

NORTH HEMEL HEMPSTEAD LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX B: Landscape Sensitivity

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Building on previous studies, a sensitivity assessment has been carried out for each Assessment Parcel to enable a finer grain identification of the varying sensitivity across the study area, thereby enabling development to be directed away from areas of greatest sensitivity from a landscape and visual perspective. The approach to this assessment follows guidance and criteria provided by Natural England and the Landscape Institute as referenced in the methodology described in Section 2 of the main report.

2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

2.1 Criteria and relevant indicators derived from the Natural England and Landscape Institute guidance, against which each assessment parcel is judged are set out in Table B1 below:

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUSCEPTIBILITY
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY	
Landform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Open, highly prominent and distinctive or intricate and complex landforms with sharp changes in level are more likely to be susceptible to change arising from development than flat and indistinct landforms. ■ Where potential development would interrupt the relationship between distinctive landform features such as escarpments, or prominent hills or open plains. ■ Where development would affect skyline character.
Landscape pattern/landcover/scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Landscapes with a small scale, complex and intricate landscape pattern arising from landcover elements including settlement, field pattern or vegetation cover are more likely to be susceptible to change arising from larger scale development than landscapes with a simple landcover pattern. ■ Landscapes enclosed by buildings, trees and woodlands can offer more opportunity to accommodate development without affecting landscape character.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUSCEPTIBILITY
Intactness of field boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This criteria considers the scale and integrity of field boundaries whether hedgerows, stone walls or fences. Intact field boundaries can help screen development but can also be susceptible to loss or degradation from development. ■ Historic hedgerows are particularly susceptible to loss.
Sense of place/rural quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Landscapes with a strong and positive rural character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, will be more susceptible to change because of the potential impact on their legibility and upon features and combinations of elements which may be difficult to replace. ■ This applies to landscapes with semi-natural habitats and valued natural features such as woodland and hedgerows with good connectivity.
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This considers the overall settlement pattern within the assessment parcel and the nature of any settlement edge, that is whether it is positive or negative, smooth, linear or indented. ■ Importantly it considers whether potential development would integrate with the general settlement form/pattern and how it may affect the character of the existing settlement edge and its functioning relationship with the surrounding countryside.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUSCEPTIBILITY
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY	
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The likelihood of a development being visible depends on the scale of the development, the landform in which the development is sited and the screening opportunities afforded by the land cover, particularly buildings, trees and woodlands. ■ Landscapes which are visually contained with limited inward and outward views are likely to be less susceptible than open landscapes with extensive inward and outward views. The visual relationship of the assessment parcel with any existing settlement edges and whether there are any visual detractors which may reduce its susceptibility influences whether new development is likely to be well accommodated into its surroundings. ■ Intervisibility between assessment parcels is also important. A landscape with a high degree of intervisibility with/or forming a backdrop to nearby areas of acknowledged landscape sensitivity such as the Chilterns AONB are more susceptible to development as they are unique and irreplaceable. ■ Similarly a landscape located on approaches/gateways to these sensitive landscapes are more susceptible to development.
Skylines and other focal points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skylines are susceptible to development as they are generally widely visible with features on them typically being seen in relief against a light sky. ■ Undeveloped rural skylines are particularly susceptible as are attractive skylines which form a backdrop to settlement. ■ The presence of distinctive or historic landscape features such as hilltop monuments, church spires/towers or historic villages also increases susceptibility. ■ Assessment parcels may form part of, or may have a strong visual link to a distinctive skyline.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF SUSCEPTIBILITY
Typical receptors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing a view at a particular location, and therefore the extent to which their attention or interest may be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience. ■ The most susceptible receptors are residents, communities, people engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience, visitors to landscape whose interest is focussed on natural and built heritage assets and users of scenic routes. ■ Each location brings with it certain expectations. Transport users (particularly of high speed roads) are usually considered less susceptible receptors, unless the road is considered to be a scenic route or important gateway.
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The greater the number of sensitive visual receptors in an area, the more susceptible the area will be to change from development. ■ This includes receptors within the assessment parcel and also includes receptors that may lie further away but in locations which have direct and open views towards the assessment parcel (such as views from elevated hill forts/trig points etc).
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Landscapes of attractive scenery, character, quality, integrity, strong sense of place and local distinctiveness will typically be more susceptible to development than less scenic areas. ■ This includes landscapes that are designated for their natural beauty, but also areas of undesignated landscape, including areas that are scenic and have strong character.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF VALUE
Natural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presence of wildlife and habitats of ecological interest that contribute to sense of place. ■ Extent and survival of semi-natural habitat that is characteristic of the landscape type. ■ Presence of distinctive geological, geomorphological or pedological features. ■ Landscape which contains valued natural capital assets that contribute to ecosystem services, for example distinctive ecological communities and habitats that form the basis of ecological networks. ■ Landscape which makes an identified contribution to a nature recovery/green infrastructure network.
Cultural heritage*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presence of historic landmark structures or designed landscape elements (e.g. follies, monuments, avenues, tree roundels). ■ Presence of historic parks and gardens, and designed landscapes. ■ Landscape which contributes to the significance of heritage assets, for example forming the setting of heritage assets (especially if identified in specialist studies). ■ Landscape which offers a dimension of time depth. This includes natural time depth, e.g. presence of features such as glaciers and peat bogs and cultural time depth e.g. presence of relic farmsteads, ruins, historic field patterns, historic rights of way (e.g. drove roads, salt ways, tracks associated with past industrial activity). This also includes historic human influence on the landscape and its field pattern e.g. fields and remaining woodland or field boundaries resulting from assarting whereby fields were cut within the original woodland, primarily during medieval times.

