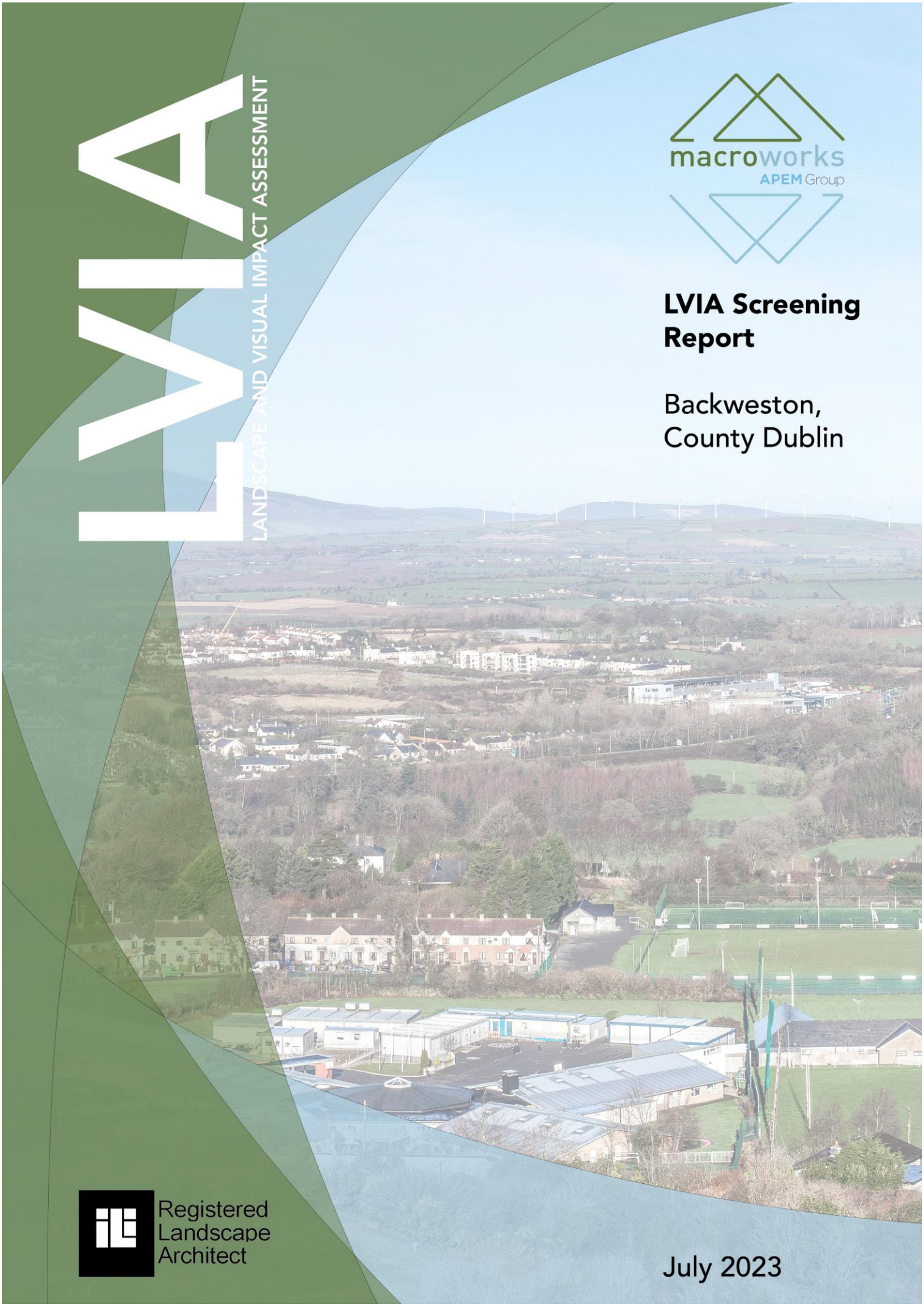
LVIA

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

macroworks
APEM Group

LVIA Screening Report

Backweston,
County Dublin



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1 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCREENING REPORT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) screening report has been prepared in respect of a planning application in the townland of Backweston in County Dublin. The LVIA screening report describes the landscape context of the proposed development and assesses the potential landscape and visual impacts of the scheme on the receiving environment.

