



## **FUTURE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

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### **NATURAL BURIAL SITE**

**LAND NORTH OF TURNERS HILL ROAD, TURNERS HILL, WEST SUSSEX**

### **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL - METHODOLOGY**

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## LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL - METHODOLOGY NATURAL BURIAL SITE – LAND NORTH OF TURNERS HILL ROAD, WEST SUSSEX

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 *The Brief and Background*

1.1.1 Lizard Landscape Design has been commissioned by Future Planning and Development to undertake a Landscape Character and Visual Impact Appraisal for the proposed development of the Land north of Turners Hill Road, West Sussex.

1.1.2 This report follows a recent meeting with planning officers in which it was agreed that the site was suitable for a natural burial ground and it was acknowledged that there is considerable support for the scheme. Officers requested that a summary of the Methodology for the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal be produced to assist in briefing planning committee members in support of an officer recommendation for approval.

#### 1.2 *The Purpose of the Report*

1.2.1 The study aims to:

- *Assess and define the landscape environment;*
- *Identify visual receptors and the 'Zone of Visual Influence';*
- *Identify and assess the key landscape character, landscape components and viewpoints in relation to the proposed development and the surrounding area;*
- *Assess and describe the visual effect of the proposed development on the landscape character, components and viewpoints;*
- *Identify and describe appropriate mitigation measures to limit and minimise any potential effects;*
- *Assess and describe the scale of magnitude of the anticipated effects;*

#### 1.3 *The Study Area*

1.3.1 The extent of the study area is largely defined by the Zone of Visual Influence arising from any proposed development. The extent of the visual effects will be informed by a variety of factors which may include:

- *Size and scale of the proposed development;*
- *Existing topography and landform surrounding the proposed development site;*
- *Existing vegetation to and surrounding the proposed development site;*
- *Visibility of the site and the proposed development;*
- *Nature of the proposed development in terms of treatment of elevations and roofs;*
- *Range and sensitivity of receptor groups;*
- *Development mitigation.*

## 2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 *Guidance*

- 2.1.1 This assessment has been prepared with in accordance with the following guidance:
- *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, published by the Countryside Agency, 2002;*
  - *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, published by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Landscape Institute, 2013;*
  - *Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment, Advice Note 01/11, published by the Landscape Institute, 2011.*

### 2.2 *Field Survey Methodology*

### 2.3 *Zone of Visual Influence*

- 2.3.1 The Zone of Visual Influence (also known as the Visual Envelope) represents the area from which the site and development proposal is visible. It is assessed and plotted by means of desktop and topographical studies which are then tested with onsite investigations.

### 2.4 *Representative Viewpoints*

- 2.4.1 Viewpoints within the Zone of Visual Influence are selected to represent the range of potential effects which may occur as a result of the proposed development and demonstrate long, medium and near distance views. The viewpoints are selected to provide an objective range of differing views of the proposed development site.
- 2.4.2 The viewpoint images are taken at approximately 1.7m above ground for consistency and in order to replicate the view an average sized person would experience in that location.

### 2.5 *Baseline Condition and Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource*

- 2.5.1 In order to assess the potential effects of the proposed development, the existing landscape condition and visual amenity must first be identified and described in order to provide a baseline against which potential effects can be assessed. This process would include;
- *Identification of the Zone of Visual Influence;*
  - *Identification of key viewpoints and sensitive receptors in relation to the proposed development;*
  - *Developing an understanding of the sensitivity and condition of the landscape and landscape components.*
- 2.5.2 Within the '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*' (Third Edition 2013) it states; '*Landscape receptors need to be assessed in terms of their sensitivity, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape.*' The sensitivity of the landscape resource is determined by judgements made on the ability of the receptor '*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*'.

2.5.3 Judgements made of the existing landscape character sensitivity have been informed according to the table below:

<b>Table 01: Landscape Character Sensitivity</b>	
<b>High</b>	<i>Landscape components or landscape character assessed to be of a high value and are particularly distinctive with elements that are substantially susceptible to change.</i>
<b>Moderate</b>	<i>Landscape assessed to be of moderate value where key features are likely, but less significantly, to be affected by the development proposals and / or change.</i>
<b>Low</b>	<i>Key features or receptors within a landscape assessed to be of low value which can accommodate some level of proposed development / change.</i>
<b>Minor</b>	<i>Landscape features assessed to be of particularly limited sensitivity which would remain predominantly unaffected by change. The development proposals would have little effect upon the existing landscape character.</i>

## 2.6 Assessing Magnitude of Landscape Effects

2.6.1 Within the Landscape Institute: Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition 2013) it recommends that the 'effect on landscape receptors needs to be assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility.' For the purposes of this report the magnitude of landscape effects has been assessed according to the table below;

<b>Table 02: Magnitude of Landscape Effects</b>	
<b>High</b>	<i>Significant long term effect on a broad landscape(s) of high quality with distinctive and characteristic components which are sensitive to change.</i>
<b>Medium</b>	<i>Noticeable change or effect upon landscape components in landscape character of a moderate quality in a localised area in the medium to longer term.</i>
<b>Low</b>	<i>Limited effect upon landscape characteristics or components within a landscape which is able to accommodate some change.</i>
<b>Negligible</b>	<i>Imperceptible, localised and / or short term change to existing landscape character consequential to the proposals.</i>

## 2.7 Visual Baseline

2.7.1 The visual baseline describes the existing visual component and resource within a specific view. Once the visual baseline is set, the appraisal of visual effects can be determined by assessing the changes in scenic quality and amenity resource, resultant of the proposed development, upon visual receptors.

