setting to its southern side.
- 8.16 I conclude that the proposed mitigation measures do not address these adverse visual effects as they neither screen the proposals, or set the proposed development within a planted framework that appears appropriate to and characteristic of the immediate setting.

Final summary

- 8.17 For all the reasons explored above I conclude that SMDC were correct to identify conflict with Local Plan Policy DC3 – Landscape and Settlement Setting and the NPPF as stated in RfR2. I conclude that overall the proposal will not respect or enhance local landscape character and would be seen, experienced and judged as prominent intrusion into the pastoral landscape to the north of Cheadle..
- 8.18 I consider there to be notable adverse effects to both the character and appearance of the Site and its surrounding landscape context from this development. The proposals will appear incongruous within this open, rural landscape, adversely affecting views from public locations local to and distant from the Site.

The following appendices are bound in a separate Appendix Report.

- A – Ryder Landscape Consultants' LVIA/LVA Methodology
- B – Published Landscape Character Information
- C – TGN 2/21 –Table I – Valued Landscape Assessment
- D – Single Plate Illustrative Photography