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF VALUE
Landscape condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good physical condition/ intactness of individual landscape elements (e.g. walls, parkland, trees). ■ Good health of elements such as good water quality, good soil health. ■ Strong landscape structure (e.g. intact historic field patterns). ■ Absence of detracting/incongruous features (or features are present but have little influence).
Associations*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Associations with well-known literature, poetry, art, TV/ film and music that contribute to perceptions of the landscape. ■ Associations with science or other technical achievements. ■ Links to a notable historical event. ■ Associations with a famous person or people.
Distinctiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Landscape character that has a strong sense of place (showing strength of expression of landscape characteristics). ■ Presence of distinctive features which are identified as being characteristic of a particular place. ■ Presence of rare or unusual features, especially those that help to confer a strong sense of place or identity. ■ Landscape which makes an important contribution to the character or identity of a settlement. ■ Settlement gateways/approaches which provides a clear sense of arrival and contribute to the character of the settlement (may be ancient/historic).

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF VALUE
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presence of open access land, common land and public rights of way (particularly National Trails, long distance trails, Coastal Paths and Core Paths) where appreciation of landscape is a feature. ■ Areas with good accessibility that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and spiritual experience/inspiration. ■ Presence of town and village greens. ■ Other physical evidence of recreational use where experience of landscape is important. ■ Landscape that forms part of a view that is important to the enjoyment of a recreational activity.
Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Landscapes and landscape elements that contribute to the healthy functioning of the landscape, e.g. natural hydrological systems/floodplains, areas of undisturbed and healthy soils, areas that form carbon sinks such as peat bogs, woodlands and oceans, areas of diverse landcover (benefits pest regulation), pollinator-rich habitats such as wildflower meadows. ■ Areas that form an important part of a multifunctional Green Infrastructure network. ■ Landscapes and landscape elements that have strong physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation, or are important to the appreciation of the designated landscape and its special qualities. ■ Areas with higher Agricultural Land Classification (grades 1 to 3a).

CRITERIA	INDICATORS OF VALUE
Scenic quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Distinctive features, or distinctive combinations of features, such as dramatic or striking landform or harmonious combinations of land cover. ■ Strong aesthetic qualities such as scale, form, colour and texture. ■ Presence of natural lines in the landscape (e.g. natural ridgelines, woodland edges, river corridors, coastal edges). ■ Visual diversity or contrasts which contributes to the appreciation of the landscape. ■ Memorable/distinctive views and landmarks, or landscape which contributes to distinctive views and landmarks.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High levels of tranquillity or perceptions of tranquillity, including perceived links to nature, dark skies, presence of wildlife/birdsong and relative peace and quiet. ■ Presence of wild land and perceptions of relative wildness (resulting from a high degree of perceived naturalness, rugged or otherwise challenging terrain, remoteness from public mechanised access and lack of modern artefacts). ■ Sense of particular remoteness, seclusion or openness. ■ Dark night skies. ■ A general absence of intrusive or inharmonious development, land uses, transport and lighting.

* Landscapes can be valued for both 'cultural heritage' and the 'associations' factors, but for different reasons. 'Cultural heritage' relates more to physical assets including field patterns, places and structures, whereas 'Associations' are less tangible and relate more to events and people, either historic or contemporary.

3 SENSITIVITY CLASSIFICATION

- 3.1 Best practice methodology has moved away from quantitative ranking of landscape components, to a more descriptive approach. However, the Landscape Institutes Technical Guidance Note 02/21 explains that *“once evidence for each factor has been collated and assessed, it is important to step back and judge the overall ‘weight of evidence’ in coming to an overall judgement...”*. In line with this, and to aid comparison between the assessment parcels considered, parcels are given a guide classification based on a five point scale for each individual assessment criteria to reflect the corresponding notes and build up an overall judgement of the level of sensitivity of each parcel.
- 3.2 The five classifications for the individual criteria are as follows:
- **High** - the assessment parcel meets the indicators to a high degree across the vast majority of its extent and represents the best examples of the factor within the study area.
 - **High-Medium** - the indicators are notable within the assessment parcel and there are above average examples across the majority of the parcel.
 - **Medium** - the indicator is identifiable within the assessment parcel to a moderate degree, but is unremarkable compared to other examples within the study area.
 - **Low-Medium** - Limited examples where the indicator can be identified within the assessment parcel.
 - **Low** - The indicator has not been identified, or is difficult to perceive, within the assessment parcel.

Overall Sensitivity Judgements

- 3.3 Classifications are likely to vary between factors, but combined will build up a picture of the ‘weight of evidence’ and help define an overall sensitivity judgement for each assessment parcel as follows:

High sensitivity

- 3.4 Areas with several criteria judged to be ‘High’ will highlight an outstanding landscape with particularly high sensitivity. These areas

have landscape/visual characteristics which are very susceptible to change and/or their value is high. Areas judged to have High sensitivity are unable to accommodate development without significant character change or adverse effects. In the event that development is proposed within areas of High sensitivity, significant evidence and mitigation would be required in order to make the proposals acceptable. Proposals would need to be of exceptionally high quality and appropriate to the location.

High-Medium sensitivity

- 3.5 Assessment parcels with consistently above average classification of ‘High-Medium’ for the majority of criteria will demonstrate an ‘all-round’ notable sensitivity, meaning the assessment parcel has landscape/visual characteristics which are very susceptible to change and its values are moderate to high. The area is unlikely to accommodate development without significant character change or adverse effects. Any development should be on a small scale, in appropriate locations, where it can be demonstrated that proposals would not have an adverse effect on the landscape. Thresholds for significant change are very low. If development is proposed within areas of High-Medium sensitivity, this should consider the highest levels of sensitivity within the assessment parcel and should be landscape-led, with robust and effective mitigation. Substantial evidence would be required in order for effects to be assessed robustly.

Medium sensitivity

- 3.6 Assessment parcels which are generally average overall may still exhibit landscape/visual characteristics which are susceptible to change and have elements which are valued. The area may be able to accommodate development in identified situations without significant character change or adverse effects, where such locations are defined, however thresholds for significant change are likely to be moderate to low. If development is proposed within areas of Medium sensitivity, this should consider the highest levels of sensitivity within the assessment parcel and should be designed sensitively. Adverse effects on

character change and views should be avoided wherever possible and opportunities for enhancement should be investigated.

