M54 to M6 Link Road

TR010054

Volume 6

6.1 Environmental Statement

Chapter 7 – Landscape and Visual

Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

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The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

M54 to M6 Link Road

Development Consent Order 202[ ]

6.1 Environmental Statement

Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual

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7 Landscape and Visual

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 This chapter assesses the potential landscape and visual impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Scheme, following the methodology set out in guidance provided in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 107 Landscape and Visual (Ref 7.1) and the Landscape Institute/ the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (Ref 7.2). This chapter summarises the regulatory and policy framework related to the landscape and visual context, details the methodology followed for the assessment and describes the existing environment in the area surrounding the Scheme. Following this, the design and mitigation and residual effects of the Scheme are presented.

7.1.2 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared by Chartered Landscape Architect competent experts with relevant and appropriate experience. The technical lead for the landscape and visual assessment has 34 years of relevant experience and has professional qualifications as summarised in Appendix 1.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3].

7.2 Legislative and policy framework

Legislation

7.2.1 There is no legislation of direct relevance to the landscape and visual assessment scope and methodology.

Planning Policy

7.2.2 The primary basis for deciding whether or not to grant a Development Consent Order (DCO) is the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPSNN) [1](Ref 7.3) which sets out policies to guide how DCO applications would be decided and how the impacts of national networks infrastructure should be considered. Table 7.1 identifies the NPSNN policies relevant to the landscape and visual assessment and where in this ES chapter information is provided to address these policy requirements.

[1] Although other policies can have weight as relevant and important matters in decision making. See Case for the Scheme for more information [TR010054/APP/7.2].

Table 7.1: NPSNN policies relevant for the landscape and visual assessment

NPSNN para.	Requirement of the NPSNN	Location where information addresses policy requirements
5.84	Where the development is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment, the applicant should assess any likely significant effects on amenity from emissions of […] artificial light and describe these in the Environmental Statement.	Lighting is taken into account in the landscape and visual assessment, refer to Section 7.9 'Assessment of likely significant effects'.
5.86	The NPSNN advises the applicant to consult the relevant local planning authority about the scope and methodology of the assessment.	Consultation with local planning authorities has been undertaken, refer to Section 7.3 'Assessment methodology', Consultation.
5.144 (footnote 102)	The NPSNN references the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition' (GLVIA 3), as well as the need to include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies, as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project and any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England.	GLVIA 3 has been used for the assessment, refer to Section 7.3 'Assessment methodology', along with reference to published landscape character assessment and studies, Section 7.6 'Baseline conditions'.
5.145	The applicant's assessment should include any significant effects during construction of the project and/ or the significant effects of the completed development and its operation on landscape components and landscape character (including historic landscape characterisation).	Refer to Section 7.9 'Assessment of likely significant effects', and Chapter 6: Cultural Heritage, Section 6.8 and 6.9.
5.146	The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include any noise and light pollution effects, including on local amenity, tranquillity and nature conservation.	Refer to Section 7.9 'Assessment of likely significant effects'.
5.149	Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints, the aim should be to avoid or minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.	Refer to Section 7.8 'Design, mitigation and enhancement measures', and the Environmental Masterplans (Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]) which present details of embedded mitigation measures.

NPSNN para.	Requirement of the NPSNN	Location where information addresses policy requirements
5.156	The NPSNN states that local landscape designations should not be used in themselves as reasons to refuse consent.	Relevant landscape and visual designations are outlined in Section 7.6 'Baseline conditions'.
5.157	In taking decisions, the Secretary of State should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to avoid adverse effects on landscape or to minimise harm to the landscape, including by reasonable mitigation.	The Scheme design has considered potential impacts on the environment (including effects upon the prevailing landscape) – details are provided in Section 7.8 'Design, mitigation and enhancement'. Refer to the Environmental Masterplans (Figures 2.1 to 2.1 [TR010054/APP/6.2]) and Chapter 2: The Scheme which present details of embedded mitigation measures.
5.158	The Secretary of State would have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as local residents, and other receptors, such as visitors to the local area, outweigh the benefits of the development.	The visual assessment considers Scheme impacts upon a range of visual receptors, including local residents, visitors and users of public rights of way (PRoW) and cyclists. Refer to Section 7.9 'Assessment of likely significant effects'.
5.160	Adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure, design (including choice of materials), and landscaping schemes, depending on the size and type of proposed project. Materials and designs for infrastructure should always be given careful consideration.	The Scheme design has considered potential impacts on the environment (including landscape and visual effects) – details are provided in Section 7.8 'Design, mitigation and enhancement'. Refer to the Environmental Masterplans (Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]) which present details of embedded mitigation measures.
5.164	The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.	The Case for the Scheme [TR010054/APP/7.2] includes planning policy considerations of the Scheme being located within Green Belt.
5.170	The general policies controlling development in the countryside apply with equal force in Green Belts but there is, in addition, a general presumption against inappropriate development within them. Such development should not be approved except in very special circumstances.	
5.185	Public rights of way, National Trails…. are important recreational facilities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. Applicants are expected to take appropriate mitigation measures to	The Scheme design takes account of, and partially mitigates effects on, facilities for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. Refer to Section 7.8 'Design, mitigation and enhancement

NPSNN para.	Requirement of the NPSNN	Location where information addresses policy requirements
	address adverse effects on such routes where appropriate, to consider what opportunities there may be to improve access. In considering revisions to an existing right of way consideration needs to be given to the use, character, attractiveness and convenience of the right of way.	measures', and Section 7.9 'Assessment of likely significant effects', the Environmental Masterplans (Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]), and Chapter 12: Population and Health, Section 12.8 and 12.9.

7.2.3 An assessment of the Schemes conformity with the relevant paragraphs and provisions for landscape and visual in the NPSNN is presented in the NPSNN Accordance Table, Annex A of the Case for the Scheme [TR010054/APP/7.2].

7.2.4 Other relevant policies have been considered as part of the landscape and visual assessment where these have informed the identification of receptors and resources and their sensitivity; the assessment methodology; the potential for significant environmental effects; and required mitigation. These policies include:

- National Planning Policy Framework, June 2019, Policies 7, 9 and 11 (Ref 7.4);
- South Staffordshire Council (SCC) Core Strategy and Development Plan Document, policy EQ4 (Ref 7.5);
- South Staffordshire Design Guide (Ref 7.6);
- South Staffordshire Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Ref 7.7); and
- South Staffordshire Landscape Sensitivity Study (Ref 7.8).

7.3 Assessment methodology

General approach

7.3.1 The landscape and visual assessment includes the following elements:

- assessment of the effects of the Scheme on landscape character, both during construction and operation (at winter of Year 1 and summer of Year 15);
- assessment of the effects of the Scheme on visual receptors, both during construction and operational (at winter of Year 1 and summer of Year 15).

7.3.2 Key methodology documents of relevance to the landscape and visual assessment are as follows:

- LA 107 Landscape and visual effects (superseding DMRB Volume 11 Section 3 Part 5 Landscape Effects and Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10)(Ref 7.1).
- LA 104 Environmental assessment and monitoring (superseding HA 205/08, HD 48/08, IAN 125/15, and IAN 133/10) (Ref 7.9).
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) (GLVIA3) (Ref 7.2).
- TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals. published by the Landscape Institute on 17 September 2019 (Ref 7.10).

7.3.3 Key methodology documents of relevance to the landscape mitigation design are as follows:

- LA 117 Landscape design (superseding HA 13/81, HA 55/92, HA 56/92, HA 57/92, HA 58/92, HA 60/92, HA 63/92, HA 85/01, HA 87/01, HA 88/01, HA 89/01, HA 92/01, HA 108/04 and HA 115/05) (Ref 7.11).
- LA 119 Roadside environmental mitigation and enhancement (superseding HA 65/94 and HA 66/95) (Ref 7.12).

Establishing baseline conditions

7.3.4 Establishment of the baseline environment has involved reference to existing data sources, consultation with statutory bodies and other organisations, and fieldwork surveys – details are presented in the sections below.

Desk study

7.3.5 A desktop study has been undertaken which explores the existing landscape character assessments both at national and local level. Data was gathered from the following sources to determine the baseline conditions for the landscape and visual assessment:

- Natural England National Character Area Profiles (Ref 7.13 and Ref 7.14);
- Planning for Landscape Change Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (1996-2011) (Ref 7.15);
- Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (Ref 7.16);
- Natural England Magic Maps (Ref 7.17);
- online PRoW maps for Staffordshire (Ref 7.18);
- the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report (Ref 7.19);
- online information on the history of Featherstone and Brinsford Parish (Ref 7.20); and
- CPRE Tranquillity mapping (Ref 7.21) and Intrusion mapping (Ref 7.22).

7.3.6 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility has also been calculated, and in turn has helped to identify receptors and public viewpoints to be assessed (see Figure 7.1A to C [TR010054/APP/6.2]) and therefore included in the baseline. As set out below, assessment locations were proposed to, and agreed by, Staffordshire County Council in November 2018. The viewpoints are drawn from publicly accessible locations chosen to cover the range of effects on visual amenity from receptors such as residential areas, PRoW, highways, commercial and leisure locations, although not all categories may be present. The viewpoints represent grouped effects of multiple receptors from settlements but take the GLVIA3 approach to representative viewpoints, rather than listing all locations with potential visibility.

Fieldwork

7.3.7 Site visits have been undertaken within the study area identified on Figure 7.1A to C [TR010054/APP/6.2]; three visits have been undertaken (one in summer, two in winter) to allow a comparison of the visual effects between the seasons. In total, 20 viewpoint locations were visited during daytime, and photographic panoramas recorded to capture the baseline view.

7.3.8 The final summer visit also incorporated a night-time survey in which the baseline lighting conditions were observed and photographed from locations around Dark Lane and Hilton Lane - and observed, but not recorded, from elsewhere in the study area. Photographs were taken from four of these locations; these can be found in Figures 7.13C, 7.18C, 7.19C and 7.25C. Other photos on the night-time survey were taken on a camera phone, due to the low light levels, and although not displayed within the assessment, have informed it.

7.3.9 The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has allowed identification of representative viewpoint locations which have been visited and form the basis of the assessment of effects on visual amenity within the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA). Photographs have been taken at representative viewpoints along with a record of the key landscape and visual characteristics. Photography incorporated into the figures accompanying the LVIA has been undertaken in accordance with guidance given in appendices of the TGN 06/19 'Visual Representation of development proposals' (Ref 7.10) unless stated otherwise.

7.3.10 The site visits have also allowed the opportunity for the published landscape character assessments to be verified on the ground. Any differences have been noted in Section 7.6.

Sensitivity of landscape and visual assets

7.3.11 Under GLVIA3 (Ref 7.2) and implicitly adopted in DMRB LA 107, (Ref 7.1) value of landscape resources is a function of the factors listed below, which may be encompassed within a designation of landscape value:

- landscape quality;
- scenic quality;
- rarity;
- representativeness;
- conservation interest;
- recreation value;
- perceptual aspects (including tranquillity); and
- associations (with arts, literature, people or historic events).

7.3.12 The LVIA assesses landscape value based on these criteria and by reference to landscape designations within the study area.

7.3.13 The susceptibility to change is a measure of the ability of a landscape to "accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape

planning policies and strategies" (paragraph 5.40, GLVIA3 – Ref 7.2). For highly susceptible landscapes, there is a low capacity to accommodate the proposed development without effects upon its overall integrity. The landscape is likely to have a strong pattern/ texture or is a simple but distinctive landscape and/or with high value features and essentially intact. Landscapes with low susceptibility are more robust; they can accommodate the type of development proposed (in this case, the Scheme) without effects upon their overall integrity. The landscape is likely to be simple, monotonous and/or degraded with common/ indistinct features and minimal variation in landscape pattern.

7.3.14 Both DMRB LA 107 (Ref 7.1) and GLVIA3 (Ref 7.2) indicate that combining landscape susceptibility and value, to arrive at a conclusion on its sensitivity to change, can be achieved in several different ways and needs to include professional judgement, based on knowledge and experience of similar schemes. However, it is generally accepted that a combination of high susceptibility and high value is likely to result in the highest sensitivity, whereas a low susceptibility and low value is likely to resulting in the lowest level of sensitivity.

7.3.15 Assessment of value of views forms a component of the LVIA required to establish sensitivity. Value of views is typically more subjective and may vary from viewer to viewer. However, factors to be considered include views of or from heritage assets, designated landscapes/ views, or named or promoted views found in guidebooks or tourist literature.

7.3.16 The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in the view and visual amenity is related to the activity they are engaged in and the extent to which their attention is focussed on the views and visual amenity at that location. As such, those receptors most sensitive to change are likely to include people engaged in outdoor activities where an appreciation of the landscape is the focus, or residents in areas where the landscape setting contributes to the setting of the properties. Conversely, those least sensitive to change include (but are not restricted to) people engaged in outdoor sports or recreation where there is no focus on the surrounding landscape/views and people at their place of work where their focus is on the work activity.

7.3.17 Susceptibility to change and value need to be combined to arrive at a conclusion of the sensitivity to change of a visual receptor. It is generally accepted that a combination of high susceptibility and high value is likely to result in the highest sensitivity, whereas a low susceptibility and low value is likely to resulting in the lowest level of sensitivity.

7.3.18 Sensitivity has been determined using the criteria presented in Table 7.2 as a guide. These criteria are derived from the guidance presented in DMRB LA 107 (Ref 7.1), which take account of the above factors.

Table 7.2: Typical criteria for landscape and visual sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description (landscape)	Description (visual)
Very High	Landscapes of very high international /national importance and rarity or value with no or very limited ability to accommodate change without substantial loss/gain (i.e. national parks, internationally acclaimed landscapes - UNESCO World Heritage Sites).	1. Static views from and of major tourist attractions; 2. Views from and of very important national /international landscapes, cultural/ historical sites (e.g. National Parks, UNESCO World Heritage sites); 3. Receptors engaged in specific activities for enjoyment of dark skies.
High	Landscapes of high national importance containing distinctive features/elements with limited ability to accommodate change without incurring substantial loss/gain (i.e. designated areas, areas of strong sense of place-registered parks and gardens, country parks).	1. Views by users of nationally important PRoW/ recreational trails (e.g. national trails, long distance footpaths); 2. Views by users of public open spaces for enjoyment of the countryside (e.g. country parks); 3. Static views from dense residential areas, longer transient views from designated public open space, recreational areas; 4. Views from and of rare designated landscapes of national importance.
Medium	Landscapes of local or regional recognition of importance able to accommodate some change (i.e. features worthy of conservation, some sense of place or value through use/ perception).	1. Static views from less populated residential areas, schools and other institutional buildings and their outdoor areas; 2. Views by outdoor workers; 3. Transient views from local /regional areas such as public open space, scenic roads, railways or waterways, users of local /regional designated tourist routes of moderate importance; 4. Views from and of landscapes of regional importance.
Low	Local landscape areas or receptors of low to medium importance with ability to accommodate change (i.e. non-designated or designated areas of local recognition or areas of little sense of place).	1. Views by users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main arterial routes; 2. Views by indoor workers; 3. Views by users of recreational /formal sports facilities where the landscape is secondary to enjoyment of the sport; 4. Views by users of local public open spaces of limited importance with limited variety or distinctiveness.

Sensitivity	Description (landscape)	Description (visual)
Negligible	Landscapes of very low importance and rarity able to accommodate change.	1. Quick transient views such as from fast moving vehicles; 2. Views from industrial area, land awaiting re-development; 3. Views from landscapes of no importance with no variety or distinctiveness.

Magnitude of impact

7.3.19 The nature of the impact that is likely to occur, i.e. its magnitude, is determined by considering four separate factors, namely:

- size/scale;
- geographical extent;
- duration; and
- reversibility.

7.3.20 Judgements have been made regarding the size and scale of the changes to the landscape for each potential impact. GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.59, Ref 7.2) specifies that these judgements should take the following into account:

- the extent of existing landscape elements that would be lost, the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape – in some cases this may be quantified;
- the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape (e.g. tranquillity) are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or by addition of new ones; and
- whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.

7.3.21 The duration of an impact and its reversibility are linked but separate considerations. Duration refers to the length of time that an impact is present, whether that is short term, medium term or long term; whereas the reversibility refers to the prospects and practicality of the change being reversed i.e. is it temporary or permanent.

