

Proposed Housing Tumbling Fields, Land off Tumbling Fields Lane Tiverton, Devon



Landscape and Visual Appraisal

June 2020 – rev a



Prepared by Foxford Design Ltd – Chartered Landscape Architects

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Issue – June 2020

a)-9 July 2020- site plan updated

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Executive Summary:

This report presents the results of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal carried out to assess the impact of a proposed development of new housing on land at Tumbling Fields Lane, in Tiverton, Devon. The appraisal has been commissioned by LiveWest to form part of a planning application for 22 dwellings and associated parking and infrastructure.

The report is a summary of the key findings following the site assessment and survey. Survey work was carried out in the Spring 2020. The report analyses and assessed the scale and character of the development with reference to the surrounding landscape in terms of landscape character and visual amenity. It considers the magnitude and assessed the importance of the effects of the development, and considers ways to mitigate adverse effects.

The site is located to the south side of Tiverton at around 62-71m above sea level, in a field laid to grass surrounded by hedges. The site is not covered by any landscape designations, though there is a scheduled monument, Cranmore Castle, to the south east.

The site lies in the Exe Valley Landscape Character Area, on the edge of the Town Landscape character type LCT7 and the River Valley slope and combs LCT 3G. The landscape around Tiverton is mainly farmland with hedges, copse and woods and has an overall well wooded appearance.

The Zone of Theoretical Visibility is mainly to the NE to SSW-of the site, however actual visibility is limited, due to the position of the site close to the town; the low lying position of the site within the valley at the confluence of the Rivers Exe and Lowman; the well wooded appearance and undulating nature of the landscape, and the predominantly farmed nature of landscape limiting public access.

Landscape and visual assessment baselines are established and the likely effect of the development on these assessed.

The landscape assessment judges that the Landscape effect of the development would be of moderate importance in terms of the site and its immediate surrounding the sites; of minimal importance in terms of Cranmore Castle; and of minimal importance to effect on the wider landscape character area.*

The visual assessment determined that views of the site from publically assessable area would either be longer distance views or close views on the footpath immediately adjacent to the site. The assessment judges that the visual effect of the development would be of minimal impact on the longer distance views, and be moderate importance on close views. In terms of Cranmore Castle it is judged that the overall visual effect of the development on the overall views to the Hillfort will be of minimal importance.

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1.0 Introduction

This report presents the results of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal carried out to assess the impact of a proposed development of new housing on land off of Tumbling Field Lane, Tiverton, Devon... The appraisal has been commissioned by LiveWest to form part of a planning application.

The report is a summary of the key findings following the site assessment and survey. Survey work was carried out in the 12th March, 29th May and 2nd June 2020. The appraisal analysed and assessed the scale and character of the development with reference to the surrounding landscape in terms of landscape character and visual amenity. It considers the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of the likely impact in order to assess the importance of the effects of the development and it considers ways to mitigate any adverse effects.

The statement is prepared by Claire Foxford, BSc, MA, and Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute on behalf of Foxford Design. The site assessments followed landscape and visual impact assessment methodology guidelines produced by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002)¹ and the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment (2013)² respectively, modified and refined to reflect the brief and nature of the site. This report is the summary of the key findings.

2.0 The Site - Location and Context

The site is situated off Tumbling Fields Lane on the south side of Tiverton Town Centre in Devon. (OS Grid reference SS 956 122). The proposed development site is within a field laid to pasture. The field is approximately 0.74 hectares.



Figure 1 – Site location and Arial Photo

3.0 Study Area – Landscape Designation and Local Planning policy

The site lies in the jurisdiction of Mid Devon District Council. There are not statutory landscape designations covering the site or surrounding area which would be influenced by the development. However to the South East lies Cranmore Castle, an iron age hillfort, which is a Scheduled monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 ³.

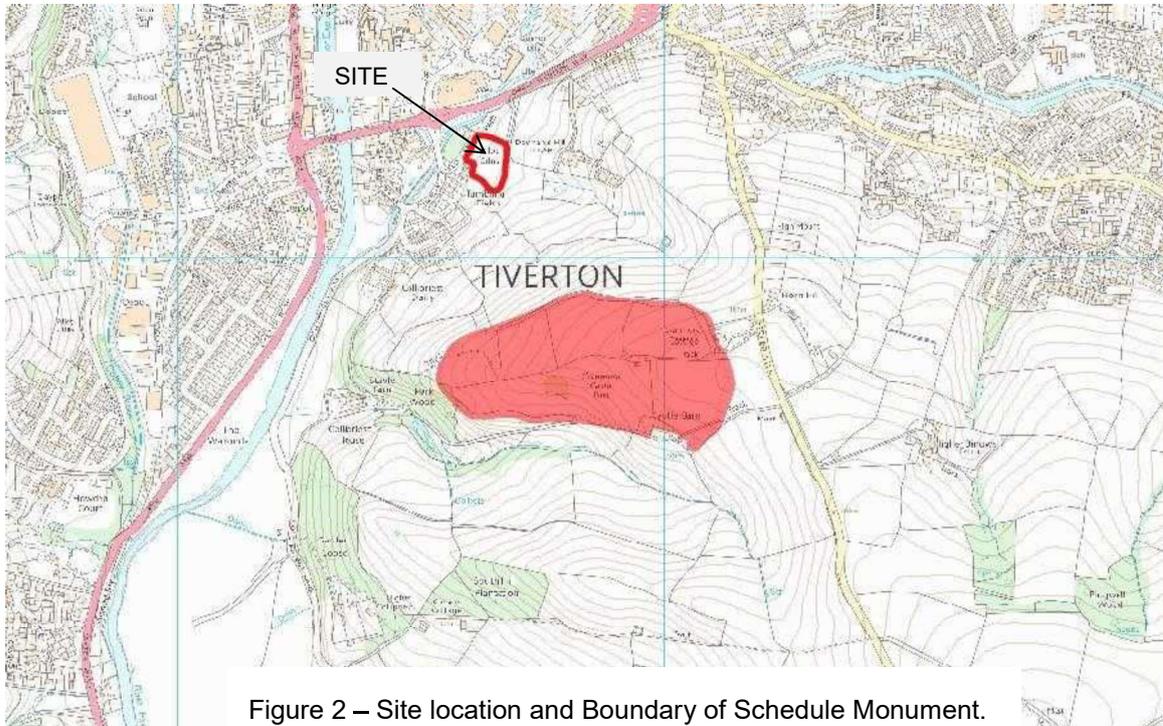


Figure 2 – Site location and Boundary of Schedule Monument.

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Local planning policy is set out in The Mid Devon Local Plan⁴ which comprises of three parts:- Part 1: Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 containing the overall spatial strategy and policies for the area; Part 2: Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (AIDPD), and Part 3: Development Management Policies (LP3), containing topic-based policies to guide specific development proposals.

In the Mid Devon Local Plan - Part 1 – Core Strategy ⁵ - the key relevant policy is COR2 Local Distinctiveness. The policy states Development should sustain the distinctive quality, character and diversity of Mid Devon's environmental assets through:-

- a) *high quality sustainable design which reinforces the character and legibility of Mid Devon's built environment and create attractive places*
- b) *the efficient use and conservation of natural resources of land, water and energy*
- c) *the preservation and enhancement of the distinctive qualities of Mid Devon's natural landscape, supporting opportunities identified within the landscape character areas.*

d) the protection and enhancement of designated sites of national and local biodiversity and geodiversity importance. Development will support opportunities for protecting and enhancing species populations and the restoration, recreation, enhancement and linking of habitats to contribute toward the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan targets, and

e) the preservation and enhancement of Mid Devon's cultural and historic environment, and the protection of sites, buildings, areas and features of recognised national and local importance.

