

6. Landscape and Visual

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. This chapter assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character and visual amenity. In particular it identifies and assesses the anticipated effects of change resulting from the Proposed Development on the character and features of the landscape, and on people's views and visual amenity within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area.
- 6.1.2. The chapter describes the methods used to assess the likely significant effects, the baseline conditions currently existing at the Site and surroundings, the potential direct and indirect effects of the development arising on the landscape and visual amenity, the mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce, or offset the identified significant effects and the residual effects. It has been written by Randall Thorp.
- 6.1.3. This Chapter is supported by the following figures and appendices:
- **Figure 6.1** – Landscape Context
 - **Figure 6.2** – Site Context
 - **Figure 6.3** – Site Photographs
 - **Figure 6.4** – Visual Context and Viewpoint Locations
 - **Figure 6.5 –6.8** – Viewpoint Photographs
 - **Appendix 6.1** – LVIA Methodology
 - **Appendix 6.2** – Relevant extracts of the Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007)
 - **Appendix 6.3** – Relevant extracts of the Landscape Character Assessment for St Helen's (2006)
- 6.1.4. This Chapter, and its associated appendices, is intended to be read as part of the wider Environmental Statement (ES) with particular reference to the introductory chapters (Chapter 1 to Chapter 4).

6.2. Assessment Approach

Methodology

- 6.2.1. The full methodology, including the criteria for evaluating, value, susceptibility, magnitude and significance of landscape and visual effects is included within **Appendix 6.1**.

Relevant Guidance

- 6.2.2. The following guidance is relevant to the LVIA:

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- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA 3) – Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2013)
- Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA) – Landscape Institute (2024)
- Technical Guidance Note 02/21 – Assessing landscape value outside national designations – Landscape Institute (2021)
- Technical Guidance Note 06/19 – Visual Representation of Development Proposals – Landscape Institute (2019)
- Technical Information Note 01/2017 – Tranquillity – An overview – Landscape Institute (2017)

Identification of the Study Area

- 6.2.3. In line with GLVIA the study area includes “...the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner”¹
- 6.2.4. The extent of the study area has been informed by desk study and site survey and includes an area of 2km radius from the centre of the Site. Beyond this distance, the Proposed Development is considered to have no meaningful influence on landscape character or views, due to the screening effects of the surrounding townscape and mature vegetation.

Establishing the Landscape and Visual Baseline

- 6.2.5. Baseline information has been gathered through a combination of desk studies and field surveys.
- 6.2.6. Site survey work was undertaken on the 18th February 2025, when deciduous trees were bare of leaf. Photography taken during the site visit represents the “worst-case” scenario for visibility, as winter vegetation provides the least natural screening of a proposed development.
- 6.2.7. The following documents have been reviewed as part of the desk study:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)
 - National Design Guide (2019)
 - Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016)
 - Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006)
 - Trees and Development SPD (2016)
 - Halsnead Masterplan SPD (2017)

¹ GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013, para. 5.2)

- National Character Area Profile 56 'Lancashire Coal Measures'
- National Character Area Profile 60 'Mersey Valley'
- Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007)

6.2.8. In addition, desk studies include review of the following information:

- landform, field and settlement patterns using Ordnance Survey mapping and public rights of way mapping
- townscape characteristics and landscape grain using aerial photographs
- site-specific technical reports, including ecology, arboriculture, and heritage reports
- local published literature (local guidebooks, tourism leaflets etc) which may indicate the importance of trails, views, or landscape areas

6.2.9. The value of the landscape has been established taking into account the landscape planning designations and the range of factors identified in box 5.1 of GLVIA and Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note O2/21 – Assessing landscape value outside national designations.

Landscape and Visual Assessment

6.2.10. In line with GLVIA3, the assessment is based on consideration of the sensitivity of landscape character, landscape features, and views/viewers to the type of development being proposed, (i.e. housing) and on the magnitude of change likely to occur. The sensitivity and magnitude are then considered together, and conclusions drawn on the potential effects on the landscape or on people's visual amenity.

6.2.11. The assessment considers daytime effects. Night-time effects are not considered because the Site is not located within an intrinsically dark landscape (settlement is a feature of the landscape within the study area). It is expected that views from residential properties include existing sources of light from other nearby properties and cars and as such any change with regards to artificial lighting is expected to be negligible.

6.2.12. The assessment considers effects during construction, at initial completion of development and 15 years post completion i.e. when landscape treatments have matured. For the purposes of this assessment the height of structural planting 15 years post planting is assumed to be at least 8m. The 15 year post planting assessment represents the residual effects.

6.2.13. The visual assessment considers the changes to views from publicly accessible viewpoints. Effects on residential receptors outside of public areas are not included in the assessment. With regards to the visual amenity of the residents of private properties, Landscape Institute Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 regarding GLVIA3 states: *"An LVIA should consider views from local communities focusing on the way that a community currently experiences views from public locations such as streets and open spaces and how those will change. Views from houses and individual properties are a matter of private amenity, noting that it is an established planning principle that there is no right to a view"*.

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Assessment of Significance

- 6.2.14. The effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual receptors identified are described as being Major, Moderate, Minor or Negligible and either Adverse, Beneficial or Neutral.
- 6.2.15. Negligible change refers to a barely perceptible change. Neutral change recognises that there will be a change to the features/characteristics, but the change will be in keeping with the existing characteristics and would not cause degradation or enhancement.
- 6.2.16. Effects that are deemed to be significant for the purposes of this assessment are those that are described as being of a Major, Moderate-major or Moderate effect. Minor-moderate, Minor and Negligible effects are not considered significant.

Legislative and Policy Framework

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 6.2.17. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) applies a presumption in favour of sustainable development for both plan-making and decision-taking (Paragraph 11).
- 6.2.18. Of most relevance are:
- Section 12, Achieving Well-Designed Places (paragraphs 131, 135, 136, 137 and 139)
 - Section 15, Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (paragraph 187)

National Design Guide

- 6.2.19. The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government published the National Design Guide in January 2021. Together with the National Model Design Code and Guidance Notes for Design Codes, the documents "*illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice*"². It encompasses all current best practice thinking in urban design.
- 6.2.20. The National Design Guide identifies the components for good design and emphasises that good design should not only pay attention to buildings. Careful attention should also be given to the context for places and buildings, hard and soft landscape, technical infrastructure – transport, utilities and services such as drainage, and social infrastructure – social commercial, leisure uses and activities.

Local Planning Policy

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (January 2016)

- 6.2.21. The Knowsley Core Strategy (CS) was adopted in January 2016 and sets out the strategic framework for the growth and development of Knowsley up to 2028 and beyond.

² National Design Guide (2019, updated 2021), Part 1: The purpose of the National Design Guide, paragraph 3.

6.2.22. The Local Plan Policies Map identifies the entire Site, and a wider area, as 'Sustainable Urban Extension – South of Whiston and Land South of the M62' (Policy SUE2c). Big Water and Big Water Wood to the west of the Site is a Local Wildlife Site (Policy CS8)

6.2.23. Of most relevance is:

- **CS8 Green Infrastructure:** states that new development must be served by Green Infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and the local environment.
- **SUE2 Sustainable Urban Extensions Development Principles:** states that development within the Sustainable Urban Extensions must be of a high design quality which enhances local distinctiveness and identity, and includes appropriate provision for public open space.
- **SUE2c Sustainable Urban Extensions South of Whiston and Land South of M62:** confirms that the land north of the M62 is expected to deliver approximately 1,500 units.
- **CS19 Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development:** seeks to enhance local distinctiveness, requiring development (among other things) to respond to and integrate positive characteristics of the immediate surroundings, including local materials, scale, mass, form, layout, alignment and density of the existing built environment, and, to complement and enhance (where possible) existing landscape, topography, Green Infrastructure.
- **CS21 Greenspace and Trees:** seeks to enhance natural and semi-natural greenspace and to protect trees.

Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (June 2006)

6.2.24. The Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in June 2006. Through a Plan Review in June 2009 and following the adoption of the CS in 2016 there are now 39 UDP policies which continue to be 'saved' and carry material weighting in the determination of planning applications.

6.2.25. The following 'saved' policy is of relevance:

- **DQ4 – Trees and Development:** states proposals for new development should include appropriate planting of trees or other soft landscaping, the location and details of which should be determined as an integral part of the development, and which shall have regard to the character of the surrounding area.

Other Material Considerations

Trees and Development SPD (2016)

6.2.26. The Trees and Development SPD explains the Council's approach in relation to Trees and Development setting out guidance relating to promoting best practice for proposals incorporating trees and landscaping within new developments; development proposals affecting existing trees, woodlands and other vegetation; requirements for detailed survey of all existing trees; and requirements for provision of replacement trees.

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Halsnead Masterplan SPD (2017)

- 6.2.27. The SPD was produced in line with Core Strategy Policy SUE2 and sets out the Council's vision and objectives for the SUE, establishing key development requirements that planning applications will be expected to incorporate. The Masterplan defines the development parameters, including land use, access, movement, and green infrastructure.

Halsnead Garden Village Design and Local Distinctiveness Guide (2020)

- 6.2.28. This Guide provides parameters for the development of Halsnead Garden Village and assists all parties involved in its delivery to secure the objectives of the development. It states: *"Outlined within the Guide is the strategic thinking that underpins the requirements for design of streets, public realm, green and blue infrastructure which together contribute to the requisite identity and quality standards of Halsnead Garden Village. The Guide also sets out detailed requirements to achieve distinctive Character Areas and their supporting typologies and palettes of materials"*.