Low-Medium sensitivity

- 3.7 Areas below average across the majority of criteria are landscapes with relatively limited landscape/visual characteristics which are susceptible to change and values which are low to medium. The site may have potential to accommodate development in a number of situations without significant character change or adverse effects. Thresholds for significant change are intermediate. Development within areas with Medium-Low sensitivity should be sensitive to its context and appropriate in scale and land use. Adverse effects on character change and views should be avoided and opportunities for enhancement should be investigated.

Low sensitivity

- 3.8 The assessment parcel has landscape/visual characteristics which are degraded or resilient and not susceptible to change and has no or limited value. The area could accommodate development without adverse landscape/visual effects. Thresholds for significant changes are high or very high. Development within areas with Low sensitivity should seek to avoid adverse effects and create opportunities for enhancement where possible.

4 ASSESSMENT TABLES

- 4.1 Judgements against the assessment criteria and a summary for each Assessment Parcel are set out in Tables B2 to B8 below.

Table B2
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel A - Gade Eastern Slopes

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform					*	Steep, relatively open west facing slopes forming eastern side of the Gade valley. Two minor valleys cut perpendicular to the main slope and landform turns to face the south at the southern end of the assessment parcel.
Landscape pattern/ landcover/scale			*			A pattern of relatively large scale irregular shaped arable fields. The area incorporates the ancient woodland of Thrift Wood, but elsewhere there is limited woodland or other notable features, forming a uniformed simple landscape pattern.
Intactness of field boundaries				*		Some boundary loss has occurred since the 1900s. However, field boundaries have a generally intact network of mature hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees which could be used as a framework for any mitigation.
Sense of place/ rural quality					*	A rural farmed landscape with limited development. The sloping valley side landform, a recognisable landscape character, and views to landmark features result in a keen sense of place. However the sense of rurality reduces to the south due to adjacent influences.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge					*	The assessment parcel contains a single dwelling, is separate from the small low density village of Piccotts End which is in the valley bottom to the west, and adjoins a limited length of the existing built up area of Grovehill. The southern end separates Piccotts End from Grovehill.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB					*	The sloping landform allows expansive distant views to the west and south, including across the Gade Valley and to Hemel Hempstead. There is intervisibility with the AONB to the north, including views of the slopes from footpath 38 within the AONB.
Skylines and other focal points				*		The break of slope along the eastern edge of the assessment parcel forms the predominately undeveloped skyline in views from lower ground in the west.
Typical receptors					*	Receptors are primarily walkers engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience, and likely to be connecting with routes through the AONB.

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Assessment Parcel A - Gade Eastern Slopes *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
				*		
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected				*		Public rights of way and an informal car parking area provide easy access to experience the landscape within the assessment parcel and beyond. A considerable number of people were using the rights of way during survey work, including dog walkers in particular.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced				*		Internal, immersive views of attractive landscape with an identifiable character, plus more distant wider views over the rural landscape to the west.
VALUE						
Natural heritage			*			Fields are lined by a generally intact network of boundary hedgerows with frequent mature trees within the hedgerows. There is a single small block of ancient woodland. However the area has a relatively loose concentration of green infrastructure.
Cultural heritage				*		The slopes form a backdrop and the setting to Piccotts End conservation area and its listed buildings. Grounds associated with Gaddesden Place abut to the north.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
				*		
Landscape condition			*			A number of fields have amalgamated and boundaries lost since the 1900s. However, there is an intact network of hedgerows along remaining field boundaries, with hedgerows and trees in generally good physical condition. Other than pylons, there are few incongruous features.
Associations		*				The slopes form the setting to Piccotts End which has historical significance including medieval wall paintings dating between 1470 and 1500 and one of the first cottage hospitals opened by Sir Astley Cooper, providing free medical services.
Distinctiveness				*		Although not particularly rare, the sloping landform combined with boundary hedgerows and other tree cover results in a distinctive, recognisable landscape which contributes to the identity of Piccotts End.
Recreation				*		Rights of way provide walking routes across the slopes and into the AONB. An informal parking area off Dodds Lane aids access to the rights of way network. During survey work there was a relatively high turnover of cars arriving and departing, including numerous dog walkers.

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Assessment Parcel A - Gade Eastern Slopes *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Function				*		The sloping landform aids watershed down to the Gade River valley, and hedgerows are part of the local green infrastructure network. The area provides part of the setting to the AONB and helps maintain the separate identities of Piccotts End and Grovehill. Identified as Grade 3 ALC.
Scenic quality				*		An attractive landscape composed of sloping fields with hedgerows and large mature trees, with limited overly detracting features.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/ or dark skies				*		A peaceful landscape with limited roads and development. There is a degree of remoteness along footpaths to the north due to local containment. The CBRE Night Sky map indicates the majority of the slopes have a night light level of 1-2.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value				*		The Gade Eastern Slopes has a number of criteria judged to have High susceptibility and the majority of value criteria are judged to be High-Medium. The sloping landform and limited settlement gives the area a notable rural character and therefore High susceptibility in terms of landform, sense of place and settlement pattern. Walkers along the public rights of way are particularly susceptible and are also considered to be High. A limited number of criteria have been judged as Medium susceptibility or value, but the weight of evidence indicates that the assessment parcel has a High sensitivity overall. The west facing, relatively open slopes have limited consistency with the existing development pattern, and provide separation between Piccotts End and Grovehill, and would not be suitable for significant development from a landscape perspective. Any development should be on a small scale and take into account the landscape guidance and principles set out in the April 2020 Dacorum Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study, page 134.