Landscape Impact Assessment (LIA) relates to assessing effects of a development on the landscape as a resource in its own right and is concerned with how the proposal will affect the elements that make up the landscape, the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and its distinctive character.

Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) relates to assessing effects of a development on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people. This deals with how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements. Visual impacts may occur from; Visual Obstruction (blocking of a view, be it full, partial or intermittent) or; Visual Intrusion (interruption of a view without blocking).

This LVIA screening report uses methodology as prescribed in the following guidance documents:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publication '*Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements* (2022).
- Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment publication entitled Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (2013).

1.1.1 Statement of Authority

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment report was prepared by Macro Works Ltd; a landscape consultancy firm specialising in LVIA along with associated visibility mapping and photomontage graphics. Relevant experience includes LVIA work for a vast range of infrastructural, industrial and commercial projects since 1999.

1.1.2 Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed development will consist of the construction of 132 no. modular housing units to provide emergency temporary accommodation for up to 512 Ukrainian refugees.

The development will consist of the installation of 120 no. single storey units, and 12 no. two storey units; including bin stores, bicycle stores, and private garden space, and the construction of pavements, public lighting, landscaping, car parking spaces, foul water, surface water, and potable water connections, and all ancillary site development works on a site located at the junction of the Cellbridge Link Road and Tubber Lane, in the townland of Backstown, Lucan, Co. Dublin.

Figure 1.1 Site Layout

1.1.3 Assessment Methodology

Production of this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment involved:

- A desktop study to establish an appropriate study area, relevant landscape and visual designations in the current South Dublin County and Kildare County Development Plans as well as other sensitive visual receptors. This stage culminates in the selection of a set of potential viewpoints from which to study the effects of the proposal;
- Fieldwork to establish the landscape character of the receiving environment and to confirm and refine the set of viewpoints to be used for the visual assessment stage;
- Assessment of the significance of the landscape impact of the development as a function of landscape sensitivity weighed against the magnitude of the landscape impact;
- Assessment of the significance of the visual impact of the development as a function of visual receptor sensitivity weighed against the magnitude of the visual impact. This aspect of the assessment is supported by photomontages prepared in respect of the selected viewpoints; and
- Incorporation of mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts and estimation of residual impacts once mitigation has become established.

1.1.3.1 Landscape Impact Assessment Criteria

When assessing the potential impacts on the landscape resulting from a proposed development, the following criteria are considered:

- Landscape character, value and sensitivity;
- Magnitude of likely impacts; and
- Significance of landscape effects

The sensitivity of the landscape to change is the degree to which a particular landscape receptor (Landscape Character Area (LCA) or feature) can accommodate changes or new elements without unacceptable detrimental effects to its essential characteristics. Landscape Value and Sensitivity is classified using the following criteria set out in Table 1.1**.**

Table 1.1 Landscape Value and Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Description
Very High	Areas where the landscape character exhibits a very low capacity for change in the form of development. Examples of which are high value landscapes, protected at an international or national level (World Heritage Site/National Park), where the principal management objectives are likely to be protection of the existing character.
High	Areas where the landscape character exhibits a low capacity for change in the form of development. Examples of which are high value landscapes, protected at a national or regional level (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), where the principal management objectives are likely to be considered conservation of the existing character.
Medium	Areas where the landscape character exhibits some capacity and scope for development. Examples of which are landscapes, which have a designation of protection at a county level or at non-designated local level where there is evidence of local value and use.
Low	Areas where the landscape character exhibits a higher capacity for change from development. Typically, this would include lower value, non-designated landscapes that may also have some elements or features of recognisable quality, where landscape management objectives include, enhancement, repair and restoration.
Negligible	Areas of landscape character that include derelict, mining, industrial land or are part of the urban fringe where there would be a reasonable capacity to embrace change or the capacity to include the development proposals. Management objectives in such areas could be focused on change, creation of landscape improvements and/or restoration to realise a higher landscape value.