EIA Scoping Process

- 6.2.29. As discussed in Chapter 2, a request for a Scoping Opinion was submitted on behalf of the Applicant to Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council (KMBC) on 30th January 2025, which set out the proposed scope of assessment (see **Appendix 2.1**). KMBC issued their Scoping Opinion on 27th March 2025 and is summarised in Chapter 2 and included in full at **Appendix 2.2**. At that time, the intention was to submit one planning application for 2 parcels of land, referred to as Phase 2b and Phase 3. However, the planning application, which this ES supports, is now seeking planning permission in relation to Phase 3 only at this time.
- 6.2.30. It is considered that the Scoping Opinion provides relevant information to ensure a robust assessment in relation to the Phase 3 Site, and has therefore been used to guide the scope of this chapter and ES as a whole.
- 6.2.31. With regards to landscape and visual matters, relevant responses were received from the consultees including the LPA and Natural England, and comments have been addressed accordingly, as follows in **Table 6.1** below.

Table 6.1: Relevant EIA Scoping Consultation Comments

Consultee	Summary of Comment	Response or location within the ES where comments are addressed
Knowsley Council scoping opinion response 25/0063/SO	The LPA consider that landscape and visual effects should be scoped into the ES and the cumulative impacts of the development across Halsnead Park Estate and the surrounding land designation will need to be considered. The SUE as a whole comprises Halsnead Park landscape character area as defined within Knowsley's Landscape Character Assessment. The Proposed Development has potential to result in a significant impact on it. This parkland landscape should additionally	The LVIA assesses effects upon the Halsnead Park Estate landscape character area and cumulative

	be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset. Given the nature of the development, it is considered that the development will have a potentially significant effect on the landscape and visual amenity.	effects are assessed.
Natural England general advice 06.02.25	The environmental assessment should refer to the relevant National Character Areas. Character area profiles set out descriptions of each landscape area and statements of environmental opportunity. The ES should include a full assessment of the potential impacts of the development on local landscape character using landscape assessment methodologies. We encourage the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), based on the good practice guidelines produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. LCA provides a sound basis for guiding, informing, and understanding the ability of any location to accommodate change and to make positive proposals for conserving, enhancing or regenerating character. A landscape and visual impact assessment should also be carried out for the Proposed Development and surrounding area. Natural England recommends use of the methodology set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 2013 (3rd edition) produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management. For National Parks and AONBs, we advise that the assessment also includes effects on the 'special qualities' of the designated landscape, as set out in the statutory management plan for the area. These identify the particular landscape and related characteristics which underpin the natural beauty of the area and its designation status. The assessment should also include the cumulative effect of the development with other relevant existing or proposed developments in the area. This should include an assessment of the impacts of other proposals currently at scoping stage. To ensure high quality development that responds to and enhances local landscape character and distinctiveness, the siting and design of the Proposed Development should reflect local characteristics and, wherever possible, use local materials. Account should be taken of local design policies, design codes and guides as well as guidance in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code. The ES should set out the measures to be taken to ensure the development will deliver high standards of design and green infrastructure. It should also set out detail of layout alternatives, where appropriate, with a justification of the selected option in terms of landscape impact and benefit.	NCA are considered. Effects upon local landscape character is considered. The LVIA methodology follows guidance within GLVIA. Cumulative assessment is included. The ES sets out measures taken to ensure that the design responds to and enhances local landscape character and distinctiveness.

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Limitations to the Assessment

- 6.2.32. A computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility has not been undertaken. GLVIA³ states *"The ZTV mapping is the desk study component of the visibility analysis. In reality many factors other than terrain will influence actual visibility. Other landscape components that may affect visibility, for example buildings, walls, fences, trees, hedgerows, woodland and banks, can in theory be added to digital models that are based on terrain but this is difficult to achieve accurately, especially for a large study area. Their effects are best judged by field surveys that can examine and record their location, size and extent, and their effect in screening visibility at key points"*. The existing built form surrounding the Site is used as a reference point and the visual analysis relies upon study of the existing topographical baseline and site observation, taking in to account the existing terrain, existing buildings, vegetation and intervening development.
- 6.2.33. Visualisations have not been prepared for the Proposed Development. The visual effects of the proposals are considered using annotated baseline site photographs, with heights of existing buildings and vegetation used to consider the potential visibility of Proposed Development from the identified visual receptors. Notwithstanding the absence of prepared visualisations, the available information and site-specific data are sufficient to reliably identify the likely significant visual effects in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

6.3. Baseline Conditions

Published Landscape Character Assessments

- 6.3.1. Figure 6.1 illustrates the national and local landscape character areas.

National Landscape Character

- 6.3.2. Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct National Character Areas ('NCAs'). These are defined as large areas with common characteristics derived from their geology, landform, and soils and land management systems.
- 6.3.3. The Site is identified by Natural England as falling within National Character Area 56 Lancashire Coal Measures. NCA 56 surrounds the towns of St Helens and Wigan, and abuts the Mersey Valley NCA 60 to the south and the Mersey Conurbation NCA 58 to the west. The summary for NCA 56 states: *"This is an area of urban and industrial development. The settlement pattern is based around the historical development of mines and industry centred on Wigan and St Helens, leading to a scattered layout and close intermingling of housing and industry"*.
- 6.3.4. The key characteristics relevant to this application include:
- *"Gentle hills and valleys run from the north-west to the south-east, creating a soft but varied topography."*
 - *The area is underlain by Coal Measures, which are buried under a patchy layer of glacial deposits, subsequently affected by a long history of mineral working."*

³ GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013, para. 6.10)

⁴ National Character Area 56 Lancashire Coal Measures (Introduction)

- *Woodland cover is limited across most of the area (covering 9 per cent), except to the north-west of Wigan. Community woodlands have been established on many post-industrial sites, and bring multiple benefits, including for public access and nature conservation.*
- *Some large tracts and isolated pockets of agricultural land remain within the urban fabric, principally used for permanent grassland or cereal production, although horse grazing and stabling are also common.*
- *Field patterns are predominantly medium to large and rectangular, mostly resulting from 18th-century and later change, with field boundaries defined by poorly managed hedges or post-and-wire fencing.*
- *Widespread ground subsidence, caused by coal mining activities, has resulted in the formation of subsidence flashes. These have created many areas of open water and wetlands, while scattered ponds and fragmented pockets of semi-natural habitat remain elsewhere.*
- *The area has an increasingly recognised strong cultural and industrial heritage, associated with heavy industry and mineral extraction – particularly south of Wigan – while the majority of the pits, spoil heaps and open cast sites have now been reclaimed and landscaped.*
- *The area is significantly influenced by transport and utilities infrastructure, with motorways, major roads and rail lines criss-crossing the landscape.*

6.3.5. The size and scale of the area encompassed by the NCAs is large and describes the broad characteristics, including both rural and urban characteristics. The intricacies of the local landscape are better defined by the Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007). Due to the availability of a more detailed local landscape character assessment, the effects upon NCA 56 – Lancashire Coal Measures as a result of the Proposed Development are not assessed within the LVIA.

Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007)

6.3.6. The Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007) divides the National Landscape Character Areas within Knowsley (the Site lies within the Lancashire Coal Measures NCA) into geographically smaller Local Authority Landscape Character Types. The landscape character types at the local authority scale are defined by patterns of drainage, landform, land use and the proximity of the urban areas. The Site is identified as lying within the 'Urban Fringe Parkland' Landscape Character Type. This is described as: *"Urban fringe parkland – Formally a managed county estate enclosed by a sandstone wall that has seen the encroachment of the adjacent urban area and is now heavily influenced by the close proximity to major transport infrastructure"*⁵.

6.3.7. The Local Landscape Character Types are further divided in to a number of different Character Areas. The Site lies within the 'Halsnead Estate' Character Area. This is described as: *"The character of this area is strongly influenced by the former Halsnead Estate that existed to the south of Whiston. The character is defined by the existence of remnants of the former Estate,*

⁵ Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007) Urban Fringe Parkland LCT

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including long sections of the sandstone boundary wall, a gate house, and small woodland clumps. The M62 motorway dissects the former estate and has a negative influence on the character of the area. It is both a visual and physical intrusion, with noise pollution being a major distraction.

Coal mining activity occurred south of the M62 at the former Cronton Colliery. The spoil heap from this colliery still remains, but its presence and visual intrusion has been masked by reclamation and tree planting carried out in the 1990s.

The area is gently rolling lowland, rising gradually to Prescott and Rainhill in the North. Arable fields are medium sized with either degraded hedgerows or no defined field boundaries. Some enclosure occurs from the proximity of wooded shelter belts on field margins. Tree cover is restricted to small woodland clumps, isolated trees and shelterbelts, often located around dwellings and along roads and tracks. There is a dispersed pattern of farmsteads and wayside dwellings. These are predominately red brick with slate roofs, but there are also properties with either red sandstone or white render”⁶.

- 6.3.8. Relevant extracts of the Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment are included within **Appendix 6.2**.

Landscape Character Assessment for St Helens (2006)

- 6.3.9. Land to the east of Fox’s Bank Lane is within the jurisdiction of St Helens Borough Council and is covered by the Landscape Character Assessment for St Helens (2006).