Table B3
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel B - Lovetts End Ridges & Valleys

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform			*			A series of shallow valleys and low ridges which inform variations in landscape character. However changes in landform are relatively subtle.
Landscape pattern/ landcover/scale			*			Predominately large scale arable fields, orientated broadly east-west across the valleys and ridges, which surround three pockets of small scale more pastoral fields associated with farmsteads. There is a small block of ancient woodland to the north-west but limited woodland generally, and the opportunity for enhancement.
Intactness of field boundaries		*				Field boundaries are without continuous vegetation in various places, including along Dodds Lane and a number of boundaries have been lost since the 1900s. However, some east-west field boundaries have significant lengths of intact hedgerows and trees, which could provide the framework for mitigation.
Sense of place/ rural quality			*	*		An intrinsically rural, farmed landscape, with a sense of wider containment (from surrounding tree cover and filtered settlement), which helps define the area. Human influences increases to the south, resulting in Medium sensitivity to the south and High-Medium to the north.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge		*	→	*		The southern edge adjoins Hemel Hempstead, albeit largely buffered by trees, and is the least sensitive part of the assessment parcel. Settlement elsewhere within the assessment parcel is limited to 3 groups around farmsteads at Wood Farm, Lovetts End & Farm Eastbrook Hay.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB		*				View corridors are orientated broadly north-south along the more open local valley features. The filtered edge of north Hemel is visible at increasing distance across the area. There is intervisibility with the AONB edge, but wider views of the area are limited by surrounding features.
Skylines and other focal points			*			Higher ground on subtle north-south ridges provide local low horizons within the area, particularly in east-west views. Trees on the higher ground forming focal points, albeit relatively indistinct.
Typical receptors					*	Includes walkers engaged in outdoor recreation where landscape is part of the experience. Motorists/pedestrians along Dodds Lane. Views from Dodds Lane are unobscured and driving along the straight rural lane requires less attention than a busy road, allowing the view to be appreciated.

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Assessment Parcel B - Lovetts End Ridges and Valleys *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected				*		Public rights of way within the area provide access and views of the countryside for a significant adjacent population and appeared well used by walkers during survey work. Motorists frequently drive along Dodds Lane with immediate views of the assessment parcel.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced			*			Internal, close range views of a pleasant rural rolling farmland. Wider views are largely restricted by surrounding containing features including tree cover to the north and settlement to the south. There is urban influence from Hemel Hempstead at varying distance to south.
VALUE						
Natural heritage		*				There are hedgerows with mature trees and occasional small tree groups, but the area contains just a single block of (ancient) woodland, frequent field boundaries without significant vegetation, and the local valley features have reduced green infrastructure compared to the ridges.
Cultural heritage		*				The area is large and contains a limited number of listed buildings, near Lovetts End Farm and Eastbrook Hay Farm. Varney's Wood is identified as ancient, with significant time depth. No physical/visual relationship with the conservation area.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Landscape condition		*				Where present, landscape features are generally well maintained and in a good physical condition. However, there are significant gaps in the hedgerow network. A number of fields have amalgamated and boundaries lost since the 1900s resulting in large irregular shaped fields, with opportunity for enhancement.
Associations	*					None identified.
Distinctiveness			*			The farmland has limited distinctive features or landscape character and the valleys and ridges are relatively subtle, but the area does contribute the rural setting to north Hemel Hempstead and is typical of the wider character area.
Recreation				*		Rights of way provide walking routes across the area, which in combination with Dodds Lane provide routes between Hemel Hempstead and the AONB, and a connection into the adjacent Grovehill Playing Fields to the south.

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Assessment Parcel B - Lovetts End Ridges and Valleys *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Function			*			Hedgerows and occasional tree groups form part of a relatively loose local green infrastructure network. The northern part of the parcel provides part of the setting to the AONB and helps maintain the separation between the AONB and Grovehill. Identified as Grade 3 ALC.
Scenic quality				*		A rural farmed rolling landscape with intermittent tree cover resulting in a pleasant landscape, albeit influenced by development to the south, pylons to the north, traffic along Dodds Lane and general farming buildings and activity.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies		*				A relatively quiet landscape with limited roads and development, however views of development to the south limit any sense of remoteness. The CBRE Night Sky map indicates the majority of the slopes have a night light level of 1-2.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value			*			<p>On balance, taking into account the overall weight of evidence and comparison to other assessment parcels, the Lovetts End Ridges and Valleys are considered to have Medium sensitivity from a landscape perspective. There is a general gradation in sensitivity from north to south, reducing in sensitivity to the south away from the AONB and towards the settlement edge.</p> <p>The area may be able to accommodate development in defined situations without significant character change or adverse effects subject to detailed assessment and design taking into account the susceptibility and value analysis.</p>

Table B4
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel C - Woodhall Valley

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform			*			An obvious local valley feature oriented east-west unlike the north-south valleys elsewhere. However the valley has a limited extent.
Landscape pattern/ landcover/scale		*				A single large scale arable field with a parkland style mature tree roundel within the field.
Intactness of field boundaries			*			There are no internal field boundaries, with mapped evidence of field amalgamation since 1900, but the area is edged by generally continuous hedgerows with trees to the north, east and west, and a thick tree belt along the southern edge adjoining settlement.
Sense of place/ rural quality			*			The local valley landform contained by vegetation gives the area a keen sense of place. Potential detracting effects of nearby urban influences, including the northern edge of Hemel Hempstead are limited by intervening vegetation, however internal pylons are a notable detracting.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge		*				There is no settlement internally and a thick tree belt forms a robust edge to the adjacent settlement edge to the south in both summer and winter. However, development has already encroached onto the southern slopes of the local east-west valley feature and new development would not be inconsistent with the settlement pattern.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB		*				There are obvious views of the assessment parcel along the length of the valley from the public footpath. From lower ground within the valley, views are generally well contained by the tree belt to the south and the hedgerow along the break of slope to the north. No intervisibility with the AONB.
Skylines and other focal points			*			The hedgerow and trees along the break of slope to the north forms the skyline in views north from lower ground to the south.
Typical receptors				*		Receptors are primarily walkers engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience.

