

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	9-1
METHODOLOGY	9-2
Consultations.....	9-3
LANDSCAPE POLICY AND DESIGNATIONS	9-3
Landscape Planning Policies and Designations.....	9-4
Other Landscape Related Receptors.....	9-6
BASELINE CONDITIONS	9-6
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES	9-18
Nature and Extent of the Proposed Development	9-18
Proposed Mitigation Measures.....	9-19
RESIDUAL IMPACTS	9-21
CONCLUSIONS.....	9-36

DRAWINGS

Drawing No. WH 9/001	Landscape Designations
Drawing No. WH 9/002	Landscape Character Areas
Drawing No. WH 9/003	Viewpoint Location Plan
Drawing No. WH 9/004	Landscape Base Plan
Drawing No. WH 9/005	Landscape Proposals Plan
Drawing No. WH 9/006	Viewpoint 1: Existing View & Post Construction Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/007	Viewpoint 1: Short Term & Long Term Planted Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/008	Viewpoint 2: Existing View & Post Construction Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/009	Viewpoint 2: Short Term & Long Term Planted Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/010	Viewpoint 3: Existing View & Post Construction Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/011	Viewpoint 3: Short Term & Long Term Planted Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/012	Viewpoint 4: Existing View & Post Construction Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/013	Viewpoint 4: Short Term & Long Term Planted Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/014	Viewpoint 5: Existing View & Post Construction Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/015	Viewpoint 5: Short Term & Long Term Planted Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/016	Viewpoint 6: Existing View & Post Construction Visual
Drawing No. WH 9/017	Viewpoint 6: Short Term & Long Term Planted Visual

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

APPENDICES

Appendix 9/1

LVIA Methodology

Appendix 9/2

Glossary

Appendix 9/3

Excerpt from Hart District Landscape Assessment

INTRODUCTION

9.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement consists of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which assesses the potential landscape and visual implications of the proposal for the permanent retention of the existing Warren Heath Recycling Facility. Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the proposed development, which forms the basis against which landscape and visual impacts have been determined.

9.2 The LVIA is divided into seven sections:

- introduction;
- summary of the methodology;
- policy considerations;
- landscape and visual baseline conditions;
- brief description of proposed development in terms of its potential landscape and visual impacts and measures proposed in mitigation of those potential impacts;
- assessment of residual impacts; and
- conclusions.

9.3 The 'Landscape' is defined in the European Landscape Convention (ELC), ratified by Government in 2007. Article 1 of the ELC states the following: *'An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. The term 'landscape' is thus defined as a zone or area as perceived by local people or visitors whose visual features and character are the result of the action of natural and/or cultural (that is human factors).'*

It is recognised that the 'landscape' of the application site contributes to, and is part of the wider landscape.

9.4 The methodology used to assess the potential effects of the development on the landscape is recorded in the Methodology section and Appendix 9/1, with the meaning of technical terms recorded in the Glossary (Appendix 9/2).

9.5 The policy section of this chapter addresses relevant landscape planning history, policy, guidance and designations. A general overview of planning policies relevant to the ES has also been set out in Chapter 4 of the ES.

9.6 The baseline study considers the current landscape and visual characteristics as follows:

- a review of all existing landscape character assessments for the area and a more detailed assessment of the landscape character of the application site and its context;
- an assessment of the visibility of the existing site and the selection of representative viewpoints; and
- relevant planning policies in relation to the landscape and visual amenities of the development.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

- 9.7 The assessment of impacts, as discussed below, includes a study of the development proposals, potential landscape and visual characteristics and impact generators, effects and mitigation.
- 9.8 The assessment of residual impacts, as discussed below, considers the sensitivity of the receptors to the proposed development, the magnitude of change and the overall significance of effects.

METHODOLOGY

- 9.9 The format of this assessment is based on the principles within the Countryside Agency's Landscape Character Assessment Guidance (2002), and the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's "Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" (2002), hereinafter referred to as the GLVIA, and conforms to the "Guidelines for EIA" (2004).published by the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).
- 9.10 A provisional study area of up to 3km surrounding the site centre was adopted for this assessment, based on previous experience of assessments of a comparable scale and complexity. Initially a desktop study was undertaken to review the relevant publications, maps and plans. A site visit was then undertaken which confirmed that the visual envelope for the application site was likely to be limited to the landscape immediately surrounding the site.
- 9.11 Fieldwork was undertaken on 3rd January 2013, to verify the desk study and to undertake a photographic study of potential viewpoints. The weather conditions were overcast but clear and suitable for assessing all views.
- 9.12 The selection of the viewpoints chosen is discussed in more detail later in this chapter. The photographs illustrating the current views from the viewpoints were taken using a Nikon D90 digital camera. The camera used a fixed focal length lens of 35mm which is the equivalent of a 52.5mm lens for a 35mm format camera. The main views are panoramic and it was therefore considered appropriate to present the photographs in this way. The panoramic views consist of series of photographic frames merged together using industry standard software.
- 9.13 The potential significance of landscape and visual impacts is determined by combining the magnitude of the potential impact and the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors to change, as shown in Table 9-1 below.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Table 9-1 Landscape and Visual Residual Effects

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change			
	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
High	Major	Major/ moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor
Medium	Major/ moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor	Minor
Low	Moderate	Moderate/ minor	Minor	Minor/ negligible
Negligible	Moderate/ minor	Minor	Minor/ negligible	None

- 9.14 This process is not a quantitative process; there is not an absolute scoring system. Instead, the correlation of the two factors, although reflecting recognised features and methods of working outlined in this report, is in the end a matter of professional judgement.
- 9.15 Table 9-1-3 in Appendix 9/1 provides a brief definition of the full range of significance criteria. Both landscape and visual impacts can be adverse (regarded as harmful), beneficial (regarded as an enhancement) or neutral in nature. An impact is described as being of 'neutral' significance if it would be in keeping with the general character of the surroundings, such as an industrial development within an industrial context.

Consultations

- 9.16 Pre-application advice provided by Hampshire County Council contained advice relating to landscape and the scoping opinion dated 16th January 2013 confirmed that landscape and visual issues would need to be contained within the ES.

Technical Difficulties

- 9.17 No technical difficulties were encountered in assessing the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development.

LANDSCAPE POLICY AND DESIGNATIONS

- 9.18 Drawing No. WH 9/001 illustrates the location of various landscape and landscape related designations relative to the proposed application site.
- 9.19 As noted above, full details of the planning context of the application site are described in Chapter 3 of this ES. However planning permissions, aspects of relevant landscape policies and designations which are of particular relevance to this landscape and visual assessment are examined below.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Landscape Planning Policies and Designations

Development Plan Policies

9.20 The following planning documents are considered relevant to the study of the landscape of the local area:

- Hampshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD 2007;
- Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006 (DPD) (2002);

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD 2007

9.21 In landscape and visual terms, the most relevant policies are as follows:

Policy DC3 - Impact on Landscape and Townscape

9.22 *Minerals and waste development will only be permitted if due regard is given to the likely visual impact of the proposed development and its impact on, and the need to maintain and enhance, the distinctive character of the landscape or townscape. If necessary, additional design, landscaping, planting and screening, including planting in advance of the commencement of the development, should be proposed.*

Policy DC4 - Historic Heritage

9.23 *Minerals and waste development will be granted if due regard is given to the likely effects on the need to protect and safeguard sites of archaeological, historical, and architectural importance, and the settings of these sites.*

Policy DC8 - Pollution, Health, Quality of Life and Amenity

9.24 *Minerals and waste development will only be permitted if due regard is given to the pollution and amenity impacts on the residents and users of the locality and there is unlikely to be an unacceptable impact on health and/or the quality of life of occupants of nearby dwellings and other sensitive properties. Where necessary minerals and waste developments should include mitigation measures, such as buffer zones between the site and such properties.*

Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006 (DPD)

9.25 The Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006 is still the Plan in force for the District as the LDF process has not developed as far as a published plan. There are a number of saved policies that were retained by instruction of the Secretary of State, and these policies have been considered in relation to this application. In landscape and visual terms, the most relevant policies are as follows:

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Policy RUR 2 Development in the open countryside - general

9.26 *Development in the open countryside, outside the defined settlement boundaries, will not be permitted unless the local planning authority is satisfied that it is specifically provided for by other policies in the local plan, and that it does not have a significant detrimental effect on the character and setting of the countryside by virtue of its siting, size and prominence in the landscape.*

Policy RUR 3 Development in the open countryside - control

9.27 *Developments in the countryside which are provided for by other policies in this plan, will be permitted where:*

(i) The countryside is protected and maintained through the retention, creation or enhancement of features of nature conservation or landscape importance;

(ii) Any existing buildings or structures can be retained if of architectural quality;

(iii) The site is satisfactorily landscaped to reduce its impact on the surrounding countryside;

(iv) The criteria of the specific Policy by which the development proposed may be permitted are also met.

Registered Parks and Gardens

9.28 Bramshill Park, a Grade II* listed park and garden is located to the west of the application site, the main bulk of the park being approximately 1.5km to the west (refer to Drawing No. WH 9/001). The park also includes a series of avenues and rides, the longest ride being Sir Richard's Ride which is immediately to the south of the application site. Bramshill is now used as a police training centre.

9.29 The grounds of Warbrook House are a designated Grade II* listed park and garden, located some 2.0km to the north of the application site at their nearest point. Warbrook House is now a hotel and conference venue operated by De Vere. It should be noted that the proposed development would not be visible from this location.