In Mid Devon's Local Plan Part 3 Development Management Policies⁶. The key policy of relevance to general landscape and visual issues is Policy DM2: High Quality Design, This states that: "Designs of new development must be of high quality, based upon and demonstrating the following principles:

a) Clear understanding of the characteristics of the site, its wider context and the surrounding area;

b) Efficient and effective use of the site, having regard to criterion (a);

c) Positive contribution to local character including any heritage or biodiversity assets and the setting of heritage assets;

d) Creation of safe and accessible places...

e) Visually attractive places that are well integrated with surrounding buildings, streets and landscapes, and do not have an unacceptably adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of the proposed or neighbouring properties and uses, taking account of: i) Architecture ii) Siting, layout, scale and massing iii) Orientation and fenestration iv) Materials, landscaping and green infrastructure "

Other Mid Devon documents which include guidance and are relevant to the report include the Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment which is referred to later.

4.0 Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape Character Assessment studies produce an objective hierarchical classification of landscape. The national context was originally defined in 199, and subsequently regional and district classifications have considered these character areas in more detail. This hierarchy approach helps to maintain the understanding of landscape character within the wider landscape and provides a framework to assess development proposals. The following describe the landscape character, as defined at the varying scales, for the area around the site.

National Level

The national landscape character context is detailed in the Character of England Map ⁷. Devon has six main National Character Areas (NCA). The site is within the NCA 148 Devon Redlands⁸. Devon Redlands NCA 148 has *“a strong unified character. The underlying red sandstone and consequent red soils dominate the landscape through ploughed fields, cliffs and exposures. ... its fertility makes it the agricultural heart of Devon. ... Gently rolling hills that feature across the NCA support a network of hedgerows enclosing relatively small fields that are grazed or under arable cultivation. Hedgerow trees and small copses often give a wooded appearance to the hills. The valleys in between are flat bottomed and open into extensive flood plains across the central part of the Redlands. Here, more ‘shrubby’ hedgerows or fences enclose larger arable or grazed fields.”*

County / District Level Assessment

Devon County Council and its districts have carried out assessment to describe their areas. Devon County Council have assimilated the districts assessments into a countywide plan for Devon identifying its 68 Landscape Character Areas, as shown on their on line interactive map⁹. From the district assessments Devon County Council has also prepared a summary list of the 37 Devon Landscape Character Types, reflected in the assessments, along with the key characteristics of each.¹⁰ Landscape Character Types are distinct types of landscapes with similar physical, perceptual and aesthetic attributes.

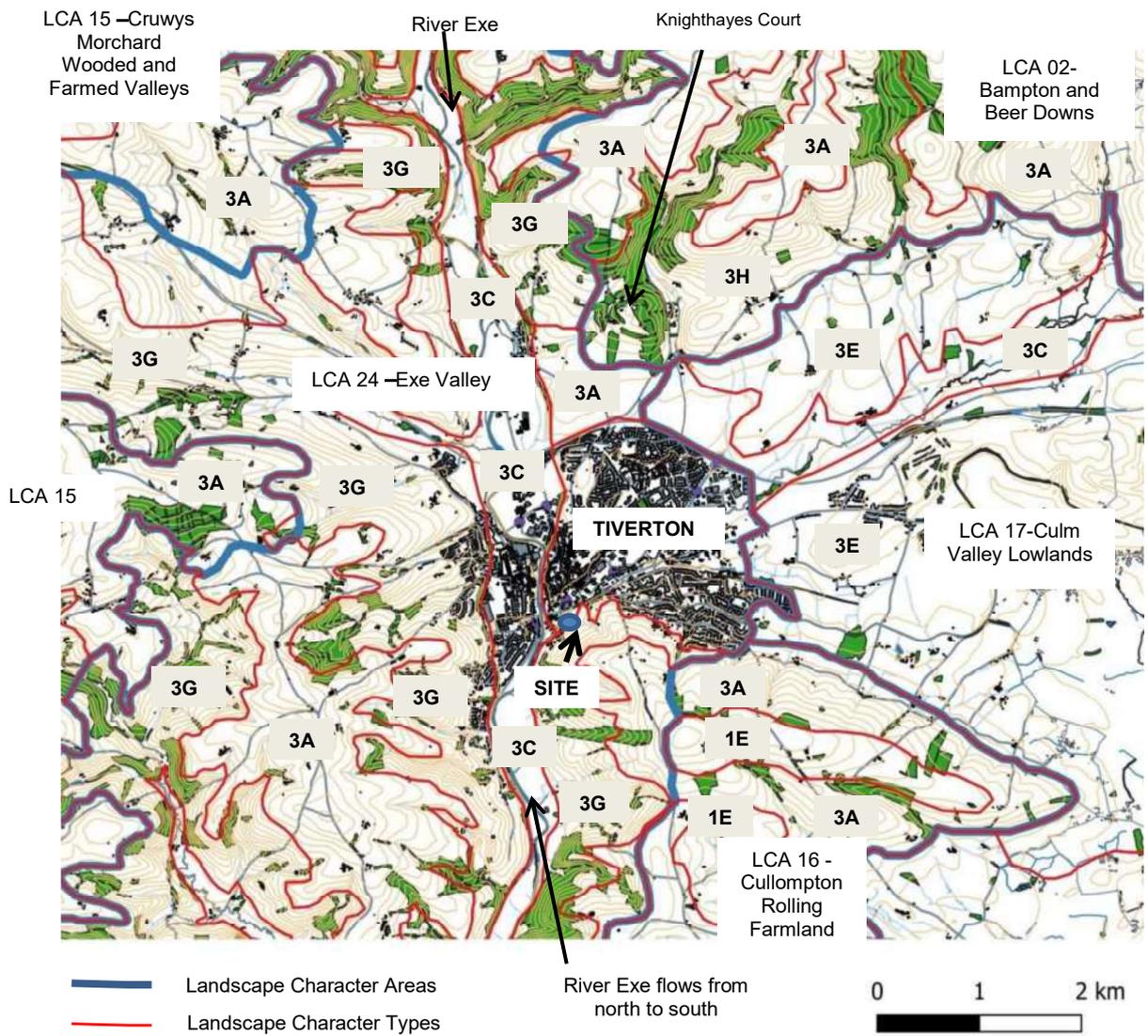
The site lies within Mid Devon District Council whose Landscape Character Assessment 2011 ¹¹ describes the areas landscape types and strategy guidelines. It is the Devon County and Mid Devon landscape assessment that are referred to in this assessment.

4.1 County / District Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Character Types (LCT)

The development site lies within the Exe Valley LCA (Devon County LCA 24⁹). The Exe Valley Landscape Character Area is influenced by the River Exe and its changing river patterns along its course. North of Tiverton deep and dramatic wooded valleys with oak woodland, give an enclosed feel, whilst gradually south of Tiverton the Exe valley landscape gradually opens up on its course to Exeter into a patchwork of fields, woodlands and copses with a gentler feel. Beyond the Exe Valley LCA the land rises to on the Western, South Eastern and North Eastern sides of Tiverton to higher ground characterised by hills and valleys, rich with hedges, woodlands and farmed landscape (the Cruwys Morchard Wooded Farmed Valley LCA15, Cullompton Rolling Hills LCA 16 and the Bampton and Beer Down LCA 02). Due East of Tiverton the flatter lowland of the Culm Valley Lowlands LCA 17 broadens out towards River Culm and the M5 Corridor. (Fig 3)

Landscape are further divided into landscape character types (LCT) ¹⁰, which are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character, sharing broadly similar combinations of geology, topography and drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use and settlement patterns and perceptual and aesthetic attributes. ² The Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment¹¹ uses this approach to define its area and gives strategic guidelines for each.