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Assessment Parcel C - Woodhall Valley *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected				*		Public rights of way across and along the field provide direct access and views of the countryside for a significant adjacent population. An informal car parking area occupied by several vehicles at the time of survey aids access and indicates usage of the rights of way.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced		*				Internal, views of pleasant landscape with an identifiable character, and inward looking views. Overhead powerlines, albeit small scale, have a notable visual impact. Tree cover limits views from the adjacent bridleway to the south.
VALUE						
Natural heritage		*				Internally the natural heritage of the assessment is limited to an isolated parkland style tree roundel, however there is significant linear landscape structure along the perimeter of the field, in particular a wide tree belt on the settlement edge.
Cultural heritage			*			The parkland style roundel in the field is likely to have some cultural significance as a local landmark.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Landscape condition			*			The area is intensively farmed with well maintained hedges and trees. Amalgamation of fields since 1900 has resulted in the loss of a vegetated field boundary, but the mature tree belt along the southern edge of the assessment parcel is in good condition.
Associations		*				The Woodhall Farm area to the south was built in the 1970s on the former Brock's Fireworks site. Brock's was founded in 1698 and moved to Hemel Hempstead in the 1930s. Brock's built homes and a sports club for its workers and made the famous RAF 'target makers' during WW2.
Distinctiveness			*			The contained valley is a distinctive landform and is part of the setting to Hemel Hempstead.
Recreation			*			Rights of way provide walking routes, which connect into the adjacent settlement. An informal parking area off Holtsmere End Lane aids access to the rights of way network.

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Assessment Parcel C - Woodhall Valley *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Function			*			The area provides part of the rural northern setting to Hemel Hempstead and linear vegetation to the north and south provide connectivity as part of the local network of green infrastructure. The area is Identified as Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification.
Scenic quality				*		A pleasant, rural, unsettled landscape with a treed backdrop. Nearby urban influences including settlement to the south are obscured by vegetation, although a small scale line of power lines reduces scenic quality.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/ or dark skies		*				A relatively quiet area, with the thick tree belt containing settlement to the south, but power lines limit any sense of wildness, The CBRE Night Sky map indicates the majority of the slopes have a night light level of 2-4, brighter than the 1-2 level of the other assessment parcels.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value			*			<p>On balance, taking into account the overall weight of evidence and comparison to other assessment parcels, the Woodhall Valley is considered to have Medium sensitivity from a landscape perspective.</p> <p>This relatively self contained area predominately faces the existing settlement edge, albeit heavily treed, and has limited relationship to the AONB.</p> <p>Compared to other parts of the study area, this local east-west valley feature has relatively limited landscape/visual characteristics which are susceptible to change and has values which are low to medium. Development would have an adverse effect on the character of the area itself, but could be in keeping with the adjacent existing settlement edge, would be localised and unlikely to affect the wider rural landscape.</p> <p>The tree belt along the southern edge is a high value feature and immediate recreational benefits for the residents of Hemel Hempstead are a consideration.</p>

Table B5
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel D - Holtsmere Plateau

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform		*				A relatively flat plateau above surrounding valley systems.
Landscape pattern/ landcover/scale				*		Hedgerows along north-south boundaries to the west partially defines the boundary with the adjacent larger assessment parcel to the west. Ancient woodland forms a notable portion of the assessment parcel.
Intactness of field boundaries				*		A number of field boundaries have been lost since the 1900s, however the majority of boundaries are lined with intact hedgerows and trees.
Sense of place/ rural quality			*			The area is focused on a small, well treed rural settlement. The subtle landform and enclosure provided by tree cover temper the sense of place, however the is limited influence from Hemel Hempstead.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge				*		The assessment parcel is centred on a small area of low density of buildings, within the surrounding rural landscape. The area is physically separate from Hemel Hempstead and would only be consistent with settlement pattern if developed in combination with other parcels.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB			*			Views are contained around the central settled/wooded area. Less enclosed areas, to the west have intervisibility with AONB edge. From the lane to the east there are views of the AONB edge to the north. Tree cover limits intervisibility with Hemel Hempstead.
Skylines and other focal points			*			Tree cover within the area provides vegetated skylines from lower ground surrounding the plateau.
Typical receptors					*	Receptors are primarily walkers engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience, and likely to be connecting with routes through the nearby AONB.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel D - Holtsmere Plateau *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected		*				The area is more distant from the large population of Hemel Hempstead than other areas, but bridleways and footpaths provide walkers with an experience of the landscape.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced			*			Views are contained around the central settled/wooded area. However, more open areas, including from rights of way to west have intervisibility with the AONB edge to the north. Hay Wood is a positive identifiable feature in wider views, but pylons are a detracting feature.
VALUE						
Natural heritage				*		The area has significant tree cover, with trees associated with the small area of settlement, ornamental tree planting, Hay Wood, which is identified as ancient woodland and hedgerows and trees along field boundaries.
Cultural heritage			*			The settled area contains two listed buildings. Hay Wood is identified as ancient, with significant time depth.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Landscape condition				*		Farmland is intensively managed and maintained with landscape features in generally good physical condition. There are manicured ornamental landscapes associated with settlement in the centre of the plateau.
Associations	*					None identified.
Distinctiveness			*			Settled area at Holtsmere End is characterised by timber fencing, brick walls and planting giving the area a degree of distinctiveness.
Recreation			*			Rights of way provide walking routes across the plateau with connections to the nearby AONB.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel D - Holtsmere Plateau *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Function			*			The plateau is part of the wider southern setting to the AONB. Trees and hedgerows are part of the local green infrastructure network. The area is identified as Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification.
Scenic quality				*		A pleasant, primarily rural landscape with notable tree cover. However, human influence in the form of pylons, low density dwellings and associated clutter reduces scenic quality.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies		*				Low density dwellings and associated clutter reduce the sense of tranquillity and limits any sense of remoteness The CBRE Night Sky map indicates the majority of the slopes have a night light level of 1-2.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value				*		<p>Taking into account the overall weight of evidence across the range of criteria and individual elements and comparison to other assessment parcels, the Holtsmere Plateau is considered to have High-Medium sensitivity from a landscape perspective.</p> <p>This is a highly rural area with high value features which should be retained, and has no relationship to significant areas of settlement. The area would only be consistent with settlement pattern if developed in combination with other assessment parcels. Landscape structure is sensitive but could provide a framework for mitigation if the area is developed. Treed skylines should be maintained.</p>

Table B6
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel E - Gaddesden Lane Southern Slopes