9.30 Elvetham Hall, a Grade II listed park and garden is located some 2.0km to the south of the application site. It should be noted that the proposed development would not be visible from this location.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Other Landscape Related Receptors

- 9.31 Castle Bottom National Nature Reserve is located some 500m to the east of the site with Yateley Common Country Park some 2.2km to the east. Views of the proposed development are unlikely from this location due to intervening woodland.
- 9.32 The Three Castle Path long-distance footpath is located some 800m to the west of the application site. This footpath runs through forestry plantation when it passes to the west of the site, views are therefore very unlikely from this section of long distance route.

BASELINE CONDITIONS

- 9.33 Baseline conditions for the site and surrounding study area have been assessed in terms of landscape and visual conditions, as discussed in greater detail below.

Landscape Baseline

Landscape Attributes of the Existing Site and Surrounding Area

- 9.34 The Countryside Agency guidance on landscape appraisal recommends that landscapes are initially characterised, and that judgements about the nature and sensitivity of these landscape are then based on this characterisation process. The Agency's guidance recommends that the characterisation process should be based on an assessment of natural factors, cultural and social factors and aesthetic and perceptual factors.
- 9.35 These factors have been examined primarily for the application site, but also more generally for the surrounding landscape. Each of these factors is assessed below.

Natural Characteristics

- 9.36 The application site is located at Warren Heath, Bramshill, some 2.5km south-west of Yateley.
- 9.37 **Topography.** The site is located on the Bramshill plateau within a former mineral working, thus the topography within the site is generally lower than the surrounding land, elevations within the site ranging from 88.8 to 97.6m AOD on top of the bund to the north-east of the site. The land immediately surrounding the site is generally flat at around 95m AOD. At a broader scale, the surrounding land generally falls away to the south-west towards a valley occupied by the River Hart and to the north-east towards a valley occupied by the Blackwater River.
- 9.38 **Land Use.** The site is located within a former gravel pit. Existing mineral extraction operations are a feature of the local landscape: Bramshill Quarry is situated immediately to the west of the site and Eversley Quarry is located

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

some 500m to the east. To the east of the site (on the eastern side of the A327) mineral extraction is currently taking place on land known as the Busta Triangle. Commercial forestry is a major land use in the immediate vicinity of the site to the north, west and south, significant tracts of which are designated as Open Access land, although the site itself is not Open Access land. To the south-east of the site is Eversley Haulage Park which is also operated by the applicant with Blackbushe Airport located some 1.5km to the south-east.

- 9.39 **Land cover.** Vegetation occupies existing bunds to the north-east, north-western and south-eastern perimeters of the site. Recently established and naturally colonised trees and scrub are present within the southern part of the site. Several water bodies and open ditches/drains are also present on site. A mixed woodland plantation including Scot's Pine is located to the immediate east of the site. Commercial forestry plantations are located beyond the site to the south and beyond land associated with Bramshill Quarry to the west. Forestry was also present to the east of the site on land known as Busta Triangle, however, the majority of the stands on Busta Triangle have been clear-felled in advance of mineral extraction which is ongoing. A line of conifers flanks the western (application site) side of the A327 between Cooper's Hill and Welsh Drive.
- 9.40 Deciduous vegetation is present locally e.g. as roadside vegetation and deciduous woodland is present in the local landscape. Coombes Wood Ancient (Replanted) Woodland is located some 500m to the north-west of the site whilst Great/Alder Copses Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland is some 840m to the north-east.

Cultural and Social Aspects

- 9.41 Local place names such as Warren Heath, Eversley Common and Yateley Heath Wood provide clues to the heathland character of the area, although in the last century or so the extent of heathland has considerably reduced. The current local landscape is characterised by forestry plantations, scrub and woodland, heathland habitats, and unimproved grassland.
- 9.42 Access to the site is via Welsh Drive, off the A327 single carriageway road, the junction of the A327 and the A30 being some 1.0km to the south of the site. The B3016 connects the A327 just east of the application site with Eversley Cross to the north-east. The B3272 between Eversley and Yateley is some 2.0km to the north of the site, whilst the remainder of the road infrastructure comprises minor roads.
- 9.43 The residential property of Hawkers Lodge is located to the south east of the site. The northern boundary and a significant length of the western boundary of this property are enclosed by a 1.8m high brick wall which limits views of the site from the garden and ground floor rooms. The first floor of the property includes windows on the northern and western elevations, from where views into the site may be possible. However, these windows are not perpendicular to the site, therefore the site would only be potentially visible from these windows from relatively acute angles. In addition, any such views

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

would be filtered through existing intervening vegetation between the property and the site, further limiting potential visibility.

- 9.44 The pre-application advice from Hampshire County Council states that a residential property named Harewood House is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the Site. However, field work has established that this property no longer exists.
- 9.45 The site is immediately bounded by Open Access land to the north and south, with further Open Access land to the east of the site beyond the A327 at Busta Triangle. Public bridleway Eversley No. 11 is located to the immediate north of the site on Welsh Drive, whilst public footpath Eversley No. 27 is approximately 200m to the north-east of the site. Public footpath Eversley No. 13 is some 500m to the east of the site. One long distance footpath is present within the study area, namely the Three Castle Path.
- 9.46 The study area contains three aforementioned Registered Parks and Gardens, Bramshill Park and Warbrook House, both of which are Grade II* listed and Elvetham Hall which is Grade II listed.
- 9.47 There are a number of recreational features in the Yateley area including Yately Common Country Park, Blackwater Valley Golf Centre/Driving Range, and numerous lakes offering fishing. Pleasure flights are available at Blackbushe Airport.

Aesthetic Aspects

- 9.48 The aesthetic qualities of the application site and local area are summarised in Table 9-3 below, being divided into the main categories identified within the guidance.

Table 9-2
Aesthetic Attributes of Site and Study Area

General Aesthetic Attributes	Description of Attributes for Site and Study Area
Scale	The site is set within a large scale landscape of coniferous forestry and fragmented areas of heathland. The existing quarry occupies a former mineral working, and is at a smaller scale in land area terms in comparison with the surrounding forestry.
Enclosure	<p>The application area is partially enclosed to the north by screen bunds and to the east by an existing woodland plantation along the A327. To the south, a vegetated screen bund provides partial enclosure to the south east but the remainder of the southern boundary comprises a post and wire fence which allows views into the site.</p> <p>The operational Bramshill Quarry abuts the site to the west; to the north-west, some vegetation partially encloses the site but the south-western boundary is not enclosed.</p> <p>The wider landscape contains extensive commercial coniferous</p>

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Diversity	<p>plantations which lend the area an enclosed character.</p> <p>The existing site is of moderate diversity and comprises a). worked out and unrestored quarry land including water bodies and planted and naturally regenerated vegetation and b). currently operational land containing stockpiled waste materials, weighbridge, site offices and hardstanding. The surrounding landscape is highly diverse including, <i>inter alia</i>, ancient woodland, heathland and associated habitats including ponds and mires, unimproved grassland, and coniferous plantations.</p>
Texture	<p>The site is rough textured as a result of the large extent of unrestored land and existing vegetation.</p>
Form and Line	<p>The A327 forms a strong linear feature to the east of the site, as does the rectilinear woodland plantation between the site and the A327. Welsh Drive and Sir Richard's Ride form strong linear features to the north and south of the site respectively. The high and steep-sided stockpiles on site have an artificial, engineered appearance. Distinctive vertical elements in the landscape include surrounding coniferous plantations and the processing plant at the adjacent CEMEX site. Existing vegetation along the western perimeter of the application site and on bunds to the north-west, north-east and south-east also provide vertical elements.</p>
Colour	<p>The application site predominantly comprises disturbed, unrestored land formerly exploited for mineral extraction and is generally orange/brown in colour due to the exposed sands and gravels/soils, with green where vegetation has established. Similarly, stockpiled materials both within the site and on the adjacent CEMEX site are orange/brown in colouration as are the existing hard-surfaced tracks to the north and south of the site. The conifer plantations surrounding the application site are predominantly dark green whilst birch, heather and gorse provide seasonal colour.</p>
Balance	<p>The general area has a long history of disturbance, mineral extraction activities having commenced on the site in the early 1960's. An aggregate recycling facility currently operates on the application site, which contains a significant area of disturbed and unrestored land. Under the current permission there is an expectation of restoration to forestry, via condition. As the site is disturbed and unrestored it is not considered to be in balance. Mineral extraction also forms a component of the wider landscape locally, which also contains significant tracts of forestry plantations on former heathland. This is a dynamic landscape in a state of flux, with forestry being felled for mineral extraction and planted in the restoration of such sites.</p>
Movement	<p>There is currently movement of plant, HGV's and other vehicles on the site. The A327 to the east of the site is a busy road which is also subject to large volumes of vehicular traffic, including HGV's travelling to/from Eversley Haulage Yard and waste transfer station, Bramshill Quarry and the existing recycling facility within the application site. The bridleway on Welsh Drive to the north of the site and track on Sir Richard's Ride to the south of the site are routes for recreational movement.</p>
Pattern	<p>Locally, forestry tracks/rides in the immediate vicinity of the site create a</p>

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

grid-like pattern, reinforced by the straight alignment of the A327 to the east of the site.