Tiverton has developed at the confluence of the River Exe and the River Lowman. The River Exe cuts through the valley floor (LCT3C) floors with the River Valley slopes and combs (LCT 3G) on each side then rising to Upper Farmed and Wooded slopes (LCT 3A). Tiverton has higher ground on all but the eastern side which open out into the Lowland Plains (LCT3E). (Figure 2).



Landscape Character Types

- LCT 1E – Wooded Ridges and Hilltops
- LCT 3A – Upper farmed and wooded valley slopes
- LCT 3C – Sparsely settled farmed Valley floors
- LCT 3E – Lowland Plains
- LCT 3G – River valley slopes and Combes
- LCT 3H – Secluded Valleys

Figure 2 – Landscape Character Areas and Landscape Character types.

Table 1– Summary of characteristics of Landscape Character Types

<p>The Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floor (LCT 3C) character is described as consisting of rivers or streams in relatively flat or gently sloping valley bottoms. Characteristics: Low lying flood plains; medium to small scale landscape characterised by relatively narrow strips of gently sloping or level land with a smooth surface topography; woodland pattern tends to be sinuous with scattered deciduous stands; pastoral landscape with locally improved grasslands within a mosaic of generally grazed to rough pasture; landscape has a higher degree of enclosure due to woods and hedges and rising ground as result there are reduced levels of visibility; sparsely populated.</p>
<p>River valley Slopes and Combes (LCT 3G) character is mainly located around the east and west of the River Exe and River Taw. These rivers have steep, wooded sides. In the upper areas there is a strong sense of enclosure with lush valley landscape and areas of ancient semi natural wood. Characterised by .a landscape of valley floors and valley sides strongly undulating with a variety of sloping land. Well wooded and pastoral landscape with regular dense hedges, frequent hedgerow trees, frequent deciduous woodlands often ancient woodlands and copses. The scale is small to medium and combined with the incised landform gives a relatively enclosed feel. High degree of visual containment.</p>
<p>Upper Farmed and wooded Slopes (LCT 3A) character is described steeply rolling landform associated with the environs of the Exe Valley and Taw Valley. Characterised by lush and fertile land with medium scale fields of permanent pasture. Deciduous woods and copse and hedgerow trees. Dense wide hedgerow including Beech hedgerows are well managed and bound medium to large scale enclosures. Landscape dominated by small scale farming. Dispersed settlement pattern, and narrow winding lanes, gives an intimate and intricate landscape with wider views often restricted by vegetation.</p>
<p>Secluded Valleys (LCT 3H) character characterised by a series of small to medium narrow valleys that extend from plateaux down over steep valley sides to low lying valley bottoms. Scrub and woodland dominate steep slopes both deciduous and coniferous, tree lined hedge bank and steep pastoral fields</p>
<p>Wooded Ridges and Hilltops (LCT 1E) character has a landscape that is high, rounded with narrow ridge tops laid to ley pasture, medium field sizes and hedging</p>
<p>The Lowland Plain (LCT 3E) character is described as an open low lying flat landscape, on red fertile soils, giving prosperous agricultural land. Typical of the Crediton area and around the River Culm. Characteristics – gently rolling from middle ground to lowland with smooth rounded hilltops;. primarily arable farmland with some areas of improved grassland;. mixed farming with a rotation of crops and ley; medium to large scale field patterns; fields divided by hedgerows and hedge banks; hedgerow trees are infrequent within type and isolated trees in field indicate positions of lost hedges; copse and discrete woodlands; roads are straight or winding characterised by narrow routes lined by traditional hedge banks.</p>

4.3 Local Landscape Character Baseline Survey – Study area around Development Site

The site lies on the southern side of Tiverton. It is shown on the Devon Interactive Map⁹ and Landscape Character assessments to lie within the Main Cities and Town Landscape Character type (LCT 7), and on the edge of the River Valley Slope and Combes LCT (LCT3G). This is probably because at the time of the Mid Devon Landscape Assessment and Mid Devon Local Framework Plan (adopted 2011) the field were shown on Ordnance Survey plan's as allotments gardens. Google's historic aerial photos of 2006 show the site as allotments but at some point between then and 2010 they must have fell into disuse and subsequently have returned to pasture that is seen today.

The site is approximately 0.74 hectare pasture, bound by native hedgerow on the north, south and eastern boundaries. (Figure 3 + Site Photos)) The eastern boundary has a high hedge bank and tall hedge with trees (Photo 17). The northern hedge is on a bank and the hedge is tall and bushy to the eastern end consisting of hazel and willow, but severely managed on the western end. (Photo 20, 21) The southern hedge is mainly overgrown willow on a low bank. (Photo 15) The western boundary along Tumbling Fields Lane consists of a planted semi natural symphoricarpus and privet hedge (Photo 16, 22) and a short section of native hedge to the rear of Hamlin Close. (Photo 13-14)

Approximately 75m from the site's northern boundary is the A396 Grand Western Way that skirts the southern edge of Tiverton Town Centre. The road is separated and screened from the site by a mature belt of tree and shrub planting. Immediately west of the site is the front of 2-3 storey town housing of Tumbling Fields Lane (Photos 2,3,5) and the rear of properties of Hamlin Close.(Photo 12) Beyond that more housing spreads to the south west of the site with newer housing on Tumbling Field and older housing associated with St Andrews Street South. The River Lowman separates these two areas of housing and a further large belt of planting between the roundabout of the A396 and the River Lowman provides further screening and natural feel to the area. (Figure 3)

Tiverton has developed around the confluence of the River Exe and River Lowman, the land rises north into the Town Centre and late C19th core of the settlement (around 70-75m above sea level). The town has also developed on the flatter areas out to west and northwards on the River Exe valley floor around the textile mill. Much of this land is of a similar level to the site (60-70m above sea level). Further to the West sides of Tiverton the town has developed up the valley sides of the River valley slopes and combes (LCT3G). The surrounding land around Tiverton rises to around over 200m and consists of mainly Upper Farmed and Wooded slopes Landscape Character Type. See Figure 5)

To the South and East of the site the land rises gradually River Valley Slope and Combes LCT (LCT3G towards Cranmore Castle. (See Figure 3, and 4) and then continues to rise to in the Upper Farmed and wooded slopes LCT 3A and then up to the Wooded Ridges and Hilltops (LCT 1E) to around 240m on the top., .These are steeply rolling landforms, with small to medium scale field patterns, with frequent deciduous hedgerow, trees and copse giving a well wooded appearance.. The land is well managed pastoral farmland landscape, and settlements are dispersed. Network of lane between hedge banks and strong field boundaries create an intricate

landscape, with little public access. The landscape has a higher degree of enclosure due to woods and hedges and rising ground as result there are reduced levels of visibility;.

The site lies close to the valley floor at around 61.5m, and rises gently east south east to around 72m at about 1:10. The Eastern boundary of the site is a tall native hedge on a 2m high hedge bank. From the site boundary the land form continues to rise, rising more steeply through a series of fields for about 260m to the northern edge of Cranmore Castle where it steepens significantly close to the castle at around 125-140m on the castle's northern tree-lined rampart. (Figure 3 Photo A)

Cranmore Castle is a large elliptical enclosure, encircling the hill approximately 550m long on its West/East axis rising from around 120m in the West to 173m in the East, and around 260m wide (approximately 14 hectares). It is defined by ramparts (wide earth mounds) on all sides, with the north on the boundary associated with the development site the rampart sits above a steep natural scarp, previously described.