The magnitude of a predicted landscape impact is a product of the scale, extent or degree of change that is likely to be experienced as a result of the proposed development. The magnitude takes into account whether there is a direct physical impact resulting from the loss of landscape components and/or a change that extends beyond the Site boundary that may have an effect on the landscape character of the area. Table 1.2 refers.

Table 1.2 Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

Magnitude of Impact	Description
Very High	Change that would be large in extent and scale with the loss of critically important landscape elements and features, that may also involve the introduction of new uncharacteristic elements or features that contribute to an extensive change of the landscape in terms of character, value and quality.
High	Change that would be more limited in extent and scale with the loss of important landscape elements and features, that may also involve the introduction of new uncharacteristic elements or features that contribute to a considerable change of the landscape in terms of character, value and quality.
Medium	Changes that are modest in extent and scale involving the loss of landscape characteristics or elements that may also involve the introduction of new uncharacteristic elements or features that would lead to noticeable changes in landscape character, and quality.
Low	Changes affecting small areas of landscape character and quality, together with the loss of some less characteristic landscape elements or the addition of new features or elements that would lead to discernible changes in landscape character, and quality.
Negligible	Changes affecting small or very restricted areas of landscape character. This may include the limited loss of some elements or the addition of some new features or elements that are characteristic of the existing landscape or are hardly perceivable leading to no material change to landscape character, and quality.

The significance of a landscape impact is based on a balance between the sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of the impact. The significance of landscape impacts is arrived at using the following matrix set out in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Impact Significance Matrix

	Sensitivity of Receptor				
Scale/Magnitude	*Very High*	*High*	*Medium*	*Low*	*Negligible*
Very High	Profound	Profound-substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Slight
High	Profound-substantial	Substantial	Substantial-moderate	Moderate-slight	Slight-imperceptible
Medium	Substantial	Substantial-moderate	Moderate	Slight	Imperceptible
Low	Moderate	Moderate-slight	Slight	Slight-imperceptible	Imperceptible
Negligible	Slight	Slight-imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible	Imperceptible

Note: The significance matrix provides an indicative framework from which the significance of impact is derived. The significance judgement is ultimately determined by the assessor using professional

judgement. Due to nuances within the constituent sensitivity and magnitude judgements, this may be up to one category higher or lower than indicated by the matrix. Judgements indicated in orange are considered to be 'significant impacts' in EIA terms.

1.1.3.2 Visual Impact Assessment Criteria

As with the landscape impact, the visual impact of the proposed development will be assessed as a function of sensitivity versus magnitude. In this instance, the sensitivity of the visual receptor, weighed against the magnitude of the visual effect.

1.1.3.3 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

Unlike landscape sensitivity, the sensitivity of visual receptors has an anthropocentric basis. It considers factors such as the perceived quality and values associated with the view, the landscape context of the viewer, the likely activity they are engaged in and whether this heightens their awareness of the surrounding landscape. A list of the factors considered by the assessor in estimating the level of sensitivity for a particular visual receptor is outlined below to establish visual receptor sensitivity at each VRP:

1.1.3.3.1 Susceptibility of Receptors

In accordance with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ("IEMA") Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment (3rd edition 2013) visual receptors most susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity are:

- "*Residents at home;*
- *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views;*
- *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
- *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area; and*
- *Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes where such travel involves recognised scenic routes and awareness of views is likely to be heightened*".

Visual receptors that are less susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity include;

- "*People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape; and*

- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity, not their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life*".

1.1.3.3.2 Values Associated with the View

1. **Recognised scenic value of the view** (County Development Plan designations, guidebooks, touring maps, postcards etc). These represent a consensus in terms of which scenic views and routes within an area are strongly valued by the population because in the case of County Developments Plans, for example, a public consultation process is required;

2. **Views from within highly sensitive landscape areas**. Again, highly sensitive landscape designations are usually part of a county's Landscape Character Assessment, which is then incorporated within the County Development Plan and is therefore subject to the public consultation process. Viewers within such areas are likely to be highly attuned to the landscape around them;