Landscape Character Classification

9.49 The Countryside Agency guidelines describe how Landscape Character Assessment can be applied at different scales, from the national or European level to the parish level. Assessments are ideally prepared at different scales that should fit together as a hierarchy of landscape character types and/or areas, such that each level of assessment adds more detail to the one above. The three main levels identified by The Countryside Agency are: national and regional scale; local authority scale; and local scale. This assessment uses a summary of the relevant published assessments at national and regional scale, published by The Countryside Agency, and local authority scale. The wider character assessments are used to provide the context for a local scale landscape assessment specific to the application site.

National Character Areas

9.50 Warren Heath Recycling Facility is located within National Landscape Character Area 129 'Thames Basin Heaths' a distinct area of commonly unenclosed heathland and coniferous forestry developed on the acidic soils in the west of the Thames Basin. The key characteristics of this Area are:

- particularly diverse landscape unified by the high incidence of heathland and coniferous forestry, the open unenclosed nature of which is unusual within the context of the south-east region;
- heavily populated and developed area characterised by large towns plus numerous smaller settlements along transport corridors interspersed by open land;
- important occupation area from Mesolithic to modern times based on exploitation of the rivers with numerous Prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlements, the latter of which extended along valley bottoms;
- fragmented but often connected blocks of largely neglected remnant heathland as a result of early agricultural clearances and widespread development, with most heath retained on large commons or as Ministry of Defence training areas;
- the western part of the area is fairly well-wooded with grazed pasture but retains a heathy character due to the dominance of oak/birch/bracken/pine and remnant heath on small unimproved pockets of land;
- variety and contrast is given by the wide grazed floodplain, drainage ditches, restored gravel workings and lush wetland vegetation associated with the Kennet Valley;
- cultivated farmland and pasture is typically enclosed within small and irregularly shaped fields divided by hedgerows with small areas of wood and heath heavily used for horse grazing; and
- large tracts of coniferous plantations or mixed wood with beech and birch are typical of much of the area, with significant areas of ancient woodland in the west.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

9.51 The study area around the site exhibits some of the key characteristics described for NCA 129. However, more detailed landscape character studies have been undertaken at the county level as set out below. An older district level assessment was carried out by Hart District Council and has been used as a source of background information to supplement the below Hampshire Character assessment.

Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment

9.52 At a county level the *Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment* was published in May 2012, which identifies the site within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 1b 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' (refer to Drawing No. WH 9/002). The key characteristics of the North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath character area are listed as:

- gently undulating landscape of plateau areas dissected by river valleys;
- predominantly well drained sandy soils over clays and sands giving rise to acidic conditions and some areas of local waterlogging;
- distinctive 'heathy' character throughout reflected in acidic loving vegetation and giving rise to a colourful landscape through the seasons;
- contains internationally important habitats including dry and wet heaths, bogs, scrub and woodland;
- land use comprises a mosaic of woodland, including conifer plantations, blocks of remnant open heathland and medium scaled pasture fields;
- varied public access network of commons and open land on the heath and rights of way in the river valleys;
- strong connections to military training from the 18th century and aviation;
- concentration of large parkland landscapes and extensive areas of mineral extraction;
- broad shallow valley of the Blackwater and narrower valleys of the River Hart and Whitewater with flat and low-lying riverside meadows;
- large urban areas of Aldershot, Farnborough and Fleet and numerous transport corridors (M3, A30, and Basingstoke Canal) and high density of dispersed settlement of common edge origin, and smallholdings; and
- enclosed often intimate character with limited outward views and a sense of remoteness and seclusion despite proximity to populated areas.

9.53 A number of the above characteristics are to be found in the study area, and also in the vicinity of the application site.

9.54 The assessment lists the following forces for change:

- urban growth associated with major conurbations and establishment of suburban landscapes;
- continued mineral extraction and coniferous forestry operations;
- changes in agricultural practices relating to agricultural intensification and or land management grant schemes;
- release of MOD land freeing up land for development;
- climate change resulting in loss of important heathland habitat; and
- demand for access and recreation from increasing population in the area.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

- 9.55 The key qualities and effects of forces are also identified with regard to the above LCA. One key quality is the *'large extent of internationally important lowland heath which is part of the Thames Basin SPA'*, with opportunities including *'restoration to heathland following mineral extraction and coniferous tree felling in accordance with mineral plans and restoration schemes'*.
- 9.56 Another key quality includes *'notable areas and number of designed parkland landscapes which are concentrated in this area which make a particular contribution to visual character and sense of place'*, with an opportunity to *'carry out conservation management plans as appropriate for parkland landscapes, ensuring the significance of elements is understood'*.
- 9.57 This LCA also identifies *'Areas of readily discernible forest origin landscape on the gravel plateau'* as a key quality with an opportunity to *'Support forestry management strategies which seek to fell/replant coniferous plantations with mixed and broadleaf woodland and/or reinstate heathland where appropriate'*.

Landscape Character Types

- 9.58 The Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment sub-divides landscape character areas into Landscape Character Types (LCTs). The site is located within the 'Woodland and Plantation Heath' LCT which is adjoined by the 'Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated' LCT to the north and south, the 'Open Heath' LCT to the east and the 'River Valley Floor' LCT to the north and west (refer to Drawing No. WH 9/002). The key identifying characteristics and boundary definitions of the Woodland and Plantation Heath LCT are listed as:
- predominantly light sandy and sand and gravel based soils, with thin humic surface horizons, often on locally high ground;
 - mostly vast, conifer plantation cover but also broadleaved ancient woodland, scrub and some open heathland;
 - seasonally boggy ground with areas of impeded drainage, plantations often on drier areas;
 - associated with internationally important heathland related habitats such as the Wealden heaths, Thames Basin heaths and New Forest;
 - large areas of open access land with few lanes and roads;
 - often regarded as being highly tranquil;
 - well enclosed wooded landscapes;
 - tend to have associations with large parishes;
 - mineral rich areas for sand and gravel open cast extraction;
 - since the late 19th century these landscapes have been targeted by the M.O.D for training areas; and
 - very few settlements- occasional farmsteads, buildings associated with military training in east and north east Hampshire
- 9.59 The landform of the Woodland and Plantation Heath LCT generally consists of flat or gently locally elevated undulating plains, or flat to gently sloping plateaux, with shallow, occasionally steep sided valleys. Typically, soils are

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

easily leached, very acid podzolic soils and this LCT is associated with very low grade agricultural land of grade 4 or 5. There is a strong relationship with woodchip and paper production from conifer plantations, the former being a biomass fuel. In terms of land cover and land use, the landscape is dominated by woodland which can be both plantation and semi natural and ancient in origin. It has also been subject to small scale soft sand and gravel extraction, particularly in north east Hampshire. It also contains large areas of Ministry of Defence training land.

- 9.60 This LCT provides significant areas of recreational space with large areas of land designated as open access, offering a vast accessible area to a wide variety of users. This LCT also has a very low density road and lane network. At a local scale, CPRE 2006 national mapping consistently maps this LCT as amongst the most tranquil areas, which is attributable to the perceptions of quietness and remoteness. Visitor pressures are absorbed very well by the woodland landscape, which imparts a sense of remoteness and intimacy.
- 9.61 In terms of biodiversity, this LCT is a well wooded landscape which supports a range of woodland types; coniferous, mixed and broadleaved plantations all occur frequently as well as natural woodlands. There is a significant heathland character in open parts of this LCT, often associated with woodland habitats.
- 9.62 With regard to the historic environment, the weak, acid soils appear not to have been preferred for settlement and farming. Historic landscape character varies from ancient woodland with wood pasture to later enclosures of oak plantations, semi ornamental and secondary woodland. A later trend which predominates in north east Hampshire is conifer plantation from the mid 19th century and throughout the 20th century.
- 9.63 In terms of visibility, the degree of enclosure is described as truncated and short views with woodland backdrops. The public perception of this LCT is that it provides significant recreational space and places, especially Forestry Commission sites that promote public access.
- 9.64 It should be noted that other LCTs identified within the study area (see Drawing WH 9/002) 'Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated', 'Open Heath' and 'River Valley Floor' are unlikely to be affected by the proposed development due to distance/lack of intervisibility: so have not been discussed further in this assessment.

Hart District Landscape Assessment

- 9.65 At a district level the *Hart District Landscape Assessment* published in April 1997 identifies the site within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 7 'Bramshill'. This LVIA assesses the impacts of the proposed development against the landscape character areas identified within the more recently published *Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment*. However, for completeness the main distinguishing features of and enhancement priorities for the Bramshill character area are listed at Appendix 9/3.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Potential for Landscape Enhancement

- 9.66 The potential for landscape enhancement is informed by the *Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment*. Consequently, within the North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath LCA there is potential for the restoration of heathland post mineral extraction and felling of coniferous trees, the development of forestry management strategies to replant coniferous plantations with mixed and broadleaved woodland and the preparation of conservation and management plans for designed parkland landscapes.
- 9.67 However, the proposed permanent use of the site for recycling prevents any large scale restoration work. The main area of landscape enhancement would relate to the proposed screening bund along the southern and eastern edge of the site. It is proposed to plant this with mixed woodland to match with the enhancement targets of the Hampshire LCA.