The geology and landform associated with the confluence of the River Exe and Lowman has shaped the development of Tiverton from the early settlements from early bronze and Iron Age around Cranmore Castle to present settlement patterns. The area is intrinsically shaped by man.

Human activity in the area has dated from early Bronze Age. Cranmore Hillfort dominated a strategic defensible location at the confluence of the Exe and Lowman. Historic characterisation maps⁹ indicate that the slopes on the northern side of the Castle were probably originally enclosed with hedge banks in later middle ages, whilst the lower ground around the Rivers Lowman and Exe were water meadows. The lower slopes below the castle around Tumbling Fields are indicated as being post medieval orchard, whilst the site, located in a field identified as Chums Meadow, is likely to have been laid out and enclosed later in the C18th and C19th century.

The landscape characters in the LCT along the Exe valley and around Tiverton are diverse and good quality. The landscape has an intricate pattern of small-medium scaled field mainly laid to pasture with hedges and with frequent trees, woodland and copses. There are significant tree planting associated with the valley sides of the River Exe, the creation of the Grand Western Way, and The North Devon link Road running to the North of the Town, adding to the well wooded appearance.

Figure 3

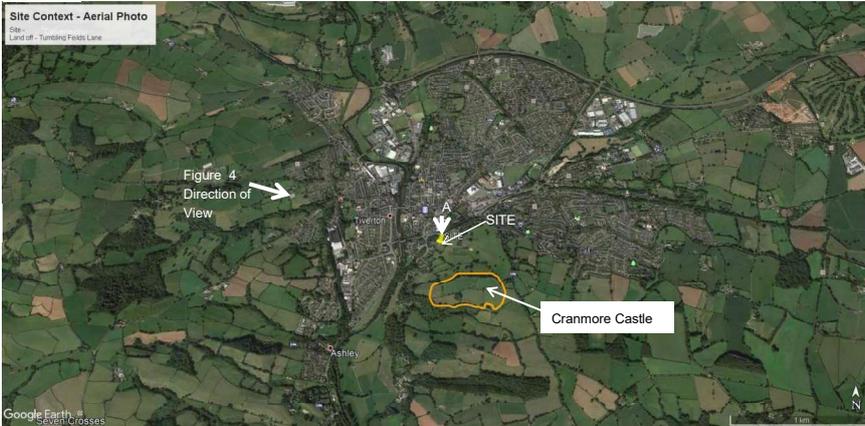


Figure 3 – Aerial Photo (Left) - showing landscape pattern and vegetation around the site and Tiverton and location of Cranmore Castle Schedule Monument. ...

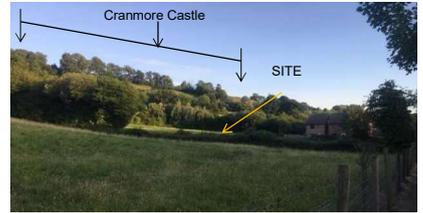


Photo A – View looking across the site to Cranmore Castle – Indicating the section of the scheduled monument visible from the site, namely the north western boundary which is predominantly tree lined.

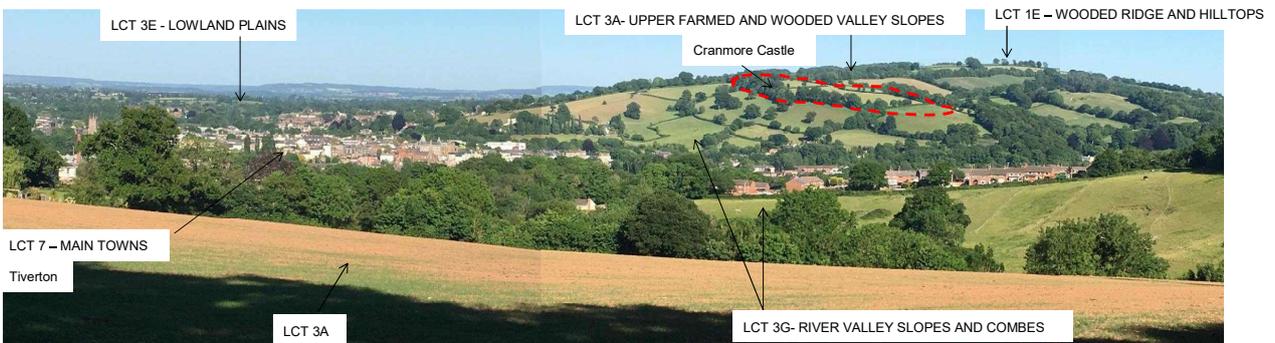


Figure 4 - Typical landscape as seen around the site. Tiverton lying in the valley, with the River Exe flowing through the sparsely settled farmed valley floor in the valley bottom LCT3C, with LCT 3G River valley slopes and Combes on the lower slopes rising to Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes on higher ground either side LCT 3A and then further to the Wooded Ridges and hilltops LCT 1E. The landscape on the edge of Tiverton is an intricate pattern of small-medium scaled pastures enclosed with hedges and with frequent trees, woodland and copses, giving a wooded appearance.



Figure 5- Character of the LCT 3A – Upper Farmed and Wooded Slopes, LCT 3H- Secluded Valleys 3 G – River Valley Slopes and Combes – Characterised by small to medium mainly pastoral fields with strong network of hedges, copses and woodlands , with network of narrow winding lanes with hedges on hedge banks. Creating an intimate complex landscape with limited view.



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4



PHOTO 5



PHOTO 6



PHOTO 7



PHOTO 8

SITE AND SITE CONTEXT PHOTOS

- PHOTO 1 – Looking east towards Hamlin Close and Tumbling Fields Lane
- PHOTO 2 – Looking north east along Tumbling Fields Lane
- PHOTO 3 – Looking south west along Tumbling Fields footpath link.
- PHOTO 4 – Properties on Tumbling Fields Lane
- PHOTO 5 – Properties on Tumbling Fields Lane – overlooking the site
- PHOTO 6 – Site's north west boundary adjacent to Tumbling Fields Lane .
- PHOTO 7 – Hamlin Close – the proposed route for the developments access.
- PHOTO 8 – Hamlin Close - Proposed new Access



PHOTO 9



PHOTO 10



PHOTO 11



PHOTO 12



PHOTO 13



PHOTO 14



PHOTO 15

SITE AND SITE CONTEXT PHOTOS

- PHOTO 9 – Site – looking from western side. Towards Tumbling Fields Lane .
- PHOTO 10 – Site – Looking SW to proposed new access
- PHOTO 11 – Site – Looking SW to proposed new access
- PHOTO 12 – Site Rear of properties Hamlin Close .
- PHOTO 13 - Site's W boundary with Hamlin Close .
- PHOTO 14 – Site's W boundary with Hamlin Close
- PHOTO 15 - Site's Southern boundary



PHOTO 16



PHOTO 17



PHOTO 18



PHOTO 19

SITE AND SITE CONTEXT PHOTOS

PHOTO 16 – Sites Eastern Boundary, looking towards southern boundary .

PHOTO 17 – Sites Eastern Boundary looking North

PHOTO 18 – Stream / Ditch inlet on Eastern Boundary

PHOTO 19 – Stream Ditch along Northern Hedge

PHOTO 20 - Northern Boundary of site .

