

Landscape and Visual Technical Note



Cronton Colliery, RM3
9th October 2024



Tyler
Grange

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Introduction

- 1.1. Tyler Grange Group Limited (TG) has been appointed by Tritax Symmetry Huyton Ltd ('the applicant') to report the effects and commitments of the consented August 2020 masterplan and parameters (planning application ref. 20/00494/HYB, hereafter referred to as 'the 2020 ES') at Cronton Colliery on land south of the M62 within the Halsnead Garden Village (hereafter referred to as 'the site') from a landscape character and visual amenity perspective.
- 1.2. This report revisits and builds upon (where necessary) Chapter 7 of the 2020 ES by assessing the detailed scheme for Units 03 and 04 and associated landscaping (hereafter referred to as 'the RM layout'), before concluding whether the detailed scheme is in compliance with the findings of the 2020 ES.
- 1.3. Chapter 7 of the 2020 ES, considered the following potential visual amenity and townscape character impacts:
 - The Proposed Development's interaction with the existing landscape character areas (landscape receptors); and
 - The effect of the Proposed Development on the visual amenity experienced by people (visual receptors) and how this will change through a series of representative views.
- 1.4. This report is supported by five photomontages, included to the rear of this report, showing the Proposed Development in context with the consented outline parameters.

Findings and Commitments of the 2020 ES

- 1.5. A site walkover was completed in September 2024, confirming that there has been little change to the wider landscape baseline since the original 2020 ES, aside from the permitted construction of Unit 01 which formed the detailed component of the original submission and associated Landscape and Visual Impact (LVIA) work.
- 1.6. There have been no changes to landscape related designations within the local area and the applicable local policy context assessed as part of the 2020 ES remains unchanged.

Construction Phase and Operational Phase Impacts

- 1.7. The following summaries the effects identified within the 2020 ES in relation to townscape and visual impacts.
- 1.8. During construction, in terms of landscape character impacts, the construction activities were considered to have a Medium impact on the Halsnead Estate LCA, with resultant Temporary Moderate Adverse Effects.
- 1.9. During operation, in terms of landscape character impacts, the completed development was considered to have a Medium impact on the Halsnead Estate LCA, with resultant Permanent Minor Adverse Effects.
- 1.10. In terms of construction phase visual impacts, the following was stated in the 2020 ES:



"Construction effects will at worst result in a Temporary Moderate Adverse effect, relating to users of the TA/9/1 public footpath, and private residents at Yew Tree Farm, Higher Park Farm, and the Grade II Listed Old Halsnead. For these receptors, the construction activities on site and/or movements to and from the site will result in a temporary noticeable change in the visual context".

"Temporary Moderate-Minor Adverse effects will be experienced by visitors to Fox's Bank Cemetery and Cronton Road users due to the construction activities on site being visible and having the potential to appear prominent."

"All other receptors will experience a Minor Adverse or Negligible effect during construction."

1.11. In terms of operational phase visual impacts, the following was stated in the 2020 ES:

"The completed development will at worst result in a Moderate Adverse effect for users of the TA/9/1 footpath, and private residents at Yew Tree Farm, Higher Park Farm due to the completed development being visually prominent on the skyline, protruding somewhat above the established wooded skyline."

"Moderate-Minor Adverse effects will be experienced by visitors to Fox's Bank Cemetery due to the development appearing lower in height overall than the established wooded skyline formed by the aforementioned vegetation, and as such will not be overly prominent. Moderate-Minor Adverse effects will also be experienced by residents at Old Halsnead due to the new mitigation planting that will be implemented between the buildings and the development reducing the impact on the Listed Building".

"All other receptors will experience Minor Adverse or Negligible effects during operation. The country park will result in some localised improvement in the green infrastructure on-site and some minor improvements to boundary stock through improved management. Due to the visual containment already afforded by the boundary woodland vegetation, it is not anticipated that any of the internal country park proposals will contribute to any beneficial visual effects on the visual receptors identified."

Mitigation

1.12. Mitigation and enhancement measures have been incorporated into the consented scheme proposals through the delivery of a site-wide landscape strategy for Green Infrastructure enhancements submitted as part of the 2020 ES. These measures are summarised as follows:

- Retention and Enhancement of Tree Belts alongside the M62, including strengthening of the landscape structure along the M62 corridor;
- Enhancement of Old Wood and Wooded Edge Ecotone, including the retention and enhancement of the Ancient Woodland at Old Wood through the establishment of a 15m development buffer along the site-side of the woodland edge;
- New Woodland Planting west of Old Halsnead, incorporating the replanting of native woodland block west of Old Halsnead to replace trees removed to facilitate development and bolster historic woodland with creation of positive active frontage to proposed buildings;
- Use of native woodland planting, ecotones, heathland scrub and grassland /meadows within and bounding the developed areas to integrate with the country park and Old Halsnead; and



- Planting and management of verges and boundaries to car parks as meadow / grass-land with scattered trees to edges.