- 6.3.10. The landscape to the north of the M62 corridor, east of Fox’s Bank Lane and to the south of Blundell’s Lane falls within the Broad Rural Slopes Landscape Character Type and within Landscape Character Area BRS5 Rainhill Slopes. The area description is as follows:

- *“the area lies on gently undulating slopes with southern aspect which runs down from the adjacent broad summit of Blundell’s Hill at 78m AOD to the flatter landscape which extends up to and is defined by the prominent embankments to the M62;*
- *the area is predominantly arable farmland with medium to large scale irregular fields overlaying the slope and highlighting the fall of the contours. The field boundaries are mostly drainage ditches with degraded hedgerows with some remnant mature trees, which give a degraded character to the landscape. In many cases the hedgerows have been lost;*
- *a golf course is located on the slopes within the area and creates a contrast in character by the smooth uniform green of the fairways and associated planting to the rural character of the fields;*
- *‘water pits’ are a distinctive landscape feature located within depressions in the fields and are generally associated with small blocks of mature deciduous woodland;*
- *the M62 and a line of pylons cross the area to the south and are both dominant visual features. The embankments of the M62 create an unnatural defined hard edge to the*

⁶ Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment (2007) ‘Halsnead Estate’ Character Area

character area. The frequent movement and noise of traffic along the motorway imposes a strong urban character on the rural landscape;

- *area limited number of small residences and a farm steading is located off the B road which runs between Rainhill and Whiston. The historic urban edge of Rainhill is visually prominent on the ridgeline to the north. In particular the historic skyline with a prominent church tower is a distinct visual horizon in views from along the M62;*
- *views from the upper elevated slopes to Rainhill are across the M62 embankments to the floodplains of the Mersey which progressively flatten out to the highly developed Mersey Valley. The large cooling towers at Fiddlers Ferry Power Station are prominent features on the distant skyline”⁷.*

6.3.11. Relevant extracts of the Landscape Character Assessment for St Helens are included within **Appendix 6.3**.

Description of the Study Area

6.3.12. **Figure 6.1** shows the Site within its landscape context.

6.3.13. There are no statutory landscape designations within the study area.

6.3.14. The Site lies within the former Halsnead Park estate, a historic country estate landscape characterised by open parkland, mature woodland blocks and water features set within a gently undulating landform. The estate was historically centred on Halsnead Hall, which has since been demolished; however, the landscape retains fragments of its former designed character, including established tree belts, boundary features and historic routes. During the 20th century, the integrity of the estate was progressively eroded by changes in land use and the introduction of major infrastructure, most notably the M62 motorway, which severed parts of the original estate and reduced landscape cohesion. By the early 21st century the land no longer functioned as a coherent country estate, instead comprising a semi-rural landscape of pasture, woodland and open space, with a degree of enclosure in places and a transitional character between surrounding urban areas and the wider countryside.

6.3.15. The former Halsnead Park estate was identified and allocated for residential-led development within the local planning framework. The allocation acknowledges both the landscape sensitivity and development potential of the Site, requiring proposals to be guided by garden village principles, the retention and enhancement of existing landscape assets, and the integration of new housing within a robust green infrastructure network. As such, change to the landscape character is anticipated and managed through planned mitigation and enhancement.

6.3.16. Located centrally within the Halsnead Garden Village allocation, and immediately to the north of the Site, is the Halsnead Park mobile home park, which occupies the former site of Halsnead Hall. Areas of broadleaf woodland associated with the former estate include Round Clump and The Old Wood, the latter comprising ancient woodland. An additional area of ancient woodland identified within the Revised Ancient Woodland Inventory is present to the north-west of the site. Big Water lies to the west of the Site and, while now used for fishing, was historically designed as an ornamental feature providing views from the Hall. The Old Wood, Big Water and

⁷ Landscape Character Assessment for St Helens (2006) Area description

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Big Water Wood are designated Local Wildlife Sites. Much of the woodland within the former Halsnead Estate is covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

- 6.3.17. To the north, the wider landscape context comprises allocated land, Knowsley Cemetery and woodland along Lickers Lane, with existing residential development located beyond Lickers Lane within the southern extents of Whiston. The housing is largely post war (1950s–70s) with pockets of Victorian housing, and new housing within the completed phases of Halsnead Garden Village.
- 6.3.18. Immediately to the east of the Site is the consented and under-construction Fox's Bank residential development (planning application reference 20/00417/FUL). Fox's Bank Lane defines the eastern boundary of the allocated land, beyond which lies a small cluster of residential development, open agricultural fields and Blundells Hill Golf Club.
- 6.3.19. The M62 motorway runs along the southern edge of the Site, beyond which lies Symmetry Park, an industrial and employment area located on the former Cronton Colliery. Pylons and overhead lines running alongside the motorway are prominent and discordant features within the landscape.
- 6.3.20. To the west of Big Water and The Old Wood is the recently constructed Elowen Garden Village residential development, accessed from Windy Arbor Road. Further residential and commercial land uses are located along Windy Arbor Road and to the west of the M57 motorway.
- 6.3.21. Stadt Moers Country Park lies approximately 750 metres to the north-west of the Site and is separated from both phases of the Proposed Development by intervening housing and woodland. The park occupies land formerly associated with coal mining and clay extraction and was later used as a landfill site before being reclaimed in the 1980s. Stadt Moers Country Park is designated as a Local Wildlife Site.
- 6.3.22. The landform is gently rolling, rising gradually to localised higher ground such as Blundells Hill and towards Prescott to the north.
- 6.3.23. Farmland is divided into medium-sized, irregular fields, typically bounded by degraded hedgerows or, in places, lacking defined boundaries. Enclosure is provided by wooded shelter belts along field margins, the M62 corridor, remnant estate woodland and within the golf course.
- 6.3.24. Public access within the surrounding farmland is limited, with a small number of Public Rights of Way running through agricultural land and the golf course to the east. Several of these routes are severed by the M62 motorway, reducing overall connectivity.
- 6.3.25. The wider landscape exhibits a transitional character, reflecting the evolution of the former Halsnead Park estate from a historic country estate to a semi-rural urban fringe influenced by successive phases of development and infrastructure. It comprises a varied pattern of residential areas, allocated development land, transport corridors and employment uses, interspersed with remnant estate woodland, water features, agricultural land and recreational spaces. The gently rolling landform, areas of woodland enclosure and surviving historic landscape elements provide a degree of coherence and local distinctiveness; however, major roads and ongoing urban expansion have fragmented the landscape and reduced connectivity, resulting in a mixed landscape character at the interface between urban areas and the wider countryside.

Description of the Site and its Immediate Context

- 6.3.26. **Figure 6.2** shows the Site within its immediate context. **Figure 6.3** includes site photographs.
- 6.3.27. The Site is not covered by any statutory landscape planning designations, is not designated for its landscape value and would not meet the criteria of 'Valued Landscape' in terms of NPPF.
- 6.3.28. The Site comprises a broadly rectangular shaped parcel of land within the Halsnead Garden Village area, forming part of the former Halsnead Park estate. It is currently open and undeveloped, comprising arable and/or improved grassland. The Site is contained by peripheral tree planting and adjacent residential development, and lies within a gently undulating landform characteristic of the surrounding landscape.
- 6.3.29. The southern boundary of the Site is clearly defined by the M62 motorway, which forms a strong linear infrastructure edge and a significant visual and noise influence. A belt of vegetation along the motorway corridor provides partial enclosure and separation from the transport corridor.
- 6.3.30. To the west, the Site adjoins areas of broadleaf woodland and the water body known as Big Water, which are remnants of the historic landscape associated with the former Halsnead Park estate. This western boundary is irregular and more organically defined, with woodland and associated vegetation providing a degree of enclosure and filtering views. Old Wood is recognised as ancient woodland and is protected by a TPO. Trees to the west of Halsnead Park and north of Big Water are also covered by TPO. Old Wood and Big Water/Big Water Wood are Local Wildlife Sites.
- 6.3.31. The northern boundary abuts the existing mobile home development at Halsnead Park. This includes properties along Woodend and the Lake View area, forming a distinct settlement edge. In places, rear garden boundaries directly adjoin the Site, creating a sharp transition between residential land uses and open farmland.
- 6.3.32. To the east, the Site is bounded by residential development under construction which is accessed from Fox's Bank Lane (planning application reference 20/00417/FUL).
- 6.3.33. There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) within or adjacent to the Site, although there are informal paths around Big Water which is used for fishing.
- 6.3.34. Overall, the Site occupies a transitional position between urban residential areas to the north, strategic transport infrastructure to the south, remnant historic estate landscape to the west and residential development under construction to the east, reflecting its urban fringe context.

Landscape Receptors

- 6.3.35. Potential effects on landscape will consider both the landscape character and landscape features. Taking into account the published character assessments and baseline landscape context as described above, effects upon the following landscape receptors which fall within the study area will be considered:
- The landscape within Knowsley Landscape Character Area 'Halsnead Estate'
 - The landscape within St Helens Landscape Character Area BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes'
 - Existing landscape features within the Site

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- 6.3.36. Effects upon the National Character Area 56 Lancashire Coal Measures are not deemed to be significant and are scoped out of the assessment. The size and scale of the area encompassed by NCA 56 is large, the area includes urban development and the addition of residential land uses would not be uncharacteristic. In addition, finer grain local landscape character assessments are available.
- 6.3.37. As there is no visual intervisibility between the site and other local landscape character areas within the 2 km study area, and no direct effects on these areas are anticipated, they have been scoped out of the assessment.
- 6.3.38. The effects upon the character of the Site in isolation from its perceived setting are not assessed, as the Site is always perceived in its wider context. TGN'21 paragraph 2.4.5, bullet 5, recognises that *"Value is best appreciated at the scale at which a landscape is perceived – rarely is this on a field-by-field basis"*⁸.

Landscape Value within the Study Area

- 6.3.39. This section sets out the value of the landscape within the study area using the guidelines of GLVIA3 Box 5.1⁹, Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 – Assessing landscape value outside national designations and information included within the Methodology (Appendix 6.1).

