High Peak BC Planning Reference –	HPK/2025/0123		
Site Name –	Rookery Farm Re-development		
Summary of proposals -	Residential Application – 4 new units & 1 retained unit		
Consultation Note Subject –	Landscape and Visual Matters		
Planning Case Officer –	James Stannard		
Landscape Comments Prepared By –	Stuart Ryder of Ryder Landscape Consultants		
Date of site visit —	16/7/25	**Date of notes No.1**	15/8/25
Summary of anticipated landscape and visual effects	There will be long-term **Moderate, Adverse** landscape effect at the Site and in its contextual area. There will be **Negligible** landscape effects in the wider area. Visually the proposals will have adverse effects on views from the Chapel Road corridor to the south, rural footpaths to the east of Site and from the south side of the valley facing the Site. The significance of these visual effects range from **Moderate, Adverse to Moderate/Minor, Adverse**.		

Dear Sir

ROOKERY FARM, CHAPEL ROAD, WHALEY BRIDGE – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONSULTATION

Thank you for appointing us to review the landscape and visual aspects of the submitted planning application. They are set down under the following headings;

1. Methodology
2. Site and surrounding's landscape character
3. Proposals for the site
4. Landscape effects
5. Visual effects from surrounding areas
6. Review of submitted LVIA
7. Summary of overall landscape and visual effects

1. Methodology

High Peak Borough Council (HPBC) appointed Ryder Landscape Consultants (RLC) to consider the submitted scheme and supporting documents in July 2025. Stuart Ryder an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect has reviewed the Landscape Proposals Plan by Barnes Walker Dwg No. M3648-PA-02-V5, the Landscape and Visual Appraisal M3648 -LVA 06.06-V6 again by Barnes Walker, aerial photography and Derbyshire County Council's Online PRoW Map information before attending Site. At Site local paths were walked, including those that climb the north side of the Randall Carr Brook valley side that Rookery Farm is located upon and those on the opposite side of the valley to take in the scene looking across the valley.

2. Site and surrounding's landscape character

The Site appears as a low intensity farm that has diversified into haulage as an activity to supplement farming. Its primary distinctive feature is its steeply sloping character with the land rising from its boundary with Chapel Road to the south at approximately 186m AOD running up to the existing farm building at 205m AOD and finishing at the northern top of the Site at 209m AOD. The change in level is approximately 25m which over the roughly 120m depth of the Site equates to at an average gradient of 1:5 across the Site. The steeply inclined valley side continues on past the farm to the north.

The Site in extent terms follows the field that the current farm is located in which is somewhat irregular in shape on the plan but looks more like a rhombus on Site when viewed from Chapel Road with the broader end at the road side apparently tapering up in dimension terms to a narrow top of the field. However when viewed from the opposite side of the valley it can be seen that the upper side of the Site is just as broad as the road side presence. At its broadest width it measures approximately 105m wide and as stated already the Site is about 120m deep.

The current farm building is set on a flattened area to the higher northern end of the Site. It appears as stone built with a slate roof but not of significant age. It is predominately a single storey property with a gable end facing out to Chapel Road that appears to be two storey or with a mezzanine level. The relative lowness of the property means that its sits 'low-down' in the landscape set below a mature 'shelter belt' of sycamore trees to its north. The materials are such that their colour and texture means they are largely recessive in the landscape and appear to match the local vernacular. However the existing building does not have any obvious architectural merit or age.

The existing farm building is approached via a straight up and down stone track set at 90° to the gradient. Set off this track and to either side of the farm house is a somewhat cluttered collection of farm machinery, domestic cars, HGV trailers, HGV cabs, touring caravan and bowsers. The larger HGV equipment is set to the lower, slightly flatter ground to the south of the Site just off Chapel Road.