3. **Primary views from dwellings**. A proposed development might be seen from anywhere within a particular residential property with varying degrees of sensitivity. Therefore, this category is reserved for those instances in which the design of dwellings or housing estates, has been influenced by the desire to take in a particular view. This might involve the use of a slope or the specific orientation of a house and/or its internal social rooms and exterior spaces;

4. **Intensity of use, popularity**. This relates to the number of viewers likely to experience a view on a regular basis and whether this is significant at county or regional scale;

5. **Connection with the landscape**. This considers whether or not receptors are likely to be highly attuned to views of the landscape i.e. commuters hurriedly driving on busy national route versus hill walkers directly engaged with the landscape enjoying changing sequential views over it;

6. **Provision of elevated panoramic views**. This relates to the extent of the view on offer and the tendency for receptors to become more attuned to the surrounding landscape at locations that afford broad vistas;

7. **Sense of remoteness and/or tranquillity.** Receptors taking in a remote and tranquil scene, which is likely to be fairly static, are likely to be more receptive to changes in the view than those taking in the view of a busy street scene, for example;

8. **Degree of perceived naturalness**. Where a view is valued for the sense of naturalness of the surrounding landscape it is likely to be highly sensitive to visual intrusion by distinctly manmade features;

9. **Presence of striking or noteworthy features.** A view might be strongly valued because it contains a distinctive and memorable landscape feature such as a promontory headland, lough or castle;

10. **Historical, cultural and / or spiritual significance.** Such attributes may be evident or sensed by receptors at certain viewing locations, which may attract visitors for the purposes of contemplation or reflection heightening the sense of their surroundings;

11. **Rarity or uniqueness of the view**. This might include the noteworthy representativeness of a certain landscape type and considers whether the receptor could take in similar views anywhere in the broader region or the country;

12. **Integrity of the landscape character**. This looks at the condition and intactness of the landscape in view and whether the landscape pattern is a regular one of few strongly related components or an irregular one containing a variety of disparate components;

13. **Sense of place**. This considers whether there is special sense of wholeness and harmony at the viewing location; and

14. **Sense of awe**. This considers whether the view inspires an overwhelming sense of scale or the power of nature.

Those locations which are deemed to satisfy many of the above criteria are likely to be of higher sensitivity. Overall sensitivity may be a result of a number of these factors or, alternatively, a strong association with one or two in particular.

1.1.3.4 Visual Impact Magnitude

The magnitude of visual effects is determined on the basis of two factors; the visual presence (relative visual dominance) of the proposed development and its effect on visual amenity.

Visual presence is a somewhat quantitative measure relating to how noticeable or visually dominant the proposed development is within a particular view. This is based on a number of aspects, aside from scale in relation to distance. Some of these aspects include the extent and complexity of the view, as well as the degree of existing contextual movement experienced. The backdrop against which the development is presented and its relationship with other focal points or prominent features within the view is also considered. Visual presence is essentially a measure of the relative visual dominance of the proposed development within the available vista and is often, though not always, expressed as one of the following terms:

- Minimal;
- Sub-dominant;
- Co-dominant;
- Dominant;
- Highly dominant.

The magnitude of visual impacts is classified in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 Magnitude of Visual Impact

Criteria	Description
Very High	The proposed development obstructs or intrudes into a large proportion or critical part of the available vista and is without question the most noticeable element. An extensive degree of visual change will occur within the scene completely altering its character, composition and associated visual amenity
High	The proposed development obstructs or intrudes into a significant proportion or important part of the available vista and is one of the most noticeable elements. A considerable degree of visual change will occur within the scene substantially altering its character, composition and associated visual amenity
Medium	The proposed development represents a moderate intrusion into the available vista and is a readily noticeable element. A noticeable degree of visual change will occur within the scene perceptibly altering its character, composition and associated visual amenity
Low	The proposed development intrudes to a minor extent into the available vista and may not be noticed by a casual observer and/or the proposed development would not have a marked effect on the visual amenity of the scene
Negligible	The proposed development would be barely discernible within the available vista and/or it would not influence the visual amenity of the scene

1.1.3.5 Visual Impact Significance

As stated above, the significance of visual impacts is a function of visual receptor sensitivity and visual impact magnitude. This relationship is expressed in the same significance matrix and applies the same EPA definitions of significance as used earlier in respect of landscape impacts (Table 1.3 refers).