7.3.22 The criteria contained within DMRB LA 107 (Ref 7.1) have been adopted in the assessment to identify the magnitude of impact (adverse or beneficial) that the Scheme is likely to have on landscape character and its component features and elements. These landscape impact criteria are reproduced in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Magnitude and nature of effect on the landscape and typical features

Magnitude of effect (change)		Typical description (landscape)
Major	Adverse	Total loss or large scale damage to existing landscape character or distinctive features or elements; and/or addition of new uncharacteristic, conspicuous features or elements (i.e. road infrastructure).
	Beneficial	Large scale improvement of landscape character to features and elements; and/or addition of new distinctive features or elements, or removal of conspicuous road infrastructure elements.
Moderate	Adverse	Partial loss or noticeable damage to existing landscape character or distinctive features or elements; and/or addition of new uncharacteristic, noticeable features or elements (i.e. road infrastructure).
	Beneficial	Partial or noticeable improvement of landscape character by restoration of existing features or elements; or addition of new characteristic features or elements or removal of noticeable features or elements.
Minor	Adverse	Slight loss or damage to existing landscape character of one (may be more) key features and elements; and/or addition of new uncharacteristic features and elements.
	Beneficial	Slight improvement of landscape character by the restoration of one (may be more) key existing features and elements; and/or the addition of new characteristic features.
Negligible	Adverse	Very minor loss, damage or alteration to existing landscape character of one or more features and elements.
	Beneficial	Very minor noticeable improvement of character by the restoration of one or more existing features and elements.
No Change		No noticeable alteration or improvement, temporary or permanent, of landscape character of existing features and elements.

7.3.23 The criteria contained within DMRB LA 107 (Ref 7.1) have been adopted in the assessment to identify the magnitude of impact that the Scheme is likely to have on visual receptors. These visual impact criteria are reproduced in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Magnitude (change) of visual effect and typical descriptions

Magnitude of visual effect (change)	Typical descriptions
Major	The project, or a part of it, would become the dominant feature or focal point of the view.
Moderate	The project, or a part of it, would form a noticeable feature or element of the view which is readily apparent to the receptor.
Minor	The project, or a part of it, would be perceptible but not alter the overall balance of features and elements that comprise the existing view.
Negligible	Only a very small part of the project would be discernible, or it is at such a distance that it would form a barely noticeable feature or element of the view.
No Change	No part of the project work or activity would be discernible.

Significance of effect

7.3.24 As set out above, the LA 107 and GLVIA3 methodology has been used to determine sensitivity of receptors and magnitude of impacts. GLVIA3 (Ref 7.2) acknowledges that the assessment of significance is not a prescriptive process. Accordingly, the matrix and terminology shown in Chapter 4: 'Assessment Methodology' Table 4.3, derived from DMRB LA 104 'Environmental assessment and monitoring' (Ref 7.9), has been used to guide the identification and assessment of landscape and visual effects. Where professional judgement has resulted in a deviation from the thresholds contained in the matrix, these are explained within the relevant sections of the chapter and are supported by appropriate evidence and explanation.

7.3.25 For the purposes of this assessment, effects are considered to be significant where the effect is assessed as being moderate, large or very large.

Scoping response

7.3.26 The proposed scope of the landscape and visual assessment was detailed in the EIA Scoping Report (Ref 7.19) submitted to the Inspectorate on 11 January 2019. An overview of the Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion (Appendix 4.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3]) in relation to landscape and visual effects is presented in Table 7.5. Where the assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Scoping Opinion point, a response and the relevant ES section is provided; where an alternative approach has been agreed with the relevant stakeholders, an explanation is provided.

Table 7.5: Scoping opinion and response

Scoping Opinion	Where addressed in the ES
The Inspectorate	
The study area comprises both a 1km buffer from the draft DCO boundary (with reference to IAN135/10) and an area defined by the ZTV. Figure 8.1 shows both of these overlaid on the draft DCO boundary. It is not explained if the 1km buffer relates exclusively to landscape impacts or why the distance of 1km was chosen. For landscape effects IAN 135/10 advises that the study area covers the proposal site and the wider context to include any neighbouring features of value. The ES should clarify these matters, and the Inspectorate advises that the study area should be based on the extent of the Proposed Development's anticipated impacts.	Clarification on the extent of the study area is provided in Section 7.5 'Study Area'. The study area extent has been modified from that presented in the scoping report to take into account the comments from the Inspectorate.
The Inspectorate welcomes the information explaining how the ZTV will be established and advises that the ES should include an equally detailed and robust description in this regard. The parameters used to establish the ZTV should address any uncertainty in scheme design (e.g. maximum heights of structures) that exists and if necessary adopt a worst-case scenario for the purposes of the assessment.	The ZTV incorporates the limits of deviation of the Scheme.as reported in Chapter 2: The Scheme. The approach to establishing the ZTV is reported in Section 7.5 'Study Area'.

Scoping Opinion	Where addressed in the ES
The Scoping Report acknowledges that operational lighting impacts are anticipated, however, lighting impacts during construction have not been addressed. The methodology in Paragraph 8.8.1 does not indicate if night-time views will be incorporated into the site survey (or other work to establish the baseline). The Applicant should make effort to agree with relevant consultation bodies the night-time views which should be assessed in the ES. The ES should assess impacts from lighting during all phases of development where significant effects are likely.	A site survey has been undertaken which encompasses a select number of night-time views; the survey team visited much of the study area at night to understand the baseline lighting levels. Refer to paragraphs 7.3.27 to 7.3.31 for details of consultation. Details of the night-time survey can be found in Section 7.3.
Staffordshire County Council	
In relation to the Lighting and Signing Strategy: Paragraph 2.4.15 - Lighting should be used where appropriate to improve and maintain safety for road users without negatively impacting significantly on local communities or the local environment. Paragraph 2.4.16 - a review of local and strategic signage of the network should be undertaken as part of the scheme with amendments/improvements implemented where appropriate and where routing improvements can be delivered.	A site survey has been undertaken which encompasses a select number of night-time views; the survey team visited much of the study area at night to understand the baseline lighting levels. Details of the night-time survey can be found in Section 7.3. A summary of the lighting and signage strategies can be found at Chapter 2: The Scheme.

Consultation

7.3.27 Consultation has been undertaken with statutory and non-statutory bodies such as Staffordshire County Council and the National Trust. In November 2018, the locations for viewpoint photographs were agreed by the Landscape Officer of Staffordshire County Council – with an additional viewpoint location being requested and subsequently incorporated for the junction of New Road and Featherstone Lane on the north-west of Featherstone. A meeting was held in December 2018 to discuss (amongst other matters) the initial strategies for landscape mitigation, the principles of which were accepted.

7.3.28 A further meeting was undertaken in August 2019 to confirm the approach taken to viewpoint selection and capture (including discussion on night-time viewpoints and heritage viewpoints at Hilton Hall), as well as further discussions on appropriate mitigation. Consultation comments were also received from the Council and the majority have been noted and incorporated into the assessment / mitigation design. The exception to this is the request to provide heathland planting around Junction 11 of the M6 – the possibility of which has been explored, however borehole testing results indicate that the soil is neutral to slightly alkaline. This is at odds with the acidic conditions preferred by heathland. In addition, the fertility of the soil on site is shown as ‘moderate’ as per Soilscape 18 (http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/), whilst heathland prefers areas of low fertility. Therefore, it is not considered that the area around Junction 11 of the M6

is appropriate for heathland habitat, and species-rich grassland has been shown on the Environmental Masterplans (Figure 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]) in this location.

7.3.29 In January 2019, a meeting was held with the National Trust at Moseley Old Hall to discuss landscape mitigation at the southern end of the Scheme. An additional viewpoint was included as a result of this consultation on Featherstone Bridleway (BW)3 in the National Trust-owned Ancient Woodland Whitgreave's Wood (also referred to as Oxden Leasow).

7.3.30 Public consultation events were held in May and June 2019 in Featherstone, Shareshill, Wedges Mills, Cheslyn Hay and Essington. As a direct result of this consultation, a viewpoint has been incorporated on Dark Lane facing south towards the proposed construction compound, north of M54 Junction 1.

7.3.31 The Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report for this Scheme was published in May 2019 as part of the statutory consultation. The PEI Report presented the environmental information collected, together with the preliminary findings of the assessment of likely significant environmental effects of the Scheme at the time. Comments received during public consultation and the associated responses, are detailed within the Consultation Report [TR010054/APP/5.1].

7.4 Assessment assumptions and limitations

7.4.1 The landscape and visual impact assessment has been based on the description of the Scheme detailed in Chapter 2: The Scheme, as well as the limits of deviation as detailed in Section 2.5.

7.4.2 The assessment has been based on, and is limited to, the baseline conditions observed at the time of the landscape and visual site survey. The surveys cover the summer and winter, but do not include other seasons. Whilst the baseline conditions were limited to the surveys undertaken at this time, they are representative of existing conditions.

7.4.3 The accuracy of the ZTVs modelled as part of this assessment has been constrained by the distance and height parameters adopted in their generation (described in detail in paragraph 7.5.3). In brief, the ZTV output is based on an eye height of 1.6 m, with the theoretical viewer located at 50 m centres throughout the study area. An indicative 10.0 m height has been allocated to prominent areas of vegetation within the wider study area.

7.4.4 Not every residential receptor within the ZTV has been addressed in its own right. The GLVIA3 (Ref 7.2) approach of a range of viewpoints being representative of views as a whole has been adopted. In this way, although there is not a separate photographic view for each individual receptor, the assessment covers a range of representative receptors that have the potential to be impacted by the Scheme.

7.4.5 The assessment assumes that the screening benefit provided by existing and proposed vegetation is reduced during winter months when vegetation is not in leaf. This would give rise to larger visual effects in the winter months.

7.4.6 The identification and evaluation of likely effects at Year 15 assumes that all landscape mitigation planting incorporated into the Scheme design is appropriately managed over the period from the year of Scheme opening and is performing its intended function. Accordingly, the assessment assumes that any new planting would have reached a height of at least 6 m by Year 15, based on a planting size of 1m and conservative average growth rates of approximately 1 m per 3 years, and information obtained from similar implemented highway schemes.

7.5 Study area

7.5.1 GLVIA3 (Ref 7.2) suggests that the study area should cover the geographical area from which the development being assessed would potentially be visible, whilst the area also should be proportionate to the development (p.116). For both landscape and visual effects, DMRB LA 107 (Ref 7.1) suggests that ”the study area will extend to the whole of the area from which the project could be visible”.

7.5.2 In order to provide a proportionate assessment this LVIA has used the ZTV and a notional buffer of 1 km from the Scheme boundary to encompass the maximum likely extent of significant effects – this also encompasses the worst-case scenario arising from the limits of deviation, as the Scheme would not extend beyond the boundary under any circumstances. This study area was selected as the Scheme boundary is focused nearby and parallel to the existing A460 road. For the purpose of the visual amenity assessment, potential receptors were identified through a combination of desk-study (including the ZTV), site surveys and in consultation with the local planning authorities. The study area was therefore initially defined by the ZTV extent and has been revised following on-site verification.

7.5.3 The ZTV has been established by initial analysis of topographic maps, 3D digital modelling and terrain analysis and is based on the maximum theoretical visibility of the Scheme derived from points representing cars and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) located along the highway surface. An indicative 10.0 m height has been allocated to prominent areas of vegetation within the wider study area, to provide a more refined ZTV output. The ZTV output is based on an eye height of 1.6 m with the theoretical viewer located at 50 m centres throughout the study area. For the purposes of the ES, a ZTV has been run based on points of 1.5 m height located along the highway, which represents theoretical visibility of cars on the highway, theoretical visibility of 4.5 m HGVs and theoretical visibility of 8 m/ 12 m and 15 m high lighting columns.

7.5.4 The locations of proposed signage on the existing M6 and M54 mainlines, where the road layout is not due to change as a result of the Scheme, have not been included in the study area due to the existing motorway context and the presence of similar existing signage features.

7.5.5 The extent of the study area has therefore been determined to include the area of mapping illustrated on Figures 7.1A to C [TR010054/APP/6.2], which outline the study area and ZTV for the Scheme. The ZTV for the Scheme has been split into three figures to show the theoretical visibility of combined vehicles and lighting (Figure 7.1A) cars and HGVs (Figure 7.1B) and lighting (Figure 7.1C).

7.6 Baseline conditions

7.6.1 The Scheme would link M54 Junction 1 and M6 Junction 11 within the administrative area of South Staffordshire District Council. There are several rural and urban-fringe features within the study area including extensive mixed farmland, as well as the settlements of Shareshill, Featherstone, Hilton, Cheslyn Hay and the wider parish of Essington. Highway infrastructure already exerts an influence over the study area, with the presence of the M6, M54 and M6 Toll detracting from the surrounding landscape and having a negative influence on any perceived tranquillity.

7.6.2 As outlined in Section 7.3, the landscape and visual baseline has been determined through a combination of desk study and field work.

Landscape baseline conditions

Landscape character hierarchy

7.6.3 The Scheme boundary and study area are described through baseline landscape character assessment at both national and local scales. A description is also provided for the baseline of both the Scheme boundary and study area. This hierarchy is illustrated in Plate 7.1.

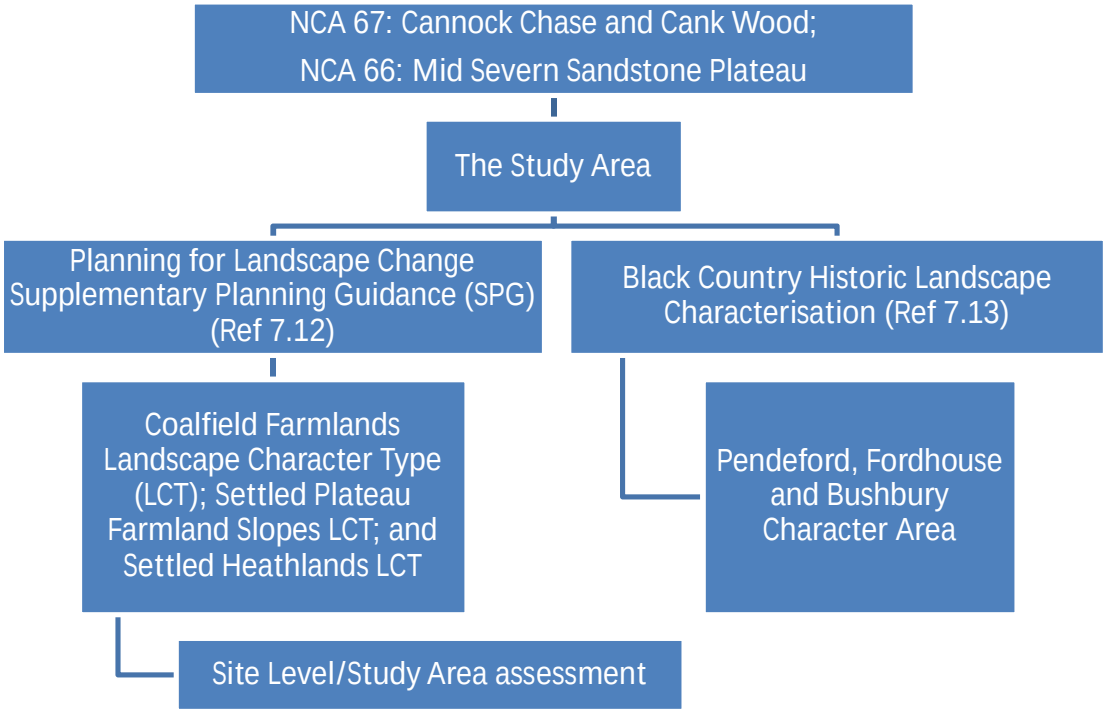

Plate 7.1: Landscape Character Area (LCA) hierarchy from National Character Area (NCA) to site level within the study area

7.6.4 At a national level, Natural England has defined a series of NCAs for England. The study area encompasses:

- NCA 67: Cannock Chase and Cank Wood (Ref 7.13); and

- NCA 66: Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau (Ref 7.14).

