

Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited

# **HINCKLEY NATIONAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE**

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## Preliminary Environmental Information Report

### **Chapter 11: Landscape and visual effects**

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January 2022

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**This document forms a part of a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) for the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange project.**

A PEIR presents environmental information to assist consultees to form an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed development and provide feedback.

This PEIR has been prepared by the project promoter, Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited. The Proposed Development is described in Chapter 3 of the PEIR and is the subject of a public consultation running from 12 January to 9 March 2022.

**Details of how to respond to the public consultation are provided at the end of Chapter 1 of the PEIR and on the project website:**

**<http://www.hinckleynrfi.co.uk/>**

This feedback will be taken into account by Tritax Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited in the preparation of its application for a Development Consent Order for the project.

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## Chapter 11 ◆ Landscape and visual effects

### INTRODUCTION

- 11.1 This chapter sets out a preliminary assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects, potential mitigation measures and residual effects of the Proposed Development as described in Chapter 3: *Project description* of this Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). At this stage, this assessment is preliminary only and is not exhaustive; other effects and mitigation requirements might be identified in light of ongoing baseline studies and survey work, stakeholder/public consultation and evolution of the project design. An Environmental Statement (ES) will be submitted with the application for the Proposed Development, and this will set out the full assessment.
- 11.2 The assessment is informed by a preliminary Landscape and Visual Baseline Assessment (LVA) (see Appendix 11.1), a Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Appraisal and Strategy (Appendix 11.2), a Soil and Agricultural Land Quality Report (Appendix 11.3) and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Appendix 11.4), which should be read in conjunction with this Chapter.
- 11.3 Landscape and visual effects are independent but related issues. Landscape effects relate to changes to the landscape fabric and the features contributing to the landscape character and quality. Visual effects relate to the appearance of such changes within views and the resulting effect on visual amenity.
- 11.4 This chapter describes the assessment methodology, the baseline conditions at the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) site and surroundings, the likely significant landscape and visual effects, the mitigation measures required and the likely residual effects after these measures have been employed.
- 11.5 This chapter should be read in conjunction with the following PEIR Appendices and other pertinent documents submitted:
- Appendix 11.1 – Landscape and Visual Baseline Report, which includes full details of survey methods, methodology and associated drawings;
  - Appendix 11.2 – Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy;
  - Appendix 11.3 – Soils and Agricultural Land Quality Report;
  - Appendix 11.4 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment
  - Figure 11.1 - Site Location and Site Boundaries;
  - Figure 11.2 - Environmental Planning Considerations;

- Figure 11.3 - Public Rights of Way and Informal Open Space;
- Figure 11.4 - Site Character and Context;
- Figure 11.5 - Published Landscape Character Areas;
- Figure 11.6 – Topography;
- Figure 11.7 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility of DCO Site in its Current Form;
- Figure 11.8 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility of Proposed Parameters;
- Figure 11.9 - Photoviewpoint Locations;
- Figure 11.10 – Photoviewpoints;
- Figure 11.11 - Night Photoviewpoint Locations;
- Figure 11.12 - Night Photoviewpoints;
- Figure 11.13 - Public Rights of Way Assessment;
- Figure 11.14 - Public Rights of Way Strategy;
- Figure 11.15 - Illustrative Landscape Strategy;
- Figure 11.16 – Scheme Parameters;
- Figure 11.17 – Landscape Sections;
- Figure 11.18 – Survey Observations;
- Figure 11:19 – Agricultural Land Classification;
- Figure 11:20 – Public Rights of Way Strategy: Rail Crossings;
- Figure 11:21 – Significant Visual Effects at Construction;
- Figure 11:22 – Significant Visual Effects at Year 1; and
- Figure 11:23 - Significant Visual Effects at Year 15.

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

### EIA Scoping opinion

11.6 An EIA Scoping Opinion was received from the Secretary of State in December 2020 which

included comments in relation to the Landscape Section of the Scoping Report. The scoping advice and how it has been addressed are summarised in Table 11.1.

**Table 11.1: Secretary of State’s comments from EIA Scoping Opinion in relation to the assessment of landscape and visual effects (December 2020).**

<b>PINS ID</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Inspectorate’s comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
4.5.1	n/a	No matters have been proposed to be scoped out of the assessment.	No response required.
4.5.2	10.10 – 10.19	The Scoping Report identifies the relevant policy relating to this aspect. It is noted that the consultation response from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) identifies further policy of relevance for informing the landscape assessment and proposed mitigation, such as Green Infrastructure provision.	These further policies have been considered.
4.5.3	10.22 & 10.54	The Scoping Report states that consultation with local authorities to inform the scope of the assessment has already commenced. Stakeholders should be consulted on the latest proposals and the viewpoints agreed based on the new Order Limits and height parameters. The outcomes of any discussions with statutory consultees should be documented in the ES and provide justification for the approach taken	Further consultation has taken place with all relevant parties as documented at para 11.30.
4.5.4	10.52	Note the input from Elmeathorpe Parish Council regarding open views from Station Road (not just St Mary’s Church).	An additional view (Photoviewpoint 48) has been assessed from this location.

PINS ID	Ref.	Inspectorate’s comments	Response
4.5.5	n/a	The landscape and visual impact assessment in the ES should include impacts during both day and night. The predicted light levels at the site and its vicinity should be clearly identified and the ES should explain any assumptions that the prediction of light levels has been based on.	A narrative will be provided within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment from a select number of photoviewpoint locations. The assessment will be based upon the lighting strategy that consent will be secured as a requirement of the DCO.

11.7 Consultee responses to the Applicant’s 2020 EIA Scoping Report concerning the assessment of landscape and visual effects are summarised in Table 11.2 below.

**Table 11.2: Consultee responses to the Applicant’s 2020 EIA Scoping Report in relation to the assessment of landscape and visual effects (December 2020).**

Consultee	Comments	Response
Blaby District Council	For both the construction and operational phases the effects of lighting and seasonal variations must be detailed.	A narrative will be provided within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment from a select number of photoviewpoint locations. This assessment would be based upon an outline Lighting Strategy that will be secured as a requirement of the DCO.
	The consideration of mitigation where significant adverse effects cannot be avoided through design should also be implemented. Consideration on its own is not sufficient.	No response required.
	The long-term management of any landscaping and planting areas	A Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will focus on the

Consultee	Comments	Response
	along with any other retained planting must be considered.	establishment and ongoing management and maintenance of the ecological and landscape areas throughout the Proposed Development. The LEMP will be secured as a requirement of the DCO.
	Taking in to account the size and height of the development it is considered that the landscape and visual impact assessment should include photomontages of the proposed developments. The viewpoints for photomontages should be agreed with stakeholders, including local planning authorities.	A number of photomontage locations had previously been considered and agreed with consultees. This has been reviewed in light of changes to the project and resubmitted and agreed with relevant parties.
	Careful consideration should be given to the form, siting and use of materials and colours given the size of the structures. This should be in terms of minimising the adverse visual impact of them.	A design code for buildings is to be submitted to Blaby District Council (BDC) for approval and secured as a requirement of the DCO. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) also provides further detail whilst landscape buffers and tree planting will provide softening mitigation in views towards the Proposed Development. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy and illustrative Landscape Sections are provided in Figures 11.15 and 11.17.
	As there will clearly be a visual impact at night as well as day, the relationship between the effects assessed in this chapter and any chapter dealing with lighting should be clearly stated to make it clear that the full range of visual effects have been assessed.	Narrative will be provided for in the ES with regard to potential lighting impacts, based on an outline Lighting Strategy for the Proposed Development which will be secured as a requirement of the DCO.
	Given the nature, scale and	Narrative will be provided for in the ES

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>operation times (24 hours, 7 days a week) of the proposed project, the inclusion of a standalone chapter on lighting within the Environmental Statement would be welcomed. Where lighting could have an impact on surrounding villages and towns these impacts should be fully explored through the EIA process and suitable mitigation included.</p>	<p>with regard to potential lighting impacts, based on an outline Lighting Strategy for the Proposed Development and off-site highways which will be secured as a requirement of the DCO.</p>
<p>Burbage Parish Council</p>	<p>The landform across the area is very gently rolling with localised topography influenced by small streams around settlements, which are often on localised plateaux. The land use is predominantly agricultural and primarily arable with relatively long-distance views. Buildings are low rise and blend into the landscape.</p>	<p>No response required.</p>
	<p>The Applicant has listed Landscape Designations in the area which does not include Burbage Common. The Applicant states “no Registered Parks and Gardens lie within the 5km search area”. This clearly shows no consideration of Burbage Common has been made. This is an important asset to the local community and should have specific safeguarding references built into the ES. Note: Burbage Common is HBBC’s largest countryside site and is located on the edge of Hinckley. Great for walkers, and dog lovers alike, a mix of semi-natural woodland and unspoilt grassland is 200 acres in size. In addition, the Common is</p>	<p>Burbage Common is not a designated Registered Park and Garden. Burbage Common is however a Country Park and area of Open Access Land and is considered as such in this PEIR and forthcoming ES.</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>well used for horses, along the trails and open landscape. There are also several paddocks and corrals along Burbage Common Road, and other livestock. The Common is immediately adjacent to the proposed site.</p>	
	<p>The ES should consider the impacts of light, noise and vista change upon the Common and surrounding areas and state the mitigation proposed on these impacts.</p>	<p>Narrative will be provided for in the ES with regard to potential lighting impacts, based on an outline Lighting Strategy for the Proposed Development which will be secured through a Requirement of the DCO.</p> <p>The Noise and Vibration Chapter (Chapter 10) sets out the potential effects of noise and vibration impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development as well as mitigation measures. These have been considered within the PEIR and will be considered in the full ES.</p> <p>This PEIR Chapter considers the vistas from a number of locations within Burbage Common and are detailed within the PEIR assessment and full ES.</p>
	<p>The ES should consider the impacts on horse riding in the immediate area around the proposed development.</p>	<p>A Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy (Appendix 11.2) considers the condition, usage and impact upon the bridleway network as well as a strategy for improvements to the network.</p>
	<p>The ES should ensure Burbage Parish Council is involved in the visual assessment process and determining appropriate viewpoints in addition to those</p>	<p>Consultation has been undertaken with Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) upon the location of agreed Photoviewpoints.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	listed in the Scoping Report.	
	It is noted in the Scoping Document that the Applicant may propose diversion of footpaths and rights of way running across the development site. Some of these diversions may be via underpasses.	No response required.
	The ES should include an assessment of the impact on amenity value of footpath diversions, and will include provision for the assessment of risks to pedestrians using such routes.	A number of photoviewpoints are taken from PRoW within and surrounding the Main Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) Site and broad study area. The effects upon these in visual terms will be considered in the assessment.
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC)	Although lighting is mentioned in the landscape and visual effects section of the report no detail is provided of how this will be assessed for the operational use. A methodology for the assessment of lighting should be submitted and agreed. Lighting during the construction may be controlled under a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).	Narrative will be provided for in the ES with regard to potential lighting impacts, based on an outline Lighting Strategy for the Proposed Development which will be secured as a requirement of the DCO. Lighting for construction will be controlled via an outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (outline CEMP) that will be secured as a requirement of the DCO.
	The Scoping Report identifies the relevant policy and legislation relating to landscape and visual effects. Policy 20 of the HBBC Core Strategy provides the overarching strategy for the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure in the borough. The application site partially lies within the Southern Green Infrastructure Zone. The Borough Council has	The Hinckley and Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy (May 2020) has been considered.

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>published an updated Green Infrastructure Strategy (May 2020) which will inform the preparation of the new Local Plan. The Strategy includes a range of interventions and opportunities for GI provision within the Southern GI Zone which could contribute towards enhancement and mitigation opportunities including enhancing the Southern Green Wedge, delivering a more resilient Burbage Common and Woods Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and increased woodland planting.</p> <p>The Scoping Report has regard to the relevant policies of the HBBC Local Plan and Landscape Character Assessment, however, regard should also be given to relevant spatial objectives of the Core Strategy including SO7 Healthier Active Communities, SO10 Natural Environment and Cultural Assets and SO12 Climate Change and Resource Efficiency. To inform the landscape assessment and proposed mitigation, regard should also be given to the following studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Review April 2020.</li> </ul> <p>Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2017</p>	<p>These policies and documents have/will be considered in the PEIR and forthcoming ES.</p>
Historic England	<p>We have the following specific comments to make regarding the Scoping Report 'Landscape and</p>	<p>There has been and will continue to be a close working relationship between landscape and heritage disciplines In</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>Visual Effects’ chapter:</p> <p>Historic England considers it essential that heritage considerations are included in the proposed scope of the ‘Landscape and Visual Effects’ chapter to ensure that the results can be integrated with those of the ‘Cultural Heritage’ chapter. We recommend that indicative wireframes/photomontages are produced for key viewpoints where significant heritage assets are affected which should include: any views towards heritage assets in which development would be visible; views from designated heritage assets; and views between contemporaneous or otherwise associated heritage assets in which both assets and any proposed development would be visible.</p> <p>Viewpoints should not, in our opinion, be limited to areas and routes with public access. We recommend that any proposed list of viewpoints is reviewed with these considerations in mind.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>Historic England urges your authority to address the issues set out above with the Applicant to ensure that the EIA will provide a sound basis on which to assess the significance of any heritage assets affected and the effect on significance of the impacts of the proposed scheme. A sound EIA report is the basis on which to</p>	<p>the HNRFI project team. Cross-referencing between chapters will be provided in the forthcoming ES.</p> <p>Photoviewpoint and photomontages locations have been reviewed and agreed between both disciplines and consulted with each respective relevant consultees.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>identify (and where possible avoid, minimise or mitigate) what may be substantial direct and indirect impacts on assets of local, regional and national importance.</p>	
<p>Leicestershire County Council</p>	<p>We can confirm that having studied the documents in detail, the Landscape and Visual Effects section adequately and thoroughly covers the Main site as referred to on page 15 of the document. Furthermore, we are pleased to see that this updated document includes assessment of additional viewpoints recommended by LCC in 2018.</p>	<p>No response required.</p>
	<p>We do however note that the DCO Order limits now appear to include an eastern and western arm to the development which was not previously identified in the 2018 documents; we understand that these areas are to be considered as part of this exercise and as such we would expect a full, further investigation of this wider site including the eastern and western arm and including an assessment of a number of additional viewpoints.</p>	<p>Photoviewpoint and photomontages locations have been reviewed and agreed with LCC.</p>
<p>Natural England</p>	<p>Natural England would wish to see details of local landscape character areas mapped at a scale appropriate to the development site as well as any relevant management plans or strategies pertaining to the area. The EIA should include assessments of</p>	<p>A plan of published landscape character areas covering the draft DCO Order Limits is contained within Figure 11.5. The PEIR includes an assessment of potential significant effects on landscape and visual amenity.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>visual effects on the surrounding area and landscape together with any physical effects of the development, such as changes in topography. The European Landscape Convention places a duty on Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to consider the impacts of landscape when exercising their functions.</p>	
	<p>The EIA 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, based on the good practice guidelines produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. The Landscape Character Assessment 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, as detailed proposals are developed.</p>	<p>The PEIR and forthcoming ES is undertaken in accordance with industry best practice including the <i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (GLVIA3)</i> as produced by the Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).</p>
	<p>Natural England supports the publication <i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment</i>, produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management in 2013 (3rd edition). The methodology set out is almost</p>	<p>No response required.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>universally used for landscape and visual impact assessment.</p>	
	<p>In order to foster high quality development that respects, maintains, or enhances, local landscape character and distinctiveness, Natural England encourages all new development to consider the character and distinctiveness of the area, with the siting and design of the proposed development reflecting local design characteristics and, wherever possible, using local materials. The EIA process should detail the measures to be taken to ensure the building design will be of a high standard, as well as detail of layout alternatives together with justification of the selected option in terms of landscape impact and benefit.</p>	<p>A design code for buildings is to be submitted to BDC for approval and secured as a requirement of the DCO. The DAS also provides further detail whilst landscape buffers and tree planting will provide softening mitigation in views towards the Proposed Development. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy and illustrative Landscape Sections are provided in Figures 11.15 and 11.17.</p>
	<p>The assessment should also include the cumulative effect of the development with other relevant existing or proposed developments in the area. In this context Natural England advises that the cumulative impact assessment should include other proposals currently at Scoping stage. Due to the overlapping timescale of their progress through the planning system, cumulative impact of the proposed development with those proposals currently at Scoping stage would be likely to be a material consideration at the time of determination of the planning</p>	<p>This PEIR sets out in brief how cumulative sites and effects will be dealt with in the forthcoming ES taking into account PINS Advice Note 17.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	application.	
	The assessment should refer to the relevant National Character Areas which can be found on our website. Links for Landscape Character Assessment at a local level are also available on the same page.	National Character Areas have been considered within the Landscape and Visual Baseline (Appendix 11.1), PEIR and forthcoming ES.
	Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help encourage people to access the countryside for quiet enjoyment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways are to be encouraged. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be incorporated where appropriate.	A Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy (Appendix 11.2) has been progressed and considers the condition, usage and impact upon the PRow network as well as a strategy for improvements to the network.
	The EIA should consider potential impacts on access land, public open land, rights of way and coastal access routes in the vicinity of the development. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated for any adverse impacts. We also recommend reference to the relevant Right of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIP) to identify public rights of way within or adjacent to the proposed site that should be maintained or	<p>A Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy (Appendix 11.2) has been progressed and considers the condition, usage and impact upon the PRow network as well as a strategy for improvements to the network. This document considers the relevant ROWIPs pertinent to the draft DCO Order Limits.</p> <p>Coastal access routes are not relevant to the site.</p> <p>In terms of visual amenity, a number of</p>



Consultee	Comments	Response
	enhanced.	photoviewpoints are taken from relevant PRoW, areas of Open Access Land and areas of public open space. These are considered within this PEIR and forthcoming ES.
Sharnford Parish Council	The HNRFI site will be surrounded by a landscape buffer. How will this hide a 36-metre-high building?	It has never been the intention to entirely hide the Proposed Development. Landscape buffers and tree planting will provide softening mitigation in views towards the Proposed Development. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy and illustrative Landscape Sections are provided in Figures 11.15 and 11.17.
Stoney Stanton Parish Council	Section 10.4 states <i>“It does not consider potential effects as a consequence of development within the Order Limit boundary encompassing junction 21 of the M1 motorway”</i> . The development within the Order Limit boundary will be the main issue with regards to Landscape and Visual effect. Earlier in the document it stated that B8 buildings will be some 33m in height, and the rail terminal will cover a significant area. If this is not taken into account then the section is pointless as this will be a major Landscape and visual effect.	No works are proposed at junction 21 of the M1 motorway.
	Section 10.12 refers to local planning policy, it only refers to Blaby District, and as the development is on the border of Hinckley and Bosworth Council and indeed some of the proposed development runs through it, this should also be considered.	Hinckley and Bosworth Planning Policy is considered in the Landscape and Visual baseline (Appendix 11.1) of this PEIR and the forthcoming ES.