Using the cardinal points of the compass the adjacent areas that form the context to the Site and with which it is judged are;

- ***North*** – Shelter belt of trees and rising pasture fields of geometrically shaped fields defined by drystone walls creating an overall upland landscape appearance.
- ***East*** – Sloping pasture field running down to Chapel Road with the insertion of two contemporary styled buildings towards the lower road level called Hey Top and Westways. These buildings appear relatively new in terms of materials and age of stone cladding but twin properties have stood here since before 1945 which is the earliest aerial photography that I have consulted which suggests a rebuild of the properties.
- ***South***– immediately south lies Chapel Road following the flatter valley floor of Randall Carr Brook as it flows east to west to run into Whaley Bridge itself. The valley bottom is relatively narrow like many of the upland valleys before running up the valley side to the south. The southern valley side has the Manchester to Buxton railway line running along it and a series of older houses centres around Cadster House. The buildings in this cluster have a sense of age and largely traditional architecture.
- ***West*** – lie some stone built cottages at Hill View to the lower road side level set behind tall hedges presumably to screen Chapel Road. These properties have a more treed backdrop leading to more pasture on the valley side. The western side of Rookery Farm is shown on historical maps as a quarry which has reverted back to tree cover now with it likely too steep and dangerous for pasture grazing.

Keeping to the topic of trees there are a relatively large number of sizeable, mature trees in the area with a notable alder trees near a stream that runs to the north side of Chapel Road. The sycamores in the northern shelter belt/former quarry add height and verdant presence to the scene as do the riparian trees that snake along the valley floor following the course of Randall Carr Brook.

The Site although unkempt at the moment is part of an agricultural landscape where pasture grazing dominates interspersed with small, wooded blocks. There are houses in the scene and they appear either set closer to road level off Chapel Road, or higher up the valley side to be with their associated

with farm land or to gain better views across the valley. The housing where present is set in small clusters usually with associated tall planting or shelter belts taking advantage of more shelter lower down the valley side.

The landscape in Character Area terms is part of the NCA 51 - Dark Peak and specifically the Settled Valley Pastures[1]. The Site accords with the main descriptors of key characteristics for this landscape character type (LCT) and I would class it and the surrounding area not as anomalies, but typical of this LCT.

I would not class the Site or the lower area as a 'valued landscape' as per the NPPF Para 187 a) meaning given the detracting communication features of the road and railway but higher up the valley side when looking across to other valley slopes / hills and the detracting features are screened by woodland it is more scenic and shares many elements similar to the Peak District National Park (PDNP). This scenic and picturesque quality of the landscape needs to be recognised.

For the purpose of clarity it is confirmed that the Site is not part of, or acts as a setting to the PDNP nor does it carry any other landscape designations for scenic, cultural or historical reasons.

3. Proposals for the Site

Development access is proposed to be moved from its central straight up and down position to form a junction off Chapel Road to the east side of the Site. This facilitates the formation of two houses at a lower level running in line with the current Hill View properties to the west.

The access route then runs up the sloping ground to form a 'swan-neck' access to achieve suitable gradients for the access and sufficient space for three detached properties to the higher north end of the Site. The three higher properties would comprise Rookery Farm itself set centrally between two new dwellings, one either side of it. The properties would be two storey and are described as having gritstone render finish and slate roofs to blend in.[2]

All the properties appear to have their principle elevation set facing south or south west towards Chapel Road. Garages are provided for each dwelling increasing the quantum of built form on the Site.

To create private spaces around the 5 No dwellings a mixture of hedges and retaining walls are indicated. Other boundary planting is indicated towards the eastern side of the Site boundary and running into the swan neck of the access road.

4. Landscape effects

The landscape at the Site and in its setting is not included in any national or local landscape designations, nor does it form the immediate setting to the Peak District National Park. It is outside of Built-up Area limits for Whaley Bridge and is therefore classed as Countryside and subject to Policies EQ2, EQ3 and E1 of the High Peak Local Plan – April 2016 as well as NPPF directions regarding the consideration of its intrinsic qualities – NPPF Paragraph 187 b).

The proposals will effectively turn the Site field into a residential area of five larger properties set ranging up the valley side.

The five dwellings (four proposed and one existing) will appear new in the landscape when first built but it is their form on the valley side that needs careful consideration. There are pockets of settlement along the valley but it is generally smaller and of one of two forms:

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[1] Landscape Character of Derbyshire – 4th Edition March 2014

[2] LVA Paragraphs 4.5 & 4.6

- Lower down the valley side and associated with Chapel Road such as Hill View; or
- Higher up the valley side and more akin to a farmstead building.