7.6.5 Landscape character assessment is a hierarchical process descending from national to regional to local scale and ultimately to scheme-specific studies. It is unlikely that the Scheme would have any significant effects on the character of these NCAs. This is because the key characteristics are regional, and localised highway development would be unlikely to result in a significant effect over the entire NCA. Therefore, this chapter only provides a high-level overview of relevant NCAs in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6: Key characteristics of the relevant NCAs

NCA 67: Cannock Chase and Cank Wood
Key characteristics of NCA 67 include: a varied landscape encompassing heathland, plantations, former mining sites and urban areas; a rounded central plateau, with a handful of other hills in the south; extensive coniferous plantations, woodlands and parklands; regular field pattern which is enclosed by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees; mixed farming, with arable cultivation in large fields; some tracts of heathland and acid grassland, habitats also present on post-industrial sites and in remnant countryside within urban areas; the rivers Trent and Tame are adjacent to the NCA, with their floodplains directly influencing it. Rivers within the NCA include the Sow and the Penk. The canal network contributes to the character; industrial archaeology is a characteristic feature; 19th and 20th century buildings tend to be constructed in red brick. More modern buildings are present in urban areas; there is a complex settlement pattern, with contrasts between dense urban areas and areas of sparse population; and the extensive canal and railway networks reflect the industrial heritage. Major roads include the M6, M6 Toll and M54.
NCA 66: Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau
Key characteristics of NCA 66 include: sandstone plateau in the centre and east of the NCA with undulations – irregular topography in the west; coal measures in the underlying geology historical fuelled industrial development locally; soils are free-draining and slightly acid, historically supporting heathland and acid grassland; the rivers Worfe and Stour drain the plateau, along with fast-flowing streams. The River Severn also flows north-south through the area; mixed woodland and former orchards contribute a well-wooded landscape, along with coniferous plantations and parkland; fields supporting arable agriculture tend to be large and open, bounded by a weak hedgerow pattern. Pasture and mixed agriculture can be found in smaller, irregular fields; lowland heathland along with acid grassland supports nationally important flora and fauna; post-industrial sites such as disused coal mines and quarries form important habitat features, but are reducing in number; World Heritage Sites are present within the NCA, generally related to the Industrial Revolution; traditional buildings tend to be constructed of brick, with elements of local sandstone; valleys contain frequent villages and there are several attractive historic towns;

NCA 67: Cannock Chase and Cank Wood
coalfield remnant landscape occurs within the Severn valley; and manmade features include Watling Street Roman road, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal, the M54 and the railway line linking Birmingham to Shrewsbury.

7.6.6 At a county level, Planning for Landscape Change SPG (1996-2011) (Ref 7.15) was originally published in 2000 by Staffordshire County Council, to provide guidance on landscape character within the county. The landscape of Staffordshire has been refined into 22 Landscape Character Types (LCTs), defined as broad tracts of landscape that convey a unity of character derived from their inclusion within specific regional character areas.

7.6.7 The Scheme boundary is located within two LCTs: Settled Plateau Farmland Slopes and Settled Heathlands, which are shown on Figure 7.3 [TR010054/APP/6.2].

7.6.8 Settled Plateau Farmland Slopes LCT comprises a gently undulating landscape with several small-scale valley characteristics, creating several long-distance views from plateau tops. Land use within the LCT predominantly constitutes small scale pastoral farmland of low intensity management, with ancient hedgerow patterns and relatively dense tree cover which limits views. Changes in vegetation cover ensure diversity in character across the LCT; tree species are predominantly ash or oak, with examples of alder and willow along watercourses. Unmanaged hedgerows contribute to the screening of potential views across the wider landscape. Where hedgerows have been managed, scale tends to become larger, putting more emphasis on the landform. Nearer to urban areas the landscape tends to become more open, heavily influenced by surrounding residential areas and other built and man-made elements.

7.6.9 Within the Settled Heathlands LCT, the landscape is flat to gently rolling and supports a mix of arable and pastoral farming activities. Adjacent to urban areas, the field pattern was originally medium scale. However, over the years this has deteriorated, and a large-scale field pattern is now evident, bounded by gappy hedgerows. Away from urban development, the landscape is more intact. Given the origins of the LCT as heathland, indicators of this past land cover, such as bracken and birch, are evident across the LCT. There are a few wooded streams in valleys throughout the landscape. Transport infrastructure and urban development both have a negative influence on the landscape quality.

7.6.10 A small proportion of the Coalfield Farmlands LCT is located at the far east of the study area. However, the proportion of this LCT within the study area in comparison to its wider size, and the distance of this LCT from the Scheme boundary means that it is not considered further within this assessment.

7.6.11 In summary, within the Planning for Landscape Change SPG (Ref 7.15), the study area encompasses, from east to west:

- Coalfield Farmlands LCT;
- Settled Plateau Farmland Slopes LCT; and

- Settled Heathlands LCT.

7.6.12 An area of townscape contained within the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation study, published by the Black Country Archaeology Service in 2009 (Ref 7.16) is located in the far south-western corner of the study area. This townscape belongs to the Pendeford, Fordhouse and Bushbury Character Area, which contains relatively new housing and is the most recently developed suburb of the city of Wolverhampton. Around half of the land within the character area comprises housing, with other uses such as industry, public services and recreational facilities present.

Site context and landscape characteristics

7.6.13 The majority of the Scheme lies within a triangle of land formed by the M6 in the east, the M54 in the south and the A460 Cannock Road in the west. It crosses several undulating fields – which are bounded by hedgerows – as well as running through woodland associated with the historic Hilton Park, and through riparian vegetation where it crosses existing watercourses.

7.6.14 The land within the Scheme boundary is slightly undulating across its length, with ground levels typically between 130-145m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) as indicated on Figure 7.2 [TR010054/APP/6.2], which shows the topographical context within the study area. Ground levels in the wider study area include localised variations such as the hill on which the Grade II listed Portobello Tower stands (at 183 m AOD); along with lower land to the east of Shareshill and immediately south-west of the M6 Junction 11, which stands at 124 m AOD. Latherford Brook (Watercourse 5 – refer to Chapter 13: Road Drainage and the Water Environment) forms the main drainage feature within the study area, running broadly south-west to north-east through its northern half; there are also several other watercourses which cross the Scheme boundary. There are a number of ponds present – these are mostly man-made features and used for activities such as fishing (both historically and at present).

7.6.15 Land use is influenced by transport infrastructure and residential uses, with areas of arable farmland, occasional pasture and parkland. Tree cover comprises woodland blocks and shelterbelts, particularly present in and around Hilton Park, as well as adjacent to existing transport infrastructure and along watercourses.

7.6.16 Transport and infrastructure elements influence the study area, particularly at its northern and southern extremities. These elements include the M6 (six-lane motorway) and the M54 (a four-lane motorway), which divide the landscape, and add perceived highway influences, whilst also reducing any sense of tranquillity. This effect is compounded by the busy A460 Cannock Road, which carries many cars and HGVs as they move between the M6 Junction 11 and the M54 Junction 1.

7.6.17 The Monarch's Way is a long-distance footpath which is based on the route taken by King Charles II as he escaped from Cromwell during the Civil War. It crosses the south-west corner of the study area near Moseley Old Hall. The study area also includes several local PRoW, which are generally located within the northern

half of the study area. Four of these directly cross the Scheme boundary, whilst several more have potential to be affected by the Scheme. The location of PRoW is shown on Figure 7.4 [TR010054/APP/6.2].

7.6.18 To the west of the A460 Cannock Road are the two settlements of Featherstone and Shareshill, as well as the smaller settlement of Little Saredon and various scattered farmsteads. Shareshill, Little Saredon and Hilton all incorporate historical buildings and have a clear sense of time depth; however, the majority of Featherstone has been developed since the introduction of Hilton Main colliery in 1924 (Ref 7.20) and consequently it appears as a modern development. Further away from the Scheme boundary, settlements include the village of Essington (to the south of the M54), the village of Cheslyn Hay (to the north-east of the M6), and the hamlet of Great Saredon (to the north of the M6 and the M6 Toll).

7.6.19 Key historical buildings within the study area include (but are not limited to) the National Trust-owned and Grade II* listed Moseley Old Hall (to the south-west of the M54 Junction 1), the Grade I listed Hilton Hall and the Grade I listed Conservatory in its grounds (both to the south of Hilton Lane) and associated buildings, and the Grade II listed Portobello Tower (situated between the M54 and Hilton Hall). Hilton Hall is also surrounded by remnant parkland which contributes to its setting and character.

7.6.20 CPRE mapping regarding the perceived levels of tranquillity (Ref 7.21) and intrusion (Ref 7.22) has been reviewed with relation to the study area (the former is replicated on Figure 7.27 [TR010054/APP/6.2]). These show that the study area has a relatively low level of tranquillity when considered on a national basis; the intrusion map demonstrates that the study area is disturbed by noise and visual intrusion such as urban development and major infrastructure. Owing to the relatively low levels of tranquillity, the effect of the Scheme on it will not be assessed separately of the effect on landscape character.

The value of the landscape

International, national and local designations

7.6.21 There are no international or national designations of landscape quality or value within the study area.

7.6.22 Hilton Park, within the south of the study area, constitutes a Historic Landscape Area (HLA) as designated by South Staffordshire District Council and is subject to additional protection through the Adopted Core Strategy (Ref 7.5). HLAs were selected for the strong historic landscape character and the desirability of conserving and restoring it. There are no other local landscape designations within the study area.

7.6.23 Much of the study area is designated as Green Belt. Green Belt is a designation of landscape value, related primarily to openness between settlements rather than an indication of landscape quality.

7.6.24 The entirety of the study area is also contained within the Forest of Mercia Community Forest. Community Forests are areas where regeneration is encouraged through landscape-scale improvements to the environment. Whilst not

a landscape designation, it indicates the intention to improve the environment within the Community Forest, thus supporting the reasoning for any mitigation enhancements.

7.6.25 There are a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the study area. The locations of the TPOs and TPO sites are illustrated on Figures 7.26A to C [TR010054/APP/6.2] and are assessed in Appendix 7.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3].

Landscape value

7.6.26 Landscape value is assessed at the scale of the study area as a whole, taking the contribution to overall character and value of the land within the Scheme boundary into account. Table 7.7 considers factors that determine the landscape value of the study area.

Table 7.7: Factors in determining landscape value of the study area

Factor	Land within the study area	Value
Landscape Quality / Condition	Within the study area, land cover comprises a mixture of arable farmland, pasture, parkland and woodland, as well as some settlements and detractors such as highways infrastructure and mineral workings. The large field pattern and unmanaged hedgerow boundaries - as well as the presence of managed parkland - contributes to a varied landscape condition within the study area. Parts of the study area are influenced by adjacent road structures and activity, as well as the urban edge of Featherstone.	Low
Scenic quality	The remnant parkland within the study area, woodland blocks and the smaller parcels of agricultural land found around Shareshill and Little Saredon contribute positively to the perceived scenic quality. However, there are also considerable detractors present – these include the highways infrastructure of the M6 and the M54, the busy A460 Cannock Road, minerals extraction activity and urban fringe.	Low
Rarity	The parkland at Hilton Park is a feature which is not found elsewhere within the study area and is considered to be relatively rare. However, there are no other rare elements within the study area.	Low
Representativeness	The landscape of the study area within the Settled Plateau Farmland Slopes LCT and Settled Heathlands LCT is somewhat representative of their respective landscape character descriptions.	Medium
Conservation interests	There are a handful of listed buildings within the study area, including two Grade I listed buildings in Hilton Park, as well as clusters of listed buildings in Shareshill, Little Saredon, at Moseley Old Hall the newer Moseley Hall. A Historic Landscape Area is also present at Hilton Park. There are no other designations of conservational interest located within the study area.	Low
Recreation value	There are numerous local PRoW within the study area, which connect the various settlements to the surrounding countryside, particularly around Shareshill. In addition, the Monarch Way	Medium

Factor	Land within the study area	Value
	long distance footpath crosses the south-west of the study area. There are some limited recreational facilities, such as the sports pitch adjacent to Featherstone and Hilton Community Centre and private fishing ponds such as those at Brookfields Fishery (Brookfield Farm) and Kings Pools.	
Perceptual aspects	The presence of the busy M6, M54 and A460 Cannock Road notably reduces the perceptions of tranquillity in their immediate environs. Away from these roads, there are more tranquil elements such as Hilton Park and the historic villages of Shareshill and Little Saredon. However, even in these areas there is noise present which originates from the road corridors. The parkland at Hilton Park has a positive perceptual impact on its immediate surroundings. Overall, perception qualities within the landscape are relatively low despite the positive aspects – the study area comprises a landscape fragmented by urban transport corridors.	Low
Associations	Moseley Old Hall in the south-west of the study area is closely associated with King Charles II during the Civil War – he stayed at the hall on his escape from Cromwell.	Medium

7.6.27 The land within the Scheme boundary is generally representative of the surrounding land use, largely comprising agricultural land, with parkland and highways infrastructure also present. Overall, based on the factors contributing to landscape value, the land within the Scheme boundary is assessed as being of low landscape value through the lack of scenic quality, rarity, conservation interest and perceptual aspects.

7.6.28 The study area itself is assessed as being of overall low landscape value. The character is typical of the modified and human-influenced landscape of the Black Country, with few rare elements or conservational interests; and the presence of multiple detractors.

Visual baseline conditions

ZTV analysis

7.6.29 As set out in Section 7.5, the study area for the assessment has been defined in part by the ZTV of the Scheme. The ZTV indicates that visibility is relatively extensive to the north and west of the study area but is contained to within around 500m-1km of the Scheme boundary in the south and east. Although the ZTV output indicates views are theoretically possible from long range vantage points, the Scheme is likely to form only a minor element of views beyond 1km of the Scheme boundary due to viewing distance. Areas of theoretical visibility within and beyond Featherstone are screened through built form, and vegetation filters views throughout.

Views from residential locations

7.6.30 Based on the ZTV, the Scheme may theoretically be visible from residential properties in Featherstone, Hilton, Shareshill, Essington, Little Saredon, Laney Green, Cheslyn Hay and Wedges Mills; as well as from scattered properties within

the study area. Relatively close-range views may be expected for properties that are very close to the Scheme boundary, including Dark Lane, Park Road, Hilton Lane, Brookfield Farm and Tower House Farm.

Views from public rights of way

7.6.31 Views are obtained from PRoW adjacent to the Scheme including several footpaths and bridleways. Intervening vegetation across the study area acts as a visual barrier to parts of these PRoW, restricting accessible views to the Scheme. PRoW within and immediately adjacent to the study area are shown on Figure 7.4 [TR010054/APP/6.2].

7.6.32 A number of PRoW would be crossed by the Scheme boundary:

- The Monarch's Way along Cat and Kittens Lane;
- Shareshill footpath (FP)5, from Shareshill BW18 in the east to Hilton Lane in the west;
- Shareshill BW1, from Shareshill FP17 in the east to the A460 Cannock Road in the west;
- Saredon FP8, from Shareshill FP4 in the south to Junction 11 of the M6 in the north; and
- Saredon BW13, from Junction 11 of the M6 in the south to Saredon Road in the north.

7.6.33 Views are also obtained from several other routes within the study area.

Views from roads

7.6.34 Views of the Scheme from highways are theoretically available from the network of roads around the Scheme boundary. Most pertinent of these are the roads which directly interface with the Scheme – the M54, the A460 Cannock Road, Dark Lane, Hilton Lane and the M6.

Viewpoint descriptions and value

7.6.35 Viewpoints have been recorded from a total of 20 locations (see Figure 7.1A to C [TR010054/APP/6.2]) and were selected to represent a range of location types and viewing distances. The viewpoints are displayed within Figures 7.5A-7.25C [TR010054/APP/6.2].

7.6.36 Assessment of the value of views forms a component of the baseline and is required to establish sensitivity. Value of views is typically more subjective and may vary from viewer to viewer. However, factors to be considered include views of, or from, heritage assets (such as Hilton Hall); designated landscapes or views; or named or promoted views found in guidebooks or tourist literature.