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p>Section 10.23 states “... <i>the main site does not fall within any national or local landscape designation</i>” is a true statement, however it fails to mention that there would be a hard border with a designated ancient woodland, Burbage Common Country park and other areas that are designated as such. The appearance of this proposed development should take this into consideration given the extensive use of Burbage Common and Woodland as an ‘escape’ for many people in the area and indeed the only green space for recreational purposes in the vicinity.</p>	<p>The adjacent Ancient Woodland is considered within the Landscape and Visual baseline (Appendix 11.1) of this PEIR and the forthcoming ES.</p>
	<p>Section 10.32 states “...<i>in very good to excellent weather conditions</i>” to use this to form a representative view of the area, visits need to be undertaken in all weather conditions and in all seasons to form a representative view.</p>	<p>Winter condition views represent the worst-case scenario, when vegetation is not in leaf and intervisibility as a result is at its greatest.</p>
	<p>Section 1.52 states “<i>In the wider landscape there will be opportunities for partial views of the proposed development from roads</i>” Given the proposal to build 36m high B8 buildings on a landscape that is predominantly flat, the B8 buildings will become the significant view from many areas and dwarf any natural or manmade features. The section needs to include that the proposed site will detract from the natural</p>	<p>No response required.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Response
	beauty of the Burbage Common and associated ancient woodland.	
	Section 10.52 needs to specify that Burbage Common Road is a single track road, unsuitable for HGV's with passing places, the description in this section leads to a vision of a main road that is used extensively.	No response required.
	Section 10.54 needs to reassess the other affected areas as a further increase of 6m to the height of these B8 buildings will mean there are other sensitive visual receptors. To complete the assessment using a different criteria should not be considered as appropriate.	An updated Zone of Theoretic Visibility plan (ZTV – see Figure 11.8) has been produced based on updated development parameters.
	Section 10.59 states <i>“Where likely significant adverse effects cannot be avoided through design, additional mitigation measures will be considered.”</i> This statement needs to read <i>“...additional mitigation measures will be implemented”</i> .	No response required.
	Section 10.61 only considers the impact to the immediate area, and not that to the wider areas (within 2.5km) that will also have significant detrimental detracting from the proposed development and should be considered.	Effects are considered within this PEIR and forthcoming ES chapter and relevant appendices.
	Section 10.104 <i>“opportunities exist to improve and enhance the</i>	Likely significant impacts are being assessed through the EIA process, using

Consultee	Comments	Response
	<p><i>structure of the landscape across the area”</i> this statement is an opinion and is contradictory to that in 10.102 where it is noted that <i>“development of the site in the manner proposed would alter the character of the landscape”</i>. However, the proposed development is summed up in a positive manner the true impact to the local area (5km) needs to be fully understood and agreed with all affected parties.</p>	<p>an approved methodology.</p>

### Assessment methodology and significance criteria

- 11.7 Provided within this section is an abridged methodology for the LVIA. An unabridged version can be found within Appendix 11.1, along with a glossary of terms used within the assessment.
- 11.8 The assessment methodology for assessing landscape and visual effects is based on the following best practice guidance:
- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition* (LI/IEMA, 2013);
  - *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (NE, 2014); and
  - Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 *Visual Representation of Development Proposals* (17 September 2019).
- 11.9 Other reference documents used to understand the baseline position in landscape terms comprise published landscape character assessments appropriate to the DCO Site’s location and the nature of the Proposed Development.
- 11.10 The nature of landscape and visual assessment requires both objective analysis and subjective professional judgement. Accordingly, the assessment will be based on the best practice guidance listed above, information and data analysis techniques, including mapping the predicted zone of visual effects using Geographic Information Systems, whilst photoviewpoint locations are consulted and agreed with LPAs. It uses quantifiable factors wherever possible and subjective professional judgement where necessary, and is based on clearly defined terms (see Glossary, Appendix 11.1: Annex 4.0).

### Assessment methodology

- 11.11 The tables within Technical Appendix 11.1, Annex 1.0 offer a template for assessing the overall sensitivity of any landscape or visual receptor, as determined by combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape or view as set out at paragraph 5.38 of GLVIA 3rd Edition (2013).
- 11.12 However, the assessment of overall sensitivity can change on a case-by-case basis. For example, a high susceptibility to change and a low value would result in a medium overall sensitivity, unless it can be demonstrated that the receptor is unusually susceptible or is in some particular way more valuable. A degree of professional judgment applies in arriving at the overall sensitivity for both landscape and visual receptors.

### Significance of effect

- 11.13 The purpose of the EIA process is to identify the likely significant environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of development proposals. Schedule 4 to the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('2017 EIA Regulations) specifies the information to be included in all environmental statements, which should include a description of:

*'The likely significant effects of the development on the environment, which should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.'*

- 11.14 To consider the likely significance of any effect, the sensitivity of each receptor is combined with the predicted magnitude of change to determine the significance of effect, with reference also made to the geographical extent, duration and reversibility of the effect within the assessment. Having taken such a wide range of factors into account when assessing sensitivity and magnitude at each receptor, the significance of effect can be derived by combining the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the matrix in Table 11.3.
- 11.15 The parameters identified for the evaluation of effects follows recommendations for the assessment of visual effects in guidance published by *NatureScot*<sup>1</sup> (previously Scottish Natural Heritage), and is commonly used by landscape practitioners throughout the UK. It states that:

*'The matrix of three classes on each axis producing 9 cells, only 3 of which are typically judged as significant, is in our view simplistic and unrefined and quite unsuitable as a tool for widespread use. In particular it implies a degree of certainty about a very restricted definition of significance that we do not believe is justified. Expanding a 3 x 3 (9 cells) matrix to 4 x 4 (16 cells) or even 5 x 5 (25 cells) is much more representative of the diversity of size*

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) *Visual Assessment of Windfarms Best Practice*, Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report F01AA303A

*and sensitivity found in visual impact assessment.'*

**Table 11.3: Level of effects matrix.**

Overall Sensitivity	Overall Magnitude of Change				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
<b>Very High</b>	<b>Substantial</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Major/- Moderate</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate/- Minor
<b>High</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Major/- Moderate</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate/- Minor	Minor
<b>Medium</b>	<b>Major/- Moderate</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate/- Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible
<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate/- Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible	Negligible
<b>Very Low</b>	Moderate/- -Minor	Minor	Minor/- Negligible	Negligible	Negligible/- None

11.16 Each effect is described and evaluated individually through the combination of all of the relevant factors and assessed as either significant or not significant. For landscape and visual effects, those effects identified at a substantial, major, major/moderate or moderate level (bold type within matrix above) are generally considered to be significant and those effects assessed at a moderate/minor, minor, minor/negligible or negligible level are considered to be insignificant.

11.17 In certain cases, where additional factors may arise, a further degree of professional judgement may be applied when determining whether the overall change in the view will be significant or not and, where this occurs, this is explained in the assessment.

**Cumulative effects**

11.18 Cumulative effects generally occur where there might be simultaneous or sequential visibility of two or more developments of the same type and scale, or where the

consideration of other schemes would increase an effect identified. Where other similar schemes are in the planning system and made known to the Applicant, or are under construction, these are considered in conjunction with the Proposed Development. PINS Advice Note 17: Cumulative effects assessment relevant to nationally significant infrastructure projects (PINS, 2015c) will be taken into account in identifying cumulative schemes.

- 11.19 Those cumulative development sites within the near vicinity of the Proposed Development (see Figure 20.1), which have the potential to result in cumulative landscape and visual effects, will be assessed against the likely LVIA effects of the Proposed Development to determine whether cumulative effects are likely and if so their significance. This will be reported in the ES.

### *Field surveys*

- 11.20 Field assessments of local site circumstances, including a photographic survey of the character and visual context of the development site and its surroundings, have been undertaken between December 2017 and April 2021 in order to gather robust baseline information. Field assessments were undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance that states that such assessments should be undertaken across the seasons to allow for the variation in effects arising from the change in leaf cover between summer and winter. Although field visits were undertaken across the seasons, the vast majority of Photoviewpoints were taken in winter conditions when the leaves are absent from the majority of trees/vegetation and visibility is at its greatest.
- 11.21 These field-based assessments were undertaken by qualified landscape architects, during good weather conditions.

### *Study areas*

- 11.22 As a result of baseline analysis, together with an understanding of the nature and scale of the development, and the likely extent and distribution of effects, the assessment defines the following study areas, as represented on Figure 11.1:
- Broad Study Area – set at 5km distance from the Main HNRFI Site (providing the broad geographical context); and
  - Detailed study area – set at 2km from the Main HNRFI Site (the area within which any significant effects are likely to fall).
- 11.23 A broad study area of 5km was adopted, as shown in Figure 11.1, enabling the geographical scope of the assessment to be defined and to provide the wider geographical context of the study. The search focussed on the local planning policy context, national and local landscape and other associated designations (e.g. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), historic parks and gardens) and a general geographical understanding of the site and its broader context (for example, in relation to landform, transport routes and the distribution and nature of settlement). The rationale for the above study areas has

been consulted upon and accepted by LCC and HBBC.

- 11.24 Following initial analysis and subsequent field work, and having an appreciation of the development proposed, a refinement of the study area has been undertaken that focuses on those areas and features that are likely to be affected by the proposals. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility for the parameters of the Main HNRFI Site was produced across the 5km study area to aid understanding of the potential geographical extent of visual effects and help define a more detailed study area. The extent of this detailed study area is 2km from the Main HNRFI Site, although occasional reference may be made to features beyond this area where appropriate. This detailed study area is illustrated on Figure 11.1.
- 11.25 With regard to the off-site highways works, given the limited nature of many components of the intended works and the pre-existing transport character purpose they occupy (i.e., existing roads, signs, railway infrastructure etc.), these will be considered on a case-by-case basis in terms of their potential for significant adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity through the LVA.

### **Limitations and assumptions**

- 11.26 Baseline conditions have been established using existing assessments, available documentation and field assessment; it is important to note that these baseline conditions might change between submission of the application for the Proposed Development and before or during the construction of the Proposed Development. This could be, for example, because of other developments going ahead that are currently unknown.
- 11.27 Within reasonable limits, the assessment is undertaken in consideration of the ‘worst case’ scenario for the development, i.e. those potential outcomes, situations or location that would result in the most elevated effect on landscape and visual receptors. It therefore identifies the greatest degree of change likely to accrue and may be subject to mitigating factors or alternative conditions that might reduce those effects. For example, visual effects are considered in both a summer and winter context; although the magnitude of change and effect is expressed for winter landscape conditions when trees are bare of leaf cover and the visibility of development would be at its greatest. Where this is the case, the assessment identifies alternative conditions or further mitigation which might result in impacts being less pronounced.
- 11.28 The assessment will apply a pre-determined methodology to arrive at conclusions. This procedure brings a degree of objective, procedural rigor into what otherwise might be judged to be ‘personal opinion’. Professional judgement still plays its part, but the purpose of adopting a methodology is to make the process as clear and logical as possible.
- 11.29 This assessment will be undertaken with regard to the phases of the Proposed Development described in PEIR Chapter 3: *Project description*, and the assumed build rate therein. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy Document will be submitted with the DCO application, illustrating the approach to green infrastructure within the Proposed Development and describing proposed planting, access and rights of way, habitat creation and outdoor amenity provisions within open areas. This will be accompanied by an



appropriate management plan to be agreed by all parties. For the purposes of the PEIR, an illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan and Illustrative Sections are contained at Figures 11.15 and 11.16.

## CONSULTATIONS

### Consultation meetings and correspondence

11.30 Comments received from the Pre-Application Community Consultation in 2018 and Highways Consultation in 2019 have been considered in the production of this PEIR. A limited number of concerns were raised during these consultation exercises in respect of the impact of the Proposed Development on Landscape and Visual Amenity and PRoW within and around the DCO Site. Accordingly, it is considered that these potential impacts are fully addressed in the PEIR.

11.31 In addition to the consultee comments received on the 2020 Scoping Response (Table 11.2) various consultees were engaged regarding the following documents below in Table 11.4.

**Table 11.4: Summary of engagement with consultees on landscape and visual considerations.**

Consultee	Document consulted upon
Blaby District Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Land Classification (ALC).</li> <li>• Landscape Baseline.</li> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> <li>• Arboricultural Impact Assessment.</li> </ul>
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Land Classification (ALC).</li> <li>• Landscape Baseline.</li> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> <li>• Arboricultural Impact Assessment.</li> </ul>
Leicestershire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape Baseline.</li> </ul>

Consultee	Document consulted upon
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> <li>• Arboricultural Impact Assessment.</li> </ul>
British Horse Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> </ul>
Elmesthorpe Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> </ul>
Sapcote Parish Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> </ul>
Leicestershire Footpath Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> </ul>
Leicestershire and Rutland Bridleways Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> </ul>
Leicestershire Local Access Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Rights of Way Appraisal and Strategy.</li> </ul>

11.32 The EIA process has also been informed by further consultation with HBBC Case Officer and LCC Landscape Architect (advisor to BDC) in January – February 2019 and again in January 2021 in order to agree the photoviewpoint selection and methodology. A summary of recent (2021) correspondence is summarised below:

***Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council***

- 18.01.21 – Email correspondence to HBBC to discuss additional photoviewpoint locations for western A47 link and potential of Eastern Village Link and Junction 21 (the latter two no longer required);
- 18.01.21 – Email response from HBBC. New landscape contact now dealing with this site;
- 29.01.21 – Email correspondence from EDP to HBBC, on photoviewpoint consultation;
- 29.01.21 – Email response from HBBC, requesting one further photoviewpoint location (Photoviewpoint 56);
- 03.02.21 – Email correspondence from EDP to HBBC, querying viewpoint location; and

- 05.02.21 – Email response from HBBC with accurate viewpoint location given.

11.33 Consultation was also held with HBBC Senior Green Space Officer in order to discuss the proximity of the Proposed Development and Burbage Common and Woods Country Park.

### *Leicestershire County Council*

- 18.01.21 – Email correspondence to LCC to discuss additional photoviewpoint locations for western A47 link and potential of Eastern Village Link and Junction 21 (the latter two no longer required);
- 18.01.21 – Email response from LCC confirming receipt and intention to review; and
- 28.01.21 – Email response from LCC Landscape and Heritage officers confirming agreement on photoviewpoint locations and additional suggested locations.

11.34 In terms of the PRoW network across the DCO Order Limits, including those at Barwell, Earl Shilton, Thorney Fields Farm (modification B8), Elmesthorpe and Outwoods (modification HB4) railway crossings, the PRoW officer at LCC has been consulted with. Recent correspondence includes:

- 26.02.21 - Telephone correspondence with PRoW officer at LCC to discuss potential blocking back of rail/PRoW crossings and alternative options;
- 26.02.21 - Follow up email to PRoW officer at LCC to confirm matters discussed;
- 22.06.21 – Latest PRoW Strategy issued to LCC PRoW officer by email; and
- 19.07.21 – No issues raised by LCC PRoW officer on intended strategy. Recommendations made by LCC on widths and construction of PRoW.

## RELEVANT LAW, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

### *Legislative and policy context*

#### *European Landscape Convention 2007*

11.35 The European Landscape Convention (ELC), which was signed by the UK in February 2006 and became binding in 2007, is the first international treaty to focus specifically on landscape issues and aims to protect and manage landscapes in Europe and to plan positively for change within them. The ELC highlights the importance of developing landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and creation of landscapes, and establishing procedures for the general public and other stakeholders to participate in policy creation and implementation.

11.36 The ELC defines landscape as *'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result*

*of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'* (Council of Europe, 2004).

- 11.37 The ELC is a convention of the Council of Europe, not the European Union (EU). Therefore, the United Kingdom's (UK) exit from the EU does not affect the status of this convention, and as of 31 January 2020, the UK remains a signatory.

### **Hedgerow Regulations 1997 SI No.1160**

- 11.38 The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (SI No.1160) aim to protect hedgerows, which play an important role in supporting and enhancing biodiversity, as well as defining the character of the English and Welsh countryside.
- 11.39 According to the regulations, a hedgerow is important if it has existed for 30 years or more, and it satisfies various wildlife, landscape or historical criteria specified in the regulations.

### **Policy framework**

#### **National Policy Statement for National Networks (2014)**

- 11.40 The National Policy Statement for National Networks, hereafter referred to as the 'NPS', sets out the need for, and government's policies to deliver Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) on the national road and rail networks in England. It is the primary statement of policy for promoters of NSIPs on the road and rail networks and forms the basis for the examination by the Examining Authority and decisions by the Secretary of State. As Proposed Development includes transport and highways infrastructure, regard has been had to relevant policy in the NPS for National Networks, including but not limited to:

- Environmental and social impacts (NPS paragraphs 3.2-3.5);
- Criteria for *'good design'* for national network infrastructure (NPS paragraphs 4.28-4.35);
- Climate change adaptation (NPS paragraphs 4.36-4.47);
- Landscape and visual impacts (NPS paragraphs 5.143-5.161); and
- Land use including open space, green infrastructure and Green Belt (NPS paragraphs 5.162-5.185).

- 11.41 The landscape and visual effects of national networks projects are considered on pages 75-79 of the National Networks NPS. In paragraphs 5.144 – 5.146 the NPS states:

*'Where the development is subject to EIA the applicant should undertake an assessment of any likely significant landscape and visual impacts in the environmental impact assessment and describe these in the environmental assessment. A number of guides have been*

*produced to assist in addressing landscape issues<sup>2</sup>. The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies, as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant's assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England.*

*The applicant's assessment should include any significant effects during construction of the project and/or the significant effects of the completed development and its operation on landscape components and landscape character (including historic landscape characterisation).*

*The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include any noise and light pollution effects, including on local amenity, tranquillity and nature conservation.'*

- 11.42 In terms of NSIP development in areas that are not subject to a national landscape designation such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Parks, the NPS states at para 5.156-5.157:

*'Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally and protected by local designation. Where a local development document in England has policies based on landscape character assessment, these should be given particular consideration. However, local landscape designations should not be used in themselves as reasons to refuse consent, as this may unduly restrict acceptable development.*

*In taking decisions, the Secretary of State should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to avoid adverse effects on landscape or to minimise harm to the landscape, including by reasonable mitigation.'*

### **National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)**

- 11.43 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, this being the key principle running throughout the document and the development of NPPF policies. Considering this broad aim alongside the three dimensions of sustainable development, in particular that relating to environmental matters, the role of LVIA is key in the creation of successful places in which to live and work.
- 11.44 For landscape, this means recognising the intrinsic beauty of the countryside (NPPF paragraph 174) and balancing any 'harm' to the landscape resource with the benefits of the scheme in other respects.