Landscape Dynamics

- 9.68 Paragraph 7.14 of the GLVIA states that “*it is important to take into account the existing trends for change with the landscape, which may be due to natural processes or human activities*”. In addition, Appendix 3 of the GLVIA (which comprises the IEMA criteria for the review of ESs), emphasises the importance of describing the dynamic baseline conditions, since it is stated that all environmental assessments should include: “*A description of the environment as it is currently and as it could be expected to develop were the project not to proceed*”.
- 9.69 The application site has a long history of disturbance, mineral extraction activities having commenced on the site in the early 1960’s. An aggregate recycling facility currently operates on the application site which contains a significant area of disturbed and unrestored land. Under the current permission there is an expectation of restoration to forestry, via condition.

Conclusions on the Landscape Appraisal of the Existing Site

- 9.70 The application site is a currently operational temporary waste recycling facility within a former mineral working, at a lower level than the surrounding landscape. It is not covered by any international or local landscape designations.

Visual Baseline

- 9.71 Visual impact assessment relates to “*changes that arise in the composition of the available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to peoples’ responses to the changes and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity*”.
- 9.72 Potential visual receptors can include the public or community at large, residents, visitors and other groups of viewers as well as the visual amenity of people affected.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

- 9.73 Initially, it is necessary to define the extent of visibility both within and outside the site. Viewpoints are then selected to represent views from the most commonly used locations in and around the site, and the existing views from each of these points are briefly described with the aid of photographs.

General Visibility of the Application Site

- 9.74 The visibility of the application site was initially assessed by a desktop study of Ordnance Survey maps in order to identify potential viewpoints. This was followed by a site visit. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study was not undertaken for this LVIA. This is due to the screening effects of adjacent forestry and tree cover at the application site which would invalidate any ZTV study as such studies are based on a bare earth landform devoid of vegetation.
- 9.75 Extensive tracts of forestry are a major component of the landscape surrounding the application site and afford the site a significant degree of visual screening from the west.
- 9.76 A post and wire fence defines the southern site boundary and as a result views are readily available of the majority of the site from Sir Richard's Ride immediately to the south due to the lack of screening. The exception to this is a small c.1.0m high bund along the south-eastern boundary which is populated with young saplings and scrub, which provide a degree of visual screening for approximately 90m of Sir Richard's Ride.
- 9.77 To the east, the site is also visible from users of the A327 which runs parallel to the eastern boundary of the site. An existing woodland plantation is located between the eastern boundary of the site and the A327, which runs parallel to the eastern boundary of the site and a line of conifers defines the eastern edge of the plantation. The trees in this plantation have clear stems to about 3.0m in height, consequently views of the site from the A327 are filtered through vegetation.
- 9.78 A partially vegetated screen bund of a maximum 2.5m height is present to the north-east of the site which provides visual screening of parts of the site from road users travelling southbound along the A327 and users of a localised section of the bridleway along Welsh Drive to the north of the site. The existing entrance to the site is located approximately at the mid-point of the northern site boundary. The configuration of the entrance currently permits views into the site in the vicinity of the site entrance with views being available across the site to the southern boundary. The north-western site boundary is occupied by a lower bund of approximately 1.5m in height. Existing young saplings are established on part of this bund and other vegetation is establishing inside the bund. This vegetation does provide a screening function and views into the site would be available over the top of the bund and through gaps in vegetation but a large stockpile occupying the north-western corner of the site limits further views into the site at this location.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

9.79 The assessment of visibility has been developed using field work to identify those intervening features which influence visibility.

Choice of Viewpoints

9.80 Potential visual receptors in the local area include the following:

- inhabitants of isolated dwellings including Hawker's Lodge to the south and several mobile homes/caravans to the north of the application site;
- walkers, cyclists and horse riders on the local Public Rights of Way network;
- outdoor recreational locations, such as nearby Open Access land; and
- users of the local road network, namely the A327 and B3016.

9.81 All potential viewpoints and areas were investigated using the following criteria:

- areas identified as potential receptors in the baseline;
- proximity to the site;
- high concentrations of viewers, such as settlements, local recreational facilities etc;
- views from designated areas, private properties, footpaths and other receptors;
- views illustrating the visual character of the surrounding area; and
- Photography and fieldwork analysis of views of the site were then carried out from the surrounding landscape

Viewpoints

9.82 Table 9-3 below summarises the viewpoints selected to illustrate existing views, and their locations and reference numbers. The locations of these viewpoints are shown on Drawing No. WH 9/003, and the photographs of the existing views are shown on Drawing No. WH 9/006 onwards. The detailed descriptions of the current views are included in the Viewpoint Analysis later in this chapter.

Table 9-3 List of Viewpoints

Viewpoint	Description	Type of Receptor
1	Sir Richard's Ride (west)	Open Access land
2	Sir Richard's Ride	Open Access land
3	Sir Richard's Ride (east)	Open Access land
4	A327 road	Road users
5	A327 road (opp. Welsh Drive jctn)	Road users
6	Welsh Drive	Public right of way

Potential for Visual Enhancement

9.83 Opportunities for visual enhancement are closely related to the opportunities for landscape enhancement. Within the North East Hampshire Plantations

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

and Heath LCA there is potential for the replanting of mixed and broadleaved woodland and the visual enhancement of part of a designed parkland landscape.

- 9.84 The inclusion of a screen bank to the south and east sides of the site would allow the existing disturbed site to be screened from view by a wooded perimeter to the site.

Conclusions on the Visual Appraisal of the Baseline

- 9.85 The footprint of the development area of the site comprises disturbed land previously exploited for mineral extraction. The landform within the application site is at a lower level than the surrounding landscape which would assist with visual screening of the proposed development. The application site is visible from locations within the immediate vicinity of the site including Welsh Drive (public bridleway Eversley no. 11), Sir Richard's Ride, the A327 and potentially from a short section of the B3016. Beyond the immediate vicinity, the application site is well screened by existing forestry/woodland. Views of the site are available from a relatively small visual zone within the overall landscape. Representative viewpoints have been selected from public rights of way, open access land and highways.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

9.86 The following section includes a description of the development proposals, potential landscape and visual characteristics and impact generators. The effects and mitigation would be considered in terms of spatial element (local, district, regional, national) and timescales (short/medium/long term).

Nature and Extent of the Proposed Development

9.87 In considering the potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development it is necessary to consider each element of the scheme and its potential to create a landscape or visual impact. The full extent and nature of the proposed development is set out in Chapter 3 of this ES and the accompanying Design & Access Statement. However, a brief description of the proposed development is described in the ensuing paragraphs.

Potential Landscape and Visual elements of the Proposed Development

9.88 The application site covers some 11.8Ha of land (refer to Drawing No. WH 9/004 of which existing land uses occupy the following approximate percentages:

- Operational land associated with the existing temporary secondary aggregate recycling facility 42%
- Unrestored mineral workings 42%
- Woodland plantation 13%
- Access road 3%

9.89 As part of the proposed development the following existing temporary operations and land uses would be permanently retained:

- Retention of existing hardstanding and buildings including portacabin, site mess room and toilet block;
- Stockpiles of unprocessed inert construction, demolition and excavation waste;
- Stockpiles of processed waste/secondary aggregates; and
- Crushing and screening (mobile and fixed plant).

9.90 As part of the proposed development the following operations and land uses would be introduced:

- Construction of screen bunds to the southern and eastern boundaries;
- New multi deck dry screening and/or aggregate washing systems.

9.91 The most significant element of the proposals in landscape and visual terms would be alterations to the existing landform as a result of the construction of the screen bunds. Other elements of the proposed development have the potential to give rise to visual impacts, namely the existing buildings, plant and unprocessed and processed stockpiles of waste/secondary aggregates. From an operational perspective, where possible the height of the stockpiles

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

would be restricted in height so as not to exceed the crest elevation of the peripheral screen bunds from the East and the South. Mobile plant would be positioned to take advantage of peripheral screen bunds and associated tree planting.

Timescales and Permanency of Potential Impacts

- 9.92 Short term impacts would occur over a period of 18 months as a result of operations associated with construction of the screen bunds, during which time the immature landscape proposals will not have had time to take effect. Thereafter, operations associated with the proposed operational development and maturing vegetation would be a permanent impact.

Potential Indirect Impacts

- 9.93 The most likely indirect effects would result from the introduction of increased plant/vehicle movements, both on the site and within the vicinity, especially vehicles utilised for the transportation of inert waste/secondary aggregates on/off site and any potential impacts have been assessed in the traffic section of the ES.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

- 9.94 The GLVIA, paragraph 9.8 advises that *“The ideal strategy for each identifiable negative effect is one of avoidance. If this is not possible, alternative strategies of reduction, remediation and compensation may be explored.”*

Landscape and Visual Mitigation

- 9.95 Screen bunds would be constructed along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site, which would necessitate the importation of approximately 85,000m³ of clean, inert soils which would be sourced by R. Collard Limited (refer to Drawing No. WH 9/005). The crest elevation of the eastern bund would be c. 3.3m above the surface level of the A327 road to the east of the site and the crest elevation of the bund would be variable, thus avoiding a flat-topped appearance. It would be constructed with shallow outward facing slopes ranging from 1v:3.5h to 1v:5.5h and be ‘S’ shaped in cross-section to provide some variability in the slope gradient to avoid a uniform, engineered appearance. A 5.0m stand-off to the east has been adopted from the existing tree stems to the commencement of earthworks, in line with the recommendations of an arboriculturalist.
- 9.96 The outward facing slopes of the eastern bund would be planted with mixed deciduous/coniferous trees and shrubs at 2.0m centres, with a higher concentration of shrubs being planted towards the upper slopes of the bund and on its crest to provide optimal visual screening. The inward facing slopes would be at a slope gradient of 1v:2h and would be planted with Scots Pine.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