7.6.37 A description of the recorded views and their perceived value is available in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8: Baseline views at representative viewpoints

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP01	View from Moseley Road	393119, 304079 - 136m AOD	450m, N	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.5A and 7.5B
Viewed primarily by adjacent residents and users of Moseley Road, the foreground of this semi-rural view is occupied by a pastoral field, currently used for equestrian purposes. To the left and right of the view is a hedge which separates the field from Moseley Road, and there is an additional wooden fence within the field itself. Overhead power lines and associated pylons and telegraph poles are present within the foreground and middle ground throughout the panorama and are detractors within it. The middle ground of the view incorporates woodland associated with the car park of the National Trust-owned Moseley Old Hall, with Whitgreaves Wood visible in the background of the view on the horizon, with lighting columns associated with the M54 glimpsed through the vegetation in winter. This view is of low value – it is typical of the rural context, but the numerous pylons and overhead power lines within the panorama notably detract from its positive qualities.						
Ref	**Location**	**Grid reference / elevation**	**Distance / direction to Scheme boundary**	**Date taken**	**Receptors**	**Figure number**
VP02	View from A460 Cannock Road, Featherstone	394247, 305182 - 138m AOD	0m, NE	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.6A and 7.6B
This view represents those afforded to residents within Featherstone, as well as those travelling along the A460 Cannock Road. The view is relatively urban, with the A460 Cannock Road dominating its central foreground and middle ground. The left of the panorama is occupied by the pavement to the west of the A460 Cannock Road, along with associated road signage and lighting columns. In the right of the view, running towards the central background, a stone wall with deciduous woodland beyond encloses the view. Whilst the woodland and stone wall within the view are positive features, the presence of the A460 Cannock Road and its associated busy traffic mean that the view has an overall low value.						
Ref	**Location**	**Grid reference / elevation**	**Distance / direction to Scheme boundary**	**Date taken**	**Receptors**	**Figure number**
VP03	View from Wolverhampton Road, Cheslyn Hay	397173, 306916 - 151m AOD	1.2km, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.7A and 7.7B
This panorama represents the views available to residents within the southern edge of Cheslyn Hay, as well as those of users of Wolverhampton Road. The view is dominated by the line of Cheslyn Hay FP2, which is contained between the wooden fence and the hedge in the view's foreground and middle ground. To the right of the fence, equestrian grazing is present in the foreground and middle ground. In the middle ground of the view, beyond the hedge, are						

polytunnels associated with W. Elwell Nurseries. The background of the panorama comprises layers of agricultural land and linear vegetation associated with field boundaries and the M6 Toll.

This urban-edge view is strongly influenced by the large wooden fence in the foreground, as well as other detractors, such as the polytunnels, within it. The value of the view is low.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP04	View from houses at Laney Green	395901, 306928 - 136m AOD	0m, SW	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.8A and 7.8B

A view available to residents in Laney Green, as well as to vehicles travelling along the A460 towards Junction 11 of the M6. The panorama is dominated by highway infrastructure, particularly in the foreground and middle ground, the A460 is prominent throughout the foreground of the view, and the M6 Junction 11 occupies the left-hand side of the middle ground. The southbound exit slip road for the M6Junction 11 is visible in the right-hand side of the middle ground of the view. Lighting columns on the approach to the junction break the skyline throughout. The background of the panorama is occupied by linear vegetation associated with the highway infrastructure.

This view is of very low value due to the dominance of highway infrastructure and traffic within it; there are minimal positive aspects.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP05	View from houses at Middle Hill	396320, 307806 - 131m AOD	0m, SW	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.9A and 7.9B

The view, as experienced by highway users of the A4601 Wolverhampton Road, as well as (to a lesser extent) residents on the severed Saredon Road and Wolverhampton Road (behind the viewpoint), is dominated by the highway infrastructure of the A4601. The road is prominent within both the foreground and middle ground of the panorama, across much of its length, flanked by structural vegetation which serves to screen the road from the adjacent residential properties. At the right of the foreground, Saredon Road joins the A4601. In the background of the view, the roundabout junction between the A4601 and the A460 is visible but is heavily filtered by intervening vegetation. Lighting columns break the skyline throughout the view, illuminating both the junction with Saredon Road, and the roundabout in its background.

The dominant highway influence within the view, as well as the lack of positive aesthetic and perceptual qualities, contributes to its very low value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP06	View from PRoW accessed via Saredon Road	395694, 307911 - 122m AOD	350m, SW	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.10A and 7.10B

The view is apparent to recreational receptors on Saredon FP7, as well as users of Saredon Road. It comprises a fence and hedge field boundary in the foreground, with the footpath stile to the left of the foreground. The middle ground of the view is composed of pastoral farmland, with fields separated by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees, as well as woodland blocks. The presence of these trees gives the middle ground a well-wooded appearance, and filters onwards views to the background. In winter, gantries, HGV traffic and lighting columns on the link between the southbound M6 and eastbound M6 Toll are visible.

The view is typical of the wider rural context: an ordinary view of pasture that is accessible through rights of way, but with no recognised quality. The value of the view is low.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP07	View from houses on Church Road, Shareshill	394736, 306105 - 136m AOD	0m, SE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.11A and 7.11B

This viewpoint represents views of residents on the eastern edge of Shareshill, as well as users of the A460 Cannock Road and Hilton Lane. The panorama is dominated by the presence of the busy A460 Cannock Road in the foreground and middle ground across much of the panorama. Hilton Lane joins the western side of the A460 Cannock Road in the centre of the view's foreground, with the road continuing into the middle ground. On the eastern side of the A460 Cannock Road, there are dense belts of trees and blocks of woodland, which filter and generally preclude onward views, particularly to the residential properties in the left-hand side of the middle ground, as well as the background.

The panorama incorporates a semi-rural character that is dominated by highway infrastructure. The overall value is low.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP08	View from field gate along Great Saredon Road	394997, 307545 - 147m AOD	600m, SE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Highway	Figures 7.12A, 7.12B and 7.12C

This elevated viewpoint demonstrates the views available to users of Great Saredon Road, and to a much lesser extent, the residents of scattered residential properties near this localised high point. The foreground of the view contains pasture which is separated from the wider field (used for equestrian grazing) by a wooden fence. A hedgerow and various hedgerow trees filter views towards the middle ground, which mostly comprises agricultural farmland bounded by hedgerows, as well as the rooftops of properties within Little Saredon. The background of the view is more open, with the M6 visible in the far left of the panorama, and the woodland associated with Hilton Park visible on the skyline to the far right. The rooftop of Brookfield Farm is centrally visible, with the white painted houses on Hilton Lane to the right of this.

Despite the presence of some detracting and degraded elements (such as Junction 11 of the M6), this is a relatively pleasant, long view, across a rural landscape. The view is of medium value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP09	View from Mill Lane, Little Saredon	395065, 307133 - 127m AOD	350m, E	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.13A, 7.13B and 7.13C
This panorama looks along Mill Lane from the eastern edge of the village of Little Saredon and represents the views obtained by residents of the village, as well as users of Mill Lane itself. The view is typically rural, with dense hedges in the foreground and middle ground precluding the majority of onwards views. Mill Lane itself is central in the panorama, with vegetation and lighting columns associated with Junction 11 of the M6 and the A460 Cannock Road visible in the background. At night, these lighting columns make the junction more prominent than it is in the day (particularly due to the lack of other artificial lighting within the view), but the viewpoint feels removed from the highway infrastructure. This is a pleasant rural view, despite its proximity to the M6 (which is heard but not seen from this location). However, the enclosed nature of the view means that it does not have any particular distinctiveness and is therefore of low value.						
Ref	**Location**	**Grid reference / elevation**	**Distance / direction to Scheme boundary**	**Date taken**	**Receptors**	**Figure number**
VP10	View from A460 Cannock Road, opposite Brookfield Farm	395095, 306400 - 125m AOD	200m, NE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Recreational / highway	Figures 7.14A and 7.14B
The view - as experienced by highway users of the A460 Cannock Road, as well as (to a lesser extent) residents in the occasional scattered properties adjacent to the road (behind the viewpoint), is dominated by the highway infrastructure of the A460, and the approach to the M6 Junction 11. The road is prominent within both the foreground and middle ground of the panorama, from the right to the centre of the view. Both sides of the road are edged by unmanaged hedgerows and other vegetation. Lighting columns break the skyline throughout the view; these are mostly associated with the A460 Cannock Road. However, in the background of the panorama, the lighting columns associated with Junction 11 of the M6 can be seen, but these, and the junction itself, are heavily filtered by intervening vegetation. The dominant highway influence within the view, as well as the lack of positive aesthetic and perceptual qualities, contributes to the very low value view.						
Ref	**Location**	**Grid reference / elevation**	**Distance / direction to Scheme boundary**	**Date taken**	**Receptors**	**Figure number**
VP11	View from PRoW east of Brookfield Farm	395413, 306149 - 140m AOD	0m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.15A, 7.15B and 7.15C
This rural viewpoint represents the view available to users of Shareshill BW1, Shareshill FP4 and Shareshill FP3, looking across arable farmland in the foreground. The left-hand side of the middle						

ground is occupied by the agricultural buildings which comprise Brookfield Farm; to the right, pastoral fields have been subdivided by post and wire fencing. Beyond these fields is woodland associated with Hadcroft Farm in Little Saredon, which continues along a watercourse linking into the mature vegetation along the A460 Cannock Road and around Junction 11 of the M6 in the right of the panorama. The wooded middle ground precludes several onwards views, but to the left of the background of the view, houses are visible within Shareshill. Saredon Hill is visible in the right-hand side of the background, with pylons breaking the skyline on the horizon.

Although of a rural character, the viewpoint is influenced by the degraded appearance of the buildings at Brookfield Farm, as well as the associated equestrian activities. The value of the view is low.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP12	View from A462 Warstone Road	396317, 306328 - 149m AOD	450m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational / highway	Figures 7.16A and 7.16B

This panorama illustrates the view available to users of Saredon bridleway CP9, the A462 Warstone Road and, to a lesser extent, the Hollybush Garden Centre. The view is dominated by the carriageway of the busy A462 Warstone Road in the foreground, with unmanaged hedgerow and scrubby vegetation present in the middle ground beyond. This vegetation screens the majority of onwards views, with the exception being views towards the linear tree belt alongside Saredon BW9 in the centre of the view.

The degraded nature of the vegetation within the view, along with the presence of the busy A462 Warstone Road and lack of positive aesthetic elements, means that the panorama is of very low visual value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP13	View from PRoW north of Hilton Lane	395281, 305667 - 148m AOD	200m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.17A and 7.17B

This rural viewpoint represents views available to users of Shareshill FP3 and Shareshill FP5. The foreground of the view comprises an arable field which is bounded by hedgerows in the middle ground. Properties on Hilton Lane are prominent in the left-hand side of the middle ground. The background of the view is composed of various blocks of trees, to the left of the view these are associated with Hilton Park, whereas elsewhere in the view, the trees are linear belts along field boundaries and (in the right of the view) the A460 Cannock Road.

The view is typical of the wider rural context although a relatively ordinary view. It is likely to be locally valued as countryside on the edge of Featherstone and has very few detractors; it therefore has a medium value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP14	View from houses on Dark Lane and Park Road	394717, 305449 - 141m AOD	0m, E	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.18A, 7.18B, 7.18C and 7.18D
This rural panorama illustrates the views obtained by residents of properties on Dark Lane and Park Road. To the right of the foreground and middle ground Dark Lane continues into the tunnel of trees in the middle ground. The tree tunnel personifies the name of the road, it is considerable darker under the trees than elsewhere along its length, particularly at twilight. Street lighting is available behind the viewer, but there are no artificial light sources within the view itself. To the left of Dark Lane a pedestrian footway, and a hedgerow which separates the road from the adjacent field (which comprises rough grassland) is visible. The background of the view is well-wooded, with trees associated with Hilton Park to the right, and other linear tree belts along field boundaries elsewhere. The view is valued by the adjacent residential properties as a rural setting, and it contains relatively few receptors. The view is of medium value.						
Ref	**Location**	**Grid reference / elevation**	**Distance / direction to Scheme boundary**	**Date taken**	**Receptors**	**Figure number**
VP15	View from Hilton Lane	395317, 305539 - 153m AOD	250m, N	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / recreational / highway	Figures 7.19A, 7.19B, 7.19C and 7.19D
This view is situated at the junction of Hilton Lane with Shareshill FP3 and represents the view from both, as well as the adjacent residential properties on the southern side of Hilton Lane. The view is predominantly rural, with arable farmland occupying both its foreground and middle ground across the full extent. There are also relatively few features within the background of the view, these mostly comprise various tree blocks and linear tree belts, although Saredon Hill can be seen to the right of the panorama on the horizon. At night, there are scattered artificial light sources within the panorama, these include the chimney of the energy from waste facility at Four Ashes, the western edge of Cannock (not pictured) and lighting columns along the M6. This is a relatively ordinary view but offers a pleasant rural panorama with few detractors. The view is of medium value.						
Ref	**Location**	**Grid reference / elevation**	**Distance / direction to Scheme boundary**	**Date taken**	**Receptors**	**Figure number**
VP16A	View from Hilton Hall looking west	395188, 305185 - 156m AOD	400m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Workers / heritage	Figures 7.20A and 7.20B

Located on the rooftop of the Grade I listed Hilton Hall, this panorama represents the worst-case/most prominent available views afforded to workers within the hall, as well as the potential change to this setting of this heritage asset. The main element within the view is the woodland and parkland associated with Hilton Park – it occupies most of the foreground and middle ground of the view. The Grade I listed Conservatory occupies the far right of the foreground, and the pond to the west of Hilton Hall is glimpsed through vegetation in the winter. The vegetation within the foreground and middle ground filters the majority of onwards views – beyond this vegetation, layers of woodland and farmland can be glimpsed. Occasional pylons break the skyline throughout the panorama, and The Wrekin near Telford is distinct on the horizon towards the left of the view.

The view is pleasant and rural with relatively few detractors, and the parkland setting to the hall within the view gives it historical context. Overall, the view is of high value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP16B	View from Hilton Hall looking south	395197, 305181 - 156m AOD	700m, S	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Workers / heritage	Figures 7.21A and 7.21B

The view at this location is on the rooftop of the Grade I listed Hilton Hall and represents the worst-case/ most prominent views afforded to workers within the hall, as well as the potential change to this setting of this heritage asset. In the foreground, there are decorative features of the roof, with woodland associated with Hilton Park visible in the middle ground beyond. This vegetation precludes the majority of onwards views, particularly in the centre of the panorama. However, to the left of the view in the background, the Grade II listed Portobello Tower can be seen. The right-hand side of the background is more open but has few distinctive features aside from the rooftops of industrial buildings at Hilton Main Industrial Estate and Hilton Cross Business Park – which is situated on the opposite side of the M54 to this viewpoint.

The panorama contains relatively few detractors, instead displaying a pleasant rural character. In addition, the parkland provides the historical setting to the hall. The view overall has a high value due to its historical value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP17	View from Portobello Tower	394969, 304732 - 171m AOD	400m, NW	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Heritage	Figures 7.22A, 7.22B and 7.22C

This panorama is located on private land adjacent to the Grade II listed Portobello Tower and represents the views within the setting of this heritage asset. The foreground of the view comprises pastoral farmland, with further farmland, as well as parkland and woodland associated with Hilton Park present across the middle ground. Houses on the junction between the A460 Cannock Road and Dark Lane are visible to the left of the middle ground. There are no other distinctive features within the middle ground. Beyond these houses, in the background of the view are the large industrial buildings associated with the Four Acres energy from waste facility, these form a detractor within the panorama, as do the pylons on Saredon Hill in the right of the background, which break the skyline. The wind turbines at South Staffordshire College near Penkridge also break the skyline within the centre of the view. Houses on the edge of Cannock can be seen at the far-right hand side of the view, with Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the

horizon beyond. The remainder of the background of the view comprises a mixture of agricultural land and woodland.

The long views at this location mean that it is valuable, as does its status as part of the setting to the heritage asset of Portobello Tower. However, the detractors in the view mean that the value is medium overall.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP18	View from Featherstone Lane	393649, 305690 - 129m AOD	850m, E	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.23A and 7.23B

This view, as experienced by users of Featherstone Lane and adjacent residents, is rural in nature. The foreground and middle ground of the panorama comprises rough equestrian grazing land which is divided by a series of white tape fences. To the right of the view in the middle ground is a stable building, and an unbound surface track leads from the viewpoint to it. The background of the view is mostly occupied by vegetation, with linear tree belts delineating field boundaries across its extent. The woodland associated with Hilton Park is visible on the horizon to the right-hand side of the view.

This is a rural view with a relatively ordinary character. The equestrian fencing adds a cluttered look to the view and detracts from it, along with the unmanaged scrub vegetation in the foreground. The view has an overall low value.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP19	View from Whitgreave's Wood	394561, 305418 - 137m AOD	50m, N	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.24A and 7.24B

This view is experienced by users of Featherstone BW3 through the National Trust-owned Whitgreave's Wood (and to a lesser extent, those working in the adjacent offices and industrial buildings). The view comprises ancient deciduous woodland within its foreground and middle ground. Mature and semi-mature deciduous trees are situated within a bracken and fern woodland understory. In the background of the view, the M54 carriageway and notably, vehicles travelling along the road are visible. This visibility reduces considerably in the summer, when the intervening leaves filter these views, although noise is present throughout the year.