1.1.3.6 Quality and Timescale of Effects

In addition to assessing the significance of landscape effects and visual effects, the EPA Guidance for EIAs[1] requires that the quality of the effects is also determined. In relation to the quality of effects, Table 3.4 of the current EPA Guidance states that these could be 'Positive', 'Neutral' or 'Negative/Adverse Effects'. A description of each is included below;

- *"Positive Effects: A change which improves the quality of the environment (for example, by increasing species diversity, or improving the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or by removing nuisances or improving amenities).*
- *Neutral Effects: No effects or effects that are imperceptible, within normal bounds of variation or within the margin of forecasting error.*
- *Negative/Adverse Effects: A change which reduces the quality of the environment (for example, lessening species diversity or diminishing the reproductive capacity of an ecosystem, or damaging health or property or by causing nuisance)."*

[1] Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) publication '*Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Statements* (2022)

Landscape and Visual effects are also categorised according to their duration:

- Temporary – Effects lasting less than a year;
- Short Term – Effects lasting one to seven years;
- Medium Term – Effects lasting seven to fifteen years;
- Long Term – Effects lasting fifteen to sixty years; and
- Permanent – Effects lasting over sixty years.

1.1.4 Extent of Study Area

It is anticipated that the Proposed Development will be difficult to discern and not likely to give rise to significant landscape/townscape or visual impacts beyond 1km. Nonetheless, due to the scale of the development and for the purpose of a comprehensive appraisal, a 2km study area has been included with a focus on those receptors within 500m of the site.

1.2 RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

1.2.1 Landscape and Visual Policy Context and Designations

1.2.1.1 South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028

The application site is situated within land designated as 'RU' by the CDP's Land Use Zoning Map no. 1. The objective for this land use zoning is *"to protect and improve rural amenity and to provide for the development of agriculture".* It is important to note that residential developments are classed as 'Open for Consideration' in this land use zoning but should be "in accordance with Council Policy for residential development in rural areas".

Section 3.4.3 of the CDP relates to the landscape and includes and Landscape Character Assessment for South Dublin County (full version included in Appendix 9 of the current CDP). As set out in the current CDP, the proposed development is contained with the Newcastle Lowlands LCA and is bordered to the east by the Urban LCA. With regard to Landscape Character Types (LCTs), the proposed development is considered to be located in the 'Urban Fringe' LCT. Section 12.3.5 outlines principles for development for each LCT. Those relevant to the 'Urban Fringe' LCT are included below;

- Screening through appropriate native broadleaf planting to provide a stronger visual boundary and definition as well as enhancing ecological connectivity.
- Coherent approach to boundary treatments and design.
- Prepare plans to integrate transitional lands into landscape through appropriate planting and boundary treatments.

Views of recognised scenic value are primarily indicated within Development Plans in the context of scenic views/routes designations, but they might also be indicated on touring maps, guide books, websites, road side rest stops or on post cards that represent the area. A number of 'prospects to be preserved' are identified on in Table 3.5 of the current county development plan. None of these are located within the study area.

1.2.1.2 Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029

Whilst the proposed development is wholly located within County Dublin, the Kildare County boundary is some c. 600m west of the site. Thus, it is important to included landscape related policy and designations within County Kildare.

A Landscape Character Assessment was prepared for Kildare in 2004 and is incorporated into the latest iteration of the Kildare County Development Plan. Landscape policy is dealt with in Chapter 14 of the main document, entitled 'Landscape, Recreation and Amenities.' In terms of landscape character areas, the most relevant of these to the proposed development include LCA – Northern Lowlands and LCA – River Liffey. The LCA – Northern Lowlands is classified with a 'Class 1 – Low Sensitivity', whilst the LCA – River Liffey is designated a 'Class 4 – Special Sensitivity' landscape due its susceptible naturalistic and scenic characteristics. It is also worth noting that the River Liffey is also designated and 'Area of High Amenity' in the current county development plan, which *"classified because of their outstanding natural beauty and/or unique interest value and are generally sensitive to the impacts of development."*

In terms of designated scenic amenity within the Kildare in the study area, several scenic views and a scenic route are located in the wider surrounds of the site. Both scenic views and the scenic route within the study area are all associated with the River Liffey corridor and are typically well contained by surrounding dense mature riparian vegetation.

