Landscape and Visual Assessment

For

Whitehaven Golf Course, Whitehaven, Cumbria

Prepared for

Western Lakes Ltd

Prepared by

Galpin Landscape Architecture

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Landscape and Visual Assessment

For

Whitehaven Golf Course, Whitehaven, Cumbria

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Proposal

1.1 The proposals include earthworks and planting mostly in between the existing the fairways and greens of the course.

1.2 There existing planting is of poor quality, largely due to the poor conditions as a result of the previous covering of the coal site.

1.3 There would be extensive planting after completion of the proposed landforms.

Landscape Character Summary

1.4 The magnitude of change to landscape character type 5 – Lowland and the subtype 5d – Urban Fringe would be Negligible and ultimately beneficial.

1.5 There would be no direct effect on landscape designations and no landscape and visual effect on heritage designations.

1.6 The local landscape character, established as a golf course of the site would be beneficially changed with the remodelling of landforms, improved drainage, and the establishment of trees and woodlands across the entire site.

1.7 There are existing trees and woodland that would connect to the proposed woodland areas. The land cover would remain as grass on the fairways with many new trees and woodland link areas.

1.8 The landform would be changed in different locations forming sinuous and smooth mounds that would be at suitable heights and scales with the surrounding settings.

1.9 The boundaries of the site would be enhanced and strengthened by further trees.

1.10 The main benefit of the proposal would be the extensive planting across the site and the enhancement of precious habitats and increase biodiversity.

Visual Amenity Summary

1.11 The visual assessment commenced with the preparation of a ZTV and exploration of potential viewpoints and visual receptors. Several viewpoints were considered and in consultation with Copeland Borough Council, additional viewpoints were added.

1.12 The visual receptors consisted of residents, recreational users and road users.

1.13 The ZTV analysis showed that the concentration of views would naturally be close to the golf course and contained with the landform to the north, west and south with some slighter wider views to the east.

1.14 The viewpoints considered key locations and the magnitudes of change varied from None, where the site is screened by trees to High, where the footpath is in the centre of the golf course.

1.15 The would be temporary changes to views when some mounds are remodelled, by all views of the proposed landforms would be have planting in the form of trees, hedgerows, shrubs or grass.

1.16 The resulting view of the gold course would be much improved and attractive with an overall beneficial residual magnitude of change.

Mitigation Measures

1.17 Mitigation measures include extensive planting of trees, hedgerows, shrubs and grass across the site as well as the design as natural, smooth landforms.

1.18 These mitigation measures would reduce any potential effects on the landscape character or visual amenity.

1.19 The benefits of the mitigation measures are:

- Adherence to Landscape Character Type guidelines
- Habitat creation and extension with wildlife links to existing habitats
- An increase in biodiversity
- A connection of habitats between the existing woodland areas
- An improvement to the landscape character
- Fulfilment of global crisis and need of tree planting

2 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

2.1 This landscape and visual assessment has been requested by Copeland Borough Council to accompany the submission of a planning application for Earthworks and Planting at Whitehaven Golf Course.

The Proposals

2.2 The proposals include earthworks and planting mostly in between the existing fairways and greens of the course.

2.3 The earthworks would consist of remodelling areas of landform that require re-shaping to provide large areas for new planting to make the course attractive.

2.4 The existing planting is of poor quality, largely due to the remains of the previous covering of the coal site, by ridge and furrows. Also the heavy clay soil is of poor quality and many existing trees have suffered and died due to the conditions.

2.5 There is now a real opportunity to establish many trees across the site.

Planning Context

2.6 Refer to MJN Associates Planning Statement for details of the planning policy and planning context.

The Assessment

2.7 This report addresses issues relating to the anticipated potential effects upon the landscape character and visual amenity of the study area likely to result from the development.

2.8 The landscape and visual assessment was prepared after site visits in February and October, November and December 2020. This assessment describes and evaluates the change to the landscape and visual amenity and the extent to which these affect perception and views of the landscape.

2.9 Landscape character and visual assessment, although closely related to one another, have been considered separately for reasons of clarity and robustness.

The Study Area

2.10 The potential effects of likely landscape receptors and visual receptors were initially appraised within a study area of 5km radius. This study area focuses on the main issues of potential landscape and visual effects within a defined study area.

Landscape

2.11 A study area of 5km was used for the assessment of the effects on landscape features and landscape character.

Visual

2.12 The visual assessment covered a radius of 5km from the development. The assessment focussed on key viewpoints, illustrated with photomontages, although also including assessment of notable views.

3 METHODOLOGY

Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology

3.1 This assessment has been prepared with reference to current recommended guidelines notably the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. The GLVIA relies on an appreciation of the existing landscape, a thorough understanding of the development proposals, evaluation of the magnitude of change predicted to result from the proposed development, the sensitivity of the existing landscape to change and the potential to mitigate effects.

3.2 Reference has also been made to the following guidelines:

- *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England (2014);*
- *Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines, Chris Blandford Associates (2008)*
- *The Partnership's Plan: The Management Plan for the English Lake District, Lake District National Park Partnership, 2015—2020*
- *Guidance note - Assessing the cumulative impact of onshore wind energy developments, SNH (March 2012)*
- *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance, SNH / The Countryside Agency (2002)*
- *The Cumbria Landscape Character Guidelines and Toolkit, Cumbria County Council (CLCG&T) (2010);*
- *Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (2019)*

3.3 The assessment has involved five key stages:

- *Defining the scope of the assessment, site reconnaissance and desktop background research;*
- *Establishment of the baseline conditions relating to landscape character, quality and value and sensitivity to change of the existing landscape;*
- *Evaluation of the potential effects anticipated to result from the introduction of the development into the baseline context;*

- *Assessment of the anticipated effects based on magnitude of change and sensitivity of the receptor; and*
- *Description of the anticipated effects and the degree of significance.*

Baseline Assessment Methodology

3.4 The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- *Consultation with the local planning authority;*
- *A review of the landscape character assessment within the 5km study area;*
- *A review of landscape designations from the English Heritage database and local authority sources; and*
- *Identification of landscape character and its key landscape elements.*

3.5 A site appraisal of the landscape character and its key landscape elements was carried out. Site recording involved the completion of standardised recording forms and annotation of survey plans, supported by a photographic record of landscape character areas.