The woodland is generally pleasant and is valued for recreation, particularly as part of the National Trust's Moseley Old Hall property. However, the proximity M54 detracts within the view, and the noise from the traffic detracts from the experience of standing in this location by way of reducing any perceived tranquillity. The value is therefore medium.

Ref	Location	Grid reference / elevation	Distance / direction to Scheme boundary	Date taken	Receptors	Figure number
VP20	View from houses on Dark Lane	393679, 304545 -	0m, S	Winter - N/A,	Residential / highway	Figures 7.25A, 7.25B

		135m AOD		Summer - 20/06/2019		and 7.25C
This panorama represents the views from residential properties on Dark Lane. The foreground of the view comprises the carriageway of Dark Lane, along with its southern verge, which contains a series of shrubs and street trees. Beyond these is a metal fence which precludes onwards views for receptors at ground level. It is likely that viewers from upper storeys would have views directly into the arable field which lies to the south of the viewpoint. The metal fence precludes views into the middle ground and background, however woodland associated with Hilton Park is visible to the left-hand side of the view, above the fence line. The metal fence within the panorama detracts from, what would otherwise be, a relatively pleasant urban edge view and the value is overall low.						

Future baseline

7.6.38 As detailed in Chapter 4: Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology, in order to identify the effects of the Scheme on environmental features, it is important to understand the baseline at the year of construction commencement and at the year the Scheme becomes operational. The baseline conditions for these years may be different to the current conditions and such changes could alter the sensitivity of existing environmental receptors, as well as introduce new sensitive receptors.

Construction year baseline (2021)

7.6.39 The baseline details as reported in the sections above describe existing landscape and visual conditions. Construction works associated with the Scheme are anticipated to start in 2021, subject to securing a DCO (refer to Chapter 2: The Scheme).

7.6.40 The majority of the land that would be impacted by the Scheme (and in its vicinity) comprises existing highway infrastructure (the M54, the M6 and the existing alignment of the A460), agricultural land, woodland, and surrounding residential areas in Featherstone and Shareshill. Environmental baseline conditions are not anticipated to change significantly by 2021 from the conditions as detailed above. However, as detailed in Chapter 15: Assessment of Cumulative Effects, a number of development projects are ongoing, or are planned, that have the potential to change baseline conditions. However, there are no developments within the study area which are anticipated to be operational by 2021. For further details of developments refer to Appendix 15.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3].

Opening year baseline (2024)

7.6.41 Environmental baseline conditions are not anticipated to change significantly by 2024 from the conditions as detailed above. However, as detailed in Chapter 15: Assessment of Cumulative Effects, a number of development projects are ongoing, or are planned, that have the potential to change baseline conditions. A number of developments within the landscape and visual study area for the Scheme, these include:

- 18/00852/FUL conversion of redundant barns to five dwellings with associated works (Development ID 1).

- 19/00170/FUL extension to existing modular school building to provide additional, open-plan classroom space (Development ID 10).
- 19/00919/FUL application for 103 dwellings, with infrastructure access and open space (Development ID 23).
- SSC allocation Hilton Cross Business Park available plots (Development ID 30).
- City of Wolverhampton Council regeneration corridor, Fordhouses; a premier high quality employment location in the Black Country and a focus for leading edge, high technology industry in the Wolverhampton to Telford High Technology Corridor (Development ID 43).
- 18/00296 outline application to demolish the existing house and erect one house and two bungalows (Development ID 35).

7.6.42 The various developments as detailed above would not alter the current landscape character or sensitivity of the applicable LCAs within the study area that are defined within the baseline, nor would they alter the views experienced by the visual receptors identified in Table 7.9. Further details of the developments listed can be found in Appendix 15.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3]

Design year baseline (2039)

7.6.43 It is not possible to accurately predict baseline environmental conditions for the design year (year 15) of the Scheme (2039). However, it is anticipated that baseline conditions in 2039 in the vicinity of the Scheme and within the associated landscape and visual study area will largely be the same as at 2021, although most of the developments as detailed in Appendix 15.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3] are anticipated to have been completed by 2024. The primary development that would potentially alter the baseline in 2039 is the SSC allocation at ROF Featherstone (Development ID 29) (for employment use and associated landscape planting) and the accompanying ROF Featherstone road option 9 (Development ID 50). These would increase the coverage of residential and employment areas within and outside the study area.

7.7 Potential impacts

7.7.1 Mitigation measures incorporated into the Scheme design and measures to be taken to manage Scheme construction are set out in Section 7.8. Prior to implementation of defined mitigation measures, the Scheme has the potential to affect landscape and visual receptors (positively or negatively), both during construction and once in operation - potential sources of impact are detailed in the sections below.

Construction

Landscape character

7.7.2 Interactions between the Scheme and landscape receptors would potentially occur in two ways; through direct loss of landscape elements (i.e. subtractions which change landscape character) or through additions which change landscape

character (additive). The following activities and elements associated with Scheme construction are anticipated to result in temporary impacts on landscape receptors:

- the presence of construction plant and material stockpiles etc. which would have a temporary adverse impact on landscape character and increase perceptions of construction/industrial activity;
- removal of vegetation to accommodate the Scheme, which would alter the landscape character through removing characteristic features; and
- the presence of earthworks and excavations, particularly in areas with limited landform variation, which would alter the landscape character.

Visual receptors

7.7.3 During construction of the Scheme, there are several elements and activities which would be introduced into the Scheme boundary and have the potential to temporarily impact the visual amenity of the study area. These include:

- site clearance, particularly clearance of trees and other vegetation around the Hilton Park and Dark Lane areas;
- formation of construction compounds adjacent to A460 Cannock Road to the south of Dark Lane, and adjacent to the M6 Junction 11;
- localised demolition works, including the existing M54 Junction 1;
- the stockpiling of materials and general earthworks operations – in particular those required to construct the embankments and cuttings;
- installation of signage equipment, traffic control measures, perimeter fencing, hoardings and overhead gantries;
- the movement of construction traffic, plant and machinery (e.g. cranes);
- lighting of any night-time construction works; and
- the erection of scaffolding and presence of tall structures.

Operation

Landscape character

7.7.4 Impacts on landscape character associated with Scheme operation are anticipated to result in permanent impacts on landscape character, these include:

- the introduction of the link road between M54 Junction 1 and M6 Junction 11. Although partially positioned within an earthwork cutting, it would affect the semi-rural landscape character (through its presence, as well as the loss of vegetation to facilitate it). The Scheme alignment would also encroach within the historic parkland surrounding the Grade I listed Hilton Hall;
- alterations to the existing field patterns and surrounding vegetation framework and modifications to existing landform; and
- generally increased perceptions of highways and highway infrastructure within the landscape character.

Visual receptors

7.7.5 Potential changes to landscape character and visual amenity would be apparent, associated with the presence of the Scheme within the study area. Some of the elements and activities which would give rise to visual impacts include:

- the introduction of the link road between M54 Junction 1 and M6 Junction 11. Although partially positioned within an earthwork cutting, it would be an extensive new feature in available views afforded to local residents within Featherstone, Hilton and Shareshill and users of the PRoW network;
- the introduction of the new junction replacing the existing roundabout interchange at M54 Junction 1. This would reduce the awareness of the existing road within the adjacent settlement of Featherstone due to the road footprint moving away from the village edge;
- the introduction of the dumbbell roundabout taking traffic between Featherstone and the new link road;
- the realignment of the M6 Junction 11 and its associated slip roads, which would extend the current awareness of the existing motorway corridor from locations where it presently exerts an influence, particularly in views afforded to users of the PRoW network and local roads;
- the stopping up of Dark Lane near to the junction with Park Road;
- modifications to the form and alignment of Hilton Lane;
- the introduction of taller, more frequent and visually conspicuous highway infrastructure such as lighting and gantries; and
- the introduction of an accommodation overbridge to take the Shareshill BW1 over the Scheme.

7.8 Design, mitigation and enhancement measures

Embedded mitigation

7.8.1 The Scheme has been designed, as far as possible, to avoid and minimise impacts and effects on the landscape and visual environment through the process of design-development (Refer to Chapter 3: Assessment of Alternatives) considering good design principles. Embedded mitigation, defined within the DMRB LA104 (Ref 7.9) as 'Design measures which are integrated into a project for the purpose of minimising environmental effects,' is reported as part of the scheme description in Chapter 2: The Scheme. The following section reports the essential mitigation required in addition to embedded mitigation to reduce and offset likely significant adverse environmental effects. Essential mitigation is defined as 'Mitigation critical for the delivery of a project which can be acquired through statutory powers'.

Essential mitigation

7.8.2 A number of essential mitigation measures have been identified to reduce, remediate or compensate likely significant adverse environmental effects.

Construction

7.8.3 An Outline Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) [TR010054/APP/6.11] has been produced to support this DCO application and would be developed into a full Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) by the appointed contractor. The CEMP would include a range of best practice measures associated with mitigating potential environmental impacts which would be implemented during the construction phase. Measures that would be included in the CEMP include the following:

- Impacts on landscape character and visual amenity during construction would be reduced by keeping a well-managed and tidy site and compounds.
- Ensuring materials are delivered to site on an “as and when” basis would avoid unnecessary stockpiles and would help to reduce construction impacts.
- Temporary offices and welfare facilities within site compounds would be of a recessive colour to blend in with the local surroundings.
- Lighting would be kept to a minimum luminosity necessary and use low energy consumption fittings. Where appropriate, safety lighting would be activated by motion sensors to prevent unnecessary usage. The main site compound would always be occupied for the security of the plant, equipment, and materials within it. As such, the main site compound would be lit as required during hours of darkness. Lighting would be directional, and positioned sympathetically, to minimise light spill and disturbance for highly sensitive receptors.
- The potential for early planting would be set out. The key locations for consideration are: either side of the Scheme to the north of Hilton Lane; to the west of the construction compound at Featherstone; and to the west of the Scheme adjacent to Brookfield Farm. This early planting would allow for visual effects to be reduced during construction and in Year 1, as the trees are more mature and would filter views to the Scheme and its construction at an earlier juncture.

Operation

7.8.4 Environmental considerations have been taken into account during the development of the Scheme design, to avoid and reduce potential impacts on the prevailing landscape and visual receptors during operation of the Scheme. This iterative approach has led to a range of mitigation measures capable of reducing the magnitude of impacts being embedded within the Scheme design. These measures are illustrated on the Environmental Masterplans in Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2] (also refer to the Environmental Mitigation Schedule provided in Appendix 2.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3]). Actions that have been taken that avoid or reduce potential landscape and visual effects include the following:

- landform modelling has been employed locally to increase screening – this includes a false cutting at a 1:2.5 gradient, which will aid screening of views from Brookfield Farm;
- woodland, tree and shrub planting along the route corridor would filter views from adjacent sensitive visual receptors;

- new planting would integrate the Scheme within existing landscape features, to mitigate or reduce visual impact, including when viewed from upper storeys of buildings;
- proposed planting on the remodelled and new embankments and cuttings have been designed to reinforce the existing vegetation and to complement the species composition found locally; and
- particular care would be taken within the vicinity of Hilton Park to integrate the Scheme and its associated landscape planting into the parkland setting.

7.8.5 In addition to the measures identified above, a landscape planting strategy has been developed in accordance with the landscape design guidance and principles contained in LA117 'Landscape design' (Ref 7.11) and LA119 'Roadside environmental mitigation and enhancement' (Ref 7.12). The landscape planting is illustrated on the Environmental Masterplans for the Scheme. These drawings place the planting strategy within the wider framework of other environmental mitigation measures and are provided as Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2], whilst the Environmental Mitigation Schedule provided in Appendix 2.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3]) provides details of the principles behind the landscape proposals.

7.8.6 The planting strategy for the Scheme has sought, where possible, to utilise trees, shrub and grassland species that would not only provide an essential landscape mitigation (screening and integration) function, but also offer wider biodiversity benefits. The objectives of the planting strategy have been to (refer to Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]):

- filter, screen and contain some of the more prominent components of the Scheme in existing views from visual receptors;
- provide compensatory planting for trees, hedgerows, woodland and grassland lost as a result of permanent land take within the Scheme, and to reinstate planting removed due to site clearance activities;
- restore previously lost field boundaries and vegetation patterns;
- reinforce the existing vegetation pattern by planting species found locally;
- provide visual interest to people travelling on new and modified sections of road, as well as local residents, pedestrians and cyclists, and users of nearby public rights of way;
- assist the integration of drainage features and watercourse channel realignment works into the surrounding landscape framework and pattern;
- achieve a no net loss of habitat throughout the Scheme boundary; and
- provide a suitable landscape setting for Hilton Hall, whilst also reinforcing the designed parkland landscape.

7.8.7 In order to maximise landscape benefits upon Scheme opening, it is proposed to plant individual trees in prominent locations around the Scheme (detailed as plot type LE5.1 – individual trees on the Environmental Masterplans shown in Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]). This includes the locations as follows:

- within reinstated hedgerows at the northern construction compound (west of Junction 11 of the M6);
- east of the junction between the existing A460 and Mill Lane;
- within proposed hedgerows running parallel to both sides of the Scheme between Junction 11 of the M6 and Brookfield Farm;
- around both sides of the accommodation bridge to the south of Brookfield Farm;
- within the proposed hedgerow running parallel to the west of the Scheme between the accommodation bridge (to the south of Brookfield Farm) and Hilton Lane;
- around both sides of the Hilton Lane overbridge;
- within the proposed hedgerow running parallel to proposed ditch running from Hilton Lane to the ecology ponds to the north of Dark Lane;
- scattered within the southern construction compound (east of the existing A460 at Featherstone);
- within proposed hedgerows running parallel to farm access tracks between Hilton Park and Junction 1 of the M54; and
- within proposed hedgerows running around the proposed drainage pond between Brookhouse Lane and the M54.

7.8.8 Detailed landscape design would be undertaken at a later stage and the mitigation design would be further detailed and refined during this process. The detailed landscape design would include planting plans and schedules, a specification and a Landscape and Environmental Management Plan (LEMP). The LEMP will be based on the requirements outlined in the OEMP [TR010054/APP/6.11]. This would include information on long-term operational management of the landscape and ecological resource within the Scheme boundary. The LEMP would ensure that landscape works are undertaken in accordance with good practice and in a consistent basis across the Scheme.

7.8.9 The implementation and maintenance of the landscape design – including any works to existing or new trees – would be undertaken in accordance with the Arboricultural Mitigation Strategy (which would be produced during the detailed design stage). The Arboricultural Mitigation Strategy would ensure that the existing trees to be retained are appropriately protected during the construction works and that newly planted trees are appropriate and successfully established.

7.8.10 The appointed contractor would be responsible for undertaking landscape management within the contract period (for up to five years after Scheme opening), after which the longer-term maintenance and management of the soft estate responsibilities would transfer to Highways England West Midlands Asset Delivery Team (Highways England, Area 9).

7.8.11 The appointed contractor would also be responsible for the preparation of a Handover Environmental Management Plan (HEMP) during the contract period (refer to Chapter 2: The Scheme). The purpose of the HEMP would be to provide

information relating to existing and future landscape and environmental commitments that would need to be delivered by those responsible for the future management and operation of the Scheme. The HEMP would include specific requirements concerning the long term maintenance and management of all landscaping incorporated into the Scheme.

7.9 Assessment of likely significant effects

Landscape receptors

7.9.1 The NCA within the study area, NCA 67: Cannock Chase and Cank Wood and NCA 66: Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau are of regional scale and incorporate such varied landscape components that any changes in the scale at the Scheme level would not be significant on the overall character. As no significant effects are anticipated, consideration of the effects at the NCA level is not discussed further as part of the LVIA.

7.9.2 For the purposes of this assessment the landscape effects of the Scheme have been assessed at the LCA level relevant to the Scheme. Direct effects on landscape character would be confined to the Settled Plateau Farmland Slopes LCT; and Settled Heathlands LCT. Based on the ZTV, indirect effects (derived from views of a change in landscape character rather than a direct change in the landscape characteristics) are unlikely to be experienced in either the Pendleford, Fordhouses and Bushbury LCA or the Coalfield Farmlands LCT, therefore these are not assessed further.

Visual receptors

7.9.3 The ZTV of the Scheme (refer to Figures 7.1A to C [TR010054/APP/6.2]) shows relatively wide views due to the gently undulating landscape and relative lack of substantial woodland blocks, although in practice these views are more restricted by intervening built form and vegetation, especially around Featherstone and Shareshill, as well as along the M6 corridor.