- 9.97 The crest elevation of the southern bund would be c. 3.3m above the surface level of the fence line to the south of the site and the level of Sir Richard's Ride. It would be constructed with outward facing slopes ranging from 1v:4h to 1v:6h and with a variable cross-section to merge with existing ground levels and created a rounded bund top thus avoiding a uniform, engineered appearance. The western end of the bund landform would need to tie in with the restored levels of the adjacent restored Bramshill Quarry.
- 9.98 The proposed southern bund is parallel to Sir Richard's Ride, a historic ride associated with Bramshill Park. Currently, woodland is not present on the northern side of the ride at its easternmost end as this land has been previously exploited for mineral extraction on the application site. The planting as described in the following paragraph is intended to assist in the reinstatement of the character of this ride along its northern boundary.
- 9.99 The 3.0m stand-off from the existing fence line to the toe of the proposed southern bund would be planted with mixed deciduous/coniferous trees at a lower density than 2.0m centres and staggered to allow views through to the planting on the outer slope of the bund, giving the impression of a depth of woodland. The outward facing slopes would be planted with mixed deciduous/coniferous trees and shrubs at 2.0m centres with a higher concentration of shrubs being planted towards the upper slopes of the bund and on its crest to provide optimal visual screening. The inward facing slopes would be at a slope gradient of 1v:2h and would be planted with Scots Pine.
- 9.100 Initially, the bunds would be seeded immediately after construction with an open fescue based mix to allow natural colonisation of grasses and herb species. Thereafter, the inner slopes of the bunds would be planted up with Scots Pine and the outer slopes of the bunds would be planted up with the following species at the noted percentages:
- Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) 70%
 - Scot's Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) 15%
 - Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*) 10%
 - Common Oak (*Quercus robur*) 5%
- 9.101 In addition, it is recognised that the existing woodland plantation in the east of the site contributes to the visual mitigation of current operations on the application site. It is considered that this function could be further strengthened by the implementation of additional understory planting e.g. gorse and the commencement of management of the woodland in accordance with the UK Woodland Assurance Standard scheme. Similarly, existing planting on the existing screen bunds to the north of the site would be strengthened by additional understorey planting to provide further visual screening.
- 9.102 The screen bunds and planting would be retained permanently for the life of the proposed development.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

RESIDUAL IMPACTS

Residual Landscape Impacts

Landscape Sensitivity of the Site

9.103 The sensitivity of the existing landscape resource to the proposed development is based on the following factors:

- value placed on the landscape;
- compatibility of the proposed development with the existing landuse;
- compatibility of the proposed development with the existing landscape character;
- condition of the landscape;
- scope for mitigation; and
- degree to which landscape elements are and characteristics can be replaced or substituted.

9.104 The sensitivity of a landscape can be categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. Table 9-4 illustrates how the above criteria have been appraised to gain a wider understanding of the landscape sensitivity of the application site and the wider area.

Table 9-4
Sensitivity of Existing Landscape Resource to Development

Landscape Element	Description
The value placed on the landscape	The site is not within any national or local landscape designations.
Compatibility of the proposed development with the existing surroundings	The application site is located within the countryside, in an area characterised by a significant amount of woodland (forestry) cover. Under the current permission there is an expectation that the entire site would be restored to forestry. The proposed development includes the establishment of woodland/forestry on the bunds, however, it would result in a lesser area of forestry than that required under the current permission.
Compatibility of the proposed development with the existing landuses	Mineral extraction is a former land use within the site and large areas of the surrounding landscape have been- and continue to be- exploited for minerals including the adjacent Bramshill Quarry. Forestry is a significant component of the local landscape with large areas of forestry being felled in advance of mineral extraction. The above ongoing land uses and activities render this a changing and dynamic landscape. A waste transfer station benefitting from permanent planning permission is located in close proximity to the application site at Eversley Haulage Park. The application site- which itself was subject to previous mineral extraction- currently benefits from permission for temporary waste activities including the importation of inert waste from the aforementioned waste transfer station, reflecting the compatibility of minerals and

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Condition of the landscape	waste operations. It is considered that the proposed development would be compatible with existing land uses. The site is an unrestored mineral site therefore the condition of the site itself is considered to be poor, although some natural regeneration has taken place within the site. The condition of the surrounding landscape is variable: operational mineral extraction areas at Bramshill Quarry to the west and Busta Triangle to the east are in poor condition whilst former mineral extraction areas which have been restored to forestry are generally in good condition. The existing woodland plantation to the immediate east of the site is unmanaged and in a poor condition. Overall, the condition of the site is assessed as poor whilst the condition of the surrounding landscape is moderate.
The scope for mitigation of the proposed development	Scope exists for mitigation including the construction of screen bunds which would be planted with native trees and shrubs. This would be coupled with additional planting in and management of the existing woodland plantation to the immediate east of the site. Also, stockpiles within the site would be limited to a height which would ensure they would not be visible above the bund.
Degree to which landscape elements and characteristics can be replaced or substituted	Existing landscape elements within the site including naturally regenerated vegetation and water bodies can easily be replaced or substituted, and have been included in the proposed landscape works associated with the screen bunds.

- 9.105 In terms of the value of the landscape, the application site is not located within any national or local landscape designations, although part of a Historic Park and Garden (woodland ride) is present on the southern boundary. The current landscape condition of the site itself is poor, but restoration to forestry would improve the general landscape condition of the site. Having regard to the above, the application site (within the 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA and the 'Woodland and Plantation Heath' LCT) is considered to have a **Low** sensitivity to landscape change.
- 9.106 In terms of the wider landscape, the proposed development would be visible from a limited number of viewpoints. These viewpoints are in close proximity to the site, as there is a high degree of visual enclosure in the adjacent landscape. It is therefore likely that any changes to landscape character would be localised. The condition of the surrounding landscape is variable, from poor to good and overall is considered to be of moderate condition. Although the 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA and the 'Woodland and Plantation Heath LCT' are valued for their remoteness, seclusion and tranquillity, these attributes are less applicable to the immediate vicinity of the site as it is located on the periphery of a general expanse of forestry plantation close to the A327, a busy local road which generates noise and visual disturbance from vehicles. Other detracting features include active mineral extraction to the west at Bramshill Quarry and to the east at Busta Triangle. Having regard to all of the above, it is considered that the wider landscape has a **Medium** sensitivity to landscape change.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

- 9.107 The magnitude of landscape impacts is categorised as substantial, moderate, slight or negligible, depending on the following factors¹:
- the scale or degree of change to the existing landscape resource;
 - the nature of the change caused by the proposed development (for example, beneficial or adverse); and
 - the timescale, or phasing, of the proposed development, whether it is permanent or temporary and reversible.

Changes in Natural Characteristics

- 9.108 The most significant element of change in natural characteristics would be alterations to the existing topography, namely the construction of two screen bunds, the eastern bund and the southern bund to a maximum height of c.3.3m. The screen bunds would be constructed with shallow outer gradients to minimise their impact on the landscape. In the short term, as the bunds would be higher than the surrounding topography they would appear out of character with the generally flat landscape of the immediate area, although they would provide immediate visual screening of more intrusive elements within the site. In the medium to long term, as the planting on the bunds became more established and mature the bunds would become less apparent and intrusive and their impact on the landscape would diminish over time.
- 9.109 Operationally, the nature of the land use within the site would remain as existing but the timescale of the operations would change from temporary to permanent. As the current operation is only temporary, the current permission allows for restoration of the application site to forestry. The long term land use of the site would therefore change from the permitted forestry to a secondary aggregates recycling facility. It should be noted that, with the exception of views into the site in the vicinity of the site entrance on Welsh Drive, all other views into the site would be screened by restored forestry² or the proposed screen bunds and planting therefore the changes in the natural characteristics of the site would not be visible- and would therefore not be apparent- to the majority of receptors.
- 9.110 Some of the existing land cover including recently established and naturally colonised trees and scrub in the south of the site, an isolated Scots Pine tree and water bodies would be removed. The removal of this vegetation would be offset by planting native trees and shrubs on the bunds.

Changes in Cultural and Social Factors

- 9.111 The historic heathland character of the area has diminished over time and significant areas of former heathland in the locality have been replaced by

¹ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Second Edition) Paragraphs 7.18

² The timescale for restoration of the adjacent Bramshill Quarry to forestry could lengthen if an extension is applied for. No extension has been applied for at the time this report was prepared.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

extensive conifer plantations, scrub and woodland. The permitted scheme requires restoration to forestry. From external viewpoints including public rights of way, open access land and roads the proposed native tree and shrub planting on the bunds to the eastern and southern boundaries of the site would give the impression of the site being wooded, which is in-keeping with the character of the local landscape and the permitted restoration land-use. Unscreened views into operational areas of the site through the site entrance would be available from the bridleway on Welsh Drive, although such views would only be for a short length of the bridleway.

- 9.112 The proposed development would have an indirect impact on the grade II* listed designated park and garden of Bramshill Park as it would reinstate part of the historic woodland ride alongside Sir Richard's Ride. A woodland edge to the site along Sir Richard's Ride would be created in the permitted restoration to forestry therefore the nature of the effect of the proposed development is neutral as it would also create a woodland edge.