The suggested building form of ranging up the valley side is not typical of current settlement patterns. The building of the swan-neck access will effectively link the higher and lower parts of the Site and given their contemporaneous construction the Site will read as a whole field development rather than a lower, or upper field development.

Looking along the 1.5km stretch of Chapel Road that runs through the rural landscape between the outskirts of Whaley Bridge to the west and Tunstead Mill to the east there is no evident examples of what would be higher and lower positioning of properties. Cadster House and Cadster Farm to the south east of the Site does have some lower and higher development but it is largely not evident given the physical gap and screening effects of the riparian and railway trees separating the upper and lower sections.

There is also the question of a sense of settlement expansion should the proposed houses be built out. The addition of four further dwellings when combined with Hey Top and Westways to the east and Hill View and associated properties to the west will tip the balance from occasional way side properties to a small nucleus of dwellings at this point of the valley. Horwich End which is the cartographic name for this area will start to have a recognisable centre of built form.

The Site itself would lose any remaining semblance of a farm, or farm business and would take on the character of a block of contemporary houses set within the wider rural scene. Staying on the Site the management of levels leads to the curving access road and the need for retaining walls near the units. This would increase the sense of development and heighten the domestic character with the separate garage buildings adding further distinct built form to the Site.

The planting associated with the properties appears domestic in nature and should you be minded to approve the proposals careful treatment of how the plots are divided would be important to prevent a series of apparent fences or walls ranging up the valley side adding further uncharacteristic urban features within this rural landscape. The planting proposed to the eastern side of the Site to screen the boundary road appears more naturalistic in form.

In weighing up any landscape change the positive landscape effects need to be set against the adverse ones to arrive at an overall conclusion. I consider there to be three positive landscape character changes albeit one of these is caveated. The first is the removal of the collection of parked vehicles and machinery. I class this as a minor landscape benefit at most as rural landscapes are working landscapes and farms are not necessarily tidy places and vary with regards to farm types and activities. The second is the removal of the uncharacteristic conifer hedges. The third is additional planting but this is caveated because if it appears too domestic in scale and species types it will add to the sense of landscape character change rather than assimilate the proposals into the wider Settled Valley Pasture landscape.

I return to the significance of these landscape effects in Section 6 where I review the Applicant's LVA material.

5. Visual effects from surrounding areas

Visual receptors i.e. the people who would be able to see the proposed change at the Site are listed below with a commentary of the likely visual effects they would receive given after the bulleted list. This list presents the people who would experience the greatest visual change and includes nearby residents for completeness even though they do not have a private right to a view.

- Chapel Road users travelling in both directions;
- Footpath users to the east of the Site;
- Footpath users to the south of the Site on the opposite side of the valley;
- Viewers from higher ground on both sides of the valley;
- Residents to the east of the Site at Hey Top and Westways;
- Residents to the west of the Site at Hill View and associated houses; and
- Residents to the south side of the valley around Cadster House.

The visual change experienced by each group would include.

Chapel Road users would be able to see the proposed new dwellings in either direction of travel. The westbound direction of travel towards Whaley Bridge would experience the greater visual change as they are able to see the Site across open ground for longer than those travelling eastbound who experience the Site with tree planting in front of it until they are almost at the Site itself. For road users the houses would appear as an intensification of development. West bound travellers have Hey Top and Westways as part of their foreground view and the two sets of houses would be judged together even though remaining separated by a field width. The nature of the view is kinetic and relatively short but long enough to see and understand the location, form and scale of the development. I consider road users on this predominately rural section of the route to have a Medium sensitivity (Medium Susceptibility and Medium Value) and magnitude of effect to be Medium in scale. The initial change to their view has been judged as a **Moderate, Adverse** effect. With appropriate mitigation planting, particularly to the side boundaries this could be reduced to a **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent** effect in Year 15..