7.9.4 Some viewpoints have not been taken further in this assessment due to the limited nature of views towards the Scheme in these locations. The reasoning for this is summarised in Table 7.9.

7.9.5 The effects on setting and visual context of heritage receptors at Hilton Hall and Portobello Tower are considered in Chapter 6: Cultural Heritage given that they represent heritage receptors and are private viewpoints with no nearby public access. Whilst GLVIA3 (Ref 7.2) states that ‘in some instances it may … be appropriate to consider private viewpoints’, these are ‘mainly from residential properties’, these viewpoints are therefore not considered further within this chapter but are considered in full in Chapter 6: Cultural Heritage.

Table 7.9: Reasoning for scoping viewpoints out of further assessment

Viewpoint ref.	Scheme screened from the viewpoint by:					
	Distance	Built form	Infrastructure (e.g. road embankment)	Landform	Vegetation	Considered in Chapter 6
VP01					✓	
VP03	✓			✓	✓	
VP05					✓	
VP06			✓		✓	
VP07		✓			✓	
VP09					✓	
VP12				✓	✓	
VP16A						✓
VP16B						✓
VP17						✓
VP18					✓	

7.9.6 It should be noted that although the metal fence in Viewpoint 20 screens the land within the Scheme boundary from view, there is potential for views from upper storeys. Therefore, this viewpoint has been taken forward into the assessment, despite the current levels of screening.

Construction

Landscape assessment

7.9.7 The assessment of likely effects on the published LCTs during construction is set out in Table 7.10 and Table 7.11.

Table 7.10: Assessment of landscape effects on the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT during construction

Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	Susceptibility
Construction: The LCT sits within the east and north-east of the study area. It has a predominantly rural character and consequently a medium susceptibility to construction activity. The section of the LCT within the study area is crossed by several major highways including the M6, the M54 and the M6 Toll, especially in the north-east of the study area where the M6 and M6 Toll merge, and the south-east of the study area where the M6 and M54 meet. There is also adjacent residential development in the residential areas of Shareshill, Featherstone, Hilton and Cheslyn Hay. Lighting associated with these highways and residential developments is present and influences the character. Construction activity is relatively at odds with the prevailing rural character, but this is tempered by the presence of the existing residential and highway influences. Taking these aspects into account along with the wider rural context, the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCA within the study area is assessed as	Medium

Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	Susceptibility
having a medium ability to accommodate construction activity and overall medium susceptibility to it.	
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: There is a perceived low landscape value and a medium susceptibility to construction of the Scheme within the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT. Overall, there would be a moderate sensitivity to the construction of the Scheme within the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of landscape impact**
Construction: The construction phase would be temporary, occurring over a relatively short period of time of approximately three years. It would introduce machinery, earthworks, demolition and other activities to the LCT, as well as the establishment of construction compounds within and adjacent to the LCT. Its impacts would mainly be confined within the Scheme boundary and its immediate vicinity, however within the Scheme boundary there would be impacts on landscape elements (such as tree loss) apparent within the wider LCT. Overall, the magnitude of impact on the Settled Plateau Farmlands, taking the short duration and moderate extent into account, would be moderate adverse.	Moderate
Significance of landscape effect	**Significance of landscape effect**
Construction: The LCT is of moderate sensitivity to change due to the medium susceptibility of the townscape and the overall low value of its character. The change within the LCT would be of moderate magnitude. There is therefore a moderate adverse effect on Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT arising from the construction of the Scheme.	Moderate adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Table 7.11: Assessment of landscape effects on the Settled Heathlands LCT during construction

Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	Sensitivity
Construction: Comprising a rural and urban fringe character, this LCT occupies the west and south west of the study area. The M54 crosses the LCT at its southern extent, and it contains several urban areas including Featherstone, the prisons complex at Brinsford comprising Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Featherstone, HMP Oakwood and Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institute (HMYOI) Brinsford, and, adjacent to the LCT, the northern edge of the city of Wolverhampton. Lighting is present, associated with the M54 and these residential and institutional developments, and influences the character. Construction activity would be relatively at odds with the prevailing rural character, particularly in the north around Shareshill, but this would be tempered by the presence of the existing residential and highway influences. Taking the wider rural context and the influence of urban and highway influences into account, the Settled Heathlands LCA would be assessed	Medium

Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	Sensitivity
as having a medium ability to accommodate construction activity and overall medium susceptibility to it.	
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: The LCT has a low landscape value, as well as a medium susceptibility to the construction of the Scheme. Overall, there would be a moderate sensitivity to the construction of the Scheme within the Settled Heathlands LCT.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of landscape impact**
Construction: Construction would introduce machinery, earthworks, demolition and other activities to the semi-rural LCT over a relatively short period of time. Its impacts would be temporary, and mainly be confined to the Scheme boundary and its immediate vicinity. There would also be impacts apparent within the LCT due to loss of landscape elements (such as trees, agricultural land and woodland blocks). The impacts of construction of the Scheme would only affect localised pockets of the LCT near Shareshill and Featherstone. Overall, the magnitude of impact on the Settled Heathlands LCT, considering the short duration and relatively limited extent affected, would be minor.	Minor
Significance of landscape effect	**Significance of landscape effect**
Construction: The medium susceptibility of the LCT and its inherent low value would contribute to a moderate sensitivity to change. Construction activity would result in change of the LCT of minor magnitude. Overall, the effect in the Settled Heathlands LCT due to construction of the Scheme would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Visual assessment

7.9.8 The assessments set out in Table 7.12 are based on visual effects arising from the Scheme from representative viewpoints during construction of the Scheme.

Table 7.12: Visual assessment at representative viewpoints during construction

Viewpoint 2: View from A460 Cannock Road, Featherstone				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394247, 305182 – 138 m AOD	0 m, NE	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.6A and 7.6B

Viewpoint 2: View from A460 Cannock Road, Featherstone	
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	**Susceptibility**
Construction: There are several detractors within this view, including lighting columns and the existing busy A460 Cannock Road. The view is experienced by residential receptors who are of high susceptibility to changes within it. However, the presence of the busy A460 Cannock Road mean that the susceptibility to changes in the view is reduced to medium.	Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: Residential receptors experience a low value view including a busy main road with associated traffic and noise. The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility to change contribute to an overall moderate sensitivity.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Construction clearance would substantially remove the woodland and stone wall throughout the view– although the stone wall would be reinstated along the new alignment of the road during construction. In turn, this would open up views of construction in its foreground, middle ground and background across much of the panorama. The construction compound would be in the middle ground and background of the view, comprising welfare facilities, vehicles and soil stockpiles. Throughout the view, there would be construction activity, noise and movement from construction vehicles, views of soil stock piles within the construction compound and cranes breaking the skyline. The impact would be temporary and relatively short term. Overall, due to the scale and extent of changes within the view, the magnitude of impact on residential and highway receptors would be major.	Major
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The medium susceptibility of the viewer and inherent low value of the view result in a moderate sensitivity to change. Construction activity would have a major impact on the view. Overall, the effect on residential and highway receptors during construction would be large adverse.	Large adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 4: View from houses at Laney Green				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395901, 306928 – 136 m AOD	0 m, SW	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.8A and 7.8B

Viewpoint 4: View from houses at Laney Green	
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	**Susceptibility**
Construction: This view comprises the existing A460 dual carriageway and associated elements such as signage and lighting, both of which form detractors, as well as the M6 Junction 11 in the left-hand half of its background. Receptors already experience a high degree of highway infrastructure within the view due to the presence of the A460, the M6 Junction 11 and the M6 slip roads and a high probability of roadworks associated with these roads. Receptors are therefore of low susceptibility to construction of the Scheme.	Low
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: The view is of an overall very low value due to the extensive presence of highway infrastructure across the panorama. The combination of very low value and low susceptibility due to the existing highway elements within the panorama contribute to low sensitivity.	Low
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Construction to alter the existing roundabout would be prominent in over half of the middle ground of the view. Vegetation clearance would open up the view so that the roundabout and its associated construction activity would become more prominent. Construction vehicles would introduce additional noise and movement to the panorama (in addition to that associated with the traffic on the roundabout and the A460) and cranes may be visible on the horizon. The effect would be temporary and relatively short term. The magnitude of impact on residential/ highway receptors due to construction of the Scheme would be moderate.	Moderate
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: Within the panorama, the combination of the very low value of the view and low susceptibility to change result in an overall low sensitivity. Changes in the view would be of moderate magnitude due to the construction activity within it. The effect in the panorama on residential/highway receptors resulting from construction would overall be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 8: View from field gate along Great Saredon Road				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394997, 307545 – 147 m AOD	600 m, SE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Highway	Figures 7.12A, 7.12B and 7.12C

Viewpoint 8: View from field gate along Great Saredon Road	
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	**Susceptibility**
Construction: This is a generally pleasant long view of fields enclosed by hedges, hedgerow trees and post and rail fences. It has detracting features in the background including the M6 and M6 Toll. The low susceptibility of highway receptors, coupled with the pleasant nature of the view, and the incongruity of construction works within this view mean that overall susceptibility to change is medium.	Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: Overall, the view is of medium value due to the extent of the panorama and its rural nature. The combination of medium value and medium susceptibility contribute to an overall moderate sensitivity.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: The panorama would incorporate multiple construction activities and elements. These would include cranes, increased noise and movement from construction vehicles and vegetation clearance - which would be visible around the roundabout which occupies part of the background of the left-hand side of the view. Works on the main carriageway would also be apparent towards the right half of the view, on the hill to the back of Brookfield Farm, as well as towards Hilton Lane. The magnitude of this change would occur across much of the view but would be short term and temporary. Overall the magnitude of impact on highway receptors would be moderate.	Moderate
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The view has a medium value and viewers experiencing it have a medium susceptibility to change, owing to the long rural view, with relatively few detractors. These combine to form a moderate sensitivity to change. The impact on the view would be of moderate magnitude due to construction activity and elements (such as construction vehicles) within it. The change within the view – as experienced by highway receptors - would be moderate adverse.	Moderate adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 10: View from A460 Cannock Road, opposite Brookfield Farm				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395095, 306400 – 125 m AOD	200 m, NE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Recreational / highway	Figures 7.14A and 7.14B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: The busy A460 Cannock Road and associated elements such as the lighting columns and pavements are surrounded by hedgerows, which				Medium

Viewpoint 10: View from A460 Cannock Road, opposite Brookfield Farm	
channel views along the road. Recreational receptors are typically of a high susceptibility to change; however, construction activity would not be incongruous within this view. Susceptibility to construction activity is therefore assessed as medium.	
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: The view is of very low value due to the presence of highway infrastructure within it and its degraded nature. Overall, taking into account the medium susceptibility and very low value, the sensitivity of receptors to construction is low.	Low
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Vegetation in the foreground limits views towards the Scheme and therefore only a small extent within the background of the view would be affected by construction activity. Cranes may be visible on the horizon in the background of approximately half of the view, and the remaining construction activity within it would be restricted to the centre of the background. This would comprise construction machinery, as well as the removal of vegetation and the emerging new carriageway of the road's link to the M6 Junction 11. The impact would be temporary and short term. The scale of the impact on recreational and highway receptors would be small and the magnitude negligible.	Negligible
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The medium susceptibility of the view and its very low value due to the presence of existing highway infrastructure contribute to a low sensitivity to construction. Construction activity would result in change of negligible magnitude on recreational and highway receptors, and the effect would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 11: View from PRoW east of Brookfield Farm				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395413, 306149 – 140 m AOD	0 m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.15A, 7.15B and 7.15C
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: This rural view comprises gently undulating fields enclosed by hedgerow trees; there are also several detractors within it such as farmyard buildings and machinery. Recreational users are of high susceptibility to construction activity in the panorama. Overall, the susceptibility to change within the view due to construction is high.				High

Viewpoint 11: View from PRoW east of Brookfield Farm	
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Construction: Large farmyard buildings, farm machinery, a mobile phone mast and pylons in the background are detractors which mean that the view is unlikely to be visited for the view and of low value. Given the low value and high susceptibility to change, the sensitivity of receptors to changes within the panorama is moderate.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Construction of the Scheme would be visible in the foreground of the full extent of the panorama. Construction activity including cranes, noise and movement of construction vehicles, soil stripping, and soil stock piles would be visible at close quarter to receptors, affecting the foreground and middle ground of the view. Whilst the impact would be temporary and relatively short term, the scale of change within the panorama would be very large. The magnitude of the impact on recreational receptors would be major.	Major
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: Within the view, the combination of the low value of the view and its high susceptibility to change combine to form an overall moderate sensitivity. The view would be affected by a change of major magnitude due to the extensive construction activity within it. The effect on recreational receptors resulting from construction would be large adverse.	Large adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 13: View from PRoW north of Hilton Lane				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395281, 305667 – 148 m AOD	200 m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / recreational	Figures 7.17A and 7.17B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: A rural view, comprising pastoral field enclosed by hedgerow with woodland in the distance, there are several properties nestled within the landscape. The high susceptibility of residential / recreational receptors, coupled with the rural view (in which construction activity would be incongruous), result in an overall high susceptibility to change.				High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Construction: The view is of medium value due to its pleasant rural character and well-wooded horizon. The high susceptibility to change and medium value combine to give a high sensitivity of receptors to changes within the panorama.				High

Viewpoint 13: View from PRoW north of Hilton Lane	
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Construction activity including noise and movement of construction vehicles, soil stripping and vegetation clearance would be visible across the full extent of the middle ground of the view. Due to the relative proximity of the receptors to the changes within the panorama, these would be perceived as a large-scale change in the view. The impact would be both short term and temporary. The extent and scale of the changes within the view for recreational receptors would mean that the magnitude of impact would be major.	Major
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The view has a medium value and viewers here have a high susceptibility to change – owing to the pleasant rural view, with relatively few detractors. These combine to form a high sensitivity to change for receptors at the viewpoint. The changes within the view would be of major magnitude due to the extent and scale of construction activity within it. The change for recreational receptors would be very large adverse.	Very large adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 14: View from houses on Dark Lane and Park Road				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394717, 305449 – 141 m AOD	0 m, E	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.18A, 7.18B, 7.18C and 7.18D
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: A country road enclosed by a hedge to the left and an unsightly fence to the right, beyond which is woodland associated with Hilton Hall. Given the inherent high susceptibility of residential receptors to changes in the view, and the presence of the pleasing elements of the rural view, the susceptibility of receptors to construction activity is high.				High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Construction: The view is of medium value due to the pleasant contrast between the wooded areas and open farmland. The high susceptibility combined with the medium value result in a high sensitivity.				High
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Activity associated with construction of the Scheme would be apparent across the full extent of the foreground and middle ground of the view. Changes within the view would comprise construction activities such as soil stripping, vegetation clearance, cranes, soil stock piles and noise and				Major

Viewpoint 14: View from houses on Dark Lane and Park Road	
movement from construction vehicles. Construction of the borrow pit would also be visible. Due to the proximity of receptors to the construction activity, the scale of the change would be large. The impact would be temporary and short term, but due to its scale and extent, the magnitude for residential / highway receptors would be major.	
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The high susceptibility of the receptors within the view to change and its medium value due to its pleasant rural character would contribute to a high sensitivity to change. Construction activity would result in a change of major magnitude on residential / highway receptors, and the effect would be very large adverse.	Very large adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 15: View from Hilton Lane				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395317, 305539 – 153 m AOD	250 m, N	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / recreational / highway	Figures 7.19A, 7.19B, 7.19C and 7.19D
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: Pylons on the horizon are a minor detractor from an otherwise pleasant rural view. Undulating pastoral fields in the foreground are enclosed by unmanaged hedgerow with occasional lone trees. The high susceptibility of residential and recreational receptors to changes within the panorama, alongside the relatively pleasant rural views in which construction activity would be incongruous, mean that susceptibility to change is high.				High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Construction: The value of the view is medium due to its pleasant rural nature, with relatively few detractors within it. The high susceptibility of receptors to change combined with medium value combine to give an overall high sensitivity.				High
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Construction activity within the field would include construction vehicles, cranes and earthworks; contained within the middle ground and background of the panorama. They would form an uncharacteristic part of the view for a temporary and short-term period. During construction, cranes will be visible on the skyline occupying most of the middle ground and background of the view. The impact would be of moderate magnitude for residential / recreational / highway receptors.				Moderate