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<sup>2</sup> *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 3rd Edition, April 2013. Natural England publishes profiles for National Character Areas.

11.45 With regards to statutory landscape designations, paragraph 176 - 177 states that:

*'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.'*

11.46 No part of the draft DCO Order Limits falls within or adjacent to the above specified statutory landscape designations nor are any located within the broad study area.

11.47 In consideration of landscape and visual impacts of light pollution, paragraph 185 bullet point (c) states that new development should *'limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation'*.

### **Local planning policy**

11.48 The DCO Order Limits fall primarily across two LPA areas: Blaby District and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. The relevant adopted local statutory planning documents include:

- Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) (adopted 2013);
- Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (adopted 2019);
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2009); and
- Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted 2016).

11.49 The 'Cross In Hand' roundabout (ref: Junction HR1) of the DCO Order Limits falls on the boundary of Rugby Borough Council (RBC) and Harborough District Council (HDC). The relevant adopted local statutory planning documents include:

- Rugby Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2019); and
- Harborough Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2019).

11.50 The limited nature of the works required to Junction HR1 are unlikely to result in the potential for significant landscape or visual effects and as such, no further review of local planning policy has been undertaken.

### **Supplementary planning documents**

11.51 The following additional supplementary guidance is relevant in terms of understanding landscape character across both the Blaby and Hinckley and Bosworth LPA areas:

- Blaby District Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2020);
- Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Review April (2020);
- Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2017);
- Landscape Character Assessment for Hinckley and Bosworth (2017);
- Hinckley and Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020);
- Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007); and
- Landscape Assessment of the Borough of Rugby (2006).

**Table 11.5: Summary of relevant planning policy concerning landscape and visual amenity**

Policy	Summary of policy requirement	Response to policy
<b>Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2013</b>		
Policy CS2 – Design of New Development	<i>‘In order to secure a high quality environment, all new development should respect distinctive local character and should contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality, contributing to a better quality of life for the local community.’</i>	High quality landscape design and potential mitigation measures have been identified to contribute to policy objectives, which have been reflected through a combination of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and Access Statement;</li> <li>• Parameter Plans;</li> <li>• Illustrative Masterplan;</li> <li>• Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Figure 11.15); and</li> <li>• Landscape Sections (Figure 11.17).</li> </ul>

Policy	Summary of policy requirement	Response to policy
<p>Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure (GI);</p>	<p><i>‘Blaby District Council and its partners will seek to protect existing, and provide new, networks of multi-functional green spaces’. This network will comprise public and privately owned land. Green Infrastructure can include formal open spaces for sport and recreation, green areas that can be used for informal recreation, areas that are valuable for their biodiversity (flora and fauna and network links), areas that are of cultural importance (heritage assets and their settings), areas that maintain natural and ecological processes (such as floodplains) and other areas that contribute to the health and quality of life of communities.’</i></p>	<p>A design code for buildings is to be submitted to BDC for approval and secured as a requirement of the DCO. The DAS also provides further detail whilst landscape buffers and tree planting will provide softening mitigation in views towards the Proposed Development. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy and illustrative Landscape Sections are provided in Figures 11.15 and 11.17.</p>
<p>Policy CS18 – Countryside;</p>	<p><i>‘Land will be designated as Countryside where it is outside the limits to built development and outside designated Green Wedges and Areas of Separation.</i></p> <p><i>Within areas designated as Countryside, planning permission will not be granted for built development, or other development which would have a significantly adverse effect on the appearance or character of the landscape.’</i></p>	<p>The Proposed Development will have significant adverse effects on the local landscape character. Potential mitigation measures have been identified through initial design and secondary measures (such as planting and green infrastructure to reduce effects as illustrated within the Illustrative Landscape Strategy (Figure 11.15).</p>
<p><b>Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (2019)</b></p>		
<p>Policy DM2 – Countryside</p>	<p>This policy largely echoes Policy CS18 of the Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy).</p>	<p>Potential mitigation measures have been identified, with regard to a review of published documentation</p>



Policy	Summary of policy requirement	Response to policy
	<p>In consideration of landscape, the policy further adds:</p> <p><i>a) 'The development is in keeping with the appearance and character of the existing landscape, development form and buildings. Decisions in respect of impact on landscape character and appearance will be informed by the Blaby Landscape and Settlement.</i></p> <p><i>Character Assessment, Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Landscape Characterisation Study, National Character Areas and any subsequent pieces of evidence; and</i></p> <p><i>b) The development provides a satisfactory relationship with nearby uses that would not be significantly detrimental to the amenities enjoyed by the existing or new occupiers,</i></p> <p><i>including but not limited to, consideration of:</i></p> <p><i>i. overdevelopment of the site due to factors including footprint, scale and mass;</i></p> <p><i>ii. privacy, light, noise, disturbance and overbearing effect; and</i></p> <p><i>iii. vibration, emissions, hours of working, vehicular activity.'</i></p>	<p>(Appendix 11.1), through initial design and secondary measures (such as planting and green infrastructure to reduce effects (Figure 11.15 and 11.17). Green Infrastructure within the proposed development will be designed to integrate with the wider landscape context (Figure 11.15).</p>
<b>Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy (adopted 2009)</b>		
Policy 6 – Hinckley/Barwell/Earl	The Green Wedge overlaps with a small portion of the DCO Order	Potential mitigation measures have been identified through

Policy	Summary of policy requirement	Response to policy
Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge	Limits. The Policy safeguards the area from development. Any development that does take place within, should retain the function of the Green Wedge, retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within urban areas, retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation and it should retain the visual appearance of the area.	initial design and secondary measures (such as planting and green infrastructure) to reduce effects.
Policy 20 – Green Infrastructure	The Proposed Development partially lies within the Southern GI Zone. The 2020 Green Infrastructure Strategy includes a range of interventions and opportunities for GI provision within the Southern GI Zone which could contribute towards enhancement and mitigation opportunities including enhancing the Southern Green Wedge, delivering a more resilient Burbage Common and Woods SSSI and increased woodland planting.	These GI measures are considered in the design and mitigation of the Proposed Development. The Illustrative Landscape Strategy (Figure 11.15)
<b>Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted 2016)</b>		
Policy DM4 – Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation	Policy seeks to protect intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside by safeguarding it from unsustainable development.	High quality design and potential mitigation measures have been identified to contribute to policy objectives.

Policy	Summary of policy requirement	Response to policy
Policy DM9 – Safeguarding Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces	Policy states that: <i>‘All developments within or affecting Natural and Semi-Natural Open Spaces should seek to retain and enhance the accessibility of the space and its recreational value whilst ensuring the biodiversity and conservation value is also enhanced.’</i>	The Proposed Development responds to adjacent assets such as Burbage Common and Woods Country Park and PRoW with regard to accessibility, biodiversity and conservation value. As illustrated within Figure 11.15, the areas adjacent to Burbage Common and Woods Country Park will be safeguarded from development through the conversion to naturalistic, biodiverse areas of public open space.

## BASELINE CONDITIONS

11.52 A general description of land and surrounding area of the Proposed Development is provided in Chapter 2: *Site description* of this PEIR.

### Landscape designations

11.53 As illustrated in Figure 11.2 and of relevance here with regard to landscape value, no part of the DCO Order Limits lies within a nationally or regionally designated landscape. The closest designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the Main HNRFI Site is the Cannock Chase AONB, 43 km to the north-west. The closest designated National Park is the Peak District, 60 km to the north-north-west.

### Landscape character

11.54 Published landscape character assessments provide a helpful understanding of the area and the landscape context for the DCO Order Limits, with character assessments having been undertaken from the national level down to more localised regional assessments.

11.55 At the national level, the DCO Order Limits lies within National Character Area (NCA) 94 ‘Leicestershire Vales’. The key characteristics are broadly described as follows:

- *‘An open landscape of gentle clay ridges and valleys underlain by Mercia Mudstone and Lias groups bedrock but with an extensive cover of superficial deposits*

*occasionally giving rise to moderately steep scarp slopes. There is an overall visual uniformity to the landscape and settlement pattern;*

- *Land use characterised by a mixture of pasture and arable agriculture that has developed on the neutral clay soils;*
- *Distinctive river valley of the Soar and Swift, with flat flood plains and gravel terraces together with tributaries including the Sence. Riverside meadows and waterside trees and shrubs are common, along with waterbodies resulting from gravel extraction;*
- *Woodland character derived largely from spinneys and copses on the ridges and the more undulating land and from waterside and hedgerow trees and hedgerows. The density, height and pattern of hedgerows varies throughout;*
- *Diverse levels of tranquillity associated with contrasts between busy urban areas and some deeply rural parts. Large settlements dominate the open character of the landscape. Leicester, Lutterworth, Hinckley and Market Harborough and related infrastructure, including major roads are often visually dominant;*
- *Frequent small towns and large villages often characterised by red brick buildings and attractive stone buildings in older village centres and eastern towns and villages;*
- *Frequent, imposing spired churches are also characteristic, together with fine examples of individual historic buildings; and*
- *Rich and varied historic landscape, with the nationally important Bosworth Battlefield near Sutton Cheney, prominent historic parklands and country houses, ridge-and furrow earthworks and important medieval settlement remains, for example at Wistow Hall, Gumley, Knaptoft and Peatling Magna.'*

11.56 While the key characteristics of the NCA are broadly representative of the wider landscape, for the scale of the development proposed, it is considered that the description of landscape character undertaken at the sub-regional level is more relevant in establishing the landscape resource baseline. Accordingly, while NCA 94 has been used to inform this LVA, it will not be carried forward to the detailed assessment of effects, with the focus being on local landscape character areas.

11.57 The following subsections identify the county and borough published landscape character areas within the near vicinity of the Project Site, whilst a more detailed narrative is included in the LVA Baseline (Appendix 11.1). Figure 11.5 illustrates the location of Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) in relation to the DCO Order Limits.

### **Blaby Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2020)**

11.58 A review of the Blaby District Council Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (BDCLCA) finds that the DCO Order Limits fall across five Landscape Character Areas (LCA) within the Blaby District. As illustrated in Figure 11.5, the northern parts of the Main HNRFI Site and most of the A47 Link lie in LCA 6: 'Elmesthorpe Floodplain'.

- 11.59 The southern portions of the Main HNRFI Site, M69 Junction 2 fall within LCA 1: ‘Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland’.
- 11.60 The majority of off-site highway modifications east of the Main HNRFI Site and M69 are located within LCA 15: ‘Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland’, save for one isolated off-site highway modification works (B5) at Coventry Road/Croft Road junction c.920m east of Croft. This is located partially within LCA 5: ‘Croft Hill and Quarries’ and partially within LCA 3: ‘Cosby Agricultural Parkland’.
- 11.61 A summary of which elements are located within each BDCLCA LCA is provided below in Table 11.6.

**Table 11.6: HNRFI project components locations within BDCLCA LCAs.**

<b>LCA</b>	<b>HNRFI component</b>
LCA1: Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland	Main HNRFI, A47 Link Road
LCA 3: Cosby Agricultural Parkland	Highways modification B5
LCA 5: Croft Hill and Quarries	Highways modification B5
LCA6: Elmesthorpe Floodplain	Main HNRFI Site and A47 Link Road
LCA 5: Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland	Modifications B2, B3, B4, B6, B8 and M69 Junction 2.

***Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment (2017)***

- 11.62 Within the Hinckley and Bosworth District Council Landscape Character Assessment (HBBCLCA) one LCA, ‘Burbage Common Rolling Farmland’ covers the north-western end of the A47 Link Road and highways modification HB2 and HB3.
- 11.63 The A47/Ashby Road highways modification (ref: HB1) and the Outwoods (HB4) railway crossing is located within the Urban Character Area (UCA) 4: Hinckley.
- 11.64 A summary of which elements are located within each HBCDLCA LCA is provided below in Table 11.7.

**Table 11.7: HNRFI project components within HBBCLCA LCAs.**

LCA	HNRFI component
LCA1: Burbage Common Rolling Farmland	A47 Link Road, M69 Junction 2, Outwoods railway crossing HB4
UCA 4: Hinckley	Highways modification HB1, Outwoods railway crossing HB4

11.65 The above character areas are reviewed further in Section 3 of Technical Appendix 11.1.

**Rugby Landscape Character Assessment (2006)**

11.66 Within the Rugby Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (RBCLCA), highways modification HR1 falls within the ‘High Cross Plateau, Open Plateau’.

**Harborough Landscape Character Assessment (2007)**

11.67 Within the Harborough District Council Landscape Character Assessment (HDCLCA), highways modification HR1 falls within the ‘Upper Soar’.

**Landscape character of the Main HNRFI Site**

11.68 While the above assessments provide a helpful contextual appreciation of the wider landscape, none provide a sufficiently site-specific assessment to allow a reliable assessment to be made of the effects of the Main HNRFI Site on the landscape. In particular, published assessments tend to miss more localised influences on the landscape, such as the effect of traffic or existing development on tranquillity and visual character, especially in close proximity to settlements. This requires an appropriately detailed assessment of the Main HNRFI Site and its immediate surroundings, which has been undertaken, and is described below.

11.69 Site visits have taken place between 2015 and 2021 in good to excellent weather conditions. The visits were complemented by a review of aerial photography, mapping and field assessments from publicly accessible locations (e.g. from local roads and PRoW).

11.70 The (approximately) 225.57 hectares (ha) Main HNRFI Site is located approximately 5km to the north-east of Hinckley town centre, in a level area of mixed farmland to the north-west of M69 junction 2 as illustrated in Figure 11.1. The Main HNRFI Site lies between the Felixstowe to Nuneaton railway to the north-west and the M69 motorway to the south-east, with the village of Elmesthorpe to the north. The DCO Site also includes Junction 2

of the M69 motorway and extends south-westwards along the motorway to accommodate proposed junction upgrade works.

### Soil types

- 11.71 The underlying mudstone bedrock across Main HNRFI Site has an influence both on soil profiles and drainage with a large part of the site comprising '*slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils*'<sup>3</sup>, whilst some small areas in the north of the site comprise '*slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage*', which have impeded to slightly impeded drainage down to the mudstone aquifer below.
- 11.72 The Soils and Agricultural Quality Report (Appendix 11.3) confirms that the Main HNRFI is underlain by heavy clay loam topsoils that directly overlie slowly permeable clay subsoils. A small area in the north-east of the Main HNRFI Site has lighter permeable upper layers (see Figure 11.19). The heavy soils provide land of subgrade 3b agricultural quality (83% of the site) and the lighter soils provide subgrade 3a land (1% of the site); all the land is limited by wetness. The remaining 16% comprises non-agricultural land.

### Vegetation and hydrological features

- 11.73 The current land use of the Main HNRFI Site is predominantly arable farmland, comprising medium to small, enclosed field parcels, typically bounded with mature hedgerows with few hedgerow trees. Also included within the site are a number of small to medium Improved Grassland field and few Poor Semi-improved Grassland. Areas of amenity grassland are extremely limited and located adjacent to dwellings only.
- 11.74 Along part of the eastern edge of the Main HNRFI Site to the southern extent of the Main HNRFI Site are limited areas of Semi-improved Neutral Grassland forming the motorway verge. In addition, there is a small strip of Broadleaved Semi-natural Woodland and an area of Broadleaved Plantation Woodland near the footbridge over the M69 (halfway along the eastern boundary of the Main HNRFI) and within the M69 junction 2 roundabout is an area of Broad-leaved Plantation Woodland. A number of Broadleaved Scattered/Parkland Trees are located within the site, along the B4669 Hinckley Road to the west of Junction 2 and southward along the M69. Another group of Broadleaved Scattered/Parkland Trees runs alongside the Hinckley to Leicester Railway along the north-western boundary of the Main HNRFI site.
- 11.75 As mentioned in the previous section, there is no Ancient Woodland within the Main HNRFI Site. However, there are several blocks of Ancient Woodland close to the south-western edge of the Main HNRFI Site, at Burbage Wood, Aston Firs, Freeholt Wood and Sheepy Wood. Two other areas of Ancient Woodland are located within the 5km study area of the main site, with Kirkby Spinney located c.3.8km to the north-west of the site and Crab-tree Spinney located c.3km to the south of the Main HNRFI. In terms of other veteran trees, one was identified across the Main HNRFI Site (T486) and is located near

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/index.cfm>

Hobbs Hayes.

- 11.76 Small areas of dense scrub are located near Hobbs Hayes and Woodhouse Farm whilst a larger portion is located between the access track to Hobbs Hayes and the M69 Junction 2 roundabout. A thin strip of scattered scrub is present along most of the boundary with the Hinckley to Leicester railway.
- 11.77 A survey compliant with BS5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction* of the trees within the footprint of the Main HNRFI Site has been undertaken. The survey was undertaken by an appropriately qualified arboriculturalist in May 2018 and updated in October 2021 to check previously surveyed items and include any new trees within the DCO Order Limits. The survey recorded a total of 200 individual trees, 104 groups of trees and 193 hedgerows and 9 woodlands totalling 506 items. Of these 506 items, 13 have been categorised as A, of high quality and value; 148 have been categorised as B, of moderate quality; and 260 have been categorised as C, of low quality. In addition, 85 items have been categorised as U and due to their impaired condition are considered unsuitable for retention, irrespective of development.
- 11.78 Hydrological features comprise nine field ponds scattered over the Main HNRFI Site, one unnamed stream corridor that passes from Freeholt Wood south of the Main HNRFI Site, which travels in a north-eastern direction to the eastern boundary and M69, and few dry ditches.

### **Historic landscape and features**

- 11.79 The Leicestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation data for the Main HNRFI Site is available via the Leicestershire archaeology data service and identifies that the area containing the Main HNRFI Site is formed part of areas HLE5028 (reorganised piecemeal enclosure), HLE5123 (planned enclosure), HLE5026 (piecemeal enclosure), HLE5119 (very large post-war fields), HLE5027 (major road junction) and HLE5029 (farm complex). As such the historic landscape of the Main HNRFI Site was created predominantly as a result of parliamentary enclosure of the 18th century (of which a number of internal field boundaries reflect this pattern of enclosure), which has experienced subsequent reorganisation in 19th and 20th centuries.
- 11.80 The Heritage Chapter (Chapter 13) identifies that within the fields north of Woodhouse Farm and in a field to the south of Freeholt Lodge were identified as representing reduced ridge and furrow earthworks which highlights the long term agricultural character and land use of the Main HNRFI Site since at least medieval times. At the time of the visits the Main HNRFI Site was generally under pasture.
- 11.81 Ancient Woodland bounds the Main HNRFI Site to the south-west and provides a dense vertical natural feature which forms a backdrop to the agricultural land within the Main HNRFI Site.