## 2.8 Viewpoint Sensitivity

2.8.1 The sensitivity of visual receptors (which may include public rights of way, areas of open public access, public highways, community areas or residential properties) are dependent on location, importance of view and expectation and experiential quality for the viewer. The table below illustrates the potential sensitivity of the visual receptors;

<b>Table 03: Definitions of Viewpoint Sensitivity</b>	
<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A recognised important or designated viewpoint e.g. within a designated landscape (AONB / National Park etc);</li> <li>• A view with a distinct tranquillity;</li> <li>• A view encompassing rare and or unique features;</li> <li>• A view which is experienced by a large number of viewers;</li> <li>• A view free of intrusive visual and experiential elements.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A view with some scenic quality;</li> <li>• Few spoiling man made or intrusive elements;</li> <li>• A view experienced by a regular number of viewers and within a recreational area;</li> <li>• A view which engenders some sense of tranquillity.</li> </ul>
<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A view of low quality scenic value;</li> <li>• Several spoiling and / or intrusive man made structures already within the view;</li> <li>• A view experienced by a relatively small number of viewers.</li> </ul>
<b>Minor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A view dominated by permanent / long term spoiling elements and degraded such that the view holds little value of visual amenity or experiential quality;</li> <li>• The proposals would not have a marked affect upon the quality of the view.</li> </ul>

## 2.9 Assessing the Magnitude of Change to Visual Receptors

2.9.1 The magnitude of change resultant of the development proposals is dependent on several factors including the nature of the proposals, the scale of the proposal, the permanence of the change, the distance of the viewpoint from the development site and the overall visibility of the development proposals due to existing intervening landscape components.

<b>Table 04: Magnitude of Change to Visual Receptors</b>	
<b>Magnitude of Anticipated Change</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>High</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposed development would form a major component within the view;</li> <li>• A significant number of viewers would be affected;</li> <li>• The view would be permanently changed;</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development proposals would form a recognisable component within the view;</li> <li>• There would be an apparent and recognisable change in the view and the visual amenity;</li> <li>• A medium to large number of viewers would potentially be affected.</li> </ul>
<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development proposals would be perceptible within the view but would not be a dominating element;</li> <li>• There would be a slight change to the view and balance of landscape elements and features.</li> </ul>
<b>Negligible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A relatively few number of viewers would be affected by the proposed development;</li> <li>• The proposals would form a minor component within the view.</li> </ul>

## 2.10 Degree of Visual Effects

2.10.1 The degree of the visual effects is determined by assessing magnitude of change with the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the potential to accommodate the change;

<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>No Change</b>
<b>Magnitude High</b>	Severe	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	No Change
<b>Medium</b>	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Slight	No Change
<b>Low</b>	Moderate	Slight	Slight	Negligible	No Change
<b>Negligible</b>	Slight	Slight	Negligible	Negligible	No Change
<b>No Change</b>	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change

2.10.2 The range of definitions and descriptions for the potential degree of effects on the landscape resource can be expressed as beneficial, neutral or adverse effects where the proposals would;

<b>NEUTRAL</b>	
<b>No Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>not be a discernable component;</i></li> <li>• <i>have no effect within the context of the existing landscape;</i></li> </ul>
<b>Negligible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>be of only very limited perceptibility and there would be little effect upon the existing landscape character or appreciation of it.</i></li> <li>• <i>be appropriate to the existing scale, character, pattern and quality of the existing landscape resource.</i></li> </ul>
<b>ADVERSE</b>	
<b>Slight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>constitute only a minor component within the existing landscape character;</i></li> <li>• <i>Awareness of the proposals would not have a marked effect upon the existing landscape quality, pattern and landform.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>form a visible and recognisable new element within the landscape;</i></li> <li>• <i>effect the existing landscape character and appreciation of it;</i></li> </ul>
<b>Substantial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>form a significant part of the existing landscape;</i></li> <li>• <i>be unable to be fully mitigated over time;</i></li> <li>• <i>substantially and negatively effect the existing high quality landscape.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Severe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>become a dominant feature within a high quality landscape;</i></li> <li>• <i>be entirely inappropriate to the existing pattern, scale and landform;</i></li> <li>• <i>Permanently degrade or damage the existing landscape.</i></li> </ul>
<b>BENEFICIAL</b>	
<b>Slight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>mitigate degraded landscape quality and character;</i></li> <li>• <i>provide some restoration of lost landscape features.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>integrate well within the existing landscape character</i></li> <li>• <i>improve the overall landscape quality through restoration of missing or degraded landscape features due to other uses or neglect.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Substantial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>integrate very well within the existing landscape character;</i></li> <li>• <i>be appropriate to the landscape scale and pattern;</i></li> <li>• <i>significantly mitigate and improve landscape quality through restoration of missing or degraded landscape features due to other uses or neglect;</i></li> <li>• <i>bring long-term structural enhancement of the local &amp; wider landscape.</i></li> </ul>