Viewpoint 15: View from Hilton Lane	
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: Within the panorama, the medium value of the rural view and its high susceptibility to change combine to form an overall moderate sensitivity. The view would be affected by a change of moderate magnitude due to the construction activity within it. Residential / recreational / highway receptors would experience an effect resulting from construction which would be large adverse.	Large adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 19: View from Whitgreave's Wood				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394561, 305418 – 137 m AOD	50 m, N	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.24A and 7.24B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: This panorama contains a foreground of pleasant woodland, although it also contains several detractors within its background, including the existing busy M54 motorway, associated vehicles and lighting columns. The view is experienced by recreational receptors who are of high susceptibility to changes within it. However, the presence of the busy M54 and potential for roadworks unrelated to the Scheme along this route mean that the susceptibility of the viewpoint is lowered to medium.				Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Construction: Recreational receptors experience a medium value view which contains pleasant woodland elements, but also a busy motorway with associated traffic and noise. The combination of the medium value and medium susceptibility to change contribute to an overall moderate sensitivity.				Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Vegetation clearance at the edge of the woodland to facilitate construction of the embankment on the southern edge of the M54. This would in turn open up views of construction in its middle ground and background across much of the panorama – this effect would be particularly apparent in summer, when the M54 is currently well-screened. Throughout the view, there would be construction activity, such as noise and movement from construction vehicles. The impact would be temporary and relatively short term. The view would be filtered by the remaining vegetation in the foreground but would be relatively close to the receptors. Overall, the magnitude of the impact on recreational receptors would be moderate.				Moderate

Viewpoint 19: View from Whitgreave's Wood	
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The view has a medium value and a medium susceptibility to change – owing to the pleasant woodland in its foreground. These combine to form a moderate sensitivity to change for receptors at the viewpoint. The changes within the view would be of moderate magnitude due to the filtering effect of intervening vegetation on close-quarter views of construction. The effect for recreational receptors would be moderate adverse.	Moderate adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 20: View from houses on Dark Lane				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
393679, 304545 – 135 m AOD	0 m, S	Winter - N/A, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.25A, 7.25B and 7.25C
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Construction: The viewpoint is taken from a residential road enclosed by an unsightly fence across its extent, beyond which is farmland within Hilton Park. Given the inherent high susceptibility of residential receptors to changes in the view, balanced with the presence of detractors such as the metal fence, the susceptibility of receptors to construction activity is medium.				Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Construction: The view is of low value due to the presence of detractors within it. The medium susceptibility combined with the low value result in a moderate sensitivity.				Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Construction: Activity associated with construction of the Scheme would be apparent above the fence in the middle ground of the view. Changes within the view would comprise construction activity, noise and movement from construction vehicles and noise and views cranes. Visual screening provided by the fence would mean that the scale of change within the view would be relatively small – although from the first floors of the houses behind the viewpoint, the change would be of a larger scale. The impact would be temporary and short term and, due to the scale and extent of the Scheme, the magnitude for residential / highway receptors would be negligible.				Negligible
Significance of visual effect				**Significance of visual effect**
Construction: The medium susceptibility of the receptors within the view to change and its low value due to the presence of detractors would contribute to a moderate sensitivity to change. Construction activity would result in a				Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 20: View from houses on Dark Lane	
change of negligible magnitude on residential / highway receptors, and therefore the effect would be slight adverse.	

Operation

Landscape assessment

7.9.9 The assessment of likely effects on the published LCTs at operation in Year 1 and Year 15 is set out in Table 7.13 and Table 7.14.

Table 7.13: Assessment of landscape effects on the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT at operation stage

Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	Susceptibility
Year 1 of operation: The baseline landscape character is relatively rural, with a medium susceptibility to highway infrastructure. However, the study area is already affected by existing adjacent highways (the M6, the M6 Toll and the M54) and residential infrastructure, both including lighting. Taking the existing highway and residential influences into account, along with the wider rural context, the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT within the study area is assessed as having a high ability to accommodate operation of the Scheme and overall low susceptibility to it.	Low
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the landscape character within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.	Low
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: Within the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT, there is low landscape value and low susceptibility to Year 1 of operation of the Scheme. Overall, there would be a low sensitivity to the operation of the Scheme on the LCT.	Low
Year 15 of operation: As in Year 1 of Scheme operation, the Settled Plateau Farmlands is of low sensitivity to Year 15 of the Scheme operation. This is derived from the low value and low susceptibility of the LCT to this stage of the Scheme.	Low
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of landscape impact**
Year 1 of operation: The Scheme would affect the LCT on a permanent and long-term basis, crossing a sizeable portion of its western edge. It would introduce highway features across land that is currently used for agricultural and woodland land uses, but this is in the context of several other large highway infrastructure elements in the local area, namely the M6, the M6 Toll and the M54. The Scheme would be similar in scale and nature to these existing elements. Taking the influence of the existing highway on the baseline and the extent and duration of the change into account, the magnitude of impact on the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT, is assessed as minor.	Minor
Year 15 of operation: Trees and shrubs planted as part of the landscape mitigation would integrate it into the landscape and lessen the magnitude of	Negligible

the long-term, permanent impact from the Scheme on the Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT to negligible.	
Significance of landscape effect	**Significance of landscape effect**
Year 1 of operation: There is a low sensitivity within the LCT to this stage of the Scheme; this would be partly due to the presence of existing highway infrastructure. The magnitude of change would be minor, due to the combination of the existing infrastructure with the scale and duration of the Scheme. There would be a slight adverse effect at this stage of the Scheme operation.	Slight adverse (Not significant)
Year 15 of operation: Trees and shrubs planted as part of the landscape mitigation would integrate the Scheme and the magnitude of change would be reduced to negligible. The sensitivity would be unchanged from Year 1; the effect on Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT would therefore be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Table 7.14: Assessment of landscape effects on the Settled Heathlands LCT at operation stage

Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: This semi-rural LCT has several highways and urban influences on its eastern and southern edges. These include the presence of the M54, the edge of Wolverhampton and the prison complex associated with HMP Featherstone, HMP Oakwood and HMYOI Brinsford. The highway and urban influences locally affect the LCT's character, reducing its susceptibility to change from medium to low. The Settled Heathlands LCT within the study area is assessed as having a high ability to accommodate operation of the Scheme and overall low susceptibility to it.	Low
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the landscape character within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.	Low
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The Settled Heathlands LCT has an inherent low landscape value. There is also a low susceptibility to the Scheme operation. There is an overall low sensitivity to the operation of the Scheme on the LCT.	Low
Year 15 of operation: As in Year 1 of Scheme operation, the Settled Heathlands are of low sensitivity to Year 15 of the Scheme operation. This is derived from the low value and low susceptibility of the LCT to this stage of the Scheme.	Low
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of landscape impact**
Year 1 of operation: The Scheme would directly affect two small portions of the LCT – namely at its northern and western extents. It would also indirectly affect the eastern edge of the LCT. These effects would be on a permanent and long-term basis introducing highway features across agricultural land and small blocks of woodland. These changes would be in the context of other highway infrastructure elements in the local area, the M6, the M6 Toll and the M54. Taking the influence of the existing highway on the baseline	Negligible

and the extent and duration of the change into account, the magnitude of impact on the Settled Heathlands LCT is assessed as negligible.	
Year 15 of operation: Trees and shrubs planted as part of the landscape mitigation and will lessen and fully mitigate the long-term, permanent impact from the Scheme on the Settled Heathlands LCT.	No change
Significance of landscape effect	**Significance of landscape effect**
Year 1 of operation: The LCT has a low sensitivity to the Scheme at this stage of operation, due in part to the presence of existing highway infrastructure. Due to the combination of the existing infrastructure with the scale and duration of the Scheme, there would be a negligible magnitude of change. The effect of the Scheme on Settled Heathlands LCT would be slight adverse at this stage of operation.	Slight adverse (Not significant)
Year 15 of operation: Trees and shrubs planted as part of the landscape mitigation would fully integrate it such that there is no magnitude of change. The sensitivity remains unchanged from Year 1; the effect on Settled Heathlands LCT would therefore be neutral.	Neutral (Not significant)

Visual assessment

7.9.10 The assessments set out in the Table 7.15 are based on visual effects arising from the Scheme from representative viewpoints at Year 1 and Year 15 of the operation.

Table 7.15: Visual assessment at representative viewpoints at operation stage

Viewpoint 2: View from A460 Cannock Road, Featherstone				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394247, 305182 - 138m AOD	0m, NE	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.6A and 7.6B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: There are several detractors within this view, including lighting columns and an existing busy A460 Cannock Road. Residential receptors are typically of high susceptibility to changes in their view, but they currently experience views of existing highway infrastructure. Overall susceptibility to the addition of highway infrastructure is therefore reduced to medium.				Medium
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: Residential receptors experience a low value view of the busy A460 Cannock Road, although there are pleasant features within it such				Moderate

Viewpoint 2: View from A460 Cannock Road, Featherstone	
as the woodland and the stone wall. The low value and medium susceptibility to change contribute to a moderate sensitivity.	
Year 15 of operation: The residential receptors remain of medium susceptibility to change and will remain of moderate sensitivity to changes in the view at Year 15.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: The Scheme would be visible across the full extent of the foreground and middle ground of the view. The feeling of enclosure would be altered due to the removal of mature trees from the middle ground; which would be replaced by roads leading towards the dumbbell roundabout to the west of the Scheme. The main carriageway of the Scheme itself would be visible in the background of the view and comprise a larger scale than the existing road within it. Landscape mitigation would not be mature in Year 1, although the stone wall present in the baseline view would have been reinstated along the realigned A460. The effect would be permanent and long term. Overall, the magnitude of visual impact would be major for residential / highway receptors.	Major
Year 15 of operation: Maturing vegetation would filter and restrict views towards the main carriageway of the Scheme, although the roads leading to the dumbbell roundabout to the west of the Scheme would still be visible. The magnitude of change within the view would reduce to moderate for residential / highway receptors.	Moderate
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The receptors have a moderate sensitivity to the Scheme at this stage of operation, due in part to the presence of existing highway infrastructure. There would be a major magnitude of change and the effect of the Scheme on residential / highway receptors would be large adverse at this stage of operation.	Large adverse (Significant effect)
Year 15 of operation: Trees and shrubs planted as part of the landscape mitigation would be maturing and the magnitude of impact would be reduced to moderate. The effect on residential / highway receptors would therefore be moderate adverse.	Moderate adverse (Significant effect)

Viewpoint 4: View from houses at Laney Green				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395901, 306928 - 136m AOD	0m, SW	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.8A and 7.8B

Viewpoint 4: View from houses at Laney Green	
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change	**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: This view comprises the existing A460 dual carriageway and associated elements which form detractors within the view. Receptors already experience a high degree of highway infrastructure within the view and are therefore of low susceptibility to the Scheme.	Low
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.	Low
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The view is of very low value due to the number and extent of detractors already present within it. The combination of low value and low susceptibility contribute to a low sensitivity to change.	Low
Year 15 of operation: As described for Year 1.	Low
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: The highway footprint within the view would change to a limited extent in the far left-hand side of the view, with the M6 Junction 11 undergoing alterations in the middle ground and background of the view. The changes would not differ greatly from the baseline, except for gantries installed above the junction, which would break the skyline and intensify the presence of highway infrastructure in the panorama. Landscape mitigation would not be mature by Year 1 and not mitigate the effects. The impact would be permanent and long term but the overall magnitude of change in the view at Year 1 would be minor for residential and highway receptors.	Minor
Year 15 of operation: The landscape mitigation associated with the roundabout would not provide screening from this viewpoint, although the existing retained vegetation would contribute to screening the gantries on the far side of the M6 Junction 11. The magnitude of change would remain at minor for residential and highway receptors.	Minor
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: There is a low sensitivity within the view at this stage of the Scheme; this is due to the presence of extensive existing highway infrastructure. The magnitude of change would be minor, due to the addition of elements such as gantries to the panorama. There would be an effect on residential and highway receptors which is slight adverse at this stage of the Scheme operation.	Slight adverse (Not significant)
Year 15 of operation: The magnitude would remain at minor and the sensitivity is unchanged from Year 1; the effect on residential and highway receptors would therefore be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 8: View from field gate along Great Saredon Road				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394997, 307545 - 147m AOD	600m, SE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Highway	Figures 7.12A, 7.12B and 7.12C
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: This is a generally pleasant long view of fields enclosed by hedges, hedgerow trees and post and rail fences. Detracting features in the background of the view include the M6 and M6 Toll. The existing motorways within the background of the view, the relatively pleasant long view and the fact that the receptors are travelling along a highway and not primarily engaged in enjoyment of the view, results in a low susceptibility to change.				Low
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 would be the same as for Year 1.				Low
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: Overall, the view is of medium value due to the length of the view and its relatively pleasant rural nature. The combination of medium value and low susceptibility contribute to an overall moderate sensitivity.				Moderate
Year 15 of operation: As described for Year 1.				Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: The panorama would incorporate the realigned M6 Junction 11 roundabout in the far left-hand side of the middle ground, with vehicles in the cutting north of Hilton Lane. The accommodation overbridge to the south of Brookfield Farm would be visible in the right half of the view. The change resulting from the Scheme would occur across much of the view but would be set within the middle ground and background and be partially filtered by existing intervening vegetation. Overall the magnitude of change within the view for highway receptors would be moderate.				Moderate
Year 15 of operation: Landscape mitigation would be maturing, screening and filtering views to some extent. Open fields in the right of the view would change in character from open to more wooded and the realigned Junction 11 of the M6. Vehicles in the cutting, and the accommodation overbridge would be visible. The magnitude of impact for highway receptors would reduce to minor due to the screening effect of the landscape mitigation.				Minor
Significance of visual effect				**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The view has a medium value and a low susceptibility to change, owing to the long rural view, with relatively few detractors. These combine to form a moderate sensitivity to change. The changes within the view would be of moderate magnitude due to the intensification of highway				Moderate adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 8: View from field gate along Great Saredon Road	
infrastructure and the extent of the changes across the panorama. The effect for highway receptors would be moderate adverse.	
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity to change would remain the same, but the magnitude of change would be reduced to low with the presence of the maturing landscape mitigation. Within the panorama, the effect for highway receptors would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 10: View from A460 Cannock Road, opposite Brookfield Farm				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395095, 306400 - 125m AOD	200m, NE	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Recreational / highway	Figures 7.14A and 7.14B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: The busy A460 Cannock Road and associated elements such as the lighting columns and pavements are surrounded by hedgerows which channel views along the road. Recreational receptors are of a high sensitivity to change; however, due to the existing detractors such as the busy road and the speed and volume of its associated traffic, the susceptibility to the Scheme in operation is medium.				Medium
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The view is of very low value due to the presence of highway infrastructure within it and its degraded nature. Overall, the medium susceptibility to change and very low value of the view, the sensitivity of receptors is low.				Low
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view would remain as low, due to the very low value and medium susceptibility.				Low
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: Vegetation in the foreground would limit views towards the Scheme and therefore only a small extent within the background of the view would be affected by the operational Scheme. The change in the view would comprise the carriageway of A460 Cannock Road where it links to the M6 Junction 11, with associated lighting columns and gantries. The impact would be permanent and long term, at a similar scale to the existing junction, although the gantries would break the horizon and would make the junction more prominent than in the baseline. The scale of the impact on recreational and highways receptors would be small and the magnitude negligible.				Negligible
Year 15 of operation: The maturing vegetation would soften and screen the Scheme from view, but the gantries would still be notable on the skyline. The				Negligible

Viewpoint 10: View from A460 Cannock Road, opposite Brookfield Farm	
magnitude of change for recreational and highways receptors would remain at negligible.	
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The medium susceptibility of the view and its very low value due to the presence of existing highway infrastructure contribute to a low sensitivity to change. The Scheme would result in a change of negligible magnitude within the panorama, and the effect on recreational and highways receptors would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of change would remain the same; the effect on recreational and highways receptors would therefore remain slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 11: View from PRoW east of Brookfield Farm				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395413, 306149 - 140m AOD	0m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.15A, 7.15B and 7.15C
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: This rural view comprises gently undulating fields enclosed by hedgerow trees; there are also several detractors within it such as farmyard buildings and machinery. Viewers of the PRoW have a high susceptibility to the introduction of highway infrastructure of the scale proposed.				High
Year 15 of operation: Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the viewer at Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: Large farmyard buildings, farm machinery, a mobile phone mast and pylons in the background are detractors from the view resulting in a view of low value. Given the low value and high susceptibility to change, the sensitivity of receptors to changes within the panorama is moderate.				Moderate
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view remains as moderate, due to the low value and high susceptibility to change.				Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: Changes to the view would be apparent across the full extent of the foreground. The receptors' proximity to the Scheme means that the scale would be large, although the Scheme would be in a cutting, obscuring most cars and lorries from the view. Receptors would be able to				Major