### **Built features**

- 11.82 Major road infrastructure included within the Main HNRFI Site includes the M69 motorway, which runs along the eastern site boundary to the southern tip of the Main HNRFI Site. The M69 Junction 2 roundabout, a short section of the B4669, two bridges (Aston Lane and Lychgate Lane), and one footbridge over the M69 are also included within the Main Order Limits. A short section of the B4668 is also included in the draft Order Limits to facilitate the A47 Link Road connection to the Main HNRFI Site.
- 11.83 Burbage Common Road is the principal road running through the Main HNRFI Site and provides access to properties and farm buildings located on the main site, which are mainly centred around Woodhouse Farm located centrally within the Main HNRFI Site.
- 11.84 A separate access road off the B4669 provides access to Freeholt Lodge and Hobbs Hayes within the southern portion of the Main HNRFI Site. There is a mobile home park and a separate gypsy and traveller settlement off Smithy Lane to the south of the proposed Main HNRFI Site, west of M69 junction 2.
- 11.85 Separating the main body of the Main HNRFI Site and the A47 Link is a section of the Leicester to Hinckley railway and a bridge that allows Burbage Common Road from within the Main HNRFI Site to pass over the railway towards Burbage Common and Woods Country Park.
- 11.86 Buildings on the Main HNRFI Site itself include the dwellings of Woodhouse Farm, Old Woodhouse Farm, Woodfield, The Weeping Willows, Hobbs Hayes Farm and Freeholt Lodge. In addition to these are a number of ancillary agricultural structures that form farm complexes around Woodhouse Farm and Hobbs Hayes.

### **Sensory and perceptual elements**

- 11.87 As noted above, the underlying vale character of land surrounding the Main HNRFI Site forms an expansive generally flat to gently undulating landscape. As such, distant visibility can be limited due to subtle variation in topography and by mature vegetation within the landscape or built form forming settlements. From within the Main HNRFI Site, a number of telecommunications masts can be seen, appearing in relatively close proximity to the east of the site and pass over the Main HNRFI Site towards its southern extent and appear as visual detractors within the landscape. The eastern boundary of the Main HNRFI Site is formed by the M69, of which traffic movements, along with trains passing along the Leicester to Hinckley railway line, exert an urbanising influence over areas adjacent to these features and into the area of the Main HNRFI site, due to the noise and negative effect this causes on the tranquillity.

### **A47 Link Road**

- 11.88 The A47 Link Road includes a corridor of land extending north-westwards across the railway from the edge of the Main HNRFI Site to the B4668/A47 Leicester Road.

### *Soil types*

11.89 The land forming the area south of the A47 Link is Mercia Mudstone overlain by Bosworth Clay Member (clay and silt). The National Soil Map records this land as within the Salop Association, comprising slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged reddish fine loamy over clayey soils. These soils are typically imperfectly to poorly draining and give land limited by wetness restrictions. This land is likely to be of poorer agricultural quality, subgrade 3b, in line with the land already surveyed.

### *Vegetation and hydrological features*

11.90 The current land use of the A47 Link Road corridor is predominantly arable farmland, comprising medium to small, enclosed field parcels, typically bounded with managed low-lying hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. Field margins are typically scrubby. This area of the A47 Link Road corridor cuts across four arable fields and hedgerow boundaries, with the southern edge formed by hedgerow aligning Burbage Common Road.

### *Historic landscape and features*

11.91 The historic landscape of the A47 Link Road corridor is similarly a result of parliamentary enclosure of the 18th century, which has experienced subsequent reorganisation in 19th and 20th centuries and of no more than low sensitivity.

11.92 Two veteran trees (T835 and T854) are located centrally, halfway along the A47 Link Road corridor just north of the Burbage Common eastern car park.

### *Built features*

11.93 Built features within the A47 Link Road corridor comprise Burbage Common Road which runs along its southern edge, the B4688 at the north-western end and the bridge over the railway from the Main HNRFI Site to the A47 Link Road. Otherwise, there are no other built features within the A47 Link part of the DCO Order Limits.

### *Sensory and perceptual elements*

11.94 As in the Main HNRFI Site, the underlying vale character forms an expansive generally flat to gently undulating landscape. As such, distant visibility can be limited due to subtle variation in topography and by mature vegetation within the landscape or along transport routes such as the B4688 / A47 Leicester Road. From within this area, land rises eastwards towards the Leicester to Hinckley railway that provides an urbanising influence when trains pass. Bridge Farm is also located in this direction and comprises a large farm complex on elevated ground overlooking the area between the railway and the B4468/A47 Leicester Road to the north-west. The B4668/A47 cannot be seen but can be heard as vehicles travel at speed. Burbage Common Road which bounds this area to the south, whilst a rural lane, is relatively busy with walkers, horse riders and cars visiting the Burbage Common and Wood Country Park to the south. Whilst there are some influences from nearby roads and rail networks, the area is relatively tranquil with floodplain extending

northwards to Elmesthorpe and the Country Park located to the south.

### Off-site highways and junctions

11.95 The vast majority of the areas concerning the highway modifications relate to existing transport links, which by their nature are unremarkable and all of typical highways character including hardstanding, road markings, signage, pavements and verges, with occasional mature vegetation at their edges such as trees, hedgerows and scrub.

### Visual amenity baseline

11.96 To inform the Study Area for the consideration of Landscape and Visual effects, two Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) plans have been prepared. The ZTVs have been generated in a Geographical Information System (GIS), using surface and landform data only and does not account other landscape features that might limit the extent of theoretical visibility, such as vegetation and buildings. The ZTVs are based on:

- the Main HNRFI Site in its current form. See Figure 11.7; and
- the Main HNRFI Site with Proposed Development at the height parameters (see Figure 11.8).

11.97 The ZTVs illustrate the theoretical visibility based on a 5m digital terrain model (DTM) data, assuming excellent visibility with no atmospheric attenuation.

11.98 As Figure 11.8 demonstrates, the visual influence of the Main HNRFI Site will increase with development. The visual assessment process determines the extent of the increase in visual influence as well as the magnitude of any visual effects that arise.

11.99 Open views of the Main HNRFI Site are largely limited to those from roads and PRoW as they pass through the main HNRFI Site, although roadside vegetation provides some interruption and the speed and nature of travel limit the availability of views.

11.100 Following site visits, the main determinants/observations of visibility across the area towards the Main HNRFI Site are as follows (Photoviewpoints are illustrated in Figure 11.10):

- *North:* Views from the north are limited to the B581 Station Road in Elmesthorpe and built development along it. Beyond, a combination of gently undulating topography, mature vegetation and built form generally combines to limit inter-visibility. There are a couple of areas of secondary visibility towards Huit Farm (Photoviewpoint 34) and along minor road Thurlaston Lane (Photoviewpoint 27);
- *East:* Inter-visibility with the Main HNRFI Site is limited due to gently undulating topography, coupled with mature vegetation that enclose small to medium field parcels. These combine to screen views from the east, with views primarily limited to the B4669 Hinckley Road (Photoviewpoint 10) and the PRoW network within 1km from Bridleways V29/4, V29/5, V29/6, V29/9 and V29/10, as well as Footpaths U53/2

(Photoviewpoints 9 and 35) and V49/1. Further east there will be more distant secondary areas of visibility between Stoney Stanton (Photoviewpoint 22) and Fields Farm (Photoviewpoint 24), and also at the elevated geographical outlier of Croft Hill (Photoviewpoint 30);

- *South:* There are few views of the Main HNRFI Site from the south due to the intervening presence of Aston Firs, Burbage Wood and Freeholt Wood. Views will be primarily limited to the M69 Motorway as it approaches the Main HNRFI Site and the proposed M69 improvements proposed for the scheme. There may be areas of secondary visibility from isolated, elevated locations such as at Lychgate Lane bridge, which passes over the M69 c.260m south (Photoviewpoint 13), Footpath U63/1 just east of Burbage (Photoviewpoint 14), High Cross c.4.5km to the south (Photoviewpoint 32) and the B578 Lutterworth Road c.3km to the south (Photoviewpoint 33); and
- *West:* Views are generally limited by mature vegetation within and on the periphery of Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. Similarly, mature vegetation forming field boundaries and alongside roads limits visibility from this direction to Burbage Common Road and the PRoW network within 1km to the west. These routes include Bridleway U52/9 and U52/10 and Footpaths V23/1, V23/2, U50/1 and U50/3. Secondary areas of visibility include those from elevated positions at the edge of the Settlement of Barwell to the north-west of the Main HNRFI Site (Photoviewpoints 25 and 26).

11.101 Figure 11.8 includes the locations of 56 representative views that have been identified in the ZTV of the Proposed Parameters of the Main HNRFI Site and agreed through consultation. These views are at locations where there are likely to be sensitive visual receptors, including receptors on PRoW and at residential properties. These views form the basis of the visual assessment, the significance of any effect being assessed in terms of the magnitude of change in the view and the sensitivity of the visual receptor. The location of these views is set out in the Table 11.8. In keeping with good practice, the proposed photoviewpoints, including accurate visual representation (AVR) photoviewpoints and night-time viewpoints have been agreed with HBBC and LCC with those requested additionally noted in Table 11.8 below. The locations of agreed AVR and night-time photoviewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure 11.9 and 11.11 respectively. The baseline Photoviewpoints themselves are illustrated in Figure 11.10, with night-time views contained within Figure 11.12.

**Table 11.8: Summary of representative photoviewpoints. (The following acronyms correspond to additional form of presentation: AVR = Photomontage; NV = Night View).**

PVP. No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance	Borough, Parish	Reason(s) for Selection
1	View from PRoW V35/1	445931, 294327	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW V35/1 on site.
2	View from PRoW U50/1	445541, 294322	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW U50/1 on site.
3	View from PRoW U52/6	445273, 294532	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW U52/6 on site.
4	View from PRoW U52/8/  Burbage Common Road Bridge over railway	445490, 295018	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW U52/8 and minor road on site.
5	View from PRoW V23/1 over railway	445795, 295229	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW V23/1;  Boundary views from the north;  Indication of potential view from passing trains.
6	View from PRoW U50/3	446049, 295455	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW U50/3, Close-range views from the north.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
7	View from Burbage Common Road	447000, 295513	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of Burbage Common Road;  Close-range views from the north-east.
8	View from PRoW V29/6 footbridge over M69	446831, 294576	0m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of PRoW V29/6;  Boundary views from the east.
9 (NV)	View from PRoW U53/2	446959, 294270	232m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of PRoW U53/2;  Close-range views from the east.
10	View from Hinckley Road	446990, 293816	0m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of Hinckley Road to the west; Medium-range views from the east.
11	View from PRoW V29/3	446766, 293563	240m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of PRoW V29/3;  Close-range views from the south-east.
12 (NV) (AVR)	View from M69 overbridge on Aston Lane	445956, 292970	0m	Blaby, Aston Flamville	Users of Aston Lane;  Boundary views from the south.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
13	View from M69 overbridge on Lychgate Lane	445549, 292368	70m	Blaby, Aston Flamville	Users of Lychgate Lane; Medium-range views from the south.
14	View from PRow U63/1	444775, 292714	758m	Hinckley and Bosworth, Burbage	Users of PRow U63/1;  Long-range views from the south-west.
15	View from Burbage Common	444806, 295219	854m	Hinckley and Bosworth, No Parish	Users of Open Access Land/Common Land;  Medium-range views from the west.
16 (AVR)	View from Burbage Common Road	445111, 295184	0m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of Burbage Common Road;  Close range views from the west.
17 (AVR)	View from PRow U52/9	445695, 295561	250m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRow U52/9;  Medium range views from the north-west.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
18	View from PRoW U52/11	445944, 296096	565m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW U52/11;  Medium range views from the north.
19 (NV) (AVR)	View from churchyard of St Mary, Elmesthorpe	446072, 296493	880m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of the church;  Long range views from the north.
20 (NV) (AVR)	View from M69 overbridge on B581	447422, 295559	120m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of B581;  Close-range views from the north-east.
21	View from Station Road/PRoW V29/10	447795, 295400	390m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Users of PRoW V29/10;  Users of Station Road;  Medium range views from the east.
22 (NV) (AVR)	View from PRoW V49/2, Stoney Stanton	448373, 294333	0m	Blaby, Stoney Stanton	Users of PRoW V49/2;  Long-range views from the east.



<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
23	View from Hinckley Road, west of Sapcote	448150, 293561	0m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of Hinckley Road;  Long range views from the south east.
24 (NV) (AVR)	View from PRoW V34/2	447482, 293450	235m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of PRoW V34/2;  Medium range views from the south-east.
25 (NV) (AVR)	View from churchyard of St Mary, Barwell	444419, 296483	630m	Hinckley and Bosworth, Barwell	Users of church;  Long range views from the north-west.
26	View from Shilton Road, Barwell	444976, 296984	743m	Hinckley and Bosworth, Barwell	Users of Shilton Road;  Long range views from the north-west.
27	View from Thurlastone Lane	448762, 297854	2.4km	Hinckley and Bosworth, Earl Shilton	Users of Thurlastone Lane;  Long range views from the north.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
28	View from M69 overbridge on Pingle Lane	449418, 296985	2.2km	Blaby, Potters Marston	Users of Pingle Lane;  Long range views from the north-east.
29	View from PRow U18/1	450132, 296404	2km	Blaby, Potters Marston	Users of PRow U18/1;  Long range views from the north-east;
30 (AVR)	View from Croft Hill	450996, 296600	2.8km	Blaby, Croft	Users of Open Access Land;  Long range views from an elevated location.
31	View from Coventry Road	447308, 290682	2.4km	Blaby, Sharnford	Users of Coventry Road;  Long range views from the south.
32 (PM)	View from Bumblebee Lane, High Cross	447367, 288686	4km	Blaby, Sharnford	Users of Bumblebee Lane;  Long range views from the south.
33	View from B578, Lutterworth Road	445152, 290073	1.7km	Hinckley and Bosworth, Burbage	Users of Lutterworth Road;  Long range views from the south.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
34	View from PRow U18/4 near Huit Farm	447471, 447753	1.1km	Blaby, Earl Shilton	Users of PRow U18/4;  Long range views from the north-east.
35	View from PRow V48/2	447471, 294040	268m	Blaby, Sapcote	Users of PRow V48/2;  Medium range views from the south-east.
36 (NV)	View from Smenell Field	445210, 294340	165m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Requested by HBBC 17/01/19. Users of Country Park. Close range views from the west.
37	View from Footpath V29/7	446452, 294165	0m	Blaby, Sapcote	Requested by LCC 06/02/2019. Users of PRow. Close range views within the site.
38	View from Mill Lane	447959, 297666	2km	Hinckley and Bosworth, Earl Shilton	Requested by LCC 06/02/2019. Road and PRow users. Mid distance views from the north.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
39	View north of Church Farm	446249, 292804	217m	Blaby, Aston Flamville	Requested by LCC 06/02/2019. Users of PRow. Mid-range views to from east of the site.
40	View from Weaver Springs Sports Park	447106, 297637	1.7km	Hinckley and Bosworth, Earl Shilton	Requested by LCC 06/02/2019. Users of recreation ground. Residential receptors. Mid-range views from the north.
41 (NV)	View from Hinckley Golf Course	444136, 294563	953m	Hinckley and Bosworth, No Parish	Requested by HBBC 17/01/19. PRow users; golfers. Mid distant views from the west.
42	View from South of Wood House Farm	444902, 294540	189m	Hinckley and Bosworth, Burbage	Requested by HBBC 17/01/19. Users of Country Park and PRow users. Close range views from the west.
43	View from northern edge of Burbage Common and Woods Country Park	445092, 295136	83m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Requested by HBBC 17/01/19. Users of Country Park. Close range views from the west.

<b>PVP. No.</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Grid Reference</b>	<b>Distance</b>	<b>Borough, Parish</b>	<b>Reason(s) for Selection</b>
44	View from eastern edge of Burbage Common and Woods Country Park	445348, 294976	270m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Requested by HBBC 17/01/19. Users of Country Park. Close range views from the west.
45	View north along B4688	444636, 295470	126m	Hinckley and Bosworth, No Parish	Users of B4688, close range north to A47 link.
46	View from Footpath V23/2 and B4688	445052, 296062	0m	Hinckley and Bosworth, Barwell	Users of PRoW and B4688, close range views south to A47 link.
47	View from Footpath V23/2 west of Billington Rough	445566, 295688	314m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Requested by Elmesthorpe Parish Council and Planning Inspectorate. Location moved south due to new build development blocking views on B581. Close range views to south and east.

PVP. No.	Location	Grid Reference	Distance	Borough, Parish	Reason(s) for Selection
48	View from B581 / The Roundhills	446893, 296030	178m	Blaby, Elmesthorpe	Requested by Elmesthorpe Parish Council and Planning Inspectorate. Residents of Elmesthorpe. Close range views to the south.
56	A47 / Leicester Road Roundabout	445375, 296410	1.1km	Hinckley and Bosworth, Barwell	Requested by HBBC 29/01/21. Users of A47, mid-views south to Main HNRFI Site.

### Future baseline

11.102 It is anticipated that, in the absence of development, the land contained within the Main Order Limits would continue to be managed as mainly agricultural land, farmsteads and transport routes. Depending on the management regime, the quality of the landscape structure might erode, leading to further losses of valued trees and hedgerows. Alternatively, enhanced hedgerow and field boundary management might promote the biodiversity of these features perhaps with the benefit of grants.

11.103 Such variations are unlikely to be significant and would be considered as standard fluctuations. It is near-certain that the existing baseline described above would therefore not change appreciably.

## POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

11.104 Potential effects are defined as unmitigated effects that arise from either construction activities or from the Proposed Development itself after completion.

## During construction

11.105 As a consequence of the wholesale change in land use, construction activities will result in adverse landscape and visual effects on the fabric and character of the landscape, and on visual amenity, within the local area. Whilst construction activities introduce direct and indirect disturbance to both the fabric of the landscape and the surrounding area which can be perceived by people living, working or travelling through it, these effects are temporary in nature, and can be partially mitigated.

11.106 Generic construction methods and timescales are estimated in Chapter 3: *Project description* of this PEIR, with an outline Construction Method Statement (CMS) to be submitted as a requirement of the DCO. The main elements of the construction operations, considered to be of importance to the landscape and visual assessment, are described below:

- *Construction-related traffic.* This includes vehicle movements associated with the import of building materials, machinery and labour using local roads;
- *Groundworks.* Cut and fill earthworks including the construction of two development platforms across the Main HNRFI Site, levelling for access roads and ground modelling for landscaped areas;
- *Noise and vibration effects* (see Chapter 10: *Noise and vibration*) have the potential to affect landscape character, visual effects from existing (potentially diverted) rights of way and other routes, and residential amenity; and
- *Construction activities.* Subject to the preferences of individual contractors, it is expected that generic methods will be employed in the implementation of the scheme. The use of large cranes and construction platforms (rising above the height of the proposed buildings) will be necessary.