Methodology

- 1.13. A visual envelope or Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was identified through a desk-based review of Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, GIS topographic analysis and site work to inform the study area and selection of photoviewpoint locations for the 2020 ES. Given the minor reduction in development height for this reserved matters application when considered against the consented and previously modelled parameters, there has not been a need to re-run the original ZTV nor introduce any nor landscape character areas for the purposes of this report. As requested by the Local Planning Authority, 3no additional photoviewpoint locations have been assessed as part of this report to review intervisibility from within the grounds of Old Halsnead (private views, photoviewpoints 26, 27 and 28) towards the Unit 03 development.
- 1.14. Originally, 25no. photoviewpoint locations and 5no. verified photomontages, also referred to as Accurate Visual Representations (AVRs), were assessed and prepared to illustrate the baseline visual context and proposed development in context to inform the assessment process for the 2020 ES. For the purposes of this report 5no. revised AVRs (from previously assessed viewpoint 2, a re-orientated close proximity vantage point from viewpoint 24 and 3no views from within the grounds of Old Halsnead (viewpoints 26 - 28), showing the Proposed Development in context with the consented parameters.
- 1.15. These AVRs have been prepared as a proving exercise to demonstrate that in terms of massing and elevation, the Proposed Development will sit below the consented parameters, whilst also illustrating the effectiveness of proposed on-site landscaping. The locations of these AVRs are shown at Figure 1.1 below.



Figure 1.1 – RM3 AVR locations



- 1.16. On the basis of what is shown primarily in the AVR for viewpoint 2, it has been determined that re-running the full image deck of previously prepared AVRs is not warranted, as the Proposed Development will be shown to be at a lower height and similar massing / orientation in all the previously assessed views, negating the need to re-model the full suite of original AVRs. The 5no. AVRs from viewpoints 2, 24, 26, 27 and 28 provide sufficient information to extrapolate judgements of compliance and impact from a landscape and visual perspective.

Review of the Detailed Scheme

- 1.17. In terms of the construction information assessed previously within the 2020 ES, this remains the same for the RM layout including all previous assumptions in terms of mitigation, phasing and construction methodologies. The proposed detailed layout for Units 03 and 04 does not therefore give rise to any altered construction phase LVIA effects.
- 1.18. As illustrated in the AVR from viewpoint 2, in terms of operational phase effects, the proposed design for Units 03 and 04 is smaller in terms of overall height when compared with the maximum elevational parameters previously assessed as part of the 2020 ES and as such the level of significance assessed previously will not be altered and the RM layout will not give rise to any additional residual effects. In terms of operational landscape character or visual effects there will be no change from the 2020 ES assessment findings.
- 1.19. From the outset new buffer planting within the site along the edge of the Old Halsnead residential curtilage had been incorporated into the design parameters for the 2020 ES to maximise the opportunity for new screening along the site-side edge of the property whilst limiting the proximity of new development in relation to the dwelling. This is illustrated from within the grounds of Old Halsnead with view 26 illustrating Unit 03 in the context of Unit 01 and AVRs illustrating west facing (Unit 03 facing) vistas from within the rear garden area and front curtilage of Old Halsnead. Such views illustrate the interface between Unit 03, proposed landscaping east of Unit 03 and the filtering effect of existing site boundary vegetation which is proposed for retention.
- 1.20. The plan extract below (see Figure 1.2) provides a cross section showing the relationship between Unit 03 and Old Halsnead. In the cross section the distance between the eastern side of Unit 03 and the site boundary is 40.7m. The distance between the eastern side of Unit 03 and the site Old Halsnead itself is 59.7m. The cross section also highlights the ground level change on site which enable Unit 03 to be sat at a lower level than Old Halsnead, reducing its visual prominence and perceived elevation. The eastern side of Unit 03 also comprises the proposed on-site landscaping buffer which measures between 31m – 51m in width.