Viewpoint 11: View from PRoW east of Brookfield Farm	
see the western side of the cutting, as well as associated landscape mitigation which would not have matured by Year 1. The impact would be permanent and long term. Overall, the magnitude of change for recreational receptors would be major.	
Year 15 of operation: Landscape mitigation would be maturing, screening views of the Scheme and reducing visibility of vehicles travelling along it, as well minimising views of the western embankment of the cutting. The large scale of the Scheme and location in the foreground of the view means that receptors would remain aware of the change in landform, with increased noise levels affecting perceptions of tranquillity. The magnitude of change would reduce to moderate for recreational receptors.	Moderate
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: Within the view, the combination of the low value of the view and its high susceptibility to change combine to form an overall moderate sensitivity. The view would be affected by a change of major magnitude from operation in Year 1. The effect on recreational receptors resulting from operation in Year 1 would be large adverse.	Large adverse (Significant adverse effect)
Year 15 of operation: Whilst the sensitivity to change would remain as in Year 1, the magnitude of change would reduce due to the presence of the maturing landscape mitigation in the view. The effect on recreational receptors would be moderate adverse.	Moderate adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 13: View from PRoW north of Hilton Lane				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395281, 305667 - 148m AOD	200m, W	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / recreational	Figures 7.17A and 7.17B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: A rural view, comprising pastoral fields enclosed by hedgerow with woodland in the distance. There are several properties nestled within the landscape. The high susceptibility of residential / recreational receptors, coupled with the rural view and lack of highway infrastructure, result in an overall high susceptibility to change.				High
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the viewers at Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The view is of medium value due to its pleasant rural character and well-wooded horizon. The high susceptibility to change and medium value combine to give a high sensitivity of receptors to changes within the panorama.				High

Viewpoint 13: View from PRoW north of Hilton Lane	
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view would remain as high, due to the medium value and high susceptibility to change.	High
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: The Scheme would be visible across the extent of the view. The scale of change within the view would be large due to the Scheme being in the foreground. The Scheme would be in a cutting, obscuring most cars and lorries, however landscape mitigation would not yet be mature, and receptors would be able to see the western side of the cutting. The impact would be permanent and long term. Overall the magnitude of the change for recreational receptors would be major.	Major
Year 15 of operation: The location of the Scheme across the entirety of the foreground of the view means that the Scheme would remain noticeable within the view. By Year 15 landscape mitigation would be maturing and would screen views into the cutting and vehicles moving along the Scheme. The magnitude of change for recreational receptors would reduce to moderate.	Moderate
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The view has a medium value and viewers have a high susceptibility to change – owing to the pleasant rural view, with relatively few detractors. These combine to form a high sensitivity to change for receptors at the viewpoint. The changes within the view would be of major magnitude due to the extent and scale of the highway infrastructure introduced into it. The effect on recreational receptors within the view would therefore be very large adverse.	Very large adverse (Significant adverse effect)
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity to change would remain the same, but the magnitude of change would be reduced to moderate with the presence of the maturing landscape mitigation. Within the view, the effect on recreational receptors would be large adverse.	Large adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 14: View from houses on Dark Lane and Park Road				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394717, 305449 - 141m AOD	0m, E	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.18A, 7.18B, 7.18C and 7.18D
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: The viewpoint is located on a country road enclosed by a hedge to the left and a fence to the right, beyond which is woodland associated with Hilton Hall. Given the inherent high susceptibility of residential receptors to changes in the view, the lack of large-scale highway				High

Viewpoint 14: View from houses on Dark Lane and Park Road	
infrastructure, and the presence of the pleasing elements of the rural view, the susceptibility of receptors to operation of the Scheme is high.	
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.	High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The view is of medium value due to the pleasant contrast between the wooded areas and open farmland. The high susceptibility combined with the medium value result in a high sensitivity to change.	High
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view remains as high, due to the medium value and high susceptibility to change.	High
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: The full extent of the view would be affected by the Scheme from the foreground into the distance. The scale of change within it would be large. The Scheme at this point is approximately at grade with a slight cutting, with a 3 m noise barrier obstructing many of the views towards the Scheme/ vehicles using the Scheme. In the left of the view, the borrow pit would have been restored, replaced by landscape mitigation planting and views of vehicles using the Scheme would be seen where the noise barrier ends. The change in traffic noise level is not anticipated to affect perceived tranquillity. Landscape mitigation would not have matured by Year 1, and the impact of the Scheme would be both permanent and long term. The magnitude of change within the view for residential and highway receptors would be major.	Major
Year 15 of operation: Views towards the Scheme would be filtered and partially screened by maturing landscape mitigation, which would also filter views of moving vehicles. The change in traffic noise level is not anticipated to affect perceived tranquillity. The magnitude of change would reduce to moderate for residential and highway receptors.	Moderate
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The high susceptibility of the receptors to change and the medium value of the view due to its pleasant rural character contribute to a high sensitivity of receptors to change. The Scheme at Year 1 would result in a change of major magnitude within the panorama, and the effect on residential and highway receptors would be large / very large adverse.	Very large adverse (Significant adverse effect)
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of the receptors remains the same, but the magnitude of change would reduce to moderate due to maturing landscape mitigation, which would filter views towards the Scheme. The effect on residential and highway receptors would therefore be moderate adverse.	Moderate adverse (Significant adverse effect)

Viewpoint 15: View from Hilton Lane				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
395317, 305539 - 153m AOD	250m, N	Winter - 20/11/2018, Summer - 21/06/2019	Residential / recreational / highway	Figures 7.19A, 7.19B, 7.19C and 7.19D
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: Pylons on the horizon are a minor detractor from an otherwise pleasant rural view. Undulating pastoral fields in the foreground are enclosed by unmanaged hedgerow with occasional lone trees. The lack of existing highways within the view combined with the high susceptibility of residential and recreational receptors to changes within it results in an overall high susceptibility to change.				High
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				High
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The value of the view is medium due to its pleasant rural nature, with relatively few detractors within in. The high susceptibility of receptors to change combined with medium value view combine to give an overall high sensitivity of receptors to change.				High
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view would remain as high, due to the medium value and high susceptibility to change.				High
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: The Scheme would be visible across half of the middle ground of the view, in both the left-hand side of the view and towards the right of the farm buildings in the hollow. The scale of change within the landscape would be medium; the proposed cutting would obscure most vehicles. The change in traffic noise level is not anticipated to affect perceived tranquillity. Landscape mitigation would not have matured by Year 1, and receptors would be able to see the western side of the cutting. The impact would be permanent and long term, with recreational, residential and highway receptors experiencing a moderate magnitude of change.				Moderate
Year 15 of operation: Maturing landscape mitigation would screen the part of the Scheme visible in the middle distance and reduce views towards the slopes of the cutting. The change in traffic noise level is not anticipated to affect perceived tranquillity. Overall the magnitude of change would be reduced to minor for recreational, residential and highway receptors.				Minor

Viewpoint 15: View from Hilton Lane	
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: Within the panorama, the medium value of the rural view and its high susceptibility to change combine to form an overall high sensitivity. There would be a change of moderate magnitude in the view. The effect on recreational, residential and highway receptors would therefore be moderate adverse.	Moderate (Significant adverse effect)
Year 15 of operation: Whilst the sensitivity to change would remain as in Year 1, the magnitude of change would reduce due to the presence of the maturing landscape mitigation in the view. The effect on recreational, residential and highway receptors would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)

Viewpoint 19: View from Whitgreave's Wood				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
394561, 305418 - 137m AOD	50m, N	Winter - 25/01/2019, Summer - 21/06/2019	Recreational	Figures 7.24A and 7.24B
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: This panorama contains a foreground of pleasant woodland, although it also contains several detractors in the background, including the existing busy M54, associated vehicles, and lighting columns. The view is experienced by recreational receptors who are of high susceptibility to changes within the view. However, the presence of the M54 adjacent to this PRoW mean that the susceptibility of the viewpoint to operation of the Scheme in Year 1 is lowered to medium.				Medium
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				Medium
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change				**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: Recreational receptors experience a medium value view which contains pleasant woodland elements, but also a busy motorway with associated traffic and noise. The combination of the medium value and medium susceptibility to change contribute to an overall moderate sensitivity of receptors.				Moderate
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view would remain as moderate, due to the high value and medium susceptibility to change.				Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact				**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: Views of the Scheme would be available within the middle ground and background of the view. These views would be particularly				Minor

Viewpoint 19: View from Whitgreave's Wood	
apparent in summer, where the M54 is currently well-screened and vegetation would have been removed to facilitate the Scheme. Landscape mitigation would not have matured to replace this vegetation by Year 1. Throughout the view, there would be increased presence of highway infrastructure, although this would be in the context of the existing highway infrastructure. The impact would be long-term and permanent. The view would be filtered by the remaining vegetation in the foreground but would be at relatively close quarter to the receptors. Overall, the magnitude of impact would be minor for recreational receptors.	
Year 15 of operation: The maturing landscape vegetation would filter the Scheme within the view and the magnitude of impact would be reduced to negligible for recreational receptors.	Negligible
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The view has a medium value and a medium susceptibility to change, owing to the pleasant woodland in its foreground. These combine to form a moderate sensitivity to change for receptors at the viewpoint. The changes within the view would be of minor magnitude due to the filtering effect of intervening vegetation and the existing highway context. The effect on recreational receptors would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)
Year 15 of operation: Whilst the sensitivity to change would remain as in Year 1, the magnitude of change would reduce due to the presence of the maturing landscape mitigation in the view. The effect on recreational receptors would be neutral.	Neutral (Not significant)

Viewpoint 20: View from houses on Dark Lane				
Grid ref and elevation (m AOD)	**Distance and direction of view**	**Dates visited**	**Receptors**	**Figure**
393679, 304545 - 135m AOD	0m, S	Winter - N/A, Summer - 20/06/2019	Residential / highway	Figures 7.25A, 7.25B and 7.25C
Susceptibility of receptor to specific change				**Susceptibility**
Year 1 of operation: The view is taken from a residential road enclosed by a fence along its extent, beyond which is farmland within Hilton Park. Given the inherent high susceptibility of residential receptors to changes in the view, balanced with the presence of detractors such as the metal fence, the susceptibility of receptors to the operation of the Scheme is medium.				Medium
Year 15 of operation: The susceptibility of the view within Year 15 is the same as for Year 1.				Medium

Viewpoint 20: View from houses on Dark Lane	
Sensitivity of receptor to specific change	**Sensitivity**
Year 1 of operation: The view is of low value due to the presence of detractors within it. The medium susceptibility combined with the low value result in a moderate sensitivity of receptors to change.	Moderate
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity of receptors to change within the view remain as moderate, due to the low value and medium susceptibility.	Moderate
Size / scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility of impact	**Magnitude of visual impact**
Year 1 of operation: Due to the separation of the viewpoint and the Scheme, as well as the screening effect of the fence, there would be no real change within the view at ground level. However, from the first floor of the residential properties behind the viewpoint, the change would be of a larger scale, with views available towards the new M54 Junction 1. The effect would be long-term and permanent. Visual screening provided by the fence would mean the scale of change within the view would be relatively small – although from the first floor of residential properties behind the viewpoint the change would be of a larger scale. The impact would be permanent and long term and, due to the scale and extent of the Scheme the magnitude would be negligible for residential and highway receptors.	Negligible
Year 15 of operation: The landscape mitigation would be maturing behind the fence and would add a sense of enclosure to the view, as well as increasing the woodland cover in it. This planting would also restrict views from upper floors of residential properties towards the Scheme. The magnitude of change would be minor for residential and highway receptors.	Minor
Significance of visual effect	**Significance of visual effect**
Year 1 of operation: The medium susceptibility of the receptors within the view to change and its low value due to the presence of detractors contribute to a moderate sensitivity to change. The Scheme would result in a change of negligible magnitude within the panorama, taking into account the lack of change at ground level, but the minor changes at first-floor level. Overall, the effect on residential and highway receptors would be slight adverse.	Slight adverse (Not significant)
Year 15 of operation: The sensitivity to change remains the same as in Year 1. The landscape mitigation in the view would add a neutral change on the baseline for ground floor views but would be beneficial in terms of screening the views of the Scheme available from upper floors of adjacent residential properties in Year 1. The in Year 15 on residential and highway receptors would be slight beneficial.	Slight beneficial (Not significant)

7.9.11 The assessment indicates that the Scheme has the potential to generate a range of landscape and visual effects which change over time. A summary of the LVIA is presented in Tables 7.16 and 7.17.

7.9.12 During Scheme construction, the landscape effects in the vicinity of the Scheme are anticipated to be slight to moderate adverse, the latter of which are considered to be significant. Effects upon some viewpoints during Scheme construction range

from neutral / slight adverse to large / very large adverse, depending on the receptor sensitivity and the predicted impact magnitude.

7.9.13 During Scheme operation, landscape effects are anticipated to be of neutral to neutral / slight adverse, which is not considered to be significant. Effects on visual receptors during operation range from neutral to large / very large adverse. The majority of adverse visual effects reduce in significance between Year 1 and Year 15.

7.9.14 A summary of the LVIA is presented in Table 7.16 and Table 7.17.

Table 7.16: Summary of residual landscape effects

Landscape Receptor	Construction	Year 1 of operation	Year 15 of operation
Settled Plateau Farmlands LCT	Moderate adverse	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
Settled Heathlands LCT	Slight adverse	Slight adverse	Neutral

Table 7.17: Summary of residual visual effects

Visual Receptor	Construction	Year 1 of operation	Year 15 of operation
Viewpoint 02	Large adverse	Large adverse	Moderate adverse
Viewpoint 04	Slight adverse	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
Viewpoint 08	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse	Slight adverse
Viewpoint 10	Slight adverse	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
Viewpoint 11	Large adverse	Large adverse	Moderate adverse
Viewpoint 13	Very large adverse	Very large adverse	Large adverse
Viewpoint 14	Very large adverse	Very large adverse	Moderate adverse
Viewpoint 15	Large adverse	Moderate adverse	Slight adverse
Viewpoint 19	Moderate adverse	Slight adverse	Neutral
Viewpoint 20	Slight adverse	Slight adverse	Slight beneficial

7.10 Monitoring

Construction

7.10.1 Significant residual effects on landscape and visual are anticipated as a result of the construction of the Scheme, therefore monitoring would be undertaken in line with the requirements of the EIA Regulations (Ref 7.23). The implementation of the landscape mitigation planting would be monitored in order to ensure that best practice is being followed. In addition, the Scheme construction would be delivered in accordance with the measures set out within the OEMP [TR010054/APP/6.11] and Environmental Mitigation Schedule (refer to Appendix 2.1 [TR010054/APP/6.3]).

Operation

7.10.2 Significant residual effects on visual receptors are anticipated as a result of the operation of the Scheme, therefore monitoring would be undertaken in line with the requirements of the EIA Regulations (Ref 7.23). All landscape planting forming part of the Scheme design would be routinely inspected, managed and maintained post-construction in accordance with the requirements as stipulated within the HEMP. Such maintenance practices would ensure that all landscaping establishes and achieves its intended environmental functions and objectives (as indicated in Figures 2.1 to 2.7 [TR010054/APP/6.2]). Monitoring of the establishment, growth and maintenance of landscape planting, would be undertaken on a quarterly basis during the establishment period (5 years) to ensure its successful delivery. During year 15, a visit would be made to each viewpoint with anticipated residual significant adverse effects to ensure that the landscape mitigation planting has established and is delivering the intended screening and landscape integration objectives. Should the landscape planting be found not to be sufficient to provide the anticipated level of screening and landscape integration remedial works would be undertaken as appropriate, which could include further mitigation planting.

7.10.3 The Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments in the OEMP [TR010054/APP/6.11], sets out the initial monitoring and management requirements that the appointed contractor would be responsible for undertaking within the contract defects liability period (three years post construction) and during the establishment period (5 years).

7.10.4 After this period, the longer-term maintenance and management responsibilities of landscape mitigation introduced as part of the Scheme would transfer to Highways England, the requirements of which would be set out within a HEMP prepared by the contractor, prior to handover of the Scheme. Such maintenance practices would ensure that all landscape establishes and achieves its intended environmental functions and objectives.

7.11 References

Ref 7.1 Highways England (2019) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 107 Landscape and visual effects

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