Table 6.2: Landscape value of Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study area

Criteria for establishing value	Observations/comments	Value
Natural heritage	There are numerous non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites including Big Water and Big Water Wood, The Old Wood (north and south), Cronton Mineral Line, Mine Waste Cronton, Woodland Sandfield Park and Lickers Lane Wood. Some of the broad-leaved woodland associated with the former parkland is classified as ancient woodland. Hedgerows are scarce. Whilst the woodland is valued habitat, the farmland has low ecological value.	Medium
Cultural heritage	Historic parkland and estate which is a non-designated heritage asset, but recognised in heritage assessments as having historic value and includes statutory heritage assets such as Listed Buildings. Listed Buildings include the North East Lodge to Halsnead Park and its gate piers, a barn at Snape Gate, Sandfield House, Old Halsnead and several others within Whiston. Some trees within the Halsnead Estate, such as those around Big Water and to the west of Halsnead Park are protected by TPO.	High

⁸ Technical Guidance Note 02/21 (Landscape Institute, para 2.4.5, bullet 5)

⁹ GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013, Box 5.1)

Criteria for establishing value	Observations/comments	Value
Landscape condition	The areas of woodland and surviving historic landscape elements provide a degree of coherence however, major roads and ongoing urban expansion have fragmented the landscape and reduced connectivity. The mature woodlands around Halsnead Park are protected and managed but there has been some loss of field boundaries within the farmland.	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	Trees within the former estate and along the transport corridors contain views. There are no long-distance or panoramic views of note. Views are not scenic and generally include urban elements and transport corridors.	Low-medium
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	It is not a tranquil landscape due to the adjacent settlement and busy roads which have an audible presence. The landscape has historically been a favourable area for settlement and farming, and as such there are perceptions of human activity.	Low
Distinctiveness	The woodland and surviving historic elements provide a degree of local distinctiveness. However, the distinctive landscape character has been somewhat eroded by the major roads and ongoing urban expansion.	Medium
Associations	The landscape is associated with a former estate, but otherwise there are no associations with artists, writers or events in history which might contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.	Medium
Recreational	There are no recreational opportunities within the Site and no public rights of way within the character area.	Low
Functional	The land functions as agricultural land and plays an ordinary role in its part within the green infrastructure network surrounding the settlement edges. The land has limited ecological value/natural function, albeit localised parts of it function to a greater extent where woodland is present.	Low-medium
Value of landscape within Knowsley Landscape Character Area 'Halsnead Estate'		Overall Value: Medium

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Table 6.3: Landscape value of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helen's) within the study area

Criteria for establishing value	Observations/comments	Value
Natural heritage	Blundell's Golf Course and Parrens Covert are non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites. Mature trees provide habitat value, but the landscape within the golf course is semi-ornamental and maintained. The farmland is of limited ecological value.	Medium
Cultural heritage	Dean's Farmhouse and adjoining farm buildings are Listed Buildings. Rainhill Hall Farm moated site and fishponds is a Scheduled Monument located to the east of Blundell's Hill Golf Club. Some trees within the golf course are protected by TPO.	Medium-high
Landscape condition	Blundell's Hill Golf course is a managed landscape of reasonable quality but with limited natural qualities. The landscape is influenced by the urban edge, particularly the transport corridors which have fragmented the landscape and reduced its condition. The field boundaries are ditches with the loss of hedgerows or degraded hedgerows.	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	The views are generally enclosed by trees which provide a verdant character although views are not scenic and generally include urban elements such as the M62 and pylons. There are few long-distance or panoramic views.	Medium
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	It is not a tranquil landscape due to the adjacent settlement and busy roads which have an audible presence.	Low
Distinctiveness	The landscape includes elements which are consistent with the landscape character area but no characteristics which are rare or unusual.	Low-medium
Associations	There is no evidence that the landscape is associated with artists, writers or events in history which might contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.	Low
Recreational	Blundell's Hill Golf Course and the public right of way which runs through it provides recreational opportunities but otherwise the land comprises farmland which is not publicly accessible.	Medium
Functional	It is an urban fringe landscape with some ecological value/natural function.	Low-medium
Value of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helen's) within the study area		Overall Value: Medium

Table 6.4: Value of landscape components within the Site

Criteria for establishing value	Observations/comments	Value
Natural features (landform, vegetation, waterbodies)	The Site comprises arable or improved grassland, with no internal field boundaries or trees located internally. The tree survey (TEP) shows that there is limited tree cover, confined to the site boundaries. On the southern Site boundary with the M62 there are groups of trees and shrubs which are of moderate quality. There are groups of trees growing along the western boundary with Big Water and some individual trees which are of moderate quality, with a single high quality specimen. Along the northern interface with Halsnead Park, there are several individual trees, groups of trees/shrubs and sections of hedgerow positioned within the rear gardens of properties. These are generally of low or moderate quality, with a single high quality tree.	Low
Man-made features (heritage features, stone walls etc)	There are no historic man-made features within the Site.	Low
Value of landscape components within the Site		Overall value: Low

Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility of the Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study to the development proposed

- 6.3.40. The parts of the LCA which the Site lies within are allocated for development. The Site is closely associated with the settlement and development of the nature proposed would be consistent with surrounding land uses. The urban edge and mature vegetation, as well as the M62 corridor, offers a level of containment and separation from the more rural landscape to the east. It is therefore considered that the susceptibility to change is Low.

Susceptibility of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helen's) within the study area to the development proposed

- 6.3.41. The Proposed Development is located within an adjacent Landscape Character Area (LCA), and any potential effects are anticipated to be limited to perceptual characteristics rather than physical changes to landscape fabric. The undulating landform, together with established woodland and tree cover, provides a degree of visual containment that restricts intervisibility between the LCA and surrounding areas. Furthermore, the presence of existing urban and infrastructural influences, including overhead pylons and the adjacent motorway corridor,

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detracts from the perceived naturalness and scenic quality of the landscape. It is therefore considered that the susceptibility to change is Low.

Susceptibility of the Landscape Features within the Site to the development proposed

- 6.3.42. The Site is tolerant to the type of change proposed due to the lack of natural features, with peripheral vegetation having clear potential to be retained, as well as a lack of any historic man-made features which are characteristic of the area, and which would act as a significant constraint to site planning. It is therefore considered that the susceptibility to change is Low.

Sensitivity of the Landscape

- 6.3.43. Taking into account value and susceptibility as set out above the following table summarises the sensitivity of the landscape.

Table 6.5: Sensitivity of the Landscape

Landscape receptor	Value of the Landscape	Susceptibility to Change	Resulting Sensitivity
Landscape of Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study area	Medium	Low	Low-medium
Landscape of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helen's) within the study area	Medium	Low	Low-medium
Landscape features within the Site	Low	Low	Low

Views, Visibility and Visual Character

Visual Context of the Site

- 6.3.44. The Site is well contained to the north by properties within Halsnead Park and to the east by the Fox's Lane residential scheme (planning application reference 20/00417/FUL), which is currently under construction. To the south, the Site is enclosed by tree planting along the M62, while to the west mature trees surrounding Big Water provide further containment. As there is no public access to the Site, there are no close-range, uninterrupted views from public vantage points within the Site. Given the level of enclosure created by surrounding development and vegetation, there is limited potential for longer-distance views of the Site or its features from the wider landscape.

Visual Receptors and Views of the Site

- 6.3.45. **Figure 6.4** shows the locations of the photographs taken from the public viewpoints surrounding the Site. **Figures 6.5 – 6.8** include photographs taken from publicly accessible viewpoints along PRowS and roads.
- 6.3.46. Observations made during the site visit identified that people at the following publicly accessible locations would have views of the Site/Proposed Development:
- Footpaths around Big Water (viewpoints 1a–1b)
 - Routes within Halsnead Park (viewpoints 2a–2c)
 - The M62 motorway (viewpoint 3 – Google image)
- 6.3.47. Big Water is managed for angling, with access regulated by a local angling association. While the surrounding footpaths are not designated public rights of way, informal public access is anticipated as part of the wider green infrastructure provision for Halsnead Garden Village. As shown in photographs 1a–1b, the Site is visible in brief, glimpsed views from nearby paths. These views are largely filtered by surrounding vegetation, including areas of mature tree cover around the lake, which limits visibility. As a result, parts of the southern section of the Site are partially visible at close range.
- 6.3.48. Halsnead Park comprises a tightly knit arrangement of mobile homes served by a network of narrow access tracks. The density of the built form largely restricts views towards the Site; however, occasional glimpsed views are available from within the internal road network where there are localised changes in land level and breaks between buildings. As illustrated in photographs 2a–2c, representative views from Woodend and Lake View comprise filtered and partial views of sections of the Site.
- 6.3.49. The M62 motorway is separated from the Site by a linear belt of trees and shrubs, which provides effective visual screening. During the summer months, when the vegetation is in leaf, views towards the Site are largely obscured. In winter conditions, when leaf cover is reduced, motorists may experience intermittent, filtered views; however, the Site occupies a peripheral position within the wider view and is not a defining element of the visual experience.
- 6.3.50. The field survey considered the potential for longer-distance views from elevated, publicly accessible vantage points within the study area. The viewpoints identified demonstrate that, even from higher ground, views towards the Site and the Proposed Development would be entirely screened by intervening tree cover. Accordingly, these viewpoints are not included in the detailed visual assessment and are presented solely to confirm that no change in views would arise as a result of the proposed development.
- Blundell's Hill Golf Course (viewpoint 4)
 - Hall Lane to the east (viewpoint 5)

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 6.3.51. Taking into account value and susceptibility, the following table summarises the sensitivity of the visual receptors.

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Table 6.6: Visual Sensitivity

Visual Receptor Type	Value of the View	Susceptibility to Change	Resulting Sensitivity
People using the footpaths around Big Water (Viewpoints 1a -1b)	Medium Undesignated landscape and local value attached to the views.	High The landscape setting is likely to be valued by those engaged in recreation, with an appreciation of the views.	Medium-high
People using routes within Halsnead Park (Viewpoint 2a-2c)	Medium Undesignated landscape and local value attached to the views.	Medium People are primarily using the routes for access rather than focusing on the views, but may be engaged in informal recreation with some appreciation of the views.	Medium
People using the M62 (Viewpoint 3)	Low Undesignated landscape and no recognised value attached to the views. Views of the highway, corridor.	Low Motorway users are travelling at speed, resulting in views that are brief and transitory. Their primary focus is on the safe operation of their vehicles and the road environment, rather than on the surrounding landscape.	Low

6.4. Embedded Mitigation/Mitigation by Design

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- 6.4.1. For the purposes of this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment it is assumed that all vegetation indicated for retention within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) (see Appendix 7.5) would be appropriately protected throughout the construction process.