1.2.2 Landscape and Visual Baseline

The proposed development is located in an area of relatively flat terrain, some c. 1km south of the River Liffey corridor and c. 1.8km north of the Grand Canal corridor. Whilst the site itself if contained in pastoral farmland and much of the surrounding landscape to the south and west is characterised by agricultural lands, the study area is heavily influenced by the suburban areas of Dublin and surrounding commuter towns such as Leixlip, Celbridge and Maynooth. In terms of land use, the study area is contained in a mix of typical urban land uses and traditional rural land uses. Nonetheless, a variety of other contrasting land uses are also located throughout the study area and include Weston Airport, Lucan Golf Club, the national railway line and the M4 motorway corridor, in addition to an array of other commercial and industrial land uses.

In terms of settlements, the nearest centre of population to the proposed development is Adamstown, located immediately east of the site. Adamstown is a new urban centre where some residential areas, such as those located immediately east of the site, are still under construction. The centre of Leixlip is located less than 2km north of the site, whilst the centre of Lucan is some 2.5km northeast. Celbridge in County Kildare is 3km west of the site, while Maynooth is 7km northwest of the proposed development. The nearest existing residential dwellings to the proposed development include a linear cluster of rural residential dwellings located along Tubber Lane immediately south of the site, whilst a new residential complex located immediately east of the site is near completion.

The most notable transport route in relation to the proposed development is the M4 motorway, which is located some c. 1.2km north of the site. The R403 regional road is situated just over c. 300m north of the site, whilst the R404 regional road intersects the R403 some c. 1.4km west of the site and connects back to the centre of Leixlip. The site itself is bound to the north and east by the newly constructed Celbridge Link Road, whilst immediately south of the site is the L5373 local road (Tubber Lane). The National Railway Line is also located some c. 1.2km south of the site at its nearest point.

The most notable amenity feature in relation to the proposed development is the 18-hole Lucan Golf Course, situated immediately north of the Celbridge Link Road. Whilst the study area is not highly synonymous with outdoor recreation, it encompasses several local recreation facilities, including parks, playgrounds, and sports pitches. A brief section of the Grand Canal Way also pierces the southern periphery of the study area over 1.9km south of the site. Finntown Castle Hotel is located in a parkland setting some c. 1.5km southeast of the site, whilst Castletown House and Demesne and Donaghcumper House and Demesne are located in the immediate surrounds of Celbridge Town and are situated just over 2km west of the site.

1.2.3 Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape value and sensitivity are considered in relation to a number of factors highlighted in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 2013, which are set out below and discussed relative to the proposed development site and wider study area.

The study area represents a highly modified transitional setting located on the periphery of the wider suburban Dublin area and between several notable commuter towns on the outskirts of Dublin and northeast Kildare. Whilst the site itself has a distinct influence from pastoral lands, which it is contained within and immediately adjacent to, the landscape character is principally influenced by the urban centres of Adamstown and other highly anthropogenic land uses, such as airfields, major routes and other industrial and commercial land uses. Overall, there is no strong sense of distinctiveness or rarity within the site and its surrounding landscape. Indeed, some of the more notable and susceptible landscape areas, such as the Grand Canal Corridor and the River Liffey, are well offset from the site and are afforded a high degree of containment from the surrounding dense mature vegetation. Furthermore, the most notable aspects of scenic amenity within the study area and surrounding landscape typically relate to these contained landscape areas.

Overall, the landscape character of the surrounding landscape and study area is strongly influenced by the array of highly anthropogenic built features and land uses on the periphery of the wider suburban areas of west Dublin, in addition to the more typical pastoral lands to the south of the site. It is not considered that the landscape/townscape is highly rare or distinctive on a local, regional or national level, and thus, the sensitivity of the receiving landscape is deemed **Medium-low**.