Footpath users to the east of the Site – use PRoW HP23 54/1 that starts to climb up the northern valley side to the east of the Hey Top and Westways properties. It runs north up the slope before tracking north east to continue the climb all the time passing through pasture fields that were being sheep grazed at the time of the survey. The path effectively parallels the Site's eastern boundary at a distance of approximately 160m. At this distance the whole of the Site's layout will be evident for parts of the path whilst other sections would benefit from the brow of the local ridge screening the proposals. Currently Rookery Farm is relatively discrete when viewed in summer conditions from this path given its one to one and half storey height and slightly sunken position. However the proposals are for two storey development which will be more notable than the current dwelling and set built form closer to the viewer. Path users on HP23 54/1 are considered to have a Medium/High sensitivity (High value & Medium susceptibility) and been judged as experiencing a Medium, magnitude of effect resulting in a **Moderate, Adverse** effect at Year 1 for this section of path. With boundary planting and weathering of the building materials the scheme would look less raw and the magnitude of change would reduce to Medium/Small which would also return a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect given the sensitivity of the path users and the two-storey form of the dwellings keeping them evident in the seen at Year 15.

Footpath users to the south of the Site on the opposite side of the valley om HP23 61/3 have an elevated viewing position back towards the Site that they view as part of the broader, scenic valley side. The road and railway is generally screened by tree lines largely removing them from view and improving the appeal of the view. Given the elevation and distance, combined with the Site plain facing the viewer the scheme would clearly be evident. It would appear in contrast to the more naturalistic elements of the valley side but combine visually with the two properties at Hill View to make it appear that there is a row of at least four houses at the lower level, with the swan-necked access clearly evident leading up to the three dwellings set above them. The lower level houses would be partially screened by the riparian

and railway woodland in summer months but more evident in the winter. Path users on HP23 61/3 are considered to have a Medium/High sensitivity (High value & Medium susceptibility) and have been judged as experiencing a Medium, magnitude of effect resulting in a **Moderate, Adverse** effect at Year 1. The mitigation planting would add to the lower boundary screening but would have little effect on the ability to see and appreciate the rest of the Site which would appear incongruous in form. This would reduce slightly to a Medium/Small magnitude which retains a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** effect at Year 15.

Viewers on high ground to both sides of valley do not generally have views to the Site given the incised topography of the valley form and convex nature of the valley form. There is also greater distance to the Site making it less notable in the scene when viewed from a distance. Views from Eccles Pike are not affected with the Site not visible from it. It is short and mid-range views from the valley bottom and mid-way up the valley sides that are most changed by the proposals.

Residents to the east of the Site at Hey Top and Westways – Would not experience any visual change from their primary elevation as this looks south but would from their combined front gardens/forecourt and to some extent rear gardens depending on existing vegetation when they look north west towards the Site. They may also have oblique views from their rear rooms. They would experience an increased sense of built form with one relatively discrete farmhouse being replaced in their view by the collection of new houses with the eastern ones the closest and most prominent in the view. Residential receptors in a rural location have been assessed as having a High sensitivity (High value and High susceptibility) and the magnitude of visual change as Small. The resulting visual effect is assessed as **Moderate, Adverse**. There is the opportunity for boundary planting on the Site and within the existing resident's own gardens and the magnitude of change could be reduced to Small/None which would result in a **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent** visual effect.

Residents to the west of the Site at Hill View and associated houses – These are the houses that form a mini housing line at the lower slope closest to Chapel Road and to which the proposed lower two houses would 'extend'. The construction works will be the most notable phase given the proximity of these houses to the Site itself. They would not experience any change in view from their primary, road facing elevation that is south and away from the proposed development. They would however be able to see the higher houses from their rear elevation when looking up the valley side. This visual change would be felt the most keenly by Hill View which is closest to the Site, their plot will also be more open after the removal of the tall cypress hedge that stands to the south west of the Site. Residential receptors in a rural location have been assessed as having a High sensitivity (High value and High susceptibility) and the magnitude of visual change as Medium. The resulting visual effect is assessed as **Major/Moderate, Adverse**. There is the opportunity for boundary planting on the Site and within the existing resident's own gardens and the magnitude of change could be reduced to Medium/Small which would result in a **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** visual effect.