Changes in Aesthetic Aspects

- 9.113 The proposed development would change the enclosure of the landscape; it is currently possible to look across the site from a number of viewpoints, and the proposed tree and shrub planting along the eastern and southern perimeters of the site would enclose it. However, this enclosure would also be created in the permitted restoration to forestry so the proposed enclosure is similar in nature to that permitted and would have a neutral effect.
- 9.114 The proposed development would result in an increase in diversity through the planting of a wider selection of native tree and shrub species than the permitted forestry around the periphery of the application site. However, there would be a loss of habitats within the site when the proposed use is compared with the potential restoration of the whole site to forestry.
- 9.115 The existing prominent straight lines in the landscape along the southern and eastern boundaries (Sir Richard's Ride and the existing woodland plantation) would be reinforced with the proposed native tree and shrub planting on the screen bunds. Detracting features such as the existing stockpiles within the site would not be visible, representing a beneficial effect over the current views of the site and the proposed woodland planting in front of and on the bund would create a similar character to woodland planting across the site as a whole in the long term.
- 9.116 The current permission requires the site to be restored to forestry, which usually comprises coniferous species which are dark green in colour. The proposed native tree and shrub planting would comprise a mix of deciduous and coniferous species, which would result in more seasonal colour variation in the vegetation than forestry. However, the 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA recognises that the distinctive 'heathy' character of the area as a key characteristic which gives rise to a 'colourful landscape through the seasons'. Consequently, the greater seasonal colour variation of the proposed native tree and shrub planting is considered to be in-keeping with the landscape character of the locality.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

- 9.117 The existing movement of plant and vehicles within the site would be screened as a result of the proposed development, except from a short section of the bridleway to the north of the site which would have views of plant and vehicle movements within the site. Overall, however, views of movement within the site would decrease. However, the proposed permanent retention of the recycling facility would see the continuation of vehicle movements to/from the site associated with the proposed recycling operation.

Summary of Overall Landscape Impact

- 9.118 The magnitude of change caused by the proposed development on the landscape of the application site is considered to be **Moderate** which, when combined with **Low** sensitivity, gives rise to a **Moderate/Minor adverse** level of effect.
- 9.119 The magnitude of change caused by the proposed development on the adjacent landscape is considered to be **Moderate** through perception and aesthetic qualities which, when combined with **Medium** sensitivity, gives rise to a **Moderate adverse** level of effect. As the planting on the screen bunds matured this effect would reduce to **Minor** and **neutral** for the landscape to the south and east. Along the northern boundary, where views into the site and disturbance from site traffic would occur, the worst case effect would be **Moderate** and **adverse** but this would be likely to reduce as additional planting on the proposed screen bunds became established.

Effects on Landscape-Related Designations

Registered Parks and Gardens

- 9.120 The proposed development would be visible along the entire southern boundary of the site from Sir Richard's Ride which forms part of the Bramshill Park Grade II* designated park and garden. The proposed development would reinstate the woodland edge of the historic woodland ride alongside Sir Richard's Ride, albeit partially on the proposed southern screen bund.
- 9.121 In the short term, although it would be screening more intrusive operations within the site, the southern screen bund would have an adverse effect on the setting of Bramshill Park, as the landform would be above the ground levels of the surrounding land and the bund would be unvegetated. In the medium and long term, as the native tree and shrub vegetation became more established and mature the nature of the effect would become neutral as the planting would largely screen the landform of the bund and would have a similar appearance to the forestry which is currently permitted.
- 9.122 Considering all of the above, in the short term the magnitude of change to the registered park and garden is considered to be **Slight** which, when combined with **High** sensitivity, gives rise to a **Moderate adverse** but localised effect. However, in the medium to long term, the magnitude of change is considered

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

to be **Negligible** which, when combined with **High** sensitivity, gives rise to a **Moderate/Minor neutral** effect.

Effects on Landscape Character Areas

- 9.123 The site is located within the 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA; which within the study area this is subdivided into the 'Woodland and Plantation Heath' LCT, the 'Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated' LCT, the 'Open Heath' LCT and the 'River Valley Floor' LCT. The landscape immediately surrounding the site where changes to landscape character would be perceived within the 'Woodland and Plantation on Heath' LCT is not within any national or local landscape designations and its overall condition is moderate albeit with extensive areas of forestry and former/ongoing mineral extraction; it is therefore likely to have a **Medium** sensitivity to the proposed development. From the north, the proposed development would result in a localised change to the scale of the landscape but this change would only be apparent from a short section of the public bridleway on Welsh Drive; instead of looking at a woodland edge (as would occur in the permitted restoration), the operational areas of the site would be open and there would be less enclosure. From the east and south, in the short term the seeded screen bund would have an adverse impact on landscape character, however, following establishment of the proposed native tree and shrub planting the screen bund would have a similar character to the currently permitted forestry resulting in a neutral effect.
- 9.124 This LCT is considered to have a **Medium** sensitivity to landscape change which, combined with a **Slight** magnitude of change gives rise to a **Moderate/Minor adverse** effect in the short term, this would reduce to a **Minor neutral** effect on the LCT in the medium to long term in these areas. Localised significant effects would occur as identified through the viewpoint assessment but as a whole effects on the landscape character type would not be significant. The proposed development would not be visible from the 'Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated' LCT, the 'Open Heath' LCT or the 'River Valley Floor' LCT so there would not be any effects on those LCTs.
- 9.125 Localised significant effects would occur within the 'Woodland and Plantation Heath' LCT as identified through the viewpoint assessment which is a component LCT of the 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA. This LCA is considered to have a **Medium** sensitivity to landscape change which, combined with a **Negligible** magnitude of change over the entire LCA gives rise to a **Minor adverse** effect in the short term, this would reduce to a **Negligible/None neutral** effect on the LCA in the medium to long term in these areas. As a whole, effects on the 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA would not be significant.

Residual Visual Impacts

Sensitivity of Viewpoints

- 9.126 The viewpoints set out in Table 9-5 have been assessed to determine the sensitivity to change in visual amenity of viewers located at these points.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Sensitivity is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible depending on the following factors³:

- the location and context of the viewpoint;
- the expectations and occupation or activity of the receptor. For example, users of outdoor recreation facilities, including public rights of way whose attention or interest is focussed on the landscape, should be considered most sensitive along with communities where the development has the potential to impact on valued views or changes to their setting. The occupiers of residential properties whose outlook is affected are also sensitive viewpoints;
- by contrast, views from outdoor sport facilities, transport routes or places of work are less sensitive in this regard as the receptors' focus of attention is elsewhere; and
- the importance of the view, which may be defined by the number of viewers who commonly use the viewpoint, the cultural significance of the viewpoint, or the facilities provided for its enjoyment can also increase the sensitivity of the viewpoint.

9.127 The potential visual effects of the proposed development on the surrounding landscape and in particular the views from identified viewpoints, have been assessed with the aid of plans and site assessment, and are described in detail below.

Magnitude of Visual Impacts

9.128 For each of the viewpoints the potential magnitude of the residual visual impacts, taking into account the proposed mitigation, has been assessed. The magnitude of visual impacts is mainly dependent upon the following factors⁴:

- what proportion of the existing view would change as a result of the development proposals?
- how many features or elements within the view would be changed?
- how appropriate are the proposals in the context of the existing views?
- how many viewers would be affected by the changes in the view?
- what is the timescale of the proposals? Also, is it continuous or intermittent? and
- what is the angle of the view in relation the main activity of the receptor?

Viewpoint Analysis

Viewpoint 1 - Sir Richard's Ride (west)

9.129 This viewpoint is taken from Sir Richard's Ride (track), some 70m to the west of the application site at a ground level of approximately 95.2m AOD as shown in the existing photograph in Drawing No WH 9/006, within Open

³ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Second Edition) Paragraphs 7.31 and 7.32

⁴ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Second Edition) Paragraph 7.36

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Access land which is also part of the Grade II* listed park and garden of Bramshill Park. This track follows the alignment of Sir Richard's Ride, a historic ride within Bramshill Park. Part of Sir Richard's Ride to the east of the viewpoint is currently used as a haul road for quarry plant transporting mineral from a remote extraction area to the south into Bramshill Quarry (operated by CEMEX) for processing. The point at which quarry plant accesses/egresses Bramshill Quarry is adjacent to the sign to the right of the view. The foreground is occupied by operational areas of Bramshill Quarry including the plant site and stockpiles of unprocessed mineral to the left of the view, which are incongruous features in a surrounding landscape characterised by forestry. A low bund on the perimeter of Bramshill Quarry is visible in the foreground, parallel to Sir Richard's Ride. Forestry is present to the south of Sir Richard's Ride beyond the right-hand extent of the photo shown on the viewpoint drawing. Views of stockpiled materials within the application site are available in the background beyond Bramshill Quarry, with the woodland plantation flanking the eastern boundary of the application site as a backdrop, these stockpiles being incongruous features in the landscape. The remainder of the application site is physically screened by intervening landform and vegetation within Bramshill Quarry.