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- 6.4.2. The landscape and visual assessment is based on the Parameters Plan (Figure 4.1) and the Landscape Strategy for the outline element, and on the Planning Layout and Landscape Proposals (Plans 1-3) for the detailed element. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment is relied upon in respect of retention of existing trees.
- 6.4.3. Maximum height parameters for the houses are set at 2.5 storeys (Max height 9.5m from finished ground level). This would reflect the height of existing housing within the vicinity of the Site.
- 6.4.4. The AIA reports that the majority of the existing trees would be retained, with the loss of part of a single tree group and the potential loss of a further group for the outline element of the application. The retention of existing peripheral vegetation would establish a robust framework for the open space network, deliver ecological benefits through enhanced habitat value, and reinforce the Site's landscape character.
- 6.4.5. A green corridor of approximately 60 m in width is proposed along the Site's southern boundary, adjacent to the M62. The corridor would comprise areas of open space and structural planting and would incorporate sustainable drainage (SuDS) features. These elements are intended to assist in the attenuation of noise and air quality effects associated with the adjacent motorway. The SuDS features would retain shallow water on a year-round basis and form part of the overall landscape structure. A shared footpath and cycleway would be provided through the corridor, linking with the Fox's Wood (Phase 2) development to the east.
- 6.4.6. A landscaped buffer is proposed along the western boundary adjacent to Big Water. This buffer would provide spatial separation between the proposed housing and the waterbody, which is both a non-designated heritage asset and recreational resource. The buffer would comprise tree planting and areas of wildflower grassland, creating a naturalistic landscape framework, and would include footpath connections.
- 6.4.7. A greenway is proposed along the interface with Halsnead Park and the development to the south, providing a landscape buffer. It would comprise native tree, shrub, and hedgerow planting to create a woodland character. Pedestrian paths would link the development with open space within the Fox's Wood development and provide opportunities for informal recreation.
- 6.4.8. The landscape proposals would reflect the principles set out in Halsnead Garden Village Design and Local Distinctiveness Guide.

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6.5. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

- 6.5.1. The assessment presented below has been undertaken with full consideration of the embedded mitigation measures outlined above.

Construction Effects – Landscape Effects

- 6.5.2. The significance of effect is a combined judgement of the sensitivity and the magnitude of change.
- 6.5.3. The landscape sensitivity is a combined judgement of the value and the susceptibility and has been set out in **Table 6.5** above.

Magnitude and Nature of Effect

- 6.5.4. The magnitude of effect is a combined judgement of geographic extent, duration and the size/scale of effect.
- 6.5.5. Construction activity would result in adverse effects on the landscape due to the introduction of temporary structures, machinery, and site activity that are at odds with the surrounding character. These effects would be temporary and reversible once construction is complete, but over the up to 5-year construction period, the magnitude and duration of change mean that certain effects on sensitive landscape elements or patterns are considered significant, despite their temporary nature.
- 6.5.6. The magnitude of effect for the landscape receptors is explained in the table below.

Table 6.7: Landscape Effects during Construction

Receptor	Sensitivity (Table 6.5)	Size and scale of change, geographic extent and duration	Magnitude	Significance /nature of effect
Landscape of Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study area	Low- medium	The construction phase would introduce temporary elements that would be out of keeping with the existing landscape character; however, the extent of effects would be well contained by existing built development to the north and east, mature vegetation to the west, and the motorway corridor to the south. Consequently, effects on the wider Landscape Character Area (LCA) would be limited. Direct effects would be restricted to land allocated for development. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced across the Site and the immediate landscape setting,	Medium- high	Moderate adverse Local/ Short term/ Temporary Significant

Receptor	Sensitivity (Table 6.5)	Size and scale of change, geographic extent and duration	Magnitude	Significance /nature of effect
		representing a perceptible portion of the small LCA. Duration: Effects would be short term (0–5 years) and temporary.		
Landscape of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helen's) within the study area	Low–medium	The Proposed Development would not result in any direct landscape effects. Indirect or perceptual effects on the wider Landscape Character Area (LCA) would be negligible, owing to the limited visibility of construction activities, which would be largely obscured by intervening vegetation and surrounding built form. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced within the site and immediate setting. Duration: Effects would be short term (0–5 years) and temporary.	Negligible	Negligible Local/ Short term/ Temporary Not significant
Landscape features within the site	Low	There would be the loss of arable/improved grassland. The majority of the existing trees would be retained. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced within the Site. Duration: Effects would be short term (0–5 years) and temporary.	Low	Minor adverse Local/ Short term/ Temporary Not significant

Significance of Landscape Effects

- 6.5.7. During the construction phase, there would be significant adverse effects on the Knowsley LCA 'Halshead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study area. Construction activity would be generally at odds with the existing landscape context and setting; however, the Site is located within an urban fringe context and is allocated for development. Consequently, the principle of development is considered acceptable.
- 6.5.8. Effects on the adjacent St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helens) within the study area would not be significant.
- 6.5.9. There would be a loss of grassland; however, existing trees would be largely retained, resulting in no significant effects on key landscape features.

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Construction – Visual Effects

6.5.10. The significance of effect on visual receptors is a combined judgement of the sensitivity and the magnitude of change.

6.5.11. The visual sensitivity is a combined judgement of the value and the susceptibility and has been set out in **Table 6.6** above.

Magnitude and Nature of Effect

6.5.12. The magnitude of effect is a combined judgement of geographic extent, duration and the size/scale of effect.

6.5.13. Construction activity is at odds with the visual characteristics of the surrounding landscape, and the effects are therefore considered to be adverse. Whilst the effects would be temporary and reversible once construction is complete, they would be experienced over a period of up to 5 years and in some cases would be noticeable and sustained. As such, some effects are deemed to be significant despite their temporary nature.

6.5.14. The magnitude of effect for the visual receptors is explained below.

Table 6.8: Visual Effects during Construction

Visual Receptors	Sensitivity (Table 6.6)	Size and scale of effect, geographical extent and duration	Magnitude of effect	Significance/ nature of effect
People using the footpaths around Big Water (Viewpoints 1a –1b)	Medium-high	Construction activity within the western parts of the Site would be prominent in close-range views; however, existing vegetation would provide a degree of visual filtering in some locations. The magnitude of change would be increased by the uncharacteristic nature of the construction works, but would be partially moderated by the screening effects of intervening vegetation. Visibility would vary seasonally, with greater exposure of construction activity during the winter months when deciduous vegetation is not in leaf. Geographic extent: Close-range, fleeting views, experienced from a section of around 125m of footpath. Duration: Effects would be short term (0–5 years) and temporary.	Medium-high	Moderate-major adverse Local/ Short Term/ Temporary Significant

Visual Receptors	Sensitivity (Table 6.6)	Size and scale of effect, geographical extent and duration	Magnitude of effect	Significance/ nature of effect
People using routes within Halsnead Park (Viewpoint 2a-2c)	Medium	The density of the built form would largely restrict views of the construction activity; however, occasional glimpsed views would be available from within the internal road network where there are localised changes in land level and breaks between buildings. Tall structures would be more noticeable. The level of change would be increased by the uncharacteristic nature of the construction works, but somewhat moderated by the urban context and presence of existing built form. Geographic extent: Close-range, fleeting and glimpsed views along a sequential journey, with short sections of the route affected. Duration: Effects would be short term (0-5 years) and temporary.	Medium	Moderate adverse Local/ Short Term/ Temporary Significant
People using the M62 (Viewpoint 3)	Low	The significant levels of intervening vegetation would substantially screen the construction within the Site, even when the trees are not in leaf. There is potential for some partial views of the tops of tall cranes, and construction traffic may be perceptible. Construction elements are uncharacteristic, but the level of change would be reduced by the fleeting nature of the views. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced from around 30m away and from a 600m section of the motorway. Duration: Effects would be short term (0-5 years) and temporary.	Low	Minor adverse Local/ Short Term/ Temporary Not significant

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Significance of Visual Effects

- 6.5.15. During the construction phase, there would be significant adverse effects on views experienced by users of the paths around Big Water and along routes within Halsnead Park, with the greatest effects occurring during the winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf. These effects would be short-term and temporary in nature.
- 6.5.16. The effects upon the views of motorists using the M62 motorway would not be significant.

The Completed and Operational Development (Yr 1) – Landscape Effects

- 6.5.17. The assessment of likely landscape effects takes into account the retention of existing vegetation, as described in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, and the embedded mitigation and landscape proposals as shown on the Landscape Masterplan, although upon completion the planting would be immature.

Magnitude and Nature of Effect

- 6.5.18. The table below describes the magnitude of effect, which is a combined judgement of geographic extent, duration, the size/scale of effect, and the resulting landscape effect.