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform			*			An identifiable north-east facing valley side, rising to a high point of approximately 135m AOD a local spur of high ground to the east of approximately 120-125m AOD.
Landscape pattern/ landcover/scale			*			A pattern of primarily large scale arable fields. Woodland is limited, but there is the opportunity for enhancement in combination with small tree groups.
Intactness of field boundaries			*			A number of field boundaries have been lost with amalgamation of fields since the 1900s, particularly to the west of Great Revel End Farm. However the majority of existing field boundaries are lined with hedges and trees, although there are some gaps.
Sense of place/ rural quality			*			A rural farmed landscape with limited detracting development other than pylons. The lower valley slopes have a sense of enclosure from the wider landscape whilst upper slopes are more exposed.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge				*		Internal settlement is limited to Great Revel Farm and a pair of dwellings along Gaddesden Lane. The valley side is distant from the edge of Hemel Hempstead. The slopes face towards Redbourn, but intervening topography separate them from the village.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB				*		Views are contained along the valley floor, but there are more expansive views to/from higher ground on either side of the valley. There are relatively close range views of the rising valley side from the edge of the AONB, including from along the southern portion of Green Lane and intervisibility with elevated ground to the east of the M1. Not perceivable from Redbourn.
Skylines and other focal points				*		The break of slope along the north-western edge of the Assessment Parcel forms a treed horizon in views looking south-west from vantage points to north, including along public footpath 40, and Green Lane on the edge of the AONB.
Typical receptors				*		Receptors are primarily walkers, engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience, and likely to be connecting with routes through the nearby AONB.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel E - Gaddesden Lane Southern Slopes *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected		*				The area is distant from large centres of population. A single public right of way, footpath 10 crosses the Assessment Parcel providing walkers (albeit likely to be limited in numbers) with an experience of the valley side and locally elevated land around Great Revel End Farm.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced				*		Views are contained towards the valley floor, but there are more expansive views from higher up the valley side. Views are primarily composed of sloping undeveloped arable fields and a network of trees and hedges along boundaries, but pylons are also prominent in views.
VALUE						
Natural heritage			*			The area has hedgerows with trees ascending the valley side and small tree groups, but the slopes have a relatively loose landscape structure overall.
Cultural heritage		*				The valley side provides a limited part of the landscape setting to listed buildings outside the Assessment Parcel to the south. The Aubreys fort scheduled monument is approximately 200m to the east, but the north-east facing slopes are unlikely to form its immediate landscape setting.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Landscape condition			*			Farmland is intensively managed, although a number of field boundaries have been lost since the 1900s. Existing boundaries vary in condition but are generally well maintained. There are few incongruous features other than pylons.
Associations	*					There are likely to be notable events and people associated with the nearby Aubreys fort, however none pertaining to the valley side within the Assessment Parcel have been identified.
Distinctiveness				*		The valley side is a recognisable landform, particularly when experienced from along the valley floor. The majority of features are relatively unremarkable, but the sloping farmland exhibits characteristics typical of the local area.
Recreation			*			There are a limited number of rights of way on the valley side but these provide links to the wider rights of way network between Hemel Hempstead and the AONB.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel E - Gaddesden Lane Southern Slopes *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Function			*			The area is Identified as Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification and trees and hedgerows are part of the local green infrastructure network. The slopes are part of the wider southern setting to the AONB.
Scenic quality				*		A pleasant, rural sloping landscape with tree cover along boundaries. However, lines of pylons temper scenic quality.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/ or dark skies				*		The valley sides are relatively peaceful where the M1 is not audible, and the lower slopes in particular have a sense of remoteness from significant settlement. However, pylons temper the sense of remoteness. The CBRE Night Sky map indicates the valley side has a night light level of 1-2.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value				*		<p>Taking into account the overall weight of evidence across the range of criteria, individual elements and comparison to other assessment parcels, the Gaddesden Lane Southern Slopes are considered to have above average susceptibility and value and judged to have High-Medium sensitivity from a landscape perspective overall.</p> <p>This is a rural area close to the AONB and with no relationship to any significant development. The lower valley sides are relatively contained but isolated from existing settlement. Development on the upper slopes would be notable, and potentially skyline, in views from the north, including from the edge of the AONB and likely to be identified in views from elevated vantage points east of the M1, albeit distant. Landscape structure along field boundaries would benefit from additional tree planting and closing gaps in the hedgerow network.</p>

Table B7
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel F - Revel End Slopes

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform			*			Subtle slopes, but includes part of the south-east facing valley side associated with the Upper Vea Valley which forms a transition from the valley floor to the more elevated plateau to the north-west.
Landscape pattern/ landcover/scale			*			A pattern of primarily large scale arable fields but with some smaller parcels of pastoral land. There is no significant woodland but frequent mature trees along boundaries.
Intactness of field boundaries			*			The majority of the larger field sizes are due to amalgamation of smaller fields since the 1900s. As a result, a number of boundaries have been lost. However, the majority of boundaries are lined with hedgerows and trees.
Sense of place/ rural quality			*			A rural farmed landscape, albeit with a limited range of landscape features. The sloping landform and hedgerows provide a degree of legibility.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge			*			Tree cover along Holtsmere End Lane forms a robust settlement edge to Hemel Hempstead, however the north-east facing slope at the southern corner of the Assessment Parcel is a continuation of the topography upon which the town sits. If developed in isolation, the south-west facing slopes which form the majority of Assessment Parcel would be less consistent with the existing settlement pattern.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/ types of views/ intervisibility/ relationship to AONB				*		There is some intervisibility between higher northern parts of the slope and elevated ground beyond the M1 to the east. The lower slopes are more contained from wider views, but there is a clear view of the southern portion of the Assessment Parcel from the Nickey Line, over Hemel Hempstead Road. No discernible intervisibility with the AONB or Redbourn.
Skylines and other focal points			*			Hedgerows on the upper slopes provide a treed local low horizon in filtered glimpses from the lower slopes.
Typical receptors					*	Includes walkers engaged in outdoor recreation. Glimpsed by motorists along Hemel Hempstead Road, although the landscape of the Assessment Parcel is unlikely to be the main focus of drivers attention.