- 9.130 This viewpoint is located on Open Access land within a grade II* listed park and garden, as such it is considered to have a **High** sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 9.131 Post-construction of the screen bunds and in the short term while Bramshill Quarry remains operational, the proposed southern bund would be visible beyond the sign to the right of the view aligned parallel with Sir Richard's Ride, but would only occupy a small part of the overall field of view. Some sections of the proposed eastern bund would also be visible between operational land within Bramshill Quarry in the foreground and the woodland plantation to the east of the application site. However, the bunds would be seeded immediately after construction and the subsequent vegetation cover would reduce their visual impact and aid their assimilation into the landscape. As the application site is at a lower level than the surrounding land, plant/machinery within the site would be mostly screened by intervening landform and vegetation, although some plant/machinery would be likely to be visible in the central part of the site. Stockpiles within the site would continue to be visible, although they would be restricted in height as compared with existing to minimise their impact. In the short term it is considered that there would be a **Slight** change in magnitude which, combined with a **High** sensitivity would give rise to a **Moderate adverse** effect. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/006.
- 9.132 In the long term, both Bramshill Quarry and the existing temporary recycling facility within the application site currently have permission for restoration to forestry. In this scenario, visible areas of Bramshill Quarry will be planted up with forestry trees and over time, as the forestry established, views of the operational site area would be screened by intervening vegetation of a similar character to the surrounding forestry. Woodland planting is also proposed on the southern bund and in the long term this woodland would establish and assist in screening the landform of the southern bund and the application site beyond from this viewpoint. Consequently, the long term visual impact of the

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

proposed scheme would be almost identical to the permitted restoration, albeit with native broadleaved species incorporated into the species mix for the proposed planting on the southern bund although this vegetation would only occupy a small part of the overall field of view. Thus, the short term **Moderate** magnitude of change would reduce to **Negligible** in the long term giving rise to a **Moderate/Minor** and **neutral** effect in the long term. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/007.

Viewpoint 2 – Sir Richard’s Ride

- 9.133 This viewpoint is taken from Sir Richard’s Ride (track) to the immediate south of the application site at approximately 95.4m AOD ground level as shown in the existing photograph in Drawing No WH 9/008, within Open Access land which is also part of the grade II* listed park and garden of Bramshill Park. This track follows the alignment of Sir Richard’s Ride, a historic ride within Bramshill Park and this is typical of the views available into the site from the south. Open views are available into the application site across former mineral workings, disturbed ground and naturally regenerated vegetation in the foreground towards stockpiled materials, mobile plant and skips in the background with the woodland plantation flanking the eastern boundary of the application site as a backdrop. The existing stockpile within the north-western corner of the site is visible on the skyline to the left of the view. Overall, the existing view is of a highly disturbed landscape containing a significant number of detracting features in a surrounding landscape characterised by forestry.
- 9.134 This viewpoint is located on Open Access land within a grade II* listed park and garden, as such it is considered to have a **High** sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 9.135 Post-construction of the screen bunds and in the short term the proposed southern bund would be visible beyond the fence line for the complete extent of the view. The landform of the southern bund would screen all views into the application site from this viewpoint, although it would be perceived as an above-ground feature and would be out of keeping with the relatively flat surrounding landscape. However, the adoption of shallow outer gradients from 1v:4h to 1v:6h with variability in long profile and crest elevation, seeding of the bund immediately after construction and subsequent establishment of vegetation would help to reduce its visual impact. In the short term it is considered that there would be a **Substantial** change in magnitude which, combined with a **High** sensitivity would give rise to a **Major neutral** effect. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/008.
- 9.136 The application site currently has permission for restoration to forestry therefore under the permitted scenario the view beyond the fence line would be of forestry in the long term. Woodland planting is proposed on the southern bund, the outer slopes would be planted with mixed native broadleaved and coniferous species planted at an average spacing of 2.0m. Trees and shrubs would be planted at a higher density towards the crest of the bund with a greater proportion of scrub and understorey species to optimise screening. The 3.0m stand-off between the toe of the bund and the fence line would be planted with trees at an average spacing of 2.0m and

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

staggered to allow views through towards the vegetation on the bund and give the impression of a depth of woodland. In the long term this woodland planting would establish and assist in screening the landform of the southern bund and the application site beyond from this viewpoint. Consequently, the long term visual impact of the proposed scheme would be almost identical to the permitted restoration, albeit with native broadleaved species incorporated into the species mix for the proposed planting. Thus, the short term **Substantial** magnitude of change would reduce to **Negligible** in the long term giving rise to a **Moderate/Minor neutral** effect in the long term. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/009.

Viewpoint 3 – Sir Richard’s Ride (east)

- 9.137 This viewpoint is taken from Sir Richard’s Ride (track) near the south-eastern corner of the application site at approximately 95.1m AOD at ground level as shown in the existing photograph in Drawing No WH 9/010, within Open Access land which is also part of the Grade II* listed park and garden of Bramshill Park. Sir Richard’s Ride, a historic ride within Bramshill Park, is aligned on the track to the left of the view, beyond which is scrub woodland and forestry plantations to the far left of the view. To the centre left of the view young saplings and scrub have established on a low bund along the southern perimeter of the application site, which currently provide a degree of visual screening of the site for approximately 80m of Sir Richard’s Ride. Operational areas of Bramshill Quarry including the plant site and stockpiles of unprocessed mineral are visible to the centre of the view, as is vegetation along the boundary between Bramshill Quarry and the application site. Open views are available into the application site across an existing water body and naturally regenerated vegetation in the foreground towards former mineral workings/disturbed ground, mobile plant and stockpiled materials which puncture the skyline. The woodland plantation flanking the eastern boundary of the application site is visible to the right of the view. The existing disturbed ground, processing plant and stockpiles are detracting features in a surrounding landscape characterised by forestry/woodland.
- 9.138 This viewpoint is located on Open Access land within a grade II* listed park and garden, as such it is considered to have a **High** sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 9.139 Post-construction of the screen bunds and in the short term the proposed eastern bund would be visible beyond the fence line to the right of the view for its entire length. The landform of the eastern bund would screen the majority of views into the application site from this viewpoint, although it would be perceived as an above-ground feature and would be out of keeping with the relatively flat surrounding landscape. The eastern end of the proposed southern bund would also be visible to the centre of the view, although vegetation on the existing bund would screen the majority of this bund. However, the adoption of shallow outer gradients to both bunds with variability in long profile and crest elevation, seeding of the bunds immediately after construction and subsequent establishment of vegetation would help to reduce their visual impact. Views would be possible into the application site through the gap between the bunds, however, only a small proportion of the overall site would be visible. The proposed wildlife pond

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

would be visible in the foreground and the existing woodland plantation to the right of the view would be undergoing management in addition to planting of understorey species. In the short term it is considered that there would be a **Substantial** change in magnitude which, combined with a **High** sensitivity would give rise to a **Major neutral** but localised effect. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/010.

- 9.140 The application site currently has permission for restoration to forestry therefore under the permitted scenario the view beyond the fence line would be of forestry in the long term. Woodland planting is proposed on both bunds, the outer slopes of which would be planted with mixed native broadleaved and coniferous species. Trees and shrubs would be planted at a higher density towards the crest of the bund with a greater proportion of scrub and understorey species to optimise screening, particularly on the slopes nearest the gap in the bunds. In the long term this woodland planting would establish and assist in screening the landform of the southern bund and the application site beyond from this viewpoint. Consequently, the long term visual impact of the proposed scheme would be almost identical to the permitted restoration, albeit with native broadleaved species incorporated into the species mix for the proposed planting. Thus, the short term **Substantial** magnitude of impact would reduce to **Negligible** in the long term giving rise to a **Moderate/Minor neutral** effect in the long term. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/011.

Viewpoint 4 – A327 road

- 9.141 This viewpoint is taken from the road verge on the western side of the A327 towards the north-eastern corner of the application site at approximately 95.5m AOD as shown in the existing photograph in Drawing No WH 9/012. The foreground of the view is occupied by the existing woodland plantation between the A327 and the application site, which is in poor condition. The absence of understorey vegetation/low level tree canopies allows permeable views through the plantation to the application site beyond. Existing stockpiles within the application site are highly conspicuous and form skyline features to the left and right of the view. Miscellaneous trailers/skips in a compound area within the application site are visible to the right of the view with vegetation on the boundary of the application site and Bramshill Quarry and forestry further beyond as a backdrop. Bramshill Quarry plant site is visible through the trees to the centre right of the view.
- 9.142 This viewpoint approximates to views that would be available by road users on the A327 and is considered to have a **Medium** sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 9.143 Post-construction and in the short term the proposed eastern bund would be visible through the trees for the complete extent of the view, although views from passing vehicles would be transient and seen through the intervening tree belt. The landform of the eastern bund would screen all views into the application site from this viewpoint, although it would be perceived as an above-ground feature and would be out of keeping with the flat surrounding landscape. However, the adoption of shallow outer gradients from 1v:3.5h to 1v:5.5h with variability in long profile and crest elevation, seeding of the bund

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

immediately after construction and subsequent establishment of vegetation would help to reduce its visual impact. Stockpiles within the application area would be limited in height to ensure they would not be visible above the crest of the bund. In the short term it is considered that there would be a **Moderate** change in magnitude which, combined with a **Medium** sensitivity would give rise to a **Moderate and neutral** effect. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/012.

- 9.144 The application site currently has permission for restoration to forestry therefore under the permitted scenario the view through the trees would be of forestry in the long term. Woodland planting is proposed on the eastern bund, the outer slopes would be planted with mixed native broadleaved and coniferous species. In the long term this woodland planting would establish and assist in screening the landform of the eastern bund and the application site beyond from this viewpoint. In addition, further screening would be provided by the proposed understorey planting within the existing woodland plantation to the immediate east of the proposed eastern bund. Consequently, the long term visual impact of the proposed scheme would be almost identical to the permitted restoration, albeit with native broadleaved species incorporated into the species mix for the proposed planting. Thus, the short term **Moderate** magnitude of change would reduce to **Negligible** in the long term giving rise to a **Minor neutral** effect. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/013.