Table 6.9: Landscape Effects – Completed and Operational Development (Yr1)

Receptor	Sensitivity (Table 6.5)	Size and scale of change, geographic extent and duration	Magnitude	Significance/ nature of effect
Landscape of Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study area	Low-medium	In terms of policy, the site is allocated for development, and the proposed landscape strategy accords with the Halsnead Garden Village Design and Local Distinctiveness Guide. The Proposed Development would result in a localised change to the landscape character of the Halsnead Estate LCA, arising from the permanent loss of managed grassland and its replacement with housing and associated green infrastructure. While the affected land represents a minor proportion of the LCA, valued landscape features along the Site perimeter would largely be retained and protected, maintaining the continuity of landscape structure and character within the wider area.	Low	Minor adverse Local/ Medium term/ Temporary Not significant

Receptor	Sensitivity (Table 6.5)	Size and scale of change, geographic extent and duration	Magnitude	Significance/ nature of effect
		The introduction of new native tree and hedgerow planting, areas of wildflower grassland, and waterbodies would contribute positively to the LCA's character over time, although planting would be immature in the early years. The development would be compatible with adjacent residential land uses, and green buffers and structural planting would provide containment, reinforcing site boundaries and reducing outward visual influence. Due to the contained nature of the Site and limited intervisibility with the wider landscape, the change would be noticeable but confined, resulting in a minor adverse effect on the landscape character of the LCA, which would not be significant. The magnitude of change would gradually reduce as proposed planting matures, but the land-use change itself is permanent. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced across the Site and the immediate landscape setting, representing a perceptible portion of the small LCA. Duration: Permanent for land-use change; medium-term (0–15 years) for effects from landscape planting.		
Landscape of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape	Low-medium	The Proposed Development would not result in any direct landscape effects. Indirect or perceptual effects on the wider Landscape Character Area (LCA) would be negligible, owing to the	Negligible	Negligible Local/ Medium term/ Temporary Not significant

Landscape and Visual

Receptor	Sensitivity (Table 6.5)	Size and scale of change, geographic extent and duration	Magnitude	Significance/ nature of effect
Character Assessment of St Helen's) within the study area		limited visibility of the Proposed Development, which would be largely obscured by intervening vegetation and surrounding built form. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced within the Site and immediate setting. Duration: Effects would be medium term (5-15 years) and temporary (until proposed landscape matures).		
Landscape features within the Site	Low	There would be the loss of arable/improved grassland. The majority of the existing trees would be retained. The Proposed Development would introduce a range of new landscape features, including native tree and hedgerow planting, areas of species-rich wildflower grassland and new waterbodies. These features would result in a beneficial effect at the site level by enhancing landscape structure, biodiversity value and visual amenity. The scale, form and species composition of the proposed planting would reflect the surrounding landscape, reinforcing existing patterns and landscape continuity. The planting design would accord with the Halsnead Garden Village Design and Local Distinctiveness Guide, ensuring integration that is sympathetic to local character. At Year 1, the effects of the proposed landscape works would be emerging, reflecting the early	Low	Minor beneficial Local/ Medium term/ Temporary reduction in features Not significant

Receptor	Sensitivity (Table 6.5)	Size and scale of change, geographic extent and duration	Magnitude	Significance/ nature of effect
		establishment phase of new planting. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced within the Site. Duration: Effects would be medium term (5–15 years) and temporary (until proposed landscape matures).		

Significance of Landscape Effects

- 6.5.19. Upon completion, there would be no significant landscape effects.
- 6.5.20. There would be some minor adverse effects on Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate' (Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment) within the study area. Effects would be experienced across the Site and the immediate landscape setting, representing a perceptible portion of the small LCA. Effects would be permanent for land-use change and medium-term (0–15 years) for effects from landscape planting.
- 6.5.21. Effects on the adjacent St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helens) within the study area would not be significant.
- 6.5.22. There would be minor beneficial effects on features, which would be experienced within the Site and the local area, and would be temporary until the proposed planting has matured.

The Completed and Operational Development – Visual Effects

- 6.5.23. The assessment of likely significant visual effects takes into account the embedded mitigation as described above and shown on the submitted application drawings. However, for the purposes of the assessment, it is assumed that upon completion proposed tree planting and woodland would not be mature enough to provide visual screening.

Magnitude and Nature of Effect

- 6.5.24. The table below describes the magnitude of effect, which is a combined judgement of geographic extent, duration, the size/scale of effect, and the resulting visual effect.

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Table 6.10: Visual Effects – Completed and Operational Development (Yr1)

Visual Receptors	Sensitivity (Table 6.6)	Size and scale of effect, geographical extent and duration	Magnitude of effect	Significance/ nature of effect
People using the footpaths around Big Water (Viewpoints 1a-1b)	Medium-high	The Proposed Development would result in the loss of some partially open views; however, housing in the western parts of the site would be partially obscured by a landscaped buffer, which would provide varying degrees of visual screening from different viewpoints. The introduction of built form would be limited in scale and set back from key viewpoints, and the visual change would be further moderated by existing vegetation, proposed tree planting, and the presence of surrounding built development at Halsnead Park. Visibility would vary seasonally, with more open views of the proposed housing likely during the winter months when deciduous vegetation is not in leaf, and a greater degree of filtering during the summer. Geographic extent: Close-range, fleeting views, experienced from a section of around 125m of footpath. Duration: Effects would be medium term (5-15 years) and temporary (until proposed landscape matures).	Low-medium	Minor-moderate adverse Local/ Medium Term/ Temporary Not significant
People using routes within Halsnead Park (Viewpoint 2a-2c)	Medium	The density of the built form would largely restrict visibility of the Proposed Development, although occasional glimpsed views would be possible from within the internal road network where there are localised	Low-medium	Minor-moderate adverse Local/ Medium

Visual Receptors	Sensitivity (Table 6.6)	Size and scale of effect, geographical extent and duration	Magnitude of effect	Significance/ nature of effect
		changes in land level or gaps between buildings. Housing in the northern part of the Site would be most noticeable due to its closer proximity; however, views would be filtered by proposed planting within the landscape buffer along the northern boundary. The magnitude of visual change would be increased by the loss of previously glimpsed open views, but this would be moderated by the surrounding urban context and the presence of existing built development. Geographic extent: Close-range, fleeting and glimpsed views along a sequential journey, with short sections of the route affected. Duration: Effects would be medium term (5–15 years) and temporary (until proposed landscape matures).		Term/ Temporary Not significant
People using the M62 (Viewpoint 3)	Low	The extensive intervening vegetation would provide substantial screening of the Proposed Development, including during periods when trees are not in leaf. Housing would be set back behind a wide landscape buffer, and as a result, the development is expected to be barely discernible in views from the M62. The magnitude of visual change would be further reduced by the fleeting and intermittent nature of these views. Geographic extent: Effects would be experienced from	Negligible	Negligible Local/ Medium Term/ Temporary Not significant

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Visual Receptors	Sensitivity (Table 6.6)	Size and scale of effect, geographical extent and duration	Magnitude of effect	Significance/ nature of effect
		around 30m away and from a 600m section of the motorway. Duration: Effects would be medium term (5–15 years) and temporary (until proposed landscape matures).		

Significance of visual effects

- 6.5.25. Upon completion, there would be no significant effects upon visual receptors.
- 6.5.26. The Proposed Development would result in the loss of some partially open views from the paths around Big Water, with housing in the western part of the Site partially visible behind a landscaped buffer. The magnitude of visual change would be moderated by building set-back, intervening vegetation, existing built development at Halsnead Park, and seasonal variation in screening, resulting in minor–moderate adverse effects.
- 6.5.27. In views from routes within Halsnead Park, the density of built form would largely limit visibility of the Proposed Development, with occasional glimpsed views of housing within the northern part of the Site possible. The magnitude of visual change would be moderated by proposed landscape buffers and the surrounding urban context, resulting in minor–moderate adverse effects.
- 6.5.28. Effects on the views from the M62 would be negligible given that the extensive intervening vegetation and wide landscape buffer would largely screen the Proposed Development, rendering it barely discernible in the fleeting views.

6.6. Additional Mitigation / Enhancement Measures and Residual Effects

Additional Mitigation

Construction

- 6.6.1. Mitigation of some identified construction effects on landscape and views would be achieved through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which could be secured by planning condition. It is assumed that this would include the following measures:
- Protection of hedgerow and trees to be retained to BS 5837 (2012), for the duration of clearance, grading and construction works,
 - Protection of other landscape features such as waterbodies and soils through careful working methods and handling of materials to prevent pollution and ensure the integrity of resources,
 - Visual screening of on-site activity where practical, and where this would not be a highly negative visual distraction in itself,

- Careful siting of construction compounds to minimise visual effects on receptors,
- Management of working times to minimise visual effects of construction in evenings, and
- Implementation of the Considerate Contractors Scheme to ensure good neighbourliness.

6.6.2. The Principal Contractor will develop a methodology to carry out the construction of the Proposed Development which will be described in a method statement and Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

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6.6.3. There are no additional mitigation measures proposed. However, the assessment summary and likely residual environmental effects take in to account the planting and enhancement of the open spaces and buffers 15 years after planting, when the vegetation has matured. The maturity of the vegetation would provide appropriate mitigation of the landscape and visual effects.

6.6.4. For the purposes of the assessment the height of the structural tree planting 15 years post planting is assumed to be at least 8m.

Table 6.11: Mitigation (including embedded, by design and additional)

Ref	Measure to avoid, reduce or manage any adverse effects and/or to deliver beneficial effects	How measure would be secured		
		By Design	By S.106	By Condition
1	Retention of existing vegetation	X		
2	Provision of landscape buffers	X		
3	Maximum height parameter of 2.5 storeys / 9.5m above proposed ground level	X		
4	Proposed green infrastructure	X		
5	CEMP			X
6	Management of green infrastructure		X	

Residual Effects – Landscape

Construction

6.6.5. Residual landscape effects during construction would remain the same as assessed within **Table 6.7** above.

Operation – Upon Maturity of Landscape Proposals (Yr15)

6.6.6. Upon maturity of proposed green infrastructure within the landscape buffers and open spaces, there would be no adverse significant residual landscape effects. There would be significant beneficial effects upon landscape features. Effects would be permanent and long term.

6.6.7. **Halsnead Estate LCA – negligible-minor adverse:** Following the establishment of green infrastructure, the development would be largely integrated into the landscape, with visual and

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structural impacts substantially mitigated, although the permanent land-use change would remain.

6.6.8. **Adjacent St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes'** (Landscape Character Assessment of St Helens) within the study area – **negligible**.