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Assessment Parcel F - Revel End Slopes *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected				*		Views from several footpaths with onward connections to large populations at both Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn. Visible to a large number of motorists along the busy Hemel Hempstead Road.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced			*			Views include close range views of pleasant farmland and occasional more distant views from the upper slope, through gaps in vegetation. The line of pylons which run down the slope frequently dominate views and reduce their attractiveness.
VALUE						
Natural heritage			*			The slopes have hedgerows with trees along the majority of boundaries which contribute to the local green infrastructure network, but there are gaps, and with no woodland the area has a relatively loose landscape structure overall.
Cultural heritage		*				There are listed buildings nearby to the north, north-east and south, but none internally within the Assessment Parcel. The Aubreys Fort scheduled monument is approximately 500m to the east, but south-east facing slopes are unlikely to have a significant contribution to the landscape setting of the monument.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Landscape condition			*			Farmland is intensively managed, although a number of field boundaries have been lost since the 1900s. Existing boundaries vary in condition but are generally well maintained. There are few incongruous features other than pylons.
Associations	*					There are likely to be notable events and people associated with the nearby Aubreys fort, however none pertaining to the valley side within the Assessment Parcel have been identified.
Distinctiveness			*			The sloping farmland has few distinctive or unusual features, although the combination of sloping topography and hedgerows has some identifiable sense of place.
Recreation			*			Rights of way provide walking routes on the valley slope with links to the wider rights of way network between Hemel Hempstead, Redbourn and the AONB.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel F - Revel End Slopes *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
			*			
Function			*			The area is identified as Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification and trees and hedgerows are part of the local green infrastructure network. The slopes are part of the north-eastern setting to Hemel Hempstead and a wider part of the separation between the town and Redbourn.
Scenic quality				*		A pleasant, primarily rural landscape with tree cover along field boundaries. However pylons reduce scenic quality generally.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies		*				Pylons and road noise limit the sense of wildness and tranquillity. The CBRE Night Sky map indicates the upper slopes as having a night light level of 1-2, with the level rising to 4-8 to the south along the settlement edge and Hemel Hempstead Road.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
			*			
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value			*			<p>This is an intrinsically rural area with limited development, forming the wider valley side, but with a moderate landscape structure and influence from pylons and roads which reduce the areas susceptibility. The area forms a considerable part of the separation between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn.</p> <p>On balance, taking into account the overall weight of evidence and comparison to other assessment parcels, the Revel End Slopes parcel is considered to have Medium sensitivity from a landscape perspective.</p>

Table B8
Sensitivity Assessment: Parcel G - Upper Vea Valley

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY						
Landform			*			A small section of the Upper Vea Valley including the valley floor, east facing slopes rising to Pancake Wood, and part of the lower north-west facing valley side extending as far as the Nickey Line and M1 motorway.
Landscape pattern/landcover/scale		*				The majority of the Assessment Parcel consists of small scale parcels of land associated with low density development, including paddocks and large gardens. Larger fields on the upper western slopes. No extensive tracts of woodland but considerable tree cover including around The Aubreys Fort.
Intactness of field boundaries				*		Some limited boundary loss has occurred since the 1900s, however the majority of existing boundaries are well vegetated. A spaced out tree line marks the alignment of a former field boundary through the central arable field. The perimeter of Aubreys Fort has dense trees and understorey.
Sense of place/rural quality		*				The valley landform and tree cover combine to provide a degree of legibility and sense of place, however human influence including low density development, the busy Hemel Hempstead Road and adjacent M1 limit rural quality.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Settlement pattern and the nature of any adjoining settlement edge			*			The area includes dispersed settlement but is relatively distant from the settlement edge of Hemel Hempstead and separate from Redbourn by the M1 corridor.
VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY						
General visibility/types of views/intervisibility/relationship to AONB			*			The majority of the Assessment Parcel is set down in a local valley feature and generally well treed, limiting its visual envelope, however the eastern end including The Aubreys Fort can be seen from a short nearby length of public footpath 38, over the M1.
Skylines and other focal points			*			The generally enclosed nature of the area limits views to the skyline, although boundary vegetation along the northern edge of the central arable, provide a treed local low horizon in views from Hemel Hempstead Road. The Aubreys Fort is on a side slope rather than hill top.
Typical receptors					*	Includes walkers engaged in outdoor recreation along footpath 9 and the Nickey Line, although the Nickey Line is primarily enclosed on either side. Visible by motorists along Hemel Hempstead Road, although the landscape of the Assessment Parcel is unlikely to be the main focus of drivers attention.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel G - Upper Vea Valley *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected				*		The area is visible to a considerable number of motorists along Hemel Hempstead Road, although numbers of the most sensitivity receptors, namely walkers along footpath 9 and the Nickey Lane, are likely to be more modest.
The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced		*				Tree cover results in relatively pleasant views, and there are views across undeveloped fields with the central portion of the Assessment Parcel, but the presence of buildings, domestic land use, road traffic and paddocks often reduces the attractiveness of the view.
VALUE						
Natural heritage			*			The Assessment Parcel includes the small Pancake Wood, trees around the Aubreys Fort and other tree cover associated with properties and field boundaries generally, however, there are no extensive tracts of natural woodland, and hedgerows, including along Hemel Hempstead Road are limited
Cultural heritage					*	The northern portion of the Assessment Parcel includes The Aubreys Fort scheduled monument, located on the east facing slope, and the pastoral field which forms the monuments immediate western setting. The restaurant at Aubrey Park hotel is a listed building.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
Landscape condition		*				The central arable field is intensively farmed and has lost an internal hedgerows. Elsewhere there is an abundance of domestic and garden boundary vegetation, albeit generally well maintained.
Associations		*				There are likely to be notable events and people associated with The Aubreys fort. No specific events related to the Assessment parcel are identified, however finds suggest occupation of the landscape since 4000 BC.
Distinctiveness				*		Trees around The Aubreys on the valley side are a distinctive feature in the landscape, and the area has a recognisable valley form, but the majority of landscape features are unremarkable. The central arable field forms a noticeable open break when travelling along Hemel Hempstead Road.
Recreation				*		The Assessment Parcel includes a single public footpath, but this provides a route for walkers across and down the slope with connections to the wider rights of way network between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn. A section of the Nickey Line cycle and pedestrian route also crosses the area.

continues overleaf...