Viewpoint 5 – A327 road (opposite Welsh Drive junction)

- 9.145 This viewpoint is taken from the road verge on the eastern side of the A327 opposite the junction which is jointly used by the existing temporary recycling facility and Bramshill Quarry site at approximately 99m AOD as shown in the existing photograph in Drawing No. WH 9/014. The A327 runs from left to right across the view and the track off the junction is Welsh Drive, which is occupied by bridleway Eversley no. 11, a public right of way. The existing woodland plantation between the A327 and the application site is visible to the left of the view, stockpiles within the site being partially visible through the vegetation. The existing partially vegetated screen bund to the north-eastern boundary of the application site is visible to the centre and right of the view. The entrance to the existing recycling facility is off Welsh Drive to the right of the view. An existing stockpile within the north-western corner of the application site is an incongruous skyline feature to the far right of the view. With the exception of the existing stockpiles, the remainder of the application site is well-screened from this viewpoint.
- 9.146 This viewpoint approximates to views that would be available by road users on the A327 and users approaching the bridleway from the east. It is considered to have a **Medium** sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 9.147 Post-construction of the eastern screen bund and in the short term the proposed eastern bund would be visible through the trees to the centre and left of the view although existing tree trunks, canopies and understorey vegetation would help to screen views of this bund. Users of the bridleway would be concentrating on crossing the busy A327 and would be unlikely to

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

be focussing on views into the application site and views from passing vehicles would be transient. The landform of the eastern bund would screen all views into the application site from this viewpoint, although it would be perceived as an above-ground feature and would be out of keeping with the flat surrounding landscape. However, the adoption of shallow outer gradients from 1v:3.5h to 1v:5.5h with variability in long profile and crest elevation, seeding of the bund immediately after construction and subsequent establishment of vegetation would help to reduce its visual impact, as would additional understorey planting in the existing plantation to the west of the site. Stockpiles within the application area would be limited in height to ensure they would not be visible above the crest of the bund. In the short term it is considered that there would be a **Slight** change in magnitude which, combined with a **Medium** sensitivity would give rise to a **Moderate/Minor neutral** effect, as the bund is screening more intrusive elements of the proposed development within the application site. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/014.

- 9.148 The application site currently has permission for restoration to forestry therefore under the permitted scenario the view through the trees would be of forestry in the long term. Woodland planting is proposed on the eastern bund, the outer slopes would be planted with mixed native broadleaved and coniferous species. In the long term this woodland planting would establish and assist in screening the landform of the eastern bund and views of this planting would be filtered through intervening vegetation. Consequently, the long term visual impact of the proposed scheme would be almost identical to the permitted restoration, albeit with native broadleaved species incorporated into the species mix for the proposed planting. Thus, the short term **Slight** magnitude of change would reduce to **Negligible**, in the long term giving rise to a **Minor neutral** effect. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/015.

Viewpoint 6 – Welsh Drive

- 9.149 This viewpoint is taken from public bridleway Eversley no. 11 on Welsh Drive (track) to the immediate north of the application site opposite the site entrance at approximately 93.3m AOD as shown in the existing photograph in Drawing No WH 9/016. Vehicular traffic associated with the application site approaches the site from the left of the view, as does traffic associated with Bramshill Quarry, which continues along Welsh Drive to the right of the view to the quarry entrance. Vehicle movements in and out of the existing recycling facility are by way of segregated lanes to the centre of the view separated by the site offices. To the centre left of the view is a concrete bunker which is afforded limited screening by a low bund with trees on top. To the centre and right of the view are the site offices, assorted vehicular and mobile plant, skips, weighbridge and stockpile, with forestry occupying the skyline in the background. To the right of the view is another low bund with trees on top which affords partial screening of various items of hardware within the application site. The stockpile in the north-western corner of the application site is present beyond the right-hand extent of the photo shown on the viewpoint drawing and is only partially screened by trees on top of the low bund. Overall, the existing view contains a significant number of detracting features in a surrounding landscape characterised by forestry.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

- 9.150 This viewpoint is located on a public right of way (bridleway Eversley no. 11), however, given that this viewpoint does not represent any residential properties and is a recreational receptor it is considered to have a **Medium** sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 9.151 Post-construction of the screen bunds, views would be available through the site entrance towards the southern screen bund at the far end of the site, however, this bund would be at distance and would offer no screening of the proposed development. The low bunds visible either side of the entrance gates would be locally regraded where appropriate and planted up with native shrubs as a mitigation measure to aid screening and reduce the lateral extent of visible features within the application site beyond. In the short term it is considered that there would be a **Negligible** change in magnitude when judged against the existing site condition, combined with a **Medium** sensitivity, would give rise to a **Minor adverse** effect. It should be noted, however, that only a short limited length of the bridleway would be affected. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/016.
- 9.152 The application site currently has permission for restoration to forestry therefore under the permitted scenario the view would be of forestry in the long term. The long term visual impact of the proposed scheme would be a significant departure from the permitted restoration to forestry. Thus, a **Substantial** magnitude of change would occur against the baseline of a restored site, giving rise to a **Major/moderate adverse** effect which is significant. However, this would reduce over time as the as the additional planting on the existing bunds established. Refer to Drawing No. WH 9/017.

Summary of the Significance of the Visual Impacts of the Main Development Proposals

- 9.153 The significance of the visual effect of the main development proposals from each of the viewpoints is summarised in Table 5-6 below.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Table 9-6
Viewpoint Schedule

Viewpoint	Location	Sensitivity	Short term Magnitude of change	Short term Significance	Long term Magnitude of change	Long term Significance
1	Sir Richard's Ride (west)	High	Slight	Moderate adverse	Negligible	Moderate/Minor neutral
2	Sir Richard's Ride	High	Substantial	Major neutral	Negligible	Moderate/Minor neutral
3	Sir Richard's Ride (east)	High	Substantial	Major neutral	Negligible	Moderate/Minor neutral
4	A327 road	Medium	Moderate	Moderate neutral	Negligible	Minor neutral
9	A327 road (opp. Welsh Drive jctn)	Medium	Slight	Moderate/Minor neutral	Negligible	Minor neutral
6	Welsh Drive	Medium	Negligible	Minor adverse	Substantial	Major/moderate adverse

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

Summary of the Residual Visual Impacts

- 9.114 The significance of the visual impact has been assessed by considering the direct changes to seven specific viewpoints, as has been identified above.
- 9.115 In the short term (post-construction of the bunds), four viewpoints would experience effects ranging from **Moderate adverse** to **Moderate neutral** which are not significant visual effects.
- 9.116 In the short term (post-construction of the bunds), two viewpoints would experience a **Major neutral** effect which is a significant visual effect. This effect would relate to the construction of the screen mound adjacent to the viewpoints.
- 9.117 In the medium to long term, five viewpoints would experience **Minor to Moderate/Minor neutral** effects which are not significant visual effects.
- 9.118 In the medium to long term, one viewpoint on the public bridleway on Welsh Drive would experience a **Major/Moderate adverse** effect which is a significant visual effect. This would relate to views looking into the site, when compared with the restored forestry baseline.
- 9.119 As identified above, only one of the six representative viewpoints would experience a significant adverse visual effect in the medium to long term. This viewpoint is located on Welsh Drive and visual receptors using this public right of way such as walkers and horseriders would only experience an adverse impact for a limited section of the public bridleway.
- 9.120 The above summaries take into account the mitigation measures that are included within the proposed development, namely the construction of a seeded bunds to form screening landforms in the short term, subsequent native tree and shrub planting on the bunds and within the existing woodland plantation to the east and limiting the stockpiles being screened by the proposed screen bunds.

CONCLUSIONS

- 9.121 A landscape and visual assessment of the proposed development has been completed in accordance with accepted guidance. A study of the landscape and visual components of the site and the local area was undertaken through desktop study and fieldwork. This study identified the main landscape and visual receptors and resulted in a baseline appraisal, against which the existing and proposed landscape and visual impacts could be assessed. The main landscape and visual implications of the development and their potential impacts were identified, and mitigation was developed to further reduce these impacts.
- 9.122 As described in the assessment section, in terms of landscape impacts, there would be a **Moderate/Minor adverse** effect on the application site. There would be a **Moderate adverse** effect on the adjacent landscape which, as

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY 9

planting on the screen bunds matured, would reduce to **Moderate** and **neutral** for the landscape to the south and east but remain **Moderate adverse** along the northern boundary where views into the site and disturbance from site traffic would occur. With reference to the methodology and Table 9-1, the proposed development would not give rise to any significant effects on the landscape.

- 9.123 In terms of impacts on landscape character, in the short term there would be a **Moderate/Minor adverse** effect on a localised area of the 'Woodland and Plantation Heath' LCT which would reduce to a **Minor neutral** effect in the medium to long term. In respect of the overall 'North East Hampshire Plantations and Heath' LCA, in the short term there would be a **Minor adverse** effect which would reduce to a **Negligible/None neutral** effect in the medium to long term. Thus, the proposed development would not give rise to any significant effects on landscape character.
- 9.124 As described in the assessment section, one of the six representative viewpoints would experience a significant adverse visual effect in the medium to long term as a result of the proposed development, however, these effects would be limited to a short section of the public bridleway on Welsh Drive.