6.6.9. **Landscape features within the Site – moderate beneficial:** By Year 15, the maturation of planting and green infrastructure would enhance structural patterns, habitat connectivity, and visual amenity, reflecting the full establishment of trees, hedgerows, grassland, and waterbodies integrated into the existing landscape.

Residual Effects – Visual

Construction

6.6.10. Residual visual effects during construction would remain the same as assessed within **Table 6.8** above.

Operation – Upon Maturity of Landscape Proposals (Yr15)

6.6.11. Upon maturity of the proposed planting and once the development has settled into the landscape there would be no significant visual effects. Effects would be permanent and long term.

6.6.12. **Views from paths around Big Water – minor adverse:** By Year 15, some partially open views would be lost; however, housing in the western part of the Site would be largely screened by mature landscape buffers. Building set-back, intervening vegetation, and existing development at Halsnead Park would further reduce the magnitude of visual change.

6.6.13. **Views from routes within Halsnead Park – minor adverse:** Visibility of the development would remain limited to occasional glimpsed views of housing in the northern part of the Site, with fully established landscape buffers and the surrounding urban context moderating visual change.

6.6.14. **Views from the M62 – negligible:** Effects on views from the M62 would remain negligible, as extensive intervening vegetation and wide landscape buffers continue to screen the development, rendering it barely perceptible in fleeting views.

6.7. Assessment of Cumulative Effects

6.7.1. The focus of the cumulative landscape assessment is on the effects of the Proposed Development in question in conjunction with the developments identified below.

6.7.2. As set out in Chapter 2 and associated Figure 2.1, a number of cumulative sites were identified during the scoping exercise to be considered in relation to potential cumulative effects (listed in Table 2.5). A number of these sites have been scoped out of the cumulative landscape and visual effects assessment because they would not contribute to the overall landscape or visual effects, due to factors such as a lack of intervisibility, distance from the Site, existing development, or their location outside the defined study area or relevant landscape character area. This approach has ensured that the assessment remains focused and proportionate.

6.7.3. The following cumulative sites have been scoped out of the cumulative assessment of landscape and visual effects for the following reasons (references relate to those listed in Table 2.5 and shown on Figure 2.1):

- 7. 20/00329/FUL Resi/Windy Arbor Brow – outside the LCA/within urban area
- 8. 23/02782/FUL Retail/Sovereign Industrial Park – distant/within urban area
- 9. 15/00022/OUT and 20/00767/REM Prescott Cables Site – distant/within urban area
- 10. 20/00789/FUL Resi/East of Prescott Park – distant/within urban area
- 12. 19/00651/FUL paths on disused railway – within urban area/no intervisibility
- 14. 22/00195/KMBC1 multi-user routes – no intervisibility
- 15. 20/00767/REM Resi 2km north of Site – distant/no intervisibility
- 16. 20/00576/FUL mixed use dev/2.5km north of the Site – distant/no intervisibility

6.7.4. The following cumulative sites are included in the cumulative landscape and visual effects assessment (scoped in) because they are located within the Halsnead Park allocation and/or the Halsnead Estate Landscape Character Area and have intervisibility with the Application Site, thereby contributing to overall landscape and visual effects:

- 1. 20/00417/FUL Fox's Bank (Phase 2a) – under construction/ reflected in the baseline
- 2. 20/00399/OUT and 23/02378/REM South of Lickers Lane (Phases 1a/1c/2c)
- 3. 18/00283/HYB Land off Windy Arbor Road – under construction/ reflected in the baseline
- 4. 22/00600/FUL South of Lickers Lane (Phase 2c)
- 5. 20/00494/HYB and 22/00162/REM, 23/01949/REM, 24/00145/REM Former Cronton Colliery site for storage and distribution
- 6. 22/00587/FUL Mercury 62 commercial unit
- 11. South of Whiston/Land north of the M62 SUE, 'Halsnead Park' (remaining areas within the allocation)
- 13. 20/00578/FUL Former Cronton Colliery Country Park

6.7.5. Cumulative effects have been assessed in line with section 7 of the methodology included within **Appendix 6.1**.

Likely Residual Cumulative Effects and their Significance

Construction

If the cumulative sites and the Application Site were to be constructed concurrently, there would be increased levels of landscape and visual effects. Construction activity would contrast with the existing landscape context and setting, and there would be a greater concentration of construction activity within the immediate vicinity of the Site. As a result, effects on landscape character, features, and views would be significant. These effects would be temporary in nature and represent an inevitable consequence of development within an allocated site.

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- 6.7.6. Within the cumulative landscape assessment, the Application Site has been considered alongside all other development sites located within the Halsnead Estate Landscape Character Area (LCA). The LCA is wholly allocated for development and is expected to be developed in its entirety over time as part of the wider allocation. Cumulatively, the development of the Application Site together with the other allocated sites would result in a high magnitude of landscape change, reflecting a substantial transformation of the character area from predominantly open grassland to a developed landscape. However, this change occurs within a context where existing residential development is present along the northern and western edges of the allocation, and where Halsnead Park caravan site occupies a central location within the LCA, introducing an established developed element that is more consistent with the proposed residential allocation. In addition, the LCA contains a strong framework of landscape features associated with the former estate, many of which would be retained and reinforced, helping to provide structure and assist in integrating the development into the landscape. The allocation is guided by a comprehensive masterplan that incorporates extensive green infrastructure, including the provision of a country park, which would help to maintain landscape connectivity and soften the transition between built form and open space. As a result, while the cumulative change in landscape character would be significant and adverse due to the loss of open grassland, the presence of existing development, the retention of key landscape features, and the masterplanned green infrastructure would help to moderate the effects and support a coherent and integrated landscape outcome consistent with the Site's allocation.
- 6.7.7. The St Helens Landscape Character Area BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' lies immediately to the east of the Application Site and has been considered within the cumulative landscape assessment. There would be no direct physical effects on this LCA, as no development is proposed within its boundaries and its defining landscape features and landform would remain intact. However, cumulative development within the adjacent Halsnead Estate Landscape Character Area has the potential to give rise to indirect, perceptual effects, particularly where development may be experienced from the western edge of the Rainhill Slopes. These effects would relate to changes in the setting of the LCA and an increased perception of nearby built development within views. Given the containment provided by existing vegetation, landform, and the retention of landscape structure within the allocation, perceptual effects would be limited in extent and would not alter the fundamental characteristics of the Rainhill Slopes LCA. As such, cumulative effects on this LCA would be minor and not significant.
- 6.7.8. In terms of cumulative effects on landscape features, the combined development of the Application Site and other allocated sites within the Halsnead Estate Landscape Character Area would result primarily in the loss of areas of improved grassland. All notable and valued landscape features, including existing trees, hedgerows, and woodland blocks, would be retained and reinforced. The developments are guided by a comprehensive masterplan incorporating extensive green infrastructure, including new structural planting, open spaces, and a proposed country park. The retention and enhancement of key landscape features, together with the introduction of substantial new green infrastructure, would strengthen landscape structure, enhance habitat connectivity, and deliver improvements to visual amenity, recreational opportunity, and ecological value. As a result, cumulative effects on landscape features are assessed as moderate beneficial.
- 6.7.9. The development of the Application Site alongside other allocated sites within the Halsnead Estate Landscape Character Area would be visible from a number of surrounding roads, including Fox's Bank Lane, Lickers Lane, Main Drive, Windy Arbor Road, the M62, and Cronton Road. People using these routes would experience more visible built form and a reduction in the

existing open views across the allocated land, although some of these views already include elements of the surrounding urban context. Views for receptors would be moderated by existing mature trees and surrounding built development, which limit intervisibility in many locations. Users of public rights of way would experience only limited views, and there would be few long-distance glimpses of the developments. Views of the Application Site itself are already constrained by Halsnead Park to the north, tree cover around Big Water to the west, and the Fox's Bank residential development under construction to the east. The masterplanned allocation includes extensive green infrastructure and a country park, which would provide beneficial visual elements, helping to soften the perception of built development and enhance the visual experience for surrounding receptors. Overall, cumulative visual effects are expected to be localised and generally moderate, reflecting the balance between increased urbanisation across the allocation and the integration provided by retained vegetation and newly created landscape features.

6.8. Summary

Introduction

- 6.8.1. This chapter has assessed the effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character and visual amenity. In particular it has identified and assessed the anticipated effects of change resulting from the Proposed Development on the character and features of the landscape, and on people's views and visual amenity within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area.

Baseline Conditions

- 6.8.2. The Site is not subject to any statutory landscape designations, is not designated for its landscape value, and does not meet the NPPF criteria for a 'Valued Landscape'. It comprises a broadly rectangular shaped parcel of open grassland within a gently undulating landform and lies within the Halsnead Garden Village Sustainable Urban Extension, which is allocated for development.
- 6.8.3. The Knowsley Landscape Character Assessment identifies the Site as falling within the 'Urban Fringe Parkland' Landscape Character Type and the 'Halsnead Estate' Character Area, where landscape character is influenced by remnants of the former estate, including boundary walls, a gatehouse and woodland clumps, and is adversely affected by the visual and noise intrusion of the M62. Land to the east of Fox's Bank Lane falls within St Helens Borough Council and is characterised as Broad Rural Slopes (Landscape Character Area BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes'). Landscape receptors comprise the Halsnead Estate and Rainhill Slopes character areas, together with the Site's own landscape features.
- 6.8.4. The Site is well contained by existing and under construction residential development to the north and east, tree planting along the M62 to the south, and mature trees around Big Water to the west, resulting in limited intervisibility with the wider landscape. With no public access to the Site, potential effects on views are confined to footpaths around Big Water, routes within Halsnead Park, and views experienced by motorists on the M62.

Embedded Mitigation

- 6.8.5. Throughout the construction process, all vegetation indicated for retention within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) would be appropriately protected and retained.