PHOTO 21 – Site side of North West boundary Hedge alongside Tumbling Fields Lane



PHOTO 20



PHOTO 21



PHOTO 22

5.0 Visual Assessment.

The visual analysis was carried out by a combination of desktop study (including running a computer program to generate a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)) and a field assessment. The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was generated on our behalf by Swan Paul Partnership using WindPro version 3.1 software for a 5 km radius based on the location and height of the new dwellings ranging in 7.5-9m in height, thereby giving a Ridge height of between 73.5 and 77.4 m above sea level.

The software used to generate the ZTV uses topographical data only and does not take into account the impact on visibility resulting from vegetation cover or the impact of buildings. Field work was therefore undertaken to assess the actual visibility. Using the ZTV (Figure 6) and Ordnance Survey Explorer map 114 data (1:25000 scale), publically accessible areas were identified and the initial extent of the field survey was established. The field work was undertaken in Spring 2020.

As part of the assessment the visual receptors were identified. Visual receptors are “the different groups of people who may experience views of the development ”² The ZTV, baseline desk study and site visit were used to identify those receptor groups most likely to be affected by changes in views and visual amenity arising from the development. This includes people living in, using and passing through the area, and these are weighted in terms of their sensitivity to the effect.

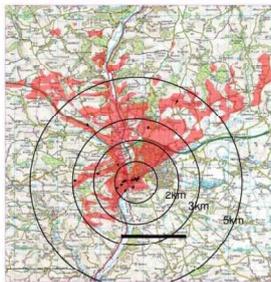
By driving and walking around the area the visual field survey established the nature and extent of the views of the development on the surrounding receptors. See Table 2, Fig 6 and photos View 1-17. The views were assessed in terms of the level and effect of the visual impact, determined by considering the nature of the impact, level of importance, distance between viewpoint and the site and the magnitude and sensitivity of the receptors. From these the overall effect of the Visual Impact of the development can be considered.

5.1 Actual Visibility and key visual receptors

The actual visibility of the site from publically accessible areas is limited due to .

- The position of the site close to the southern edge of Tiverton Town Centre, so the built form of Tiverton restricts views of the site
- The low lying nature of the site - meaning other buildings and trees are screening the site from low lying areas. .
- The landscape character with its intricate nature and well wooded appearance –restrict, break up views and provide visually diverse views.
- Rural landscape and narrow winding country lanes
- Majority of land is private farmland, limiting public access to public footpaths.

The key visual receptors initially considered as likely to experience the development are identified as local people and residents, walkers using public rights of way, car drivers, landowners and farm workers, and visitors to Knightshayes Court.



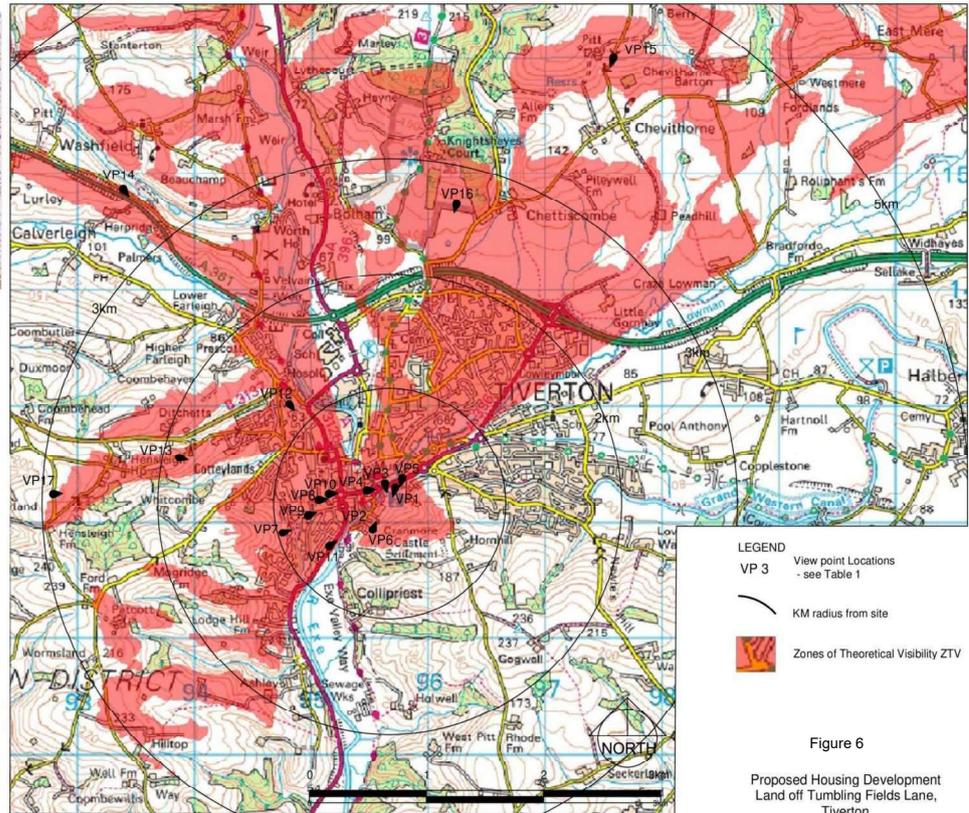
ZTV - WIDER CONTEXT

The ZTVs were generated by Swan Paul Partnership Ltd using WindPRO, Version 3.3 software. The ZTV was produced on the 06/03/2020 using grid references across the site with the following coordinates:

L 295624	N 112212	H/L 6.1	Height 8.4m
E295628	N 112217	FFL 6.5	Height 9m
L 295633	N 112223	FFL 6.5	Height 9m
L 295639	N 112322	FFL 6.5	Height 7.5m
L 295644	N 11241	H/L 6.3	Height 8m
L 295656	N 112209	H/L 6.7	Height 8.4m
C 295663	N 112207	FFL 6.8	Height 9m
E295667	N 112204	FFL 6.8	Height 7.8m
E295665	N 112193	FFL 6.8	Height 8.2m
E295662	N 112189	FFL 6.8	Height 9m
E295666	N 112182	FFL 6.8	Height 9m
E295663	N 112177	FFL 6.4	Height 7.8m
E295619	N 112180	FFL 6.6	Height 8.1m
E295627	N 112177	FFL 6.7	Height 7.4m
E295633	N 112173	H/L 6.6	Height 9m
E295640	N 112169	FFL 6.0	Height 9m
E295645	N 112166	FFL 6.4	Height 9m

Housing height ranging from 7.4m to 9m has been used in accordance of the different house types and the provided finished floor levels.

1.5m eye level height criteria for calculation of the ZTVs and for views within 5km radius.



LEGEND
 VP 3 View point Locations - see Table 1
 — KM radius from site
 Zones of Theoretical Visibility ZTV

Figure 6

Proposed Housing Development
 Land off Tumbling Fields Lane,
 Tiverton.

ZTV and viewpoints

ZTV produced by Windpro software by Swan Paul Partnership Ltd who holds the licence and have given Foxford Design Ltd - Chartered Landscape Architects permission to use the output



VIEWPOINT 1 – View looking SW towards site from public footpath



VIEWPOINT 2 – View looking towards Hamlin Close



VIEWPOINT 3 – View Looking S towards site from A396 - Grand Western



VIEWPOINT 4 – Looking E from footbridge over A396 that links St Andrews Street North and South



VIEWPOINT 5 – Looking SW along A396 in the direction of the Site



VIEWPOINT 6 – Looking North from Little Silver

VIEWPOINTS 1-6 – Visual Assessment – see table 1



VIEWPOINT 7— From Turner Rise off Palmerston Park looking NE



VIEWPOINT 8— From Broad Lane looking East



VIEWPOINT 9— From Howden Lane looking East



VIEWPOINT 10— Near Roundabout Exeter Road / Broad Lane looking East



VIEWPOINT 11— From A396 Exeter Road looking NE on the approach to Tiverton

VIEWPOINTS 7-11 – Visual Assessment – see table 1



VIEWPOINT 12 – From Derrick Road looking SW



VIEWPOINT13 – From Gateway on Hensleigh Road looking ESE



VIEWPOINT 14 – View looking SE from Gateway on Long Lane.