11.107 Landscape and visual amenity effects resulting from the construction stages are considered to be consistently adverse, as there are few, if any, aspects of the process that could be considered positive in terms of promoted landscape strategies or in terms of visual amenity.

11.108 These effects will, however, be temporary and at any one time restricted by the phased nature of development (see Chapter 3). The effects of the construction phase of the Proposed Development on landscape character and visual amenity respectively are summarised below. Effects on PRoW, other recreational routes, public highways and residential areas are also described below with reference to the assessed representative viewpoints. Detailed effects will be described and assessed against each landscape character area and representative photoviewpoints within the full ES.

## Potential effects on landscape character during construction

### Landscape character areas

11.109 With regard to landscape character, the construction effects predicted upon those areas which cover or lie in close proximity to the Main Order Limits are identified in Table 11.11 below.

11.110 The BDCLCA provides an assessment of landscape sensitivity for its LCAs, concerning different development scenarios within Blaby District. The types of development include:

- 2-3 storey residential housing/transport infrastructure;
- small-scale commercial (B1/B2 use categories); and
- large scale commercial (warehousing – B8 use category).

11.111 The sensitivity judgements within the BDCLCA vary compared to the methodology used for this project. BDCLCA has a five-point scale ranging from low, low-medium, medium, medium-high to high. The methodology used for this assessment also uses a five-point scale and can easily be translated into the terminology used for this assessment as Table 11.9 illustrates.

**Table 11.9: BDCLCA conversion to EDP sensitivity.**

<b>BDCLCA Sensitivity</b>	<b>EDP Sensitivity</b>
Low	Very Low
Low-Medium	Low
Medium	Medium
Medium-High	High
High	Very High



11.112 Using the translated sensitivity of the LCAs, the sensitivity of development scenarios are as such:

**Table 11.10: LCA sensitivity to development scenarios.**

LCA	Sensitivity to Scenarios		
	2-3 storey residential housing/transport infrastructure	Small-scale commercial (B1/B2 use categories)	Large scale commercial (warehousing – B8 use category)
Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland	Medium	High	Very High
Cosby Agricultural Farmland	Medium	High	Very High
Croft Hill and Quarries	Medium	Medium	High
Elmesthorpe Floodplain	Medium	High	Very High
Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland	Low	Medium	High

11.113 As the DCO Order Limits comprise a number of elements, ranging from ‘large scale commercial’ to ‘transport infrastructure’, the sensitivity of each LCA to those elements varies as indicated above, and as such results in varying levels of effects dependent on the treatment.

11.114 For example, Table 11.10 below demonstrates that there will be likely significant effects upon LCA 1: Aston Flamville with regard to large scale commercial development associated with the Main HNRFI Site. However, highways works associated with the M69 Junction 2 works are unlikely to result in significant effects on this LCA.

11.115 With regard to the Hinckley and Bosworth LCAs, a degree of professional judgement has been taken on determining their sensitivity.

**Table 11.11: Potential construction effects on published landscape character.**

	<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Effect</b>
<b>Blaby Landscape Character Areas</b>		
LCA 1: Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland	Very High (large scale commercial) Medium (transport infrastructure)	Major Significant Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 3: Cosby Agricultural Parkland	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 5: Croft Hill and Quarries	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 6: Elmesthorpe Floodplain	Very High (large scale commercial)	Major/Moderate Significant
LCA: 15 Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland	Low (transport infrastructure)	Negligible Not Significant
<b>Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Areas</b>		
Burbage Common Rolling Farmland	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor Not Significant
Hinckley (UCA)	Very Low (transport infrastructure)	Negligible/None

- 11.116 Effects on the LCAs have been assessed within the context of the Main HNRFI Site, A47 Link Road and off-site highways, with this confirming that there will be an unavoidable localised change in character. Effects on landscape character within the wider LCAs context will result from lighting, noise, vibration and traffic which extend beyond the site boundary. The works would require temporary lighting where previously there was little artificial lighting, particularly within the main body of the site, away from the existing residential urban edges or major roads. The effects would be short-term and temporary in nature and minimised by an appropriate construction management plan designed to reduce the effects on the existing landscape receptors and the amenity of local residents.
- 11.117 Taking these matters into account, the overall magnitude of change upon the LCAs varies in level. This is primarily due to the proportion of each LCA the geographical extent the Proposed Development covers - i.e., components of the off-site highways take up extremely small geographic proportions of some LCAs (e.g. highways modifications B5 and B6 within Cosby Agricultural Parkland and Croft Hill Quarries LCAs).
- 11.118 The magnitude of change expected upon the Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland LCA as a result of the Main HNRFI Site is considered to be high, leading to an overall effect of major, adverse and significant. In terms of the elements comprising the M69 junction, construction would only result in a very low magnitude of change, with an effect of minor/negligible and not significant.
- 11.119 With regards to the Elvesthorpe Floodplain LCA a high magnitude of change is expected at construction, leading to an overall effect of Major/Moderate and significant as a result of the Main HNRFI Site.
- 11.120 In terms of the effects on the Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland LCA, only elements of the M69 and off-site highways (B1, B2, B3, B4 and B8) works would affect the area, of which construction would result in a very low magnitude of change, leading to a negligible effect and not significant.
- 11.121 There would be no significant effects on the Cosby Agricultural Parkland or Croft Hill and Quarries LCAs as a result of construction works related to highways modifications B5 and B6.
- 11.122 In consideration of 'Burbage Common Rolling Farmland' of which the A47 Link of the Main passes through to join the B4668, this is considered to be 'transport infrastructure' and as such, the LCA is determined to have a 'medium' sensitivity to this type of development. In consideration of the construction phases, there would be a low change and a minor effect which is not significant.
- 11.123 Hinckley UCA would experience very little change as a result of highways modifications HB1 and HB4 that would lead to an effect of negligible/none which is not significant.

### *Landscape character of the main HNRFI site*

- 11.124 Invariably, a mixed-use development on a 'greenfield' site and at the scale proposed will result in the unavoidable removal of landscape features, in particular the agricultural field

parcels and hedgerows, at a level which materially alters the character of the receiving environment. In essence, there will be wholesale change at this stage from an operational agricultural landscape to a construction site.

11.125 This change will result in a very high magnitude of change on a medium sensitivity landscape, which will generate a major/moderate, short-term and locally significant adverse effect. This is not the effect upon the wider landscape character areas, but solely reflective of the site-based change.

#### ***Landscape character of the A47 Link***

11.126 The fieldscape character of A47 Link will be gradually transformed from agricultural farmland to a Link Road embanked on either side, whilst to the south a naturalistic character with open access, adjacent to the Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. This would result in potential significant, temporary adverse effects during construction as the character is completely altered, whilst the field margins, field boundary hedgerows and trees would for the most part be retained, and the perception of field structure would remain.

#### ***Landscape character of off-site highways and junctions***

11.127 Effects upon the landscape character of off-site highways and junctions will be extremely limited given the nature of the change which will involve additional signage, occasional road calming measures and minor adjustments to the existing highway network. As such there would be a very low magnitude of change to these areas, resulting in a neutral effect of negligible/none which would not be significant.

#### ***Visual amenity***

11.128 Locations of representative receptor photoviewpoints are illustrated on Figures 11.9. The photoviewpoints themselves are provided as Figure 11.10. PRow locations with route numbering are provided on Figure 11.3. Receptor sensitivity is described in Table 11.12 with the sensitivity of visual receptors varying according to category, context of the view and susceptibility to change.

**Table 11.12: Potential construction effects on visual receptor groups.**

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
<b>Residences and Settlements</b>			
-	Residents at Aston Firs Campsite	Very High	Substantial Adverse Temporary Significant
-	Residents at Averley Farm House	Very High	Major Adverse Temporary Significant
-	Residents at Bridge Farm	Very High	Substantial Adverse Temporary Significant
17, 47	Residents at Billington Rough	Very High	Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
3	Residents at Wood House Farm	Very High	Substantial Adverse

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Temporary Significant
20, 21	Residents at Oaklands	Very High	Major/Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
22	Residents at Stanton Road	Very High	Major Adverse Temporary Significant
7	Residents at Burbage Common Road	Very High	Substantial Adverse Temporary Significant
	Residents at Burbage Common Road west	Very High	Substantial Adverse Temporary Significant
26	Residents at Barwell	Very High	Major Adverse Temporary

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Significant
25	Residents at Church Lane, Dovecote way, St Mary's Close and Barwell Lane, Barwell	Very High	Major Adverse Temporary Significant
9	Residents at Highgate Lodge Farm and Red Hill Farm	Very High	Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
40	Residents at Earl Shilton	Very High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Temporary Not Significant
46	Residents at B4668 between Burbage Common Road and A47	Very High	Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
	Residents at Gypsy and traveller settlement off Smithy Lane	Very High	Substantial Adverse Temporary Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
	Residents at Gypsy and traveller camp off B4668	Very High	Substantial Adverse Temporary Significant
<b>Public Rights of Way, National Cycle Routes and Open Access Land</b>			
-	Leicestershire Round	High	Minor Adverse Temporary Not Significant
-	Footpath T89 (between Wentworth Arms Pub and the A47, east Elmesthorpe)	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
-	Footpath U8 (Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4))	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
-	Footpath U17 (Thorney Fields Farm rail crossing (modification B8))	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Temporary



Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Significant
-	Footpath U20 (between Station Road/B581 and A47, Elmesthorpe)	High	No Effect
-	Footpath U49 (Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Minor Adverse Temporary Not Significant
2, 6	Footpath U50 (links Billington Rough with Aston Firs)	High	Major Adverse Temporary Significant
3, 4	Footpath U52 (links Burbage Common Road bridge with Burbage Common and Woods Country Park, and south to Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4))	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Temporary Significant
9	Footpath U53 (east of Main HNRFI Site, passing Red Hill Farm, connecting to Sapcote)	High	Major Adverse Temporary Significant
14	Footpath U63	High	No Change

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
	(between Aston Flamville and Burbage)		No Effect
-	Footpath V22  (near Hissar Farm House on A47 Link Road)	High	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
5, 47	Footpath V23  (travels northwest from Burbage Common Road within Main HNRFI Site to B4668)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Temporary  Significant
-	Footpath V30  (Along M69 south of Main HNRFI Site near Aston Flamville)	High	Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
1	Footpath V35  (Between M69 Junction 2 and Burbage Common Road bridge)	High	Major  Adverse  Temporary  Significant
-	Footpath V36  (West of Aston Flamville)	High	No Effect

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
39	Footpath V37  (Heads north from Aston Flamville)	High	Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
22	Footpath V49  (Links south of Stoney Stanton to Hinckley Road near Averley House Farm)	High	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not significant
-	Bridleway U11  (Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4) to Hinckley)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Temporary  Significant
-	Bridleway U51  (Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
17, 18	Bridleway U52  (Between Elvesthorpe and Bridge Farm)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Temporary  Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
8, 11, 21, 37	Bridleway V29  (Between Freeholt Lodge, Huncote Road north Sapcote and Aston Lane west Sharnford)	High	Major  Adverse  Temporary  Significant to  Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not significant
15, 36, 43, 44	Burbage Common Country Park	High	Major/Moderate to Moderate  Adverse  Temporary  Significant
<b>Public Highways</b>			
8, 12, 13, 20, 28	M69 Motorway	Very Low	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
10, 29	B4669	Low	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Temporary

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Not Significant to  Minor/Negligible  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
20, 21, 48	B581	Low	Moderate  Adverse  Temporary  Significant to  Minor/Negligible  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
56	A47	Very Low	Negligible  Adverse  Temporary  Not Significant
45, 46	B4668	Low	TBC
4, 7, 16	Burbage Common Road	Medium	Major/Moderate  Adverse

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Temporary Significant
22	Stanton Lane	Medium	Minor Adverse Temporary Not significant
-	Smithy Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Temporary Not Significant
12	Aston Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Temporary Not significant
13	Lychgate Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Temporary Not significant
28	Pingle Lane	Medium	Minor Adverse Temporary

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Not significant
27	Thurlastone Lane	Medium	Minor Adverse Temporary Not significant
38	Mill Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Temporary Not Significant
<b>Railways</b>			
4, 5	Leicester to Hinckley Railway	Very Low	Moderate/Minor Temporary Adverse Not Significant

### *Homes and settlements*

11.129 The residential receptors that have the greatest potential to be affected by the Proposed Development are set out in Technical Appendix 11.1.

11.130 During the construction phases there would be include likely potential significant adverse effects for a number of dwellings in close proximity to the Main HNRFI Site, including Aston Firs Campsite (off Smithy Lane) and the nearby Gypsy and Traveller site (also off Smithy Lane) due to their proximity to the main entrance to the Main HNRFI Site which will feature extensive construction works, groundworks and engineering in order to establish a next exit off the M69 Junction 2. Beyond this phase of works, it is anticipated that the

construction of warehouse units and rail freight infrastructure integral to the Main HNRFI Site will also result in a significant adverse effect upon northern views from these groups of dwellings.

- 11.131 Dwellings along Burbage Common Road (Photoviewpoint 1) are likely to experience potential significant adverse effects during the construction phases of the Main HNRFI Site, with potential views southwards of major land regrading establishment of development platforms and the general construction of the scheme to completion.
- 11.132 In terms of dwellings along the western end of Burbage Common Road, those located at the northern extent of the Country Park are unlikely to have clear views of the early phases of the construction process (ground remodelling and establishing development platforms) due to a combination of topography and mature vegetation which screen views in the direction of the Main HNRFI Site, whilst there might be limited views of the upper storeys of warehouse construction and crane operations associated with the SRFI to the east. The foreground view from these dwellings would however significantly change during the construction process whilst the A47 Link is established to the north, cutting through the fieldscape, whilst the area south of the A47 will be gradually transformed from agricultural farmland to a naturalistic character with open access, adjacent to the existing asset of Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. This would result in potential significant adverse effects during construction. Those dwellings at the very western edge of Burbage Common Road (at the junction with the B4668) are unlikely to obtain any views towards the Main HNRFI Site and A47 Link Road would therefore experience no significant visual effects.
- 11.133 Bridge Farm is located close to the A47 Link Road near its connection with the main body of the Main HNRFI Site (to the east) and is located on elevated ground. There would be potential significant visual effects on this dwelling due to the proximity to the Proposed Development, there would be possible views west over the construction phase, including groundworks to the construction of the SRFI and B8 buildings. It should be noted that it is intended to construct a bund along the northern edge of the railway, which will be planted up to provide a future visual screen and filter. South and west, there would be views of the construction of the A47 Link Road including development of the large area of POS adjacent to the Country Park.
- 11.134 Averley Farm House is located opposite the proposed M69 Junction 2 and Hinckley Road (B4669) works and is likely to experience potential adverse, close range significant visual effects as a result of roadworks and engineering. The slightly elevated ground on which the farm is located is also likely to offer views west and north-west over the Main HNRFI Site which would comprise significant ground remodelling and construction of the overall Main HNRFI Site during the construction Phase. Effects are likely to be significant and adverse.
- 11.135 In terms of dwellings at Billington Rough located north of the Main HNRFI Site between the Leicester to Hinckley railway and Elmesthorpe, views are in part illustrated by Photoviewpoint 17, 47 and 18 taken from the nearby surrounding PRow network. Views towards the Main HNRFI Site would, in part, be screened by mature vegetation which



particularly limits views east. There may be potential elevated views south and south-eastwards to construction phases of the main body of the Main HNRFI Site; including the establishment of development platforms, through to the construction of B8 buildings which would likely result in significant adverse effects. Views south and south-west are also likely to incorporate the construction of the A47 Link Road (which will require construction of embankments) to the existing agricultural fieldscape.

- 11.136 With regard to Wood House Farm, located within Burbage Common and Woods Country Park at the northern extend of Smithy Lane, due to a combination of mature vegetation and topography, views of construction work at the Main HNRFI Site for the most part would be filtered, if not screened (see Photoviewpoint 42). However, there will however be some views towards the western edge of the Main HNRFI Site, of which construction processes would be readily visible from initial groundworks through to the completion of B8 buildings, albeit filtered by vegetation. As such there would be potential significant adverse visual effects.
- 11.137 Dwellings at Oaklands comprise a small group on Station Road (B581) east of Elmesthorpe which currently have filtered views towards the Main HNRFI Site, represented in part by Photoviewpoint 21. During the construction phase there would be potential for significant adverse visual effects, likely in the latter stages with the construction of B8 buildings along the eastern edge of the Main HNRFI Site. Views of the early stages of the construction process (i.e. ground remodelling to establish development platforms) would not be visible due to a combination of topography and mature vegetation. Construction of works of the A47 Link would not be visible from this receptor.
- 11.138 For dwellings located on Station Road located at the northern extent of the proposed construction access road for the Main HNRFI Site, there will be little change to views for the majority of dwellings due to mature vegetation forming their rear curtilage views. Two dwellings at the eastern end of this road have potential to experience significant visual effects as their rear curtilages.
- 11.139 Along the B4668 Leicester Road between Burbage Common Road and the B4668 / A47 roundabout a small group of dwellings is located near the roundabout. Views from the rear of these dwellings are filtered and screened by mature vegetation that is likely to limit the potential for significant adverse effects during the construction of the Main HNRFI Site. However, the proximity of these dwellings to the works proposed for the HB2 and HB3 highways modifications roundabout may result in potential, temporary significant adverse visual effects. No other parts of the off-site highways would result in potential significant adverse effects upon this receptor.
- 11.140 Further south on the B4668, a Gypsy and traveller site located opposite Hinckley Rugby Club would experience close range, significant adverse visual effects associated with the construction of the A47 Link Road construction.
- 11.141 Dwellings located at the edge of the elevated settlements of Barwell and Earl Shilton would potentially have distant views over the Main HNRFI Site (representative Photoviewpoint 25 and 26). There would be significant adverse effects as a result of the

construction phase, from initial establishment of platforms, to construction of the B8 buildings, by where agricultural fields will change into a large scale, warehouse development. Views of the A47 Link Road and highways modifications HB2 and HB3 would also be possible.

11.142 However, it is important to note that this effect would only be apparent for certain parts of certain properties, and not as a wholesale effect across the groups. The worst of the effects during construction (i.e. the movement and activity of construction vehicles and operations) would be short term in duration, reversible and local. These effects would be short-term on the basis that in any one location the construction would be apparent.