Residents to the south side of the valley around Cadster House – It is only the few properties set higher within this group of properties who would be able to see the proposed development from their north facing frontages. They appear built higher on the valley side, some with gallery windows to take advantage of the view and overlook the railway that is set lower down the valley side. Again as rural residential receptors looking out to a landscape that is pastoral and generally lacking in built form their sensitivity is High (High value & High susceptibility) and the magnitude of change would be Small. This results in a **Moderate, Adverse** effect at Year 1. Screen planting around the Site would reduce the ability to see all of its form which would likely reduce the magnitude of change to Small/None and an end visual change of **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent** level at Year 15. For the purpose of clarity

the houses set around Cadster Farm on the lower slope would not experience any visual change given the intervening tree cover and ground form restricting views to Site.

With regards to the three sets of residential receptors it is noted that:

- Access was not taken to the private land to ascertain the full nature of any visual change;
- Private dwellings and their occupants very rarely have a private 'right to a view'; and
- That the residential amenity of these residential dwellings are not affected in terms of light, noise, overlooking or intrusive activity given the distance between them and the proposed Site.

In summarising the visual effects the proposals would;

- Be most frequently experienced from Chapel Road from which they would remain clearly recognisable as a collection of detached houses ranging up the valley side;
- Increase the number of houses seen from PRoW's to the east and south; and
- Be evident from nearby residential properties with greater effects for those closer to them.

However it is not the question of whether the houses will be visible that is critical in terms of visual effects it is whether that visual change is unduly large and uncharacteristic to the visual receptor and whether the proposals have the ability to assimilate into the scene successfully. When considering these questions I conclude:

- That the physical scale of the area of change is not particularly large when the expansive nature of the views are considered but the proposals will appear uncharacteristic to this location.
- The development's more contemporary urban form and layout will appear as a small pocket of 'suburban'[3] style housing in sharp contrast with the surrounding rural scene.
- That the separate, repeated nature of the detached houses and garages will appear different to the traditional workers cottages or prevailing farmstead form where a collection of buildings read as one entity with a common function rather than as separate domestic plots; and
- That garden planting and boundaries have the potential to add to the sense of urban development when more natural planting would aid its assimilation.

6. Review of submitted LVIA

The application was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) produced by Barnes Walker with report reference M3648 -LVA 06.06-V6. This LVA was reviewed prior to attending Site for background information and to understand which landscape and visual receptors had been considered by the Applicant's professional advisors.

There are no concerns to express about the general methodological approach used to produce the LVA as it is considered to follow the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (GLVIA3). It is considered proportional to the scale of the proposed development and the choice of landscape receptors and visual receptors logical and appropriate. The judgements of the receptor's susceptibility and value that lead through to the receptors' defined sensitivity do however vary from my own.

LVA Table 2 on page 23 is where sensitivity is defined for the three landscape receptor considered by the LVA and LVA Table 3 on page 39 defines the three visual receptors' sensitivity. I have produced a comparison table below to indicate my own assessment of the factors that define receptor sensitivity.

[3] Suburban used as a descriptive term, not pejorative, to describe a style of housing more associated with the suburbs of larger settlements