VIEWPOINT 15 – From gateway looking SSW from lane North of Chevithorne



VIEWPOINT 16 – From Fields on Knightshayes Estate looking South



VIEWPOINT 17 – View from Gateway on Farmland to W of Site and Exe Valley

VIEWPOINTS 13-17 – Visual Assessment – see table 1

Table 2 - Viewpoints – Visual Analysis.

Refer to photos Views 1-12

View point Reference	Description	Grid Reference of viewpoint	Level of Importance	Degree of visibility of the Development	Distance of dev from viewpoint	Nature of Effect			Receptor of view	Magnitude of receptors number	Importance
SITE Height 59-70m		SS 956 122									
VIEW 1 Height 60m	View looking SW towards site from public footpath near Tumbling Field Lane	SS 956 122	Local	View of Site over Northern boundary	Near 50m	A	D	P	Locals /Local Residents	small	Moderate/ Minor
VIEW 2 Height 59m	View looking towards Hamlin Close	SS 955 121	Local	Site behind Hamlin Close –Ridge of new houses just seen	Near 60m	A	D	P	Locals /Local Residents	small	Minor
VIEW 3 Height 60m	View Looking S towards site from A396 - Grand Western Way	SS 956 123	Local	Glimpse of site through gap in road side screen planting.	Near 75m	A	D	P	Road Users/Locals	small	Minor
VIEW 4 Height 60m	Looking E from footbridge over A396 that links St Andrews Street North and South	SS 954 122	Local	Urban Form and Trees screen site	Near 195m	NONE			Locals	small	-----
VIEW 5 Height 60m	Looking SW along A396 in the direction of the Site	SS 956 123	Local	Roadside Planting screens views	Near 90m	NONE			Road Users/Locals	small	-----
VIEW 6 Height 83m	Looking North from Little Silver	SS 955120	Local	Views down towards site partially screened by buildings and trees	Near 220m	A	D	P	Local Residents	Very small	Minor

View point Reference	Description	Grid Reference of viewpoint	Level of Importance	Degree of visibility of the Development	Distance of dev from viewpoint	Nature of Effect			Receptor of view	Magnitude of receptors number	Importance
SITE Height 59-70m		SS 956 122									
VIEW 7 Height 84m	From Turner Rise off Palmerston Park looking NE	SS 948 119	Local	Belt of Woodland and trees and building near site form screening – Rooves may be visible	Long 900m	A	D	P	Local Residents	Very small	Minimal
VIEW 8 Height 60m	From Broad Lane looking East	SS 950 122	Local	Urban Form and Trees screen site	Medium 530m	NONE			Local Residents	small	-----
VIEW 9 Height 58m	From Howden Lane looking East	SS 949 121	Local	Urban Form screens site	Medium 640m	NONE			Local Residents	small	-----
VIEW 10 Height 60m	Near Roundabout Exeter Road / Broad Lane looking East	SS 952 122	Local	Urban Form and Trees screen site	Medium 420m	NONE			Road Users /Locals	medium	-----
VIEW 11 Height 57m	From A396 Exeter Road looking NE on the approach to Tiverton	SS 951 118	Local	View of site screen by along River Exe	Medium 640m	NONE			Road Users/Locals	medium	-----
VIEW 12 Height 71m	From Derrick Road looking SW	SS 948 130	Local	Urban Form screens site – Rooves may just be visible	Far 1.2km	A	D	P	Local Residents	Very small	Minimal
VIEW 13 Height 147m	From Gateway on Hensleigh Road looking ESE	SS 948 130	Local	Partial view of Site – close to Urban form of Tiverton and Trees View	Far 1.7km	A	D	P	Local Landowners	Very small	Minimal

View point Reference	Description	Grid Reference of viewpoint	Level of Importance	Degree of visibility of the Development	Distance of dev from viewpoint	Nature of Effect			Receptor of view	Magnitude of receptors number	Importance
SITE Height 59-70m		SS 956 122									
VIEW 14 Height 122m	View looking SE from Gateway on Long Lane	SS 942 143	Local	Urban Form and Trees screen site. Rooves may just be seen	Far 2.6km	A	D	P	Local Landowners	Very small	Minimal
VIEW 15 Height 188m	From gateway looking SSW from lane North of Chevithorne	SS 975 159	Local	Site beyond urban form of Tiverton and discernible	Far 4km	NONE			Local Landowners	Very small	-----
VIEW 16 Height 110m	From fields on Knightshayes Estate looking South	SS 952 122	Local	Urban Form and Trees screen site	Far 2.5km	NONE			Visitors /Locals	small	-----
VIEW 17 Height 235m	View from Gateway on Farmland to W of Site and Exe Valley	SS 929 122	Local	Partial view of Site – close to Urban form of Tiverton and Trees	Far 2.7km	A	D	P	Local Landowners	Very small	Minimal

Distance of development from viewport – Near = <250m, Medium Distance = 250-750m, Long Distance = 750-1000m, Far = >1km

Nature of effect – A=Adverse, N=Neutral, B=Beneficial, D=Direct effect, I=Indirect effect, P=Permanent, T= Temporary

Magnitude of receptors – numbers of receptors, very small, small, medium, large, very large, extensive.

Importance – insignificant, minor, mod= moderate, major, severe, -

The Importance criteria used within the visual assessment is.

SEVERE – An Adverse Landscape or Visual Effects which represents a key factor in the decision-making process. These effects directly affect the landscape or visual quality of the National Park. Typically, mitigation measures are unlikely to remove such effects. **MAJOR** - Landscape or Visual Effects which will be important to the perception of the National Park and could have an effect on the visual or landscape character of an area. Mitigation measures and detailed design work are unlikely to remove all of the effects upon the affected communities or interests. **MODERATE** - Landscape or Visual Effects which will be experienced at the district or local scale, but are not likely to be key decision-making issues. Mitigation and detailed design may ameliorate or enhance some of the consequences. Some residual effects will arise. **MINOR** - Landscape or Visual Effects which will have little overall impact on the landscape and visual character of the area. These effects may be raised as local issues but are unlikely to be of importance in the decision-making process. Nevertheless they are of relevance in enhancing the design of the project and consideration of mitigation measures. **MINIMAL/INSIGNIFICANT** - No effect or effect which is beneath the level of perception

6.0 Development Proposals

The proposed development is for 22 affordable residential dwellings, consisting of 4 blocks of 2 storey dwellings, including a mix of 1 bed apartment, and 2 and 3 bed houses all with associated parking set around a shared surface road layout. The road will enter the site from Hamlin Close through the existing boundary and swing right and rise up the slope to the houses. . Figure 7 shows the site layout

The hedge boundaries on the North, East, South will be retained along with the majority of the western hedge. The proposals retain a landscaped buffer around the margins of the site to provide ecological benefits. An open space is proposed at the North Western side which will be the location for the water attenuation tanks. . Refer to the Design and Assess statement and plans accompanying the application for details of the development for further details.



Figure 7 – Architects Site Plan – P1747 – 02

7.0 Potential Effect

From the landscape and visual baseline conditions, the effects the development will have on these are considered. Whilst related, the visual and landscape components are two different considerations and therefore the impact of the development on each is assessed separately.