### *Public rights of way, long distance recreational routes and open access land*

11.143 As shown on Figure 11.3, a number of footpaths/bridleways traverse the Main HNRFI Site and the study area. Figure 11.9 illustrates the locations of the Photoviewpoints. Figure 11.10, Photoviewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 37 illustrate views from sections of PRoW across the Main HNRFI Site. Most of these routes will be diverted or extinguished in some way. Throughout the evolution of the project, the maintenance of PRoW connections across the Main HNRFI Site for a range of users has been a key consideration, informing the Illustrative Masterplan through a Public Rights of Way Strategy (Figure 11.4). Unsurprisingly, during the construction process which will include groundworks (the creation of development platforms), there will likely be temporary PRoW diversions, whilst there will be wholesale adverse significant visual effects from an early stage for all PRoW based on the Main HNRFI Site which include:

- Footpath U50 (Photoviewpoint 2 and 6);
- Footpath U52 (Photoviewpoint 3 and 4);
- Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 5);
- Footpath V35 (Photoviewpoint 1);
- Bridleway U52 (Photoviewpoint 4); and
- Bridleway V29 (Photoviewpoint 8 and 37).

11.144 Beyond the confines of the Main HNRFI Site, other PRoW that have the potential to experience significant effects during construction phases include:

- Footpath U53 (Photoviewpoint 9);
- Footpath V52 (Photoviewpoint 42);
- Bridleway U52 (Photoviewpoint 17);
- Bridleway V29 (Photoviewpoint 21);

- Footpath V22;
- Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 47);
- Bridleway U9; and
- Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 47).

11.145 In terms of PRoW likely to experience potential effects related to construction of works at the M69, these include:

- Footpath V30;
- Footpath V36;
- Footpath V37; and
- Footpath U63.

11.146 In terms of PRoW likely to experience potential effects related to construction of off-site highways works, these include:

- Footpath U8 (highways modification HB4);
- Footpath U52 (highways modification HB4);
- Bridleway U11 (highways modification HB4); and
- Footpath U17 (highways modification B8).

11.147 However, it should be noted that these potential significant adverse effects from the M69 and off-site highways are generally limited to where the PRoW joins, passes through or is located in very close proximity to DCO Order Limits (i.e., in most cases the effects would be extremely localised). Further assessment will be needed once further detail of the works required for these elements of the off-site highways is known, but in most cases they are likely to represent minor highways alterations to what is already of a highways character.

11.148 Highways modifications HB4 and B8 consist of closing up of pedestrian level crossings over railway lines which will be diverted on safer routes over existing and proposed bridges.

11.149 With particular regard to long distance recreational routes, one is located within the broad 5km study area, the Leicestershire Round. Despite the close proximity in which part of this route falls adjacent to the south-western boundary, a short section (c.200m) may experience views of upper levels of construction above mature vegetation (Photoviewpoint 42). However, it should be noted that the level of effect arising from the Main HNRFI Site and A47 Link Road will diminish with distance and level of intervening screening element such as vegetation, built form and topography and on the Leicestershire Round as a whole, the magnitude of change to views will be very low,

leading to a minor adverse effect which is not significant.

- 11.150 In terms of open access land there would be limited significant adverse effects at some select locations within Burbage Common and Woods Country Park (Photoviewpoint 36, 42, 43 and 44) that would comprise principally the construction of the upper levels of B8 buildings and the A47 Link Road from the Main HNRFI Site, as well as the conversion of agricultural land south of the A47 Link Road to a naturalistic open space.
- 11.151 No National Cycle Routes (NCRs) within the 5km broad study area are considered to have the potential to experience significant effects as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 11.152 Effects at this level are not surprising. The conversion of any greenfield site to a major development site would yield such an outcome and this is not a reflection on the quality of the project master plan, but of the process that requires an assumption to be made that most people would see the visual and sensory change from greenfield to construction site as adverse.

### **Public highways**

- 11.153 Those local road network receptors that have the greatest potential to be affected by the Proposed Development are set out in Appendix 11.1.
- 11.154 The assessment has shown that during the construction phase there would be significant adverse effects upon Burbage Common Road which currently passes through the Main HNRFI Site. The section which heads north from the Main HNRFI Site to the B581 will closed upon commencement of the construction phase which will change the character of this route from a rural through road to a dead end whilst pedestrian, cycle, equestrian and emergency vehicle access will be provided through the Main HNRFI Site at appropriate points during the construction phases. Where the route passes through the Main HNRFI Site, this will be entirely removed as the phases of development come forward, initially with the creation of development platforms. Beyond the Main HNRFI Site to the west, Burbage Common Road will continue its route with some minor adjustments just west of the railway, continuing to provide access to Burbage Common and Wood Country Park, as well as to the B4668. That said, the construction of the A47 Link Road will result in potential significant adverse effects along this section, whilst extensive works south of it (that will be beneficial in the long term) in the adjacent farmland north of the road will comprise the conversion to a naturalistic open access character consistent with the existing Country Park. There will also be potential significant adverse effects when looking back along the western extent of Burbage Common Road towards the main body of the Main HNRFI Site which will contain the construction of the SRFI and commercial B8 buildings.
- 11.155 The M69 motorway passes adjacent to the eastern edge of the Main HNRFI Site and receptors on it could potentially experience significant adverse effects due to the construction phase. Users of the route will be travelling at speed, with their primary focus on the road ahead. The large-scale ground remodelling to create development platforms, construction of warehouse units and establishment of boundary treatments along this

edge is likely to result in glimpsed significant adverse effects that would be experienced when immediately passing the Main HNRFI Site, which would reduce rapidly beyond it.

- 11.156 In terms of the construction works required to other roads within the Main Order Limits, these are unlikely to result in significant adverse effects upon users of those routes due to the likely limited nature of the works (i.e. signage, road calming measures).
- 11.157 Elsewhere within the 2km detailed study area, there may be occasional glimpses towards construction works at the Main HNRFI Site from the surrounding road network. However, in most instances these would only be oblique, glimpsed views that would be largely interrupted by a combination of topography, mature vegetation and/or built form that would limit the potential for significant adverse effects.

### **Railways**

- 11.158 There would be potential significant adverse effects upon the railway network passing through the Main HNRFI Site throughout the construction process. Trains are likely to be temporarily speed limited during as they pass through during part of the construction process (in particular whilst the connections are being made to the mainline), obtaining oblique, open views over much of the Main HNRFI Site including the A47 Link and west of the railway line. There may also be glimpses of the modifications to the Outwoods (HB4), Thorney Fields (B8) and Elmesthorpe railways crossings. Post the connection to the mainline, trains are likely to be able to return to full linespeed (subject to a risk assessment and agreement with National Rail), such that views of construction of the Main HNRFI Site and A47 would become far more glimpsed and oblique.
- 11.159 Beyond the immediate bounds of the Main Order Limits, there are unlikely to be significant adverse effects upon receptors due to the transient, oblique, glimpsed nature of views that are generally limited by embankments and or/mature vegetation within the landscape.

### **During operation**

#### ***Post-completion stage effects on the landscape resource***

- 11.160 This section offers an assessment of the post-completion (i.e. at Year 1, before the full effects of mitigation measures are realised) on the landscape resource; visual effects are considered separately, below. This section describes the anticipated effects of the Proposed Development during its operational lifetime and assesses the significance of those effects in landscape and visual amenity terms.
- 11.161 In practical terms, the 'operational lifetime' of the Proposed Development is measured in decades, as it would result in a permanent change to the character of the development site. Given that the Proposed Development includes landscape proposals, which would in any event take time to mature, and that all new development can seem 'raw' until it has 'settled' into its landscape context, the assessment of operational effects for specific areas and views considers the effects at two distinct points in time:

- when the Proposed Development is fully operational (Year 1) and all construction phases have ceased; and
- 15 years after completion of the Proposed Development (such that mitigation planting may have matured and/or materials weathered).

11.162 It is often the case that initial (Year 1) effects are more considerable than those at Year 15 of operation due to the limited initial effect of the landscape proposals. It is also the case, that in reality, there would be a number of phases of construction, by where parts of the Proposed Development and mitigation would be completed before others. Such that is the case that by ‘Year 1’ of operation, parts of the Landscape Strategy planted in the early stages of the 10-year construction phase timespan would already have matured and provided benefit.

**Landscape character**

**Landscape character areas**

11.163 With regard to landscape character areas, the effects upon Year 1 of completion upon those areas which cover or lie in close proximity to the DCO Order Limits are detailed in Table 11.13 below.

**Table 11.13: Potential operational effects at year 1 on published landscape character.**

Landscape	Sensitivity	Effect
<b>Blaby Landscape Character Areas</b>		
LCA 1: Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland	Very High (large scale commercial) Medium (transport infrastructure)	Major Significant Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 3: Cosby Agricultural Parkland	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 5: Croft Hill and Quarries	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor/Negligible

<b>Landscape</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Effect</b>
		Not Significant
LCA 6: Elmesthorpe Floodplain	Very High (large scale commercial)	Major/Moderate Significant
LCA: 15 Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland	Low (transport infrastructure)	Negligible Not Significant
<b>Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Areas</b>		
Burbage Common Rolling Farmland	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor Not Significant
Hinckley (UCA)	Very Low (transport infrastructure)	Negligible/None

11.164 The magnitude of change expected upon the Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland LCA as a result of the completed HNRFI would be high, leading to an overall effect of major, adverse, permanent and significant. In terms of the elements comprising the M69 works, these would only result in a very low magnitude of change, with an effect of minor/negligible, adverse, permanent and not significant.

11.165 With regards to the Elmesthorpe Floodplain LCA a high magnitude of change is expected upon Year 1 of completion, leading to an overall effect of major/moderate and significant as a result of development at the Main HNRFI Site.

11.166 There would be minor/negligible effects which would be neutral and permanent and neutral in nature on the Cosby Agricultural Parkland or Croft Hill and Quarries LCAs as a result of completed junction works related to the highways modifications B5 and B6. These would not be significant.

11.167 In consideration of ‘Burbage Common Rolling Farmland’ of which the A47 Link passes through to join the B4668 and the highways modifications (HB2 and HB3), this is considered to be ‘transport infrastructure’ and as such, the LCA is determined to have a ‘medium’ sensitive to this type of development. In consideration of the completed A47 Link Road, there would be a low change and a minor effect which is not significant which

would be permanent and adverse in nature.

- 11.168 Hinckley UCA would experience very little change as a result of very minor completed junction works of highways modification HB1 and HB4, of which the effects would be negligible/none, neutral, permanent and not significant.

### ***Landscape character of the main HNRFI site***

- 11.169 Invariably, a development on a 'greenfield' site' would result in the unavoidable loss of grassland margins, arable and pasture land, and the necessary removal of some characteristic landscape features, in particular hedgerows and trees in order to allow for development of the HNRFI. This will be at a level that will materially alter the character of the receiving environment. There would also be level changes across much of the Main HNRFI Site to allow for development platforms, whilst the Sustainable Drainage Scheme (SuDS) will introduce a number of small to large size permanently wet basins. The stream running through the Main HNRFI Site will also be diverted and in part culverted.
- 11.170 With reference to Chapter 12 *Ecology*, there would be a loss of 12.67km of hedgerows in moderate condition, whilst 4.48km would be retained 1.32km of poor-quality hedgerow would be lost whilst 310m would be retained and enhanced.
- 11.171 In response to these losses, 13.76km of new hedgerow would be created on site, whilst 9.19ha of woodland vegetation would be planted.
- 11.172 Effects upon the landscape character of the site at Year 1 post-completion of the Proposed Development will be described in detail in a technical appendix that will be submitted with the ES. At this preliminary stage, at Year 1 it is expected there would be a major/moderate, significant, adverse, permanent effect across the Main HNRFI Site.

### ***Landscape character of the A47 Link Road***

- 11.173 The fieldscape character of A47 Link Road corridor will be gradually transformed from agricultural farmland to a Link Road embanked on either side, whilst to the south of the A47 Link Road itself would remain intact, field boundaries would be retained as far as practically possible as would the scattered mature hedgerow trees. The area (comprising approximately 22.66 hectares) will have been transformed from an agricultural fieldscape to one comprising newly planted trees, areas of scrub (Figure 11.15), meadow grassland, providing GI links to the woodland to the north-west and to the existing Country Park to the south. There would be a high change that would be significant, however it would be beneficial and permanent in nature.

### ***Landscape character of off-site highways and junctions***

- 11.174 Effects upon the landscape character of off-site highways and junctions would be extremely limited given the nature of the change, which would involve additional signage, occasional road calming measure and minor adjustments to the existing highway network. As such there would be a very low magnitude of change to these areas, resulting in a



neutral effect of negligible/none which would not be significant.

### Visual amenity

11.175 Locations of representative receptor photoviewpoints are illustrated on Figures 11.9. The photoviewpoints themselves are provided as Figure 11.10. Receptor sensitivity is described in Table 11.9 with the sensitivity of visual receptors varying according to category, context of the view and susceptibility to change. Modelled views of the scheme parameters are contained within Figure 11.16, in which it should be noted that these views represent the scheme parameters within which built development will be placed and do not represent the scheme layout which would comprise the rail port and a series of units with landscape planting and open space within the parameters shown. The potential effects at Year 1 of completion predicted for each receptor is included in Table 11.14 below.

**Table 11.14: Potential Operational Effects at Year 1 on Visual Receptor Groups.**

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
<b>Homes and Settlements</b>			
-	Residents at Aston Firs Campsite	Very High	Substantial Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Averley Farm House	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
-	Residents at Bridge Farm	Very High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
17	Residents at Billington Rough	Very High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
3	Residents at Wood House Farm	Very High	Substantial Adverse Permanent Significant
20, 21	Residents at Oaklands	Very High	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
22	Residents at Stanton Road	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
7	Residents at Burbage Common Road	Very High	Substantial Adverse Permanent Significant
	Residents at Burbage Common Road west	Very High	Substantial Adverse Permanent Significant
26	Residents at Barwell	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
25	Residents at Church Lane, Dovecote way, St Mary's Close and Barwell Lane, Barwell	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
9	Residents at Highgate Lodge Farm and Red Hill Farm	Very High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
40	Residents at Earl Shilton	Very High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
46	Residents at B4668 between Burbage Common Road and A47	Very High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Gypsy and traveller settlement off Smithy Lane	Very High	Substantial Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Gypsy and traveller camp off B4668	Very High	Substantial Adverse Permanent Significant
<b>Public Rights of Way, National Cycle Routes and Open Access Land</b>			

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
-	Leicestershire Round	High	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
-	Footpath T89  (between Wentworth Arms Pub and the A47, east Elmesthorpe)	High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Footpath U8  (Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4))	High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Footpath U17  (Thorney Fields Farm rail crossing (modification B8))	High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Footpath U20  (between Station Road/B581 and A47, Elmesthorpe)	High	No Change Neutral Permanent No Effect

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
-	Footpath U49 (Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
2, 6	Footpath U50 (links Billington Rough with Aston Firs)	High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
3, 4	Footpath U52 (links Burbage Common Road bridge with Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
9	Footpath U53 (east of Main HNRFI Site, passing Red Hill Farm, connecting to Sapcote)	High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
14	Footpath U63 (between Aston Flamville and Burbage)	High	No Change Neutral Permanent No Effect

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
-	Footpath V22  (near Hissar Farm House on A47 Link Road)	High	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not Significant
5	Footpath V23  (travels northwest from Burbage Common Road within Main HNRFI Site to B4668)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
-	Footpath V30  (Along M69 south of Main HNRFI Site near Aston Flamville)	High	Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not Significant
1	Footpath V35  (Between M69 Junction 2 and Burbage Common Road bridge)	High	Major  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
-	Footpath V36  (West of Aston Flamville)	High	No Change  Neutral  Permanent  No Effect

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
-	Footpath V37 (Heads north from Aston Flamville)	High	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
22	Footpath V49 (Links south of Stoney Stanton to Hinckley Road near Averley House Farm)	High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not significant
-	Bridleway U11 (Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4) to Hinckley)	High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Bridleway U51 (Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
17, 18	Bridleway U52 (Between Elmesthorpe and Bridge Farm)	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant



Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
8, 11, 21, 37	Bridleway V29  (Between Freeholt Lodge, Huncote Road north Sapcote and Aston Lane west Sharnford)	High	Major  Adverse  Permanent  Significant to  Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not significant
15, 36, 43, 44	Burbage Common Country Park	High	Major/Moderate to Moderate  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
<b>Public Highways</b>			
8, 12, 13, 20, 28, 49, 50	M69 Motorway	Very Low	Moderate/Minor  Neutral  Permanent  Not Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
10, 29	B4669	Low	Moderate/Minor Neutral Permanent Not Significant to Minor/Negligible Neutral Permanent Not Significant
20, 21, 47, 48	B581	Low	Minor/Negligible Neutral Permanent Not Significant
56	A47	Low	Negligible Neutral Permanent Not Significant
45, 46	B4668	Low	Negligible Neutral Permanent Not Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
4, 7, 16	Burbage Common Road	Medium	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
22	Stanton Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not Significant
-	Smithy Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not Significant
12	Aston Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not significant
13	Lychgate Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and Location	Sensitivity	Effect
28	Pingle Lane	Medium	Minor Adverse Permanent Not significant
27	Thurlastone Lane	Medium	Minor Adverse Permanent Not significant
38	Mill Lane	Medium	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
<b>Railways</b>			
4, 5	Leicester to Hinckley Railway	Very Low	Moderate/Minor Permanent Adverse Not Significant

**Homes and settlements**

11.176 A summary of the effects on the residential amenity of residential areas during Year 1 of completion is set out below.

- 11.177 During Year 1 of completion there would be likely potential significant adverse effects for a number of dwellings in close proximity to the Main HNRFI Site, including Aston Firs Campsite (off Smithy Lane) and the adjacent Gypsy and traveller site due to their proximity to the main entrance to the Main HNRFI Site, which will feature the newly completed exit off the M69 Junction 2. Views north from this group would comprise warehouse units and internal infrastructure integral to the Main HNRFI Site which will also result in a significant adverse effect upon northern views from these groups of dwellings. The Landscape Strategy (Figure 11.15) will be newly planted, and whilst it would provide some initial softening to views northwards.
- 11.178 Upon completion, along the northern end of Burbage Common Road (Photoviewpoint 1) construction will have ceased, as will the potential significant adverse effects associated with construction. The route will have changed from a through road, through the area of the Main HNRFI Site to one which provides access to residents at the northern end of Burbage Common Road, whilst cyclists, pedestrians, equestrian users and emergency vehicles will still be able to obtain access southwards through the Main HNRFI Site. Views from dwellings southwards towards the Main HNRFI Site are likely to comprise horizontal built form of B8 buildings across most of the view, whilst woodland planting at the northern extent of the Main HNRFI Site will still be in the early stages of growth. As such there would be potential significant adverse effects upon this group.
- 11.179 In terms of dwellings along the western end of Burbage Common Road, those located at the northern extent of the Country Park will have oblique limited views of the upper storeys of warehouse and crane operations associated with the SRFI to the east. A recently constructed earth bund with woodland along the northern edge of the railway would provide some early filtering of views, there would be adverse visual effects arising from the Main HNRFI Site which would not be significant. In terms of the foreground view from these dwellings the completed A47 Link Road would be a subtle addition to the view due to its low-lying nature, whilst the newly planted area of POS adjacent to Burbage Common and Woods Country Park would provide a naturalistic, attractive character with open access. This would result in potential significant beneficial effects. Those dwellings located at the very western end of Burbage Common Road adjacent to the B4668 Leicester Road would experience no significant effects as a result of either the A47 Link Road or Main HNRFI Site, views being restricted by intervening woodland and existing commercial buildings.
- 11.180 In terms of Bridge Farm, which is located close to the A47 Link Road near its connection with the Main HNRFI Site, there would be potential significant adverse visual effects on this dwelling due to the proximity to the Proposed Development, with notable close-range changes to views east, south and west of the dwelling. In views to the east there will be partial views of the Railport and B8 buildings beyond a constructed bund (planted with vegetation) along the northern edge of the railway. To the south and west, there would be views of the A47 Link Road and the proposed area of public open space adjacent to the Country Park (just south of the A47 Link Road) with the former located concealed by low embankments, screening the route from view.
- 11.181 Averley Farm House is likely to experience potential significant adverse effects at close

range as a result of completion of development at the Main HNRFI Site which would comprise a new exit off Junction 2 of the M69 and a number of large warehouse units across a previously agricultural landscape. Effects are likely to be significant and adverse, whilst landscape planting will not have matured sufficiently to soften views in this direction.