Comparison table of receptor sensitivity

	BW Assessments			SR Assessment			
Landscape Receptor	**Value**	**Susceptibility**	**Sensitivity**	**Value**	**Susceptibility**	**Sensitivity**	**Comments**
Wider Study Area/ Settled Valley Pasture	**Medium/High** using Table 1a of the LVA judging lower valley as Medium and upper valley High	**Low** – arguing residential and woodland are characteristic of area.	**Medium**	**Medium/High** with a strong rural character and scenic collection of features. Table 1a appears fair and reasonable.	**Medium** – There is some residential form in the wider area but it is more traditional and woodland is lacking from proposals so is not included.	**Medium**	The same end sensitivity is reached but a greater degree of susceptibility is defined given the form of proposals being different to existing residential forms in this area.
Site and immediate setting	**Medium** – with the Site's value judged as Low and the context as higher giving a combined Medium value.	**Low** – arguing site has urbanising characteristics, peripheral landscape features & paraphernalia	**Low/Medium**	**Medium** with not as many rural landscape features on the Site as within the adjacent context.	**Medium** – The Site, even though part used for storage, is still a rural landscape and part of the immediate scene and has the same level of susceptibility.	**Medium** – The Site is part of the wider rural scene and displays a similar sensitivity level.	The current condition of the Site has to be looked past[4] to the fundamental landscape character of being part of the same valley side with similar characteristic as its context.
Landscape features of the Site	**Medium/Low** – with the trees having higher value but other features described as unkempt. No mention of valley side topography.	**Low** – better trees on third party land and other features common and contribute little.	**Low**	**Medium/Low** with some younger trees and detracting features as temporary. High conifer hedges have low value.	**High** – trees are susceptible to levelling works as is Site's sloping landform as part of valley side.	**Medium** – trees and sloping landform are key Site features.	Susceptibility of trees is High whatever their age structure when major earthworks are required. The Site's sloping ground is common and consistent feature of the valley.
Visual Receptor	**Value**	**Susceptibility**	**Sensitivity**	**Value**	**Susceptibility**	**Sensitivity**	**Comments**
People using PRoW in the area	**Medium**	**High** – focus upon the	**Medium/High**	**High**	**Medium**	**Medium/High**	The same end result is defined but I consider

[4] TGN 2/21 – Assessing landscape value outside of National Landscapes page ??

		enjoyment of the landscape					the path users value their view at High but given other houses in the view have a lower susceptibility
Road users in the area	**Low-Medium**	**Low-Medium**	**Low/Medium**	**Medium** – rural road users will be aware of and value the views they experience along the route	**Medium** – again related to the specific type of development houses are not missing from the scene but this form is less common	**Medium**	Road users in rural areas value and enjoy the views without having proprietorial ownership of them. They notice change and can make comparative judgements between areas and forms of development.
Nearby residents	**Medium**	**High** - residents are generally susceptible to change	**Medium/High**	**High** – views are valued highly given the rural location and sense of ownership	**High** – residents have a keen interest within their views and change, even from other houses will be readily experienced.	**High**	Residents have been graded at the highest level of sensitivity given their interest in the views and the simple fact that they have to live with the visual change.

This comparison exercise indicates that I consider the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the visual receptors at the same or greater levels for the three groupings of landscape receptors and three groupings of visual receptors.

For the landscape receptors I consider the LVA assessors may have been influenced by the current land use for storage of HGV and farm machinery and not looked beyond this temporary use to the base characteristics and character of the Site along with its intrinsic contribution to the surrounding rural landscape. This is not stating that collection of stored vehicles and equipment is a positive landscape characteristic – it is clearly not, it is just one of the Site's landscape feature that need to be taken into account as the baseline of the Site and changes to it are considered.

For the visual receptors there is agreement as to the sensitivity of path users along the valley sides but not for road users and nearby residents. My assessment of their sensitivity is half a grade higher in each case.

Turning to the assessment of landscape and visual effects the magnitude of change experienced at the Site and in the surrounding area is explored in the following tables that are also used to define the LVA's judgement on the associated significance of effect:

- Landscape magnitude of change – LVA Table 4
- Visual magnitude of change – LVA Table 5

Narrative to explain the reasoning behind the judgement is presented as well in line with GLVIA3 guidance.

Significance of landscape effects

Looking at the landscape receptors the following results are found in the LVA.

Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance at Yr 1 & Yr 15	BW Narrative Summary
Wider study area/ Settled Valley Pasture	**Medium/High**	**Negligible**	**Negligible** then **Minor Beneficial** upon maturity of the planting	Development would accord with the inherent development pattern of the valley, small scale, planting in longer term would assimilate the development into the landscape and give a small positive.
Site character and Immediate Area	**Medium**	**Negligible**	**Negligible** then **Minor Beneficial** upon maturity of the planting	Consistent with surrounding land use, removal of stored paraphernalia, reflect farm house precedent in terms of scale and vernacular materials and be mitigated with appropriate planting leading to a small positive.
Features on Site	**Medium/Low**	**Negligible – Low Adverse**	**Negligible – Minor Adverse** then **Minor, Moderate Beneficial** upon maturity of the planting	Better trees off Site are retained, the trees on Site that are to be removed are smaller and of lesser value. Cypress hedges removal argued as a landscape benefit with rough grassland considered of low aesthetic and ecological value. Establishment of new planting is considered to deliver an improvement to the Site's features.