In order to assess the landscape and visual effect of a development the sensitivity of the receptor to change (i.e. the designated areas or landscape character areas or people) and the magnitude of the likely effect on them are assessed. Sensitivity is a combination of susceptibility to change of the landscape receptor or visual receptors and the perceived value of the receptor.

Susceptibility indicates “the ability of the defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation”². Sensitivity is then combined with the magnitude of the likely effects of the development (based on its scale (amount of alteration to the baseline situation), duration and extent (indicates the geographic area or extent of view over which the effect will be felt).

Combining the sensitivity and magnitude gives the overall level of importance of the effect.

7.1 Potential Effect of the development on the baseline condition

The site and its surrounding are not cover by any landscape designations, and is outside of Tiverton’s Conservation Area boundary. However Cranmore Castle, a univallate hillfort and schedule monument is situated to the south / south east of the site.

The Site lies on the edge of Tiverton Town LCT 7 and the River valley slopes and Combes LCT3G. This landscape has a very good quality and high scenic value in particular to the SE and S of the site and a rich and intricate character..

The proposed development is on a small field laid to grass (approx.0.74 hectares), which is surround on the north, east and south by native hedges with trees. The proposals will change this pastoral field to an area of residential housing with associated road, parking and infrastructure. Approximately 0.5 hectares of the site will become buildings, road, parking and gardens, whilst the remainder will be open space (0.1 hectares in the NW), the retained boundary hedges and the ecological buffer to them. The site will retain its enclosed nature, with a tall hedge boundary to the north east, east, and south. The field is on the edge of Tiverton on low lying land around 62-71m above sea level. The hedge to the East of the site continues north to meet the town by pass, this hedge is not affected by the development and provides a strong landscape feature separating the site from the larger pastoral fields and farmland to the East of the site.

Several trees and areas of vegetation will be removed as part of the development to form the site entrance and part of two areas of existing young native tree and shrub planting in the NE and SE corners of the site will be removed to accommodate the proposals. The NW corner will have an attenuation tank buried beneath the ground, however due to drainage requirements and outlet levels the top of the tank will be around 63.6m. Therefore this section of open space will be raised. The original gate access into the field will be removed and a new pedestrian access to Tumbling Fields Lane added.

The field slopes at around 1:10 from about 62.3m and the new access road will rise up the slope to the housing and level areas of parking. At the top of the site these will be dug into the existing ground to keep ridge heights down. Ridge heights across the site will be between 73.5 on the lower part of the site and 77.4m above sea level on the higher part. The open space will create a buffer between the existing 2-3 storey town houses on Tumbling Field Lane and the new properties, however the new properties are at around 65.57 FFL. A new hedge will be planted to the front of the dwelling to soften the appearance of the base of the houses.

The proposed development will have a permanent adverse effect, placing housing into a green field area. However the boundary trees and vegetation will be retained. There will be alteration to landscape character and the post development baseline situation will be noticeably changed. The magnitude of the effect of the development and degree of change exhibited on the landscape or view will vary within the context it is experienced. The level of importance of the landscape and visual effect as a result of the development is therefore considered in the following sections in terms of their sensitivity and magnitude.

When considering the effect of the development on the landscape particular consideration is given to the physical change to the fabric / structure of the landscape; the integration of a development to the surrounding landscape pattern and structure; and the degree to which opportunities to preserve or enhance character are taken. When considering the effects of the development on the view the magnitude and sensitivity of the visual receptors are considered.

7.1.1 Landscape Effect – Impact of the development on the site and immediate surroundings.

The development site is situated in a small sized field enclosed by hedges and trees on the edge of Tiverton. Being close to Tiverton and low in the valley allows for a natural extension of the Town. The main landscape features characteristic of the area, hedges and trees around the edge of the site will be retained, thereby retaining the structure of the landscape pattern. Within the site ecological margins are provided to buffer the development's built form from these features to lessen pressure on them, giving greater assurance to their long term retention as broad landscape features. The residential development will therefore be built into the existing landscape pattern on a parcel of land located in an area which provides a natural extension of the Town.

The area is not covered by landscape designations and therefore valued at the community level and the location would allow the landscape to accommodate the development without undue landscape consequences so a Medium- Low landscape sensitivity is judged for the site.

The development will result in a permanent change of 0.5 hectares of a 0.74 hectare field to housing, but the existing landscape hedges to the north south and east will not be affected. The scale of the landscape effect is judged as medium, as there will be partial alteration to key features and characteristics giving a noticeable change, but the extent is limited, therefore overall the magnitude of the effect is judged as low. Combined with the medium-low sensitivity of the area, the overall landscape effect of the development on its immediate surroundings is considered to be of moderate importance. This should not preclude development but high quality buildings and mitigation measures are important to generate an acceptable scheme to fit into the context of the area.

7.1.2 Landscape Effect – Impact of the development on Cranmore Castle..

When considering the landscape impact of the development on Cranmore Castle, the scale of the development is less than 6% the size of the Hillfort. The development is located on low lying land between 62-71m above sea level, whilst the Hillfort ramparts closest to the site are around 130-140m above sea level, at a distance of 260m.. The land rises gently from the proposed site and then more steeply to the scarp and the earth ramparts on the northern edge of the Hillfort. The development lies in fields that were historically enclosed later than the higher slopes (i.e. C18th and C19th rather than medieval). It is therefore considered that the effect of the development in terms of landscape would have no undue consequences on the Hillfort and whilst having a national historic value, the magnitude of the effect is low and will be of minimal importance. Considering the adjacent housings relationship to the Hillfort, the existing housing around Little Silver is at around 85m above sea level and only 150m from the Hillfort ramparts which are only 120m above sea level at that point and so nearer to the Hillfort than the proposed development.

7.1.3 Landscape Effect – Impact of the development on the wider landscape.

When considering the impact of the development on the wider Landscape Character of the area, the scale of the development and the position close to the edge of Tiverton means the extent of the landscape effect on the wider LCA and LCT will be so small as to be of minimal importance.

7.2 Visual Effect

Visual impact assessments consider the nature and extent of the impact of a development on a view combine with the nature of the visual receptors to give a level of importance. (Table 2) Visual Assessments concentrates on public views, from publically accessible areas. The visual analysis identified the views and direction of views from which the development will be perceived.

Due to the sites location, near the confluence of the Rivers Exe and Lowman within a valley setting, with high ground rising steeply above, the Zone of Theoretical Visibility generated is mainly a scattered area to the NE to SSW of the site. The character of the landscape with strong pattern of field enclosure by hedges is a predominantly farmed landscape, the wooded valley of the River Exe, and the screen planting associated with North Devon Link Road and Grand Western Way and the urban form of Tiverton means actual view point from publicly accessible areas are limited.

Most views are either immediately adjacent to the site or from higher ground (above 100m above sea level) at distance from the site. With high ground and longer distances the site a progressively smaller element within the wider view and so as the distance increases the potential for a visual effect diminishes. This is especially so in this area where the mosaic of elements and landform within the view are complex and diverse, as experience in this area..

Within the study area views from public rights of way access is limited to narrow winding roads and footpath and the visual receptors were assessed a being local people using footpaths, land owners or agricultural workers.

Where longer distance views are achieved the magnitude of the development is negligible, and the site seen in the context of Tiverton. Vegetation often significantly screens the site and therefore only some roof top may be seen, if at all. Therefore the longer distance views of the site are judged as of minimal importance.