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- 6.8.6. Proposed housing is limited to a maximum of 2.5 storeys / 9.5m above proposed ground level to reflect the scale of surrounding residential development and reduce potential landscape and visual effects. Existing trees would be retained, with peripheral vegetation forming a strong landscape framework that integrates the development into its setting, supports the open space network and reinforces local landscape character. A green corridor of approximately 60 m in width is proposed along the southern boundary, incorporating open space, structural planting, SuDS features and a shared footpath and cycleway to strengthen landscape containment and connectivity. Landscaped buffers along the western boundary adjacent to Big Water and along the interface with Halsnead Park would provide separation from sensitive receptors, soften built form and create a naturalistic landscape setting with opportunities for informal recreation. Collectively, these measures constitute embedded mitigation and align with the principles of the Halsnead Garden Village Design and Local Distinctiveness Guide.

Likely Significant Effects

Construction

- 6.8.7. During the construction phase, significant adverse effects are predicted on the Knowsley Landscape Character Area 'Halsnead Estate', as construction activity would be at odds with the existing landscape context; however, the Site lies within an urban fringe location allocated for development, and the principle of change is therefore considered acceptable. Significant adverse effects on views would also be experienced by users of footpaths around Big Water and routes within Halsnead Park, particularly during winter months, although these effects would be short-term and temporary.
- 6.8.8. Effects on the adjacent St Helens Landscape Character Area BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes', as well as on views experienced by motorists on the M62, would be not significant. While construction would result in the temporary loss of grassland, the majority of the existing trees would be retained, with no significant effects upon key landscape features within the Site.

Operation – (Yr1)

- 6.8.9. On completion of the Proposed Development (Year 1), no significant landscape or visual effects are predicted.
- 6.8.10. Minor adverse landscape effects would occur within the Knowsley Landscape Character Area 'Halsnead Estate', experienced across the Site and its immediate setting as a result of permanent land-use change. Effects on the adjacent St Helens Landscape Character Area BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes' would be negligible. Minor beneficial effects on landscape features within the Site would arise from the introduction of new landscape elements, including native tree and hedgerow planting, areas of species-rich wildflower grassland, and new waterbodies.
- 6.8.11. Minor-moderate adverse visual effects would be experienced from paths around Big Water and routes within Halsnead Park, where the development would be partially visible or glimpsed, moderated by building set-back, intervening vegetation, landscape buffers, and existing development. Views from the M62 would be negligible due to extensive screening by vegetation and the wide landscape buffer.

Additional Mitigation / Enhancement Measures and Residual Effects

- 6.8.12. Construction-phase landscape and visual effects would be mitigated through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), secured by planning condition. No additional mitigation is proposed for the completed development; however, the

assessment accounts for the maturation of proposed green infrastructure, assuming that structural tree planting reaches at least 8 m in height 15 years post-planting.

Construction – Residual Effects

- 6.8.13. Residual landscape and visual effects during construction are expected to remain the same as those assessed at completion, after accounting for embedded mitigation; no additional mitigation is anticipated to alter these effects. Significant adverse landscape effects would remain during construction within the Knowsley Landscape Character Area 'Halsnead Estate'. Significant adverse visual effects would also remain for users of footpaths around Big Water and routes within Halsnead Park, particularly during winter months. These effects would be short-term and temporary, limited to the duration of construction works.

Operation – Residual Effects (Yr15)

- 6.8.14. By Year 15, the proposed green infrastructure would be fully established, integrating the development into the surrounding landscape. There would be no significant adverse residual landscape or visual effects. There would be significant beneficial effects upon landscape features. Effects would be long-term and permanent.
- 6.8.15. Residual effects on the Halsnead Estate LCA would reduce to negligible–minor adverse, while effects on the St Helens LCA ('Rainhill Slopes') would remain negligible. Within the Site, the mature green infrastructure would enhance structural patterns, habitat connectivity, and visual amenity, resulting in moderate beneficial effects.
- 6.8.16. Established landscape buffers would enhance screening and filtering of the built form, reducing levels of adverse visual effects in the longer term, resulting in no significant residual visual effects.

Cumulative Landscape and Visual Effects

- 6.8.17. If the Application Site and other allocated sites were constructed concurrently, both landscape and visual effects would be significant. Construction activity would contrast with the existing open landscape, creating substantial temporary effects on landscape character, features, and local views. Visual receptors on surrounding roads, paths, and public spaces would experience prominent construction activity and concentrated built form, although some views would be partially screened by existing vegetation and surrounding development. These effects would be temporary and represent an inevitable consequence of developing allocated land.
- 6.8.18. Once construction is complete and proposed green infrastructure is established, the Halsnead Estate LCA would undergo a significant, permanent transformation from open grassland to a developed landscape. Retained and reinforced landscape features, extensive planting, and a country park would help integrate development, maintain structural patterns, and provide localised beneficial effects in terms of recreation, biodiversity, and visual amenity. Visual effects would be moderated by mature vegetation, building set-backs, and surrounding context, resulting in localised, generally moderate effects.

Conclusion

- 6.8.19. The Application Site is not designated for its landscape value and lies within the Halsnead Garden Village allocation. The Site is well contained by surrounding development, vegetation, and topography, limiting intervisibility. During construction, significant temporary adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity would occur, particularly within the Halsnead

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Estate LCA and from nearby footpaths. These effects reflect typical construction impacts and are temporary in nature.

- 6.8.20. Upon completion and maturity of the Proposed Development, including retained trees, landscape buffers, peripheral planting, and internal green infrastructure, residual landscape and visual effects would be minor or negligible. Within the Site, maturing vegetation would provide moderate beneficial effects by enhancing structural patterns, habitat connectivity, and visual amenity. Overall, long-term landscape and visual effects would be largely mitigated, and there is no landscape or visual reason why development of the Site would be inappropriate. The proposals integrate with the surrounding context and support local landscape enhancement.
- 6.8.21. **Table 6.12** provides a summary of effects, mitigation and residual effects.

Table 6.12: Summary of Effects, Mitigation and Residual Effects

Receptor / Receiving Environment	Description of Effect	Nature of Effect	Sensitivity Value	Magnitude of Effect	Geographical Importance	Significance of Effects	Mitigation/ Enhancement Measures	Residual Effects
Construction								
Landscape of Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate'	Effect on landscape character	Temporary / Direct	Low-medium	Medium-high	Borough/ District or Local	Moderate adverse	CEMP	Moderate adverse Significant
Landscape of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes'	Effect on landscape character	Temporary / Indirect	Low-medium	Negligible	Borough/ District or Local	Negligible	CEMP	Negligible Not significant
Landscape features within the Site	Effect on landscape fabric	Temporary / Direct	Low	Low	Borough/ District or Local	Minor adverse	CEMP	Minor adverse Not significant
Views from footpaths around Big Water	Effect on views	Temporary / Direct	Medium-high	Medium-high	Borough/ District or Local	Moderate-major adverse	CEMP	Moderate-major adverse Significant
Views from routes within Halsnead Park	Effect on views	Temporary / Direct	Medium	Medium	Borough/ District or Local	Moderate adverse	CEMP	Moderate adverse Significant
Views from the M62	Effect on views	Temporary / Direct	Low	Low	Borough/ District or Local	Minor adverse	CEMP	Minor adverse Not significant

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Receptor / Receiving Environment	Description of Effect	Nature of Effect	Sensitivity Value	Magnitude of Effect	Geographical Importance	Significance of Effects	Mitigation/ Enhancement Measures	Residual Effects
Operation								
Landscape of Knowsley LCA 'Halsnead Estate'	Effect on landscape character	Permanent / Direct	Low- medium	Low	Borough/ District or Local	Minor adverse	Maturity of green infrastructure	Negligible- minor adverse Not significant
Landscape of the St Helens LCA BRS5 'Rainhill Slopes'	Effect on landscape character	Permanent / Indirect	Low- medium	Negligible	Borough/ District or Local	Negligible	Maturity of green infrastructure	Negligible Not significant
Landscape features within the Site	Effect on landscape fabric	Permanent / Direct	Low	Low	Borough/ District or Local	Minor beneficial	Maturity of green infrastructure	Moderate beneficial Significant
Views from footpaths around Big Water	Effect on views	Permanent / Direct	Medium- high	Low-medium	Borough/ District or Local	Minor- moderate adverse	Maturity of green infrastructure	Minor adverse Not significant
Views from routes within Halsnead Park	Effect on views	Permanent / Direct	Medium	Low-medium	Borough/ District or Local	Minor- moderate adverse	Maturity of green infrastructure	Minor adverse Not significant
Views from the M62	Effect on views	Permanent / Direct	Low	Negligible	Borough/ District or Local	Negligible	Maturity of green infrastructure	Negligible Not significant

Receptor / Receiving Environment	Description of Effect	Nature of Effect	Sensitivity Value	Magnitude of Effect	Geographical Importance	Significance of Effects	Mitigation/ Enhancement Measures	Residual Effects
Cumulative and In-Combination								
Application Site considered in combination with all development within Halsnead Estate LCA	Effect on landscape character during operation	Permanent / Direct	Not applicable	Not applicable	Borough/ District or Local	Major-moderate adverse	Maturity of green infrastructure	Moderate adverse Significant
Landscape features within the site considered in combination with features within the wider Halsnead Garden Village	Effect on landscape fabric	Permanent / Direct	Not applicable	Not applicable	Borough/ District or Local	Minor-moderate beneficial	Maturity of green infrastructure	Moderate beneficial Significant
Views from publicly accessible locations, roads and footpaths	Effect on views	Permanent / Direct	Not applicable	Not applicable	Borough/ District or Local	Moderate beneficial/ adverse	Maturity of green infrastructure	Moderate beneficial/ adverse Significant