Wider study area/Settled Valley Pasture – I agree that the character change to the wider study area is **Negligible** given the size of the Site compared to the wider geographical extent of the study area. However I do not agree that the planting as shown would lead to the **Minor, Beneficial** improvement. If the addition of four houses is **Negligible** in scale and effect then the same can be said for the landscape effects of the planting proposals when judged across the same scale.

Site character and Immediate Area – I disagree with both the Year 1 and Year 15 assessment of effects. The magnitude of change at both time marks would be larger than the Negligible indicated. The immediate change from a sloping rough grassland field (even with the stored equipment) to built, contemporary housing form would be Large. The resulting Year 1 effect would be **Major/Moderate, Adverse** and with established mitigation planting the magnitude of change would reduce to Medium leading to a Year 15 **Moderate, Adverse and Permanent** landscape effect. Both these results are larger and more adverse than those indicated within the LVA.

Landscape features on Site – I agree that the removal of the conifer hedging and stored equipment would be positive landscape changes but the loss of the native tree resource around the Site is not a positive effect on the Site's features nor is the proposed change to the Site's levels to create development platforms and the swan-necked access. The initial change to the landscape features is considered to be of a Medium/Large magnitude that returns a **Moderate, Adverse** effect at Year 1. With the additional planting, assuming it is not incongruous this change could me ameliorated slightly and reduce to a Medium/Small magnitude of change resulting in a Year 15 **Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent** change to landscape features on Site.

Comparison of the landscape effects

My assessment of landscape effects is greater for both the Site Character and Immediate Area and for the actual landscape features on Site. Not only is the scale of significance greater I judge the landscape effects to be adverse. The proposed planting ameliorates these adverse landscape effects but do not remove them, nor deliver the Minor landscape benefits as stated in the application LVA. In balancing the minor landscape benefits that would accrue from the proposals (conifer hedge removal, paraphernalia tidy-up and new planting) these do not offset the considerably larger adverse landscape effects from developing more houses at this location, the uncharacteristic form of the housing and modifications to the valley side landform to accommodate the development platforms and access road.

I consider that the long-term adverse landscape change to the Site's Character and Immediate Area as well as the Landscape features on Site be put into your planning balance exercise as harms on the negative side of the balance.

Significance of visual effects

The visual effects are defined for each of the 11 No. visual receptor groups in Table 5 of the LVA.

I have produced a comparison table below for the groups who would experience visual change. I agree that there would be no visual effects for Receptor Groups 5. 6., 7, 8 & 9 and do not include these.