The main visual effect will be experienced by locals using the footpath link north of the site and the residents of the 2-3 storey town houses opposite the site on Tumbling Fields Lane and those in Hamlin Close. Visual Assessment focuses on views from publically accessible areas, rather than private dwellings, however it is acknowledged that the residents of Tumbling Fields Lane are the main visual receptors. The view is limited to a very small number of visual receptors who would have a High –Medium sensitivity and the magnitude of the change of the view is judged as medium. So in visual assessment terms the importance of the visual effect of the development, on those close to the development, though from private areas is judged as of moderate importance.

The development will have an impact on the view to Cranmore Castle from the viewpoints close to the development identified in the study (Viewpoint 1 / Photo A p.13). However, being elevated and visible from a wide area around Tiverton it is judged that the magnitude of this visual impact due to the development is small in terms of the overall views of the Hillfort from the surrounding areas and so of minimal importance.

There may be some views from individual properties or views from farmland scattered through the wider study area, however this report focuses on only publically accessible areas. However it is recognised that there may be some places where residents will see the change from their homes, but whilst having a medium-high visual sensitivity, they will be small numbers and often the development will be a small element in a wider view, and so the effect is judged as minor.

7.3 Elements of the development:

The quality of the landscape surrounding the area is very good. The assessment of landscape and visual effect has considered the scale of the development. However the appearance of the buildings in terms of colour and materials used and the design approach to layout and planting are fundamental to how well the development can integrate into the surroundings.

External lighting has an effect on the landscape and visual amenity but has not been assessed in this report. Street lighting will be required by the highways authority. Being situated on the edge of the town and next to the countryside the site lighting needs to be sensitively designed to control and reduce local light pollution and overspill into the countryside and adjacent housing. The CPRE data for light pollution and dark skies indicates night light level of around 16-32 (nanowatts/cm²/sr) within the centre of Tiverton lessening to 16-18 on the edges around Tumbling Fields, with the farmland near Cranmore Castle at 2-4.

8.0 Mitigation and Enhancement

Following the assessment of the landscape and visual effect of the proposed housing, mitigation and enhancement measures are recommended. The following items are recommended to integrate the development into the local landscape:

1. Design in keeping with the local character
 - a) Retain existing hedges and tree lined boundaries and manage for the long term benefit of, wildlife and screening. Ideally the whole section of the northern boundary should be allowed to grow up as tall hedges to screen the development from the north, however as the hedge is not owned by the applicant, planting on the inner hedge bank of native trees and shrubs is recommended to introduce taller planting. The southern boundary hedgerow should be coppice, and new transplants added for diversify in order to regenerate the hedges structure.
 - b) Provide a landscape buffer between the houses and the hedges, and manage for the benefit of wildlife to lessen the pressures on the hedges.
 - c) Contour the open space in as natural a manner as possible around the surface water storage.
 - d) Create diversity in the grass and flora in the open spaces and buffer zone using summer flowering meadows, tussocky grassland or hedgerow species mixes
 - e) Provide hedge or climbers on mesh or trellis fencing to selected garden boundary to soften the site's internal boundaries.
 - f) Provide planting on the western boundary with Tumbling Field Lane to soften/ screen the visual impact of the new road – where possible.
 - g) Hard landscaping - lessen the overall impact of the road by using different materials
 - h) Fencing – Soften the impact of fencing, using a mix of 1.5m close board fencing with 0.3m trellis above; trellis to the front of 1.8m high close board fences to allow climber to grow, and mesh garden fencing between gardens and natural boundaries.
2. Use native species that are in keeping with the local character
 - a) Plant tree and shrub species typical of the area (e.g. oak, hawthorn, alder, hazel, field maple, beech, rowan, holly, elder, willow, dogwood, spindle, wild privet, wild cherry, crab apple and holly) in order to integrate with the existing landscape and ecology, using trees and shrub nursery stock of local provenance. Strength areas where Ash is present to future proof against ash die back disease.
 - b) Where native species are less practical close to houses use planting that provides a naturalistic effect.
3. Adopt a management regime for the boundary hedges that allows those on the North, South and East boundary to grow tall and bushy to maximise the screening effect and value for wildlife. Sides of hedges to be trimmed back lightly outside of nesting period and to allow maximum flowering and fruiting effect of plants for wildlife. (Jan- Feb) Carryout long term maintenance of hedges in a phased approach to ensure coverage is maintained.
4. Plant and seed hedges and hedge banks at the earliest opportunity during the construction process in the correct season once formed, to allow establishment

5. Design lighting sensitively with careful consideration to avoid unnecessary light pollution or spillage into the hedges, adjacent fields and properties.

9.0 Temporary effect

In terms of landscape and visual impact there will be a temporary effect during construction works in the grading, groundwork and construction and hedgerow maintenance. The construction programme and operations should minimise the extent and duration of disturbance. Landscaping and remediation should be implemented at the earliest opportunities to allow time to establish and regenerate.

10.0 Residual effect

The mitigation and enhancement measures identified in section 8 include landscaping and planting items. When incorporating any soft landscape measures it is the established vegetation and planting that will have the positive benefits. There will be a delay before new woody vegetation establishes and provide the effect intended to fully integrate the development into the landscape. Management then needs to be carried out to secure the design intent.

The tree and shrub planting enhancement cannot be expected to have a beneficial effect or major impact for at least 5-8 years. There will be therefore an initial adverse residual effect of the development in landscape and visual terms until this time. This effect is temporary and the level of importance will progressively reduce over time. With the planting becoming a beneficial effect to the landscape. Planting, whilst including some native evergreen species, will be mainly deciduous in character, in keeping with the local character of the area and therefore there will be a reduction in the extent of screening achieved in the winter months, however this is typical of existing features in the area.

11.0 Summary and Conclusion

The site is located to the south side of Tiverton at around 62-71m above sea level, in a field laid to grass surrounded by hedges. The site is not covered by any landscape designations, though there is a scheduled monument, Cranmore Castle, to the south east.

The site lies in the Exe Valley Landscape Character Area, on the edge of the town Landscape character type LCT7 and the River Valley slope and combes LCT 3G. The landscape has a rich pattern of hedges, copse and woods, associated with the river valley, combes and farmland giving an overall well wooded appearance.

The Zone of Theoretical Visibility, the area in which the site can be seen based on topographical data only is mainly to the NE to SSW-of the site. However actual visibility is limited, due to the position of the site close to the town; the low lying position of the site within the valley at the confluence of the Rivers Exe and Lowman; the well wooded appearance and undulating nature of the landscape, and the predominantly farmed nature of landscape limiting public access.

The Landscape and visual assessment established the baseline situation from which the likely effect of the development were assessed

The landscape assessment judges that the Landscape impact of the development would be: of moderate importance when considering the landscape of the site and its immediate; it would of minimal importance in terms of the landscape effect on Cranmore Castle; and of minimal importance to its effect on the wider landscape character area.

The visual assessment determined that views of the site from publically assessable areas would either be longer distance views or close views immediately adjacent to the development site. It is recognise that views from individual properties may occur scattered through Zone of Theoretical visibility, however these are not assessed in this study. The assessment judges that the visual effect of the development would have minimal effect on the longer distance views, and moderate importance on close views. In terms of views to Cranmore Castle it is judged that the overall visual effect from the development on overall views to the Hillfort will be of minimal importance, though there is a moderate effect in terms of the close views near to the site.

Whilst the report identifies landscape and visual effects experienced near to the site with moderate importance these are ones experienced at a very local scale and are not key decision-making issues. Mitigation and detailed design can ameliorate some of the consequences, but the development of housing means residual effects will arise.

By taking into account mitigation measures to help integrate the site into the surroundings and consideration of the quality of the building, the development could be constructed without undue impact on the landscape or visual quality of the area.

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