Assessment Parcel G - Upper Veia Valley *continued...*

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
			*			
Function			*			The area is identified as Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification. Pancake wood and other trees are part of the local green infrastructure network. The area is part of the wider separation between the town and Redbourn, albeit less of an effective contribution than areas to the west.
Scenic quality			*			There are some pleasant picturesque areas, such as within the north-western portion of the Assessment Parcel. However, obvious human influence in the form of low density development and associated land uses restricts scenic quality within the majority of the area.
Sense of wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies	*					The north-west corner of the Assessment Parcel is less effected by internal dispersed development than other areas, but the M1 is audible. The CBRE Night Sky map indicates that the eastern portion of the Assessment Parcel, along with the M1 corridor, has a relatively high night light level of 8-16.

CRITERIA	Low	Low-Medium	Medium	High-Medium	High	NOTES
			*			
SUMMARY						
Summary of sensitivity incorporating value			*			<p>The Assessment Parcel is identifiable as a local valley feature, as experienced along public footpath 9 and Hemel Hempstead Road. The area has a limited visual envelope and tree cover creates enclosure, however considerable dispersed development has an adverse effect on scenic quality and limits the sense of rurality. The busy Hemel Hempstead Road and adjacent M1 limit tranquillity. The Aubreys Fort scheduled monument is set down adjacent to the M1 rather than on the upper slopes.</p> <p>The Assessment Parcel forms part of the separation between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn, although given the presence of existing development within the area, the parcel has a less effective contribution to separation than the undeveloped fields of Assessment Parcel F adjacent to the west.</p> <p>On balance, taking into account the overall weight of evidence and comparison to other assessment parcels, the Upper Veia Valley parcel is considered to have Medium sensitivity from a landscape perspective.</p>

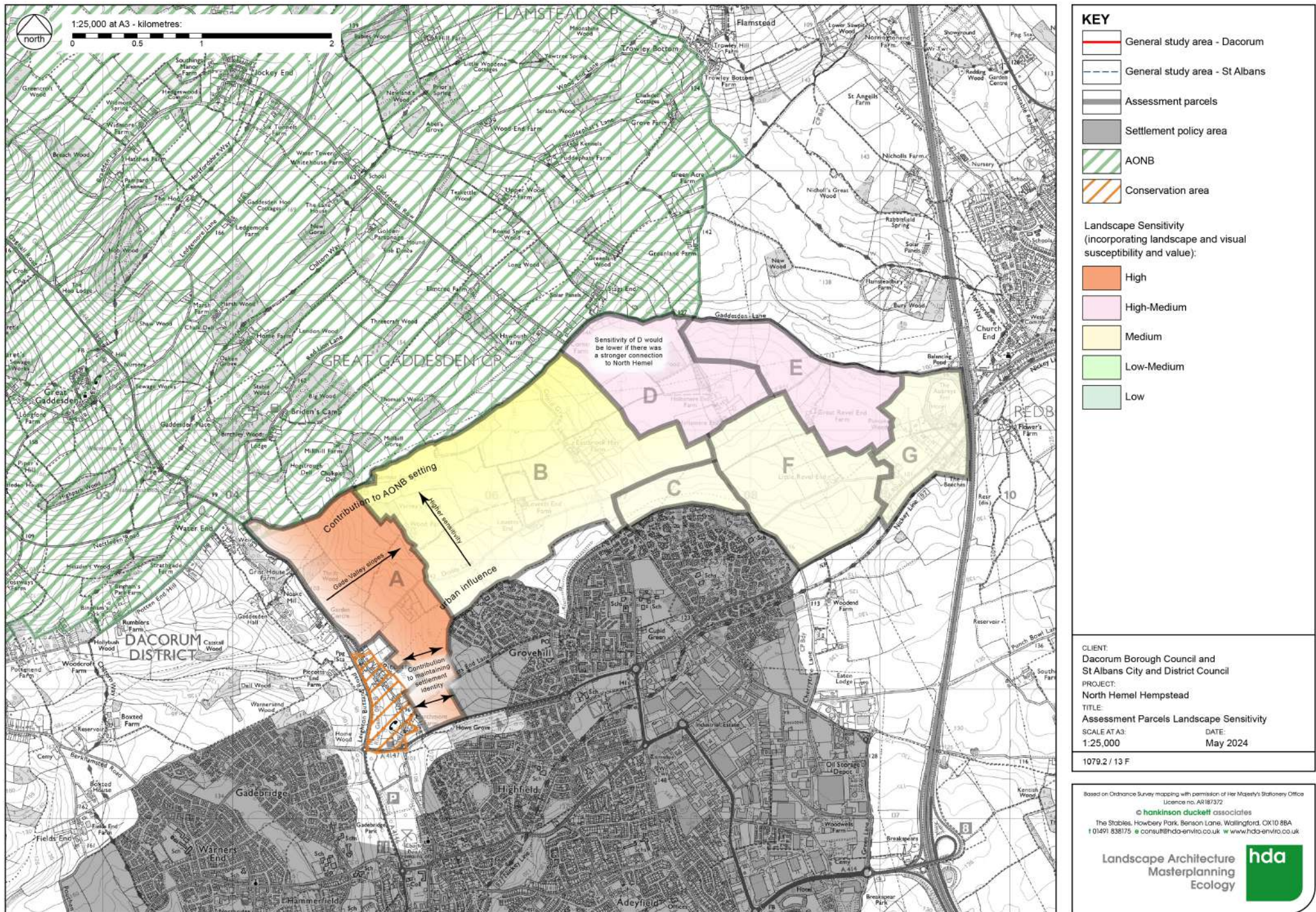


Figure B1 Assessment Parcels Landscape Sensitivity