	BW LVA Assessment			SR Assessment			
Visual Receptor	**Sensitivity**	**Magnitude**	**Significance**	**Sensitivity**	**Magnitude**	**Significance**	**Comments**
RG1 – Chapel Road Users	**Low-Medium**	**Low**	**Minor, Adverse**	**Medium**	**Medium** With boundary planting reducing to **Medium / Small**	**Moderate, Adverse** Reducing to **Moderate/ Minor Adverse**	Greater significance of effect than the LVA.
RG2 – Rural footpath to east of the Site	**Medium-High**	**Negligible to Low**	**Negligible to Minor/ Moderate Adverse**	**Medium-High**	**Medium** With boundary planting reducing to **Medium / Small**	**Moderate, Adverse** remaining at **Moderate Adverse** but at the lower end of this grade.	Greater significance of effect than the LVA. This is a rural path with the greatest degree of visibility to the proposals but also judged with Hey Top and Westways.
RG3 – Rural footpath to south of railway	**Medium-High**	**Negligible to Low**	**Minor Adverse**	**Medium - High** –	**Medium** With boundary planting reducing to **Medium / Small**	**Moderate, Adverse** remaining at **Moderate Adverse** but at the lower end of this grade.	Greater significance of effect than the LVA. This is a rural path with direct view to the sloping plain of the Site field and an appreciation of the overall form of the houses and access road.
RG4 – Rural footpath to south side of valley	**Medium-High**	**Negligible to Low**	**Negligible to Minor Adverse**	**Medium - High** –	**Medium** and **Medium/Small** depending on the distance and angle. With boundary planting reducing to **Small**	**Moderate, Adverse** reducing to **Moderate / Minor Adverse**.	Greater significance of effect than the LVA. These are a collection of rural paths and the Site forms a small part of a wider view but generally the change will remain evident.
RG10 – Residents on Chapel Road	**Medium-High**	**Medium** Reducing to **Low**	**Moderate, Adverse** Reducing to **Minor/Moderate Adverse**	**High**	**Medium** and **Small** reducing with planting to **Medium/Small** and **Small/None**	**Major/Moderate,** and **Moderate Adverse** reducing to **Moderate, Adverse** and	There is a similarity in assessment between the LVA and my own judgments. The greater scale of effects occur for

						Moderate/Minor Adverse	Hill View immediately to the west of the Site.
RG11 – Residents in the wider landscape	**Medium-High**	**Negligible**	**Negligible**	**High**	**Small** reducing with planting to and **Small/None**	**Moderate, Adverse** and **Moderate/Minor Adverse**	The area of housing considered to have effects is Cadster House to south of the valley.

7. Summary of overall landscape and visual effects

The degree of adverse landscape change at the Site arises from the extensive modification of land form, resulting felling of tree stock and introduction of a series of new residential dwellings that will form a distinct group of houses that span from the lower Chapel Road side of the Site up to the current level of Rookery Farm. Houses are not an uncharacteristic feature of the Settled Valley Pasture landscape but this proposed layout arrangement is and it would lead to a sense of urban intensification at this location. The change to the landscape character of the Site and its immediate context is assessed as a ***Moderate, Adverse and Permanent*** landscape effect at Year 15 taking into account the proposed mitigation measures. The nature of the change to the landscape features on Site have been assessed as ***Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent*** at Year 15

In terms of positive landscape effects the removal of the uncharacteristic coniferous hedge at the front of the Site is viewed as a landscape positive, as is the removal of stored equipment and vehicles that give the Site and unkempt look. The proposed landscape planting to the east of the Site could also be a positive subject to careful choice of species and planting layout. This collection of landscape benefits I would class as ***Minor, Beneficial and Permanent*** which is not at a sufficient level to offset the greater landscape harm caused to the Site features and the overall character of the Site and immediate area.

I agree with the Application LVA assessment of only ***Negligible*** landscape effects on the landscape character of the wider geographical study area from the additional four dwellings but disagree that the planting would have any positive landscape effects on the study area.

In terms of visual receptors with an ability to see the Site I have judged that the residual visual effects at Year 15 are as follows:

- RG1 – Chapel Road user travelling past the Site in both directions – ***Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent.***
- RG2 – Rural footpath users climbing valley side to east of Site – ***Moderate, Adverse and Permanent.***
- RG3 – Rural footpath users to south side of railway line - ***Moderate, Adverse and Permanent***
- RG4 - Rural footpath users to south side of the valley - ***Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent.***
- RG10 - Chapel Road residents – ***Moderate, Adverse and Permanent*** (Hill View to west of Site) and ***Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent*** (Hey Top and Westways to the east).
- RG 11 – Residents in wider landscape - ***Moderate/Minor, Adverse and Permanent*** (Cadster House to the south east)

The RG prefix stands for Receptor Group and matches the naming given in the Application LVA. RG's 5 to 9 do not experience visual change. However all of the identified visual receptor groups would experience permanent adverse visual effects and there are no beneficial effects to set against them.

I trust you find this note useful as you consider the determination of the application. Should you have any queries about its contents please do not hesitate to contact me.

Stuart Ryder

Ryder Landscape Consultants Ltd

15/8/25