- 11.182 Photoviewpoint 17, 47 and 18 are taken from the nearby surrounding PRoW network to Billington Rough. Views towards the Main HNRFI Site would, in part, be screened by mature vegetation which particularly limits views east. There is the potential for elevated views south and south-eastwards to the Railport and B8 buildings on the Main HNRFI Site, which would likely result in significant adverse effects. Views south and south-west in the direction of the A47 Link Road will likely be screened or well filtered due to its location beyond planted embankments.
- 11.183 With regard to Wood House Farm, located within Burbage Common and Woods Country Park at the northern extent of Smithy Lane, views towards of the Main HNRFI Site for the most part would be filtered, if not screened (see Photoviewpoint 42). However, there would be some views towards the western edge of the Main HNRFI Site, of which B8 buildings would be a notable feature on the skyline, albeit filtered by vegetation. As such there would be potential significant adverse visual effects.
- 11.184 Dwellings at Oaklands will have filtered views towards the Main HNRFI Site, represented in part by Photoviewpoint 21. Upon completion there would be potential for significant adverse visual effects as a result of completed B8 buildings which will run visually horizontally across the view adjacent to the route of the M69. Completed works along the M69 would not be visible from this receptor.
- 11.185 Those dwellings located on Stanton Road located at the northern extent of the proposed construction access road for the Main HNRFI Site. There will be little change to views for the majority of dwellings at completion due to mature vegetation forming their rear curtilage views. Two dwellings at the eastern end of this road have potential to experience significant visual effects as their rear curtilages which will comprise warehouse units within the Main HNRFI Site, whilst newly planted woodland will still be in its early stages of maturity, providing some ground and low-level filtering.
- 11.186 Along the B4668 between Burbage Common Road and A47 roundabout, a small group of dwellings is located near the roundabout. Views towards the Main HNRFI Site would be screened by mature vegetation or filtered heavily to such a degree that there would not be potential for significant effects. In terms of completed elements of the highways modifications at HB2 and HB3 at the A47/B4668, these are likely to result in a very low change, and unlikely to result in significant adverse effects.
- 11.187 The Gypsy and Traveller site located opposite Hinckley Rugby Club would experience close range, significant adverse visual effects associated with the completed A47 link of the Main HNRFI Site which wraps around this group.
- 11.188 Dwellings located at the edge of the elevated settlements of Barwell and Earl Shilton

would potentially have distant views over the Main HNRFI Site (representative Photoviewpoint 25 and 26). There would be significant adverse effects as a result of the completed B8 buildings, which would introduce built form across the previously agricultural landscape, whilst views of the A47 Link Road works and area of POS adjacent to the Country Park would also be possible.

### ***Public rights of way and open access land***

11.189 As shown on Figure 11.3, a number of footpaths/bridleways traverse the Main HNRFI Site and the study area. Figure 11.9 illustrates the locations of the Photoviewpoints. Figure 11.10, Photoviewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 37 illustrate views from sections of PRoW across the Main HNRFI Site. Most of these routes will be diverted or extinguished. Throughout the evolution of the project, the maintenance of PRoW connections across the Main HNRFI Site for a range of users has been a consideration, informing the Illustrative master plan through a Public Rights of Way Strategy (Figure 11.14). Upon completion, there will largely be a new PRoW network established around the Main HNRFI Site to continuing previous onward connections whilst providing betterment in the form of surfaced routes and removal of gates and stiles.

11.190 Unsurprisingly there would be a wholesale adverse visual change to the previous alignments of PRoW across Main HNRFI Site which include:

- Footpath U50 (Photoviewpoint 2 and 6);
- Footpath U52 (Photoviewpoint 3 and 4);
- Footpath V22;
- Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 5);
- Footpath V35 (Photoviewpoint 1);
- Bridleway U52 (Photoviewpoint 4);
- Bridleway V29 (Photoviewpoint 8 and 37); and
- Bridleway U9.

11.191 Beyond the confines of the Main HNRFI Site, other PRoW that have the potential to experience significant effects during Year 1 of completion include:

- Footpath U53 (Photoviewpoint 9);
- Footpath V52 (Photoviewpoint 42);
- Bridleway U52 (Photoviewpoint 17);
- Bridleway V29 (Photoviewpoint 21); and

- Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 47).

11.192 In terms of PRoW likely to experience potential significant effects related to Year 1 completion of off-site highways works, these include:

- Footpath U8 (highways modification HB4);
- Footpath U52 (highways modification HB4);
- Bridleway U11 (highways modification HB4); and
- Footpath U17 (highways modification B8).

11.193 In terms of the A47 Link Road, none of the PRoW that experienced potential significant effects at construction is considered to experience potential significant adverse effects related to Year 1 of completion.

11.194 With regard to the Leicestershire Round, despite the close proximity in which part of this route falls adjacent to the western edge of the Main HNRFI Site, only a short section (c.200m) may experience views of upper levels of completed B8 buildings to the east above existing mature vegetation. The level of effect would diminish with distance and the influence of intervening screening such as vegetation, buildings and topography such that, on the Leicestershire Round as a whole, the magnitude of change to views will be very low, leading to a minor adverse effect which is not significant.

11.195 In terms of open access land, there would continue to be significant adverse effects at locations within Burbage Common and Woods Country Park (Photoviewpoint 36, 42, 43 and 44). Effects at Photoviewpoint 43 and 44 would be twofold, as views eastwards will comprise elements of the completed B8 buildings, whilst views northwards would include the completed A47 Link Road, with the extensive area of land sandwiched between it and Burbage Common Road that will become an area of recreational public access that will be naturalistic in character, forming an informal area of POS adjacent to Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. This would result in a significant beneficial effect.

### **Public highways**

11.196 During Year 1 of completion, there would be potential (worst case) major/moderate significant adverse effects experienced on Burbage Common Road. This route where it passes through the Main HNRFI Site will have been entirely removed and replaced by commercial B8 buildings and associated infrastructure integral to the Main HNRFI Site. Users on this route travelling south from the B581 will now be met with a dead-end whilst there would be views in a southern direction towards the warehouse units which appear against a backdrop of Burbage Wood, Aston Firs and Freeholt Wood (Photoviewpoint 7). Woodland planting at the northern edge of the Main HNRFI Site will still be young and provide little filtration of the proposals and users of this road would have close range open views of the Proposed Development. In terms the western end of Burbage Common Road which will be retained, becoming a no through road to traffic with a turning head, whilst



pedestrian, equestrian and cyclists will be able to carry on towards the Main HNRFI Site. Views north of the western extent of Burbage Common Road would also experience significant close range beneficial effects through the creation of a newly planted area of open access land adjacent to Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. This western edge of the route will largely retain its country lane character as a result, whilst there may be glimpses of B8 buildings and Railport infrastructure when travelling eastwards towards the Main HNRFI Site.

- 11.197 For users of the M69 motorway, close-range, oblique, glimpsed views of the B8 buildings and immature boundary landscape treatments would be possible as users pass the eastern boundary of the Main HNRFI Site. These views are likely to be less intrusive and stark than at construction. Glimpsed significant adverse effects are likely to be experienced by road-bourne receptors when immediately passing the Main HNRFI Site, which would reduce rapidly beyond it.
- 11.198 In terms of the completed works required to other roads within the DCO Order Limits relating to off-site highways, these are unlikely to result in significant effects upon users of those routes due to the likely limited nature of the works (e.g. signage, road calming measures).
- 11.199 Elsewhere within the 2km detailed study area there might be occasional glimpses towards the completed Main HNRFI Site from the surrounding road network. However, in most instances these would be, oblique, glimpsed views that would be largely interrupted by a combination of topography, mature vegetation and/or built form that would limit the potential for significant adverse effects.

### **Railways**

- 11.200 Upon completion, there would be potential significant, if transient, adverse effects for rail passengers passing through the Main HNRFI Site, obtaining oblique, open views over much of the Main HNRFI Site and the A47 Link Road west of the railway line.
- 11.201 Beyond the immediate bounds of the DCO Order Limits, there is unlikely to be significant adverse effects upon receptors due to the transient, oblique, glimpsed nature of views that are generally limited by embankments and or/mature vegetation within the landscape.

## **PROPOSED MITIGATION**

### **Mitigation and enhancement**

- 11.202 Inherent mitigation provides a form of preventative mitigation and is that which has been considered as an integral part of the overall design for the landscape strategy. It is not an 'add-on' or 'band-aid' measure to ameliorate significant environmental effects, but part of the positive and pro-active approach whereby mitigation has been assessed and

considered at all stages of the development of the project.

- 11.203 The Proposed Development benefits from existing dense mature woodland to the south of the Main HNRFI Site which provides a natural screen to views from the south, whilst the north-western edge of the Main HNRFI Site will incorporate a bund, planted with woodland species to assist in softening views from the west and north. The northern edge of the Main HNRFI Site will include further areas of woodland planting whilst the areas adjacent to the M69 will feature a new Bridleway route that will be planting with a mixture of woodland, shrub and scrubby species. Further, areas between the Main HNRFI Site and Burbage Common and Woods Country Park would be laid out as additional naturalistic public access land.
- 11.204 The Landscape and Public Rights of Way strategy is a key component of the Proposed Development. As illustrated through the Illustrative Landscape Strategy (Figure 11.15), Masterplan and Parameters Plan, the Proposed Development incorporates green infrastructure, public open space (both formal and informal) and landscape enhancements.
- 11.205 The Landscape Strategy has been conceived and designed with reference to published Landscape Character Assessments as well as site-specific advice regarding landscape and visual matters, thus ensuring mitigation proposed accords with Local Authority policy guidance.
- 11.206 Those mitigation measures pertinent to landscape and visual (and arboricultural) matters are explained with reference to the different stages of the Proposed Development below.

### Demolition and construction

- 11.207 The following measures would be implemented during the construction phase of the Proposed Development:
- the adoption of an approved Construction and Environment Management Plan (CEMP) including mitigation designed to avoid significant ecological effects including those on key landscape features, would be secured through a DCO Requirement. Also included would be the phasing and detailing of landscaping, provision of earthworks and drainage. This CEMP will be approved by the relevant local planning authority prior to the commencement of development and would be substantially in accordance with the measures set out in an outline CEMP, submitted with the DCO application;
  - a Construction Method Statement (CMS) would also be secured through a DCO Requirement, setting out the indicative construction methodologies, works, machinery and procedures required to build the Proposed Development. It would describe at a high level how the Proposed Development will be constructed and sets out the overall programme and phasing of works. This CMS will be approved by the relevant local planning authority in accordance with a DCO Requirement and would be substantially in accordance with the measures set out in an outline CMS, submitted

with the DCO application;

- the adoption of an approved Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) incorporating best practice guidance set out in British Standard 5837: 2012 *'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction'* which will ensure retained trees and other vegetation is not adversely affected during the construction process;
- the adoption of an approved topsoil and earthworks management plan (Soil Management Plan), including dust control measures would be secured via a DCO Requirement. The Soil Management Plan would include measures to protect and enhance soil for biodiversity purposes and for the establishment of landscaping;
- the use of visual screening, such as hoardings for more sensitive visual receptors in proximity to the Application Site, including residential receptors that have the greatest potential to be affected by the Proposed Development, as set out in Appendix 10.1;
- existing residents that live adjacent to Main HNRFI Site (particularly those to the north and west on Burbage Common Road) would be more sensitive to construction lighting due to the proximity, direction and type of receptor. Mitigation measures for construction lighting are likely to include directional fittings. Where work is required outside of daylight hours, temporary lighting would be directed away from retained watercourses, woodlands, mature trees and hedgerows. The outline Construction Environmental Management Plan and the Lighting Statement will provide further detail in respect of temporary construction lighting. All these documents will be secured as a requirement of the DCO; and
- as shown on Figure 11.3, there are a number of PRoW crossing the Main HNRFI Site. Safe access for pedestrians would need to be maintained whenever practicable throughout the construction phases of development of the Main HNRFI Site, A47 Link Road and off-site highways. Access along retained PRoWs should be protected using Heras fencing, hoardings or similar. Many routes across the Main HNRFI Site will be closed up or diverted in order to deliver the Proposed Development. Construction works that create dust would be kept to a minimum close to the PRoWs, and dust prevention measures, such as damping, would be undertaken to reduce the impact on users of the PRoW network.

11.208 Generally, the landscape and visual effects during the construction phases of the Proposed Development would be difficult to mitigate entirely due to the nature of these operations. However, as described above, the adoption of approved best practice construction methods will aid in reducing the perception of construction activities for those receptors most likely to be affected.

11.209 Notwithstanding the adoption of these measures, and whilst the significance of the effect at some receptors would reduce to a limited degree, no receptor experiencing a significant unmitigated effect would experience a reduction to a non-significant level of effect as a result of construction mitigation.

11.210 The critical consideration in the assessment of construction effects is their temporary nature, and thus the medium term time period for which landscape and visual amenities would be affected to a significant degree.

11.211 It should also be noted that the construction phase would not be a singular phase of construction where the whole draft Order Limits are under construction for a 10-year span. In reality, there would be a number of phases of construction, by where parts of the Proposed Development and landscape mitigation would be completed before others. Such that is the case that by 'Year 1' of full operation of the entire Proposed Development, parts of the Landscape Strategy planted in the early stages of the 10-year construction phase timespan would already have matured and provided benefit.

### Operation

11.212 Mitigation during the operational (post-completion) stage comprises embedded (avoidance) mitigation and additional mitigation proposed to reduce the significance of likely effects (reduction mitigation). These different mitigation measures are explained below with reference to the proposed development.

#### *Embedded mitigation*

11.213 The Main HNRFI Site currently comprises a series of small to medium scale regular agricultural fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees, and is influenced across its eastern boundary by the M69 and on its north-western boundary by the Leicester to Hinckley railway.

11.214 Despite the unavoidable loss of some enclosed farmland, the current condition and key characteristics of the landscape have been considered throughout the design of the Proposed Development and integrated into the landscape strategy where possible, such as the nearby character of the Burbage Common and Woods Country Park which has been considered on the design of the area south of the A47 Link Road and the western extent of the Main HNRFI Site.

#### *Additional mitigation*

11.215 The landscape and visual mitigation strategy is a key component of the Proposed Development. As shown on the illustrative masterplan, parameter plan and DAS for the Main HNRFI Site, the Proposed Development incorporates public open space and other landscape enhancements which include:

- an over-arching Illustrative Landscape Strategy (Figure 11.15) for the Main HNRFI Site;
- the provision of a retained, albeit realigned and upgraded on-site PRoW network across the Main HNRFI Site (Figure 11.14), offering recreational value, and a community resource; and
- the creation of surface water attenuation and detention features incorporated within

the areas of open space.

11.216 In addition to these site-wide measures, around the edges of the HNRFI, the landscaping will be managed and reinforced to contain the development, providing site security, screening and habitat enhancement.

11.217 As part of the wider green infrastructure, public open spaces, both formal and informal, will be designed to provide high-quality and traffic free green spaces, which satisfies a number of objectives, including:

- provision of an on-site PRoW network which maintains connectivity across the Main HNRFI Site, including the creation of a new route; and
- public open space for formal and informal use, whilst also contributing to green networks and enhancing habitat connectivity through the provision of a landscaped corridor along the eastern edge of the Main HNRFI Site, the A47 Link Road (sandwiched between the road and Burbage Common) and located in the western end of the Main HNRFI Site.

11.218 In summary, the landscape elements specific to the detailed design of the proposals include enhancements that would provide:

- visual filtering of the Proposed Development;
- public and private amenity; and
- ecological value.

## RESIDUAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

### Following completion at year 15

11.219 The following is an assessment of the residual effects of the Proposed Development following mitigation employed during the construction phase (to reduce the effects of construction activities) and after completion, at Year 15 post full completion, once embedded mitigation measures have matured.

11.220 The 'residual' effects of the scheme are considered to be those that persist once the effects of mitigation – be that strategic planting or the softening of the Proposed Development provided by planting and areas of open space – have become established. In planning terms, these are the effects to which most 'weight' should be attached, since they represent the long-term effect on the landscape and visual baseline.

11.221 The residual effects following the implementation of the mitigation strategies will be assessed in further detail in the ES that will accompany the DCO submission. Only those residual effects that have reduced and/or ameliorated likely significant effects as

described above are discussed below; all other effects as stated at Year one would remain the same.

**Landscape character**

**Landscape character areas**

11.222 With regard to broader the published landscape character areas, the potential effects predicted upon those areas which cover or lie in close proximity to the DCO Order Limits at Year 15 of completion are detailed in Table 11.15 below.

**Table 11.15: Potential operation effects at year 15 on published landscape character.**

Landscape	Sensitivity	Effect
<b>Blaby Landscape Character Areas</b>		
LCA 1: Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland	Very High (large scale commercial) Medium (transport infrastructure)	Major Significant Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 3: Cosby Agricultural Parkland	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 5: Croft Hill and Quarries	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor/Negligible Not Significant
LCA 6: Elmesthorpe Floodplain	Very High (large scale commercial)	Moderate Significant
LCA: 15 Stoney Stanton Rolling Farmland	Low (transport infrastructure)	Negligible Not Significant

Landscape	Sensitivity	Effect
<b>Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Areas</b>		
Burbage Common Rolling Farmland	Medium (transport infrastructure)	Minor Not Significant
Hinckley (UCA)	Very Low (transport infrastructure)	Negligible/None Not Significant

11.223 Following completion, and as mitigation measures have matured c.15 years from completion, the magnitude of change expected upon the Aston Flamville Wooded Farmland LCA would remain as high and an effect of major and significant adverse and permanent.