1.3 IMPACT POTENTIAL

1.3.1 PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER EFFECTS

During the construction stage of the proposed development there will be construction-related activity within and around the site, including approach roads. This will include, but is not limited to:

- Stripping of soil and regrading of terrain within the site;
- HGVs transporting materials to and from the site;
- Movement of heavy machinery and assembly of scaffolding on-site;
- Temporary storage of construction materials on-site;
- Gradual emergence of the proposed residential development, and associated works;
- Security fencing/hoarding and site lighting;

It is predicted that the construction stage for the proposed project will last for up to xx months years depending on market demand which will be 'temporary', in accordance with the EPA definitions of impact during. Furthermore, the context of this construction activity is in an urban/hinterland context where construction activity is already, on-going within neighbouring developments.

On the basis of the reasons outlined above, the magnitude of construction stage landscape / townscape, impacts are deemed to be Medium-low. When combined with the Medium-low sensitivity of the receiving townscape, the overall significance is considered to be Moderate-slight. Thus, the construction stage will not generate significant landscape impacts.

In terms of operational phase impacts, the proposed development will see an area of agricultural land situated in a rural/urban interface context developed into a residential housing development with 132 residential units, landscaped open spaces and internal paths and roadways.

Some: 5.7 hectares of landscaped open spaces and 2.5 ha of berming and woodland mix is also to be provided across the proposed development. Some of the main elements of the landscaping proposals include a comprehensive boundary treatment along the sites boundary with the new Celbridge link road, which comprises berming and native woodland planting, to further screen and soften the proposed development from the adjacent road corridor and surrounding local receptors. The landscape strategy will also retained and bolster wildlife corridors along the perimeter and within the site, incorporates Sustainable Drainage Systems into the design, and will enhance the living environment and biodiversity with soft landscaping.

Following the completion of the proposed construction works, landscape/townscape impacts will relate entirely to the development's impact on the character of the receiving landscape/townscape and whether this is positive or negative – the main influence here being the transition from a peri-urban landscape to a higher intensity urban/residential landscape.

The proposed development seeks to change the land use from low intensity rural to mid-high intensity urban. However, within this hinterland context, there is a notable degree of scope and precedent for this change as the site is bound to the east by the evolving settlement of Adamstown, which comprises new residential development.

The proposed development will also integrate contemporary high-quality construction materials and high- finishes and landscaping to complement and integrate with the surrounding setting. Whilst some hedgerow vegetation and areas of scrub will need to be removed from the site to facilitate the full footprint of the proposed development, the harder profiles of the built structures will be softened, screened and assimilated by retaining and enhancing many of the existing hedgerows and treelines around its perimeter in so far as possible. Considerable additional planting is also proposed and will be of local provenance and will help embed the development into its surrounding landscape context.

For the reasons outlined above, it is considered that the proposed development will give rise to a townscape impact that will be of Medium-low magnitude. When combined with the Medium-low sensitivity of the receiving townscape, the overall significance is considered to be Slight. Thus, the operational stage of the proposed development will not generate significant landscape impacts.

1.3.2 VISUAL AMENITY EFFECTS

With regard to the potential visual impact of the proposed development, this is notably diminished by the relatively contained nature of the site, which will only be clearly visible from the newly constructed Celbridge Link Road along the site's eastern and northern boundary. The potential visual impact of the proposed development on surrounding receptors was assessed by six representative viewpoints representing various viewing distance angles and receptor types. In this instance, all the representative viewpoints are located in the near vicinity of the site as the surrounding landscape is relatively flat, so there is limited potential for any clear views of the proposed development from a distance. Furthermore, the site and surrounding landscape encompass a high degree of intervening mature vegetation and large areas of existing (and under construction) built development, which heavily diminish the proposed development potential to alter the landscape character of the surrounding study area. Furthermore, the proposed residential development is in keeping with the surrounding emerging land residential land uses and, therefore, will not appear incongruous in this peri-urban landscape context.

Viewpoints VP1-VP4 are all representative of the users along the Celbridge Link Road and neighbouring residential receptors in the new residential development immediately east of the site. These views, most notably viewpoints VP1 and VP2, are also representative of users of the neighbouring golf course, which have the potential to afford views in the direction of the site. Viewpoints VP5 and VP6 represent the local community and local residential receptors south of the area along the L5373 local road.