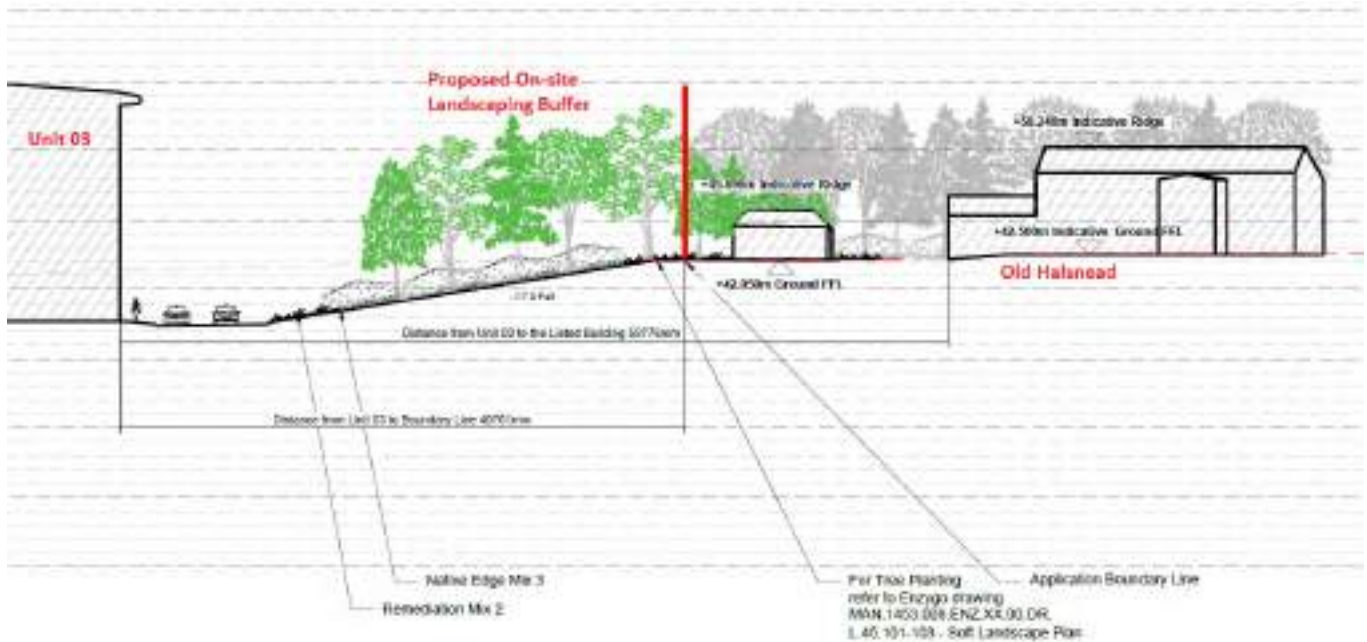


Figure 1.2 – Cross section extract showing Unit 03 on the left, the proposed landscaping, red line site boundary and Old Halsnead on the right.

- 1.21. Consistent with the landscape strategy submitted with the 2020 ES, as illustrated in the AVR from viewpoints 24, 26 – 28, and as detailed within the detailed planting proposals submitted as part of the RM layout, new scrub, scattered trees and woodland planting will be established west of Old Halsnead. Such planting is shown within the submitted AVRs to illustrate a growth simulation to demonstrate the visual experience at implementation (Year 0), establishment (Year 5) and maturity (Year 15).
- 1.22. In accordance with the original landscape strategy, the proposed planting east of Unit 03 and west of Old Halsnead will incorporate the replanting of native woodland trees to replace those trees which were permitted to be removed at the consented outline stage in order to facilitate the development, with additional planting of native woodland trees, creating ecotones through a mix of trees, scrub and grassland / meadow planting to bound the eastern side of Unit 03. As illustrated in the AVRs this can supplement the retained tree line on the site boundary as a means of strengthening the physical buffer between the development and the Grade II listed property Old Halsnead.
- 1.23. Following a site visit into the grounds of Old Halsnead undertaken in September 2024, it is clear that site-facing views from the Listed Building into the eastern portion of the site / Unit 03 is currently heavily filtered by existing intervening trees within and beyond the site. The property is surrounded to the north, east and west by a belt of mature tree cover which offers garden enclosure and this will remain intact and then strengthened by the proposed on-site landscaping of new trees, scrub and grassland habitat as shown within the suite of AVRs.
- 1.24. In conclusion, and as illustrated in the 5no AVRs included with this report, the height, massing and orientation of the RM layout would be perceived in a similar manner to that which was concluded within the 2020 ES (where the Proposed Development will sit below the consented outline parameters in terms of maximum elevation and massing) and the layout



seeks to screen the development from Old Halsnead through the provision of new tree and shrub planting to supplement and strengthen the existing tree line which bounds the site and Old Halsnead curtilage.

- 1.25. Given the consistency with the previously assessed outline parameters, and the delivery of a robust soft landscaping response, which is in accordance with the landscape strategy submitted with the 2020 ES, in terms of operational effects experienced local to the RM layout and within the wider landscape it is concluded that the impacts resulting from the detailed proposals for Units 03 and 04 will be consistent with the 2020 ES assessment findings. A diverse habitat structure and layering of screening vegetation to the east of Unit 03 will ensure that the visual impact in relation to Old Halsnead will be no worse than Moderate-Minor Adverse where existing vegetation gaps are present (Viewpoint 26) and Minor Adverse where visibility is already heavily filtered by existing vegetation (Viewpoints 27 and 28).



Viewpoint 02 - Existing View











Viewpoint 24 - Existing View









Viewpoint 25 - Existing View



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Note: This is a composite image made up of 50mm equivalent photographs joined together horizontally (by means of cylindrical projection) to form an overall field of view which is wider than that seen in detail by the human eye. For correct perspective viewing, this page should be viewed at comfortable arm's length when printed at full size (297mm x 841mm).

Date: 08 October 2024
Drawing Number: C279_OVP01d
Drawn by: MP
Checked by: AP

Project title: Cronton Colliery
Client: Tritax Symmetry
Drawing Title: Viewpoint 25 Existing View









Viewpoint 26 - Existing View











Viewpoint 27 - Existing View













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