11.224 With regards to the Elmesthorpe Floodplain LCA, a reduction from high (Year 1) to medium (Year 15) is expected, leading to an overall effect of moderate and significant and adverse. However, it should be noted that the maturation of the area south of the A47 Link Road will have altered in character over time to one more consistent with the adjoining LCA to the south (Burbage Common Rolling Farmland).

11.225 In terms of the Burbage Common Rolling Farmland LCA itself, this contribution is likely to have a beneficial effect, increasing the area in which the character is exhibited. Effects at Year 15 are still considered to be minor, permanent and not significant, but they are also considered to be beneficial.

11.226 The very limited, neutral effects upon Cosby Agricultural Parkland, Croft Hill and Quarries, LCAs and Hinckley UCA at Year 1 would remain at Year 15 and would not be significant.

#### ***Landscape character of the main HNRFI site***

11.227 Following completion, and as mitigation measures mature c.15 years from completion, the magnitude of change would reduce slightly. However, given the degree and permanence of change (from agricultural fields to a SRFI), the level of effect would remain major/moderate adverse and significant, resulting from a medium sensitivity and a very high magnitude of change.

#### ***Landscape character of the A47 Link Road corridor***

11.228 The fieldscape character of A47 Link Road corridor will have transformed from agricultural

farmland to a Link Road embanked on either side, whilst to the south of the A47 Link Road itself, the field structure would remain intact with field boundaries retained as far as practically possible, as would the scattered mature hedgerow trees. The area will have been transformed from an agricultural fieldscape to one comprising newly planted trees, areas of scrub (Figure 11.15), meadow grassland, providing GI links to the woodland to the east and to the existing Country Park to the south. There would be a high change that would be significant, although it would be beneficial and permanent in nature.

**Landscape character of the off-site highways and junctions**

11.229 By Year 15, there would still be a very low magnitude of change to these areas, resulting in a neutral effect of negligible/none, which would be insignificant.

**Visual amenity**

11.230 Locations of representative receptor photoviewpoints are illustrated on Figures 11.9. The photoviewpoints themselves are provided as Figure 11.10. Receptor sensitivity is described in Table 11.16 with the sensitivity of visual receptors varying according to category, context of the view and susceptibility to change. Modelled views of the scheme parameters are contained within Figure 11.16, in which it should be noted that these views represent the scheme parameters within which built development will be placed and do not represent the scheme layout which would comprise the rail port and a series of units with landscape planting and open space within the parameters shown. The potential effects at Year 1 of completion predicted for each receptor is included in Table 11.16 below.

**Table 11.16: Potential operational effects at year 15 on visual receptor groups.**

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
<b>Residences and Settlements</b>			
-	Residents at Aston Firs Campsite	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Averley Farm	Very High	Major/Moderate



Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
	House		Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Bridge Farm	Very High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
17	Residents at Billington Rough	Very High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
3	Residents at Wood House Farm	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
20, 21	Residents at Oaklands	Very High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
22	Residents at Station Road	Very High	Major/Moderate Adverse

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Permanent Significant
7	Residents at Burbage Common Road	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Burbage Common Road west	Very High	Major Beneficial Permanent Significant
26	Residents at Barwell	Very High	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
25	Residents at Church Lane, Dovecote way, St Mary's Close and Barwell Lane, Barwell	Very High	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
9	Residents at Highgate Lodge Farm and Red Hill Farm	Very High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Not Significant
40	Residents at Earl Shilton	Very High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
46	Residents at B4668 between Burbage Common Road and A47	Very High	Moderate/Minor Neutral Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Gypsy and traveller settlement off Smithy Lane	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Residents at Gypsy and traveller camp off B4668	Very High	Major Adverse Permanent Significant
<b>Public Rights of Way, National Cycle Routes and Open Access Land</b>			
-	Leicestershire Round	High	Minor Adverse

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Permanent Not Significant
-	Footpath T89  (between Wentworth Arms Pub and the A47, east Elmesthorpe)	High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
-	Footpath U8  (Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4))	High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
-	Footpath U17  (Thorney Fields Farm rail crossing (modification B8))	High	Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
-	Footpath U20  (between Station Road/B581 and A47, Elmesthorpe)	High	No Change Neutral Permanent No Effect
-	Footpath U49  (Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Minor Adverse Permanent

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Not Significant
2, 6	Footpath U50  (links Billington Rough with Aston Firs)	High	Major  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
3, 4	Footpath U52  (links Burbage Common Road bridge with Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
9	Footpath U53  (east of Main HNRFI Site, passing Red Hill Farm, connecting to Sapcote)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
14	Footpath U63  (between Aston Flamville and Burbage)	High	No Change  Neutral  Permanent  No Effect
-	Footpath V22  (near Hissar Farm House on A47 Link Road)	High	Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
5	Footpath V23 (travels northwest from Burbage Common Road within Main HNRFI Site to B4668)	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Footpath V30 (Along M69 south of Main HNRFI Site near Aston Flamville)	High	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
1	Footpath V35 (Between M69 Junction 2 and Burbage Common Road bridge)	High	Major/Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant
-	Footpath V36 (West of Aston Flamville)	High	No Change Neutral Permanent No Effect
-	Footpath V37 (Heads north from Aston Flamville)	High	Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
22	Footpath V49  (Links south of Stoney Stanton to Hinckley Road near Averley House Farm)	High	Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not significant
-	Bridleway U11  (Outwoods rail crossing (modification HB4) to Hinckley)	High	Moderate/Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not Significant
-	Bridleway U51  (Burbage Common and Woods Country Park)	High	Minor  Adverse  Permanent  Not Significant
17, 18	Bridleway U52  (Between Elmesthorpe and Bridge Farm)	High	Moderate  Adverse  Permanent  Significant
8, 11, 21, 37	Bridleway V29  (Between Freeholt Lodge, Huncote Road north Sapcote and Aston Lane west Sharnford)	High	Major/Moderate  Adverse  Permanent  Significant to  Minor

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Adverse Permanent Not significant
15, 36, 43, 44	Burbage Common Country Park	High	Moderate Adverse Permanent Significant to Moderate/Minor Adverse Permanent Not Significant
<b>Public Highways</b>			
8, 12, 13, 20, 28,	M69 Motorway	Very Low	Minor Neutral Permanent Not Significant
10, 29	B4669	Low	Minor Neutral Permanent Not Significant to Minor/Negligible



Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Neutral Permanent Not Significant
20, 21, 47, 48	B581	Low	Minor/Negligible Neutral Permanent Not Significant
-	A47	Low	No Effect Neutral Permanent Not Significant
45, 46	B4668	Low	Negligible Adverse Permanent Not Significant
4, 7, 16	Burbage Common Road	Medium	Moderate Beneficial Permanent Significant
22	Stanton Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Permanent Not significant
-	Smithy Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not Significant
12	Aston Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not significant
13	Lychgate Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not significant
28	Pingle Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not significant
27	Thurlastone Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent

Photoviewpoint numbers	Receptor and location	Sensitivity	Effect
			Not significant
38	Mill Lane	Medium	Minor/Negligible Adverse Permanent Not Significant
<b>Railways</b>			
4, 5	Leicester to Hinckley Railway	Very Low	Minor Permanent Adverse Not Significant

### **Homes and settlements**

11.231 Following completion of the Proposed Development and as mitigation measures mature, by Year 15 the magnitude of change would marginally reduce for the majority of residential receptors, reflecting the maturity of the scheme mitigation and the benefit of the early establishment of strategic planting belts along the eastern boundary and the northern edge of railway of the Main HNRFI Site.

11.232 During Year 15 of completion there would continue to be potential significant adverse effects for a number of dwellings in close proximity to the Main HNRFI Site, including Aston Firs Campsite (off Smithy Lane) and the adjacent Gypsy and traveller site, due to their proximity to the main entrance to the Main HNRFI Site which will feature the newly completed exit off the M69 Junction 2. Views north from this group would comprise warehouse units and internal infrastructure integral to the Main HNRFI Site which will also result in a significant adverse effect upon northern views from these groups of dwellings. The Landscape Strategy (Figure 11.15) by this stage will have matured to a stage that will filter and partially screen the lower elements of the scheme. Whilst this may reduce the level of effect, the overall proximity to the Main HNRFI Site to these receptors is such that there would still be a significant effect.

- 11.233 Upon completion, along Burbage Common Road (Photoviewpoint 1), the northern extent of the route will have changed from a through road to providing vehicular access only to residents along it. However, pedestrians, equestrian users, cyclists and emergency vehicles will still have access through the northern edge of the Main HNRFI Site. Views from dwellings southwards towards the Main HNRFI Site are likely to comprise horizontal built form of B8 buildings across most of the view, whilst woodland planting at the northern extent of the Main HNRFI Site will have reached maturity, softening views in this direction. The effects will have reduced, but they would remain significant effects, permanent and adverse upon this group.
- 11.234 Dwellings at the western end of Burbage Common Road, (located at the northern extent of the Country Park) would have oblique limited views of the upper storeys of B8 buildings and cranes associated with the HNRFI to the east. Existing vegetation and the earth bund with woodland along the northern edge of the railway would provide filtering of views, reducing the adverse visual effects arising from the Main HNRFI Site which would not be significant. In terms of the foreground view from these dwellings the completed A47 Link Road would be hidden due to its low-lying nature, whilst the area of proposed POS adjacent to Burbage Common and Woods Country Park will have matured to a state that would provide a naturalistic, attractive character with open access, with maturing vegetation providing a further containment of views toward the HNRFI. This would result in significant beneficial effects that would be permanent in nature. Dwellings located at the very western end of Burbage Common Road, adjoining the B4668 would experience no significant effects as a result of either the Main HNRFI Site, A47 Link Road or off-site highways by Year 15.
- 11.235 In terms of Bridge Farm significant adverse visual effects would remain due to its proximity to the Proposed Development, which would remain visible in views from the east, south and west of the dwelling. Whilst views eastwards will have become softened over time due to the proposed bund, on which maturing trees will have established, there would still be views of B8 buildings and the Railport. Views south and west, new area of POS adjacent to the Country Park (part of the A47 Link) will have matured and embedded with the landscape, whilst the A47 link road (enclosed by embankments) will be limited from views.
- 11.236 Averley Farm House is likely to experience potential significant adverse effects at close range as a result of completion of development at the Main HNRFI Site which would comprise the upgrading of M69 Junction 2 and a number of large B8 buildings across a previously agricultural landscape. Whilst proposed landscaping will have matured, effects are likely to remain significant and adverse.
- 11.237 In terms of dwellings at Billington Rough, views of large scale B8 buildings and the Railport to the south and south-west would likely result in significant adverse effects, despite continued growth of mature vegetation within the landscape.
- 11.238 Wood House Farm would continue to have views towards the Main HNRFI Site, although for the most part would be filtered, if not screened (see Photoviewpoint 42). Further maturation of vegetation in the Country Park as part of the landscape strategy are likely to reduce the adverse visual effect by Year 15 to a level that would not be significant.

- 11.239 In terms of the dwelling at Oaklands, maturation of vegetation within the landscape will have softened views in the direction of the Main HNRFI Site, reducing the effects to a level that would not be significant.
- 11.240 The two dwellings Station Road will experience a reduction in the level of effect due to the maturation of woodland planting at the northern extent of the Main HNRFI Site. However, these views would still remain significant, adverse and permanent in nature.
- 11.241 The Gypsy and traveller site located opposite Hinckley Rugby Club would continue to experience close range, significant adverse visual effects associated with the A47 link.
- 11.242 Dwellings located at the edge of the elevated settlements of Barwell and Earl Shilton would have distant views over the Main HNRFI Site (representative Photoviewpoint 25 and 26). There would be significant adverse effects as a result of the completed B8 buildings which would introduce built form across the previously agricultural landscape, whilst views of the A47 Link Road and the area of POS adjacent to the Country Park would also be possible.
- 11.243 It should be noted that a finding of significant effects results primarily from the assignation of a very high sensitivity for such receptors, rather than a large degree of predicted change, which in a visual amenity sense would (if it occurred) be subject to greater materiality, due to the greater likelihood for an overbearing effect.

### ***Public rights of way and open access land***

- 11.244 Following completion, and as mitigation measures mature, by Year 15 the magnitude of change would generally reduce for the PRoW network, whilst those within the Main HNRFI Site and within particularly close proximity to it would remain the same. As illustrated on Figure 11.14, a number of footpaths/bridleways that traverse the Main HNRFI Site will have been extinguished or diverted, however, the strategy ensures that connectivity around the Main HNRFI Site is retained via a new dedicated link.
- 11.245 By Year 15, the new PRoW network established around the Main HNRFI Site will have matured along with the landscaping associated along those corridors.
- 11.246 Due to the loss, diversion and alteration of the below routes as a result of development at the Main HNRFI Site, there would be a wholesale adverse visual changes which would be significant to the following PRoW:
- Footpath U50 (Photoviewpoint 2 and 6);
  - Footpath U52 (Photoviewpoint 3 and 4);
  - Footpath V22;
  - Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 5);
  - Footpath V35 (Photoviewpoint 1);

- Bridleway U52 (Photoviewpoint 4);
- Bridleway V29 (Photoviewpoint 8 and 37); and
- Bridleway U9.

11.247 Beyond the confines of the Main HNRFI Site, other PRoW that have the potential to experience significant effects during Year 15 of completion include:

- Footpath U53 (Photoviewpoint 9);
- Footpath V52 (Photoviewpoint 42);
- Bridleway U52 (Photoviewpoint 17);
- Bridleway V29 (Photoviewpoint 21); and
- Footpath V23 (Photoviewpoint 47).

11.248 Whilst there might still be significant adverse effects upon the above routes by Year 15, the landscape strategy encompassing the Main HNRFI Site will have, over time matured to soften views in the direction of the HNRFI.

11.249 In terms of the A47 Link Road and off-site highways, none of the retained PRoW that experienced potential significant effects at construction or Year 1 of completion is considered to experience potential significant adverse effects related to Year 15 of completion.

11.250 In terms of Burbage Common and Woods Country Park, the level of effect would reduce over time due to maturation of intervening existing and planted vegetation (as part of the landscape strategy). However significant adverse effects at locations within the Country Park (Photoviewpoint 36, 42, 43 and 44) will occur where glimpses of warehouse units will still be possible in what was otherwise a rural location. Effects at Photoviewpoint 43 and 44 would be twofold, as views eastwards will comprise elements of the completed B8 buildings, whilst views northwards would comprise views towards the completed A47 Link but also the extensive area of land sandwiched between it and Burbage Common Road that will have matured into an attractive landscape for recreational public access, forming a complimentary addition Burbage Common and Woods Country Park. This would result in a significant beneficial effect.

### **Public highways**

11.251 During the construction phases and early life of the Proposed Development, due to its closure, there would be significant adverse effects on Burbage Common Road. Generally, by Year 15, the magnitude of change would reduce slightly for road receptors on this route due maturation of proposed vegetation over this time period which softens views and partially screens the Main HNRFI Site. The previously very high change would reduce to high, leading to a moderate effect which is still significant. Over the longer term, and as

the development becomes an accepted part of the view from these roads, references to magnitude of change and levels of effect would become irrelevant in the local context.

- 11.252 For the remaining road network, where screening, the existing character of views and the low sensitivity generally of road receptors plays an important role in limiting effects, there would be no residual significant effects.

## CUMULATIVE AND IN-COMBINATION EFFECTS

- 11.253 Cumulative effects can arise from the intervisibility of operational or proposed developments and/or from the combined effects of individual components of the Proposed Development occurring in different locations or over a period of time. The separate effect of such individual components or developments may not be significant, but together they may create a degree of adverse effect on the landscape resource or visual receptors within their combined visual envelopes. In this cumulative assessment, the focus is on the additional effects of the Proposed Development. Baseline schemes may have significant effects in their own right, but significant cumulative effects do not automatically arise following the addition of the Proposed Development; the significance is determined by the degree of change that the Proposed Development would introduce into the theoretical cumulative baseline.

- 11.254 Cumulative effects arise in two principal ways – in combination and sequentially. Combined effects occur when: 1) two or more schemes appear simultaneously in the same arc of view without the need for an observer to turn; and 2) in succession, where it is necessary for the observer to turn the head to see the various schemes. Sequential effects occur where the observer has to move from one location to another to be able to see the different developments, and typically arise when the observer is travelling through a landscape.

- 11.255 Those cumulative development sites within the near vicinity of the Proposed Development (see Figure 20.1), which have the potential to result in cumulative landscape and visual effects, will be assessed against the likely LVIA effects of the Proposed Development to determine whether cumulative effects are likely and if so their significance. This will be reported in the ES.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

- 11.256 The impact of climate change on the landscape and visual resource is assessed through consideration of a potential future baseline scenario and considers how potential climate change might alter the predicted landscape and visual effects reported in this chapter. Whilst it is unlikely that completely new direct impacts would arise as a result of climate change based on the current conditions, the geographic spread or scale of potential impacts might be changed when considered against the future baseline conditions.

- 11.257 The changes to temperature and precipitation predicted would be likely, in time, to change the landscape around us, in a number of ways. However, it is unlikely that this would lead to wholesale change to the future landscape baseline within the lifetime of the Proposed Development. Changes might include certain tree species or grasslands becoming more dominant/prevalent. Changes to the landscape effects predicted are therefore considered appropriate.
- 11.258 For visual effects, the future baseline under a climate change scenario would not lead to any greater, or different, effects to those predicted.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 11.259 The LVIA baseline report (PEIR Appendix 11.1) provides a preliminary appraisal of the baseline conditions against which landscape and visual effects can be considered as the design of the Proposed Development at the Project Site evolves.
- 11.260 In landscape and visual terms, the preliminary impact assessment indicates that the greatest scope for significant permanent effects relates to the construction and early years of the operational phase of the Proposed Development. This will be subject to further assessment involving more detailed visual studies (supported by photomontage visualisations to provide accurate visual representations of the proposals from key photoviewpoints). The results of this assessment will be presented in the ES which will form part of the application for the Proposed Development.
- 11.261 The Proposed Development is likely to considerably and permanently change the existing landscape in which it is sited. With regard to the Main HNRFI there would likely be residual significant adverse landscape and visual effects across a number of host LCAs, and nearby visual receptors.
- 11.262 In regard to the land south of the A47 Link Road, on the basis of the proposed landscape and ecological mitigation strategies, it is considered that the overall residual effects upon the landscape fabric and features of this area would be beneficial, including enhancement of existing areas of ecological habitats as well as the creation of newer areas.
- 11.263 This preliminary assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development, mitigation measures and residual effects are not exhaustive but are considered to provide as comprehensive an overview as possible at this stage in the project process.