Viewpoint VP1 is located some c. 35 m northwest of the site and will afford a brief view of the development. Only the two-storey dwellings will be visible from this distance, over the top of the

surrounding intervening vegetation in the site's direction. The proposed development will marginally increase the intensity of the built skyline in the view, however, the proposed development will not appear out of place or out of character in this peri-urban context.

Viewpoint VP2 is located along the Celbridge Link Road immediately northwest of the site. A near-distant view of the proposed development will be afforded from here, where the surrounding planted berms along the site's eastern and northern boundary and proposed tree and shrub planting will visually soften and screen the built forms of the proposed development from the local road corridor. An existing boundary hedgerow along the site's northwest boundary will also aid in screening and softening a terrace of single-storey dwellings along the sites southwestern boundary for road users approaching the site from the north. Whilst the proposed development will notably increase the intensity of development along this section of the road corridor, the proposed buildings are well offset of the road corridor and do not appear over-scaled or out of context.

Viewpoint VP3 is situated along the Celbridge Link Road adjacent to a newly constructed residential development. The proposed residential development will be visible in the middle distance, albeit the more visually prominent two-storey dwellings are set back into the development when viewed from this visual context. Furthermore, the proposed development is afforded generous setbacks from the local road encompassing tree and shrub planting, which will further soften and screen the built forms of the proposed residential development. In addition to the proposed landscaping, the varied materiality of the proposed residential development also aids in diminishing the overall visual mass of the proposed development.

Viewpoint VP4 is located slightly further south of the VP3 and is representative of the westernmost edge of the Adamstown development. The proposed development will be heavily screened from here by a mature tree-lined hedgerow located in the middle ground of the view. Whilst glimpses of both the single and two-storey dwellings will be afforded from here, the proposed development has a limited visual presence in this view, which is also characterised by a high degree of existing residential development in its eastern aspect. Furthermore, the combination of existing vegetative screening in the direction of the site and in the distant landscape, combined with the proposed vegetation internal to the site, will further assimilate the proposed development in this peri-urban/hinterland context.

Viewpoint VP5 is located along the L5373 local road (Tubber Lane) to the south of the site and represents a linear cluster of residential dwellings located to the south of the local road corridor. These dwellings and the local road context afforded a high degree of containment by the surrounding roadside hedgerows and mature vegetation that encircles many of these dwellings. As a result, the proposed development will be entirely screened from here.

Viewpoint VP6 is located further to the west along the L5373 to VP5. Whilst a brief window of visibility is afforded through an entrance to an existing landholding to the north, the view in the direction of the site is heavily truncated by dense mature vegetation along the roadside edge.

Overall, the proposed development will principally be visible from the nearest sections of the newly constructed Celbridge Link road, which traverse immediately east and north of the site and will be the principal access to the proposed development. Whilst the proposed residential development represents a marked degree of visual change from a low-intensity hinterland landscape to a more medium-intensity suburban edge development, it is relatively discreetly sited and will be further assimilated into the surrounding landscape context through a comprehensive landscaping strategy, which encompasses planted berms and tree and shrub plantings. Indeed, as the planting becomes established, the proposed development will be further screened and softened from even the nearest sections of the adjacent road corridor. Overall, it is not considered that this modest-scale residential development that comprises a high proportion of single-storey dwellings rising no higher than c. 3.1m and 12 two storey dwellings will generate significant visual impacts in this peri-urban/hinterland context.

1.4 CONCLUSION

Overall the proposed residential development will result in some landscape impacts at a localised scale to the site and its immediate surrounding landscape. Landscape impacts beyond the immediate context of the site are heavily diminished by the relatively contained nature of the development, which will only be visible from its immediate surrounding landscape. Furthermore, whilst the proposed development will result in a distinct visual change in this per-urban/hinterland context, it does not appear incongruous and will likely be viewed as an extension to the evolving Adamstown neighbourhood, which it is located immediately adjacent to. Thus, it is considered that in this robust and heavily modified landscape context, the proposed development will not result in significant landscape and visual impacts.