Effects Evaluation

3.6 The aim of the landscape character assessment is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects arising from the development. The assessment of predicted effects involves:

- *An appreciation of the nature, form and features of the development in the context of the baseline landscape character. Landscape character is a composite of physical, biological and cultural elements. Landform, hydrology, vegetation, land use pattern and associations combine to create a common 'sense of place' and identity which can be used to categorise the landscape into definable units (character areas). The level of detail and size of unit can be varied to reflect the scale of definition required. It can be applied at national, regional and local levels;*
- *A review of the sensitivity to change of designated sites and landscape character in relation to changes proposed. This is arrived at by a review of landscape value and scenic quality;*
- *An evaluation of the predicted magnitude of change experienced by*

designated sites and landscape character, assuming implementation of the development. This is in the form of quantification and description of the loss of, or indirect impact on, specific landscape components that make up the character of the various local landscape areas within the study area. Further, it includes explanation of the predicted change in the composite quality of the various areas related to such loss and influence in combination with the compatibility of the proposed forms within or neighbouring the various areas; and

- *Assessment of the degree of significance of the effects of the development on the designated site or landscape character under consideration by relating the magnitude of change to the sensitivity to change.*

Landscape Sensitivity to Change

3.7 Sensitivity to change in the context of the nature and form of the development and its effect on landscape character has been evaluated with reference to scenic quality and value, and has been rated as being high, medium or low. This three-point scale uses the following criteria:

- ***High sensitivity**: a highly-valued landscape of high scenic quality susceptible to change arising from the development; and/or small scale, complex landforms and land cover characteristics with distinctive landscape features;*
- ***Medium sensitivity**: a medium-valued landscape of medium scenic quality, reasonably tolerant of change arising from the development; and/or medium scale landforms and land cover in combination; occasional distinctive landscape features; and*
- ***Low sensitivity**: a low-valued landscape of low scenic quality, which is tolerant of change arising from the development; and/or large scale, simple landforms and land cover characteristics with no distinctive landscape features.*

Magnitude of Change

3.8 Magnitude of change has been assessed on a four point scale of high, medium, low or negligible. These criteria are described as follows:

- ***High****: very noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over an extensive area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a less extensive area;*
- ***Medium****: noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over less extensive area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a localised area;*
- ***Low****: perceptible indirect change in landscape characteristics over a localised area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a very localised area; and*
- ***Negligible****: virtually imperceptible or no indirect change in landscape characteristics over a very localised area, or virtually imperceptible, or no, direct change to landscape components/character.*

3.9 Wireline (or wireframe) diagrams and photomontages from viewpoint receptors have also been used as a tool to aid assessment.

3.10 The visibility of the development in the landscape would vary according to the weather conditions. The assessment has been carried out, as is best practice, by assuming the 'worst case' scenario, i.e. on a clear, bright day.

Degree of Significance Assessment

3.11 Using professional judgement and assisted by tools such as ZTVs, photomontages and wireline diagrams, the assessment of effects compares the magnitude of change experienced by a designated site or landscape character area to its sensitivity to change of the type proposed. It also takes into account direct impacts upon existing landscape elements, features and key characteristics and assesses whether these would be lost or their relationships modified, in the context of their importance in determining the existing sensitivity of the character area in question.

3.12 Anticipated magnitude of change are reported in terms of a descriptive scale ranging from substantial – moderate – slight adverse through negligible to an ascending scale of slight – moderate – substantial beneficial.

3.13 The criteria adopted for the assessment of landscape effects are as follows:

- ***Substantial adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: very noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;*
- ***Moderate adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;*

- ***Slight adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: perceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape;*
- ***Negligible degree of significance****: virtually imperceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape.*

3.14 For the purposes of this assessment, degree of significance of moderate and above are considered to be significant.

3.15 See Table 1 – Landscape Character Degree of significance for a visual guide to understanding how the magnitude of change relates to the degree of significance over different sensitivities of landscape character.

3.16 The predicted effects have been considered in the light of primary mitigation measures associated with site planning, culminating in a statement of the predicted effects and their overall degree of significance to the landscape resource of the study area.

Visual Assessment Methodology

3.17 The assessment of visual impact has been based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Third Edition 2013. The guidelines suggest that visual effects are assessed from a clear understanding of the development proposed and any related landscape mitigation measures. It calls for an understanding of the visual form of the existing landscape, its quality and sensitivity to change taking into account the nature of the development.

3.18 The assessment has involved three key stages:

- *Determination of the main areas where effects would occur as a result of the location and orientation of the development, and establishment of the baseline conditions relating to the visual context of the study area and the location and sensitivity of potential visual receptors;*
- *Evaluation of the potential effects anticipated to result from the introduction of the development into the baseline context. The susceptibility of visual receptors to change in views and how they contribute to the sensitivity. Next the scale, extent and duration and how they contribute to the magnitude of effects are assessed.; and*
- *Finally, the effects of the anticipated development are assessed by an evaluation of the magnitude of change on the sensitivity to change. The resulting judgments about sensitivity and magnitude inform the*

judgement of the overall degree of degree of significance.

Baseline Assessment

3.19 The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- *Consultation with the local planning authority, within the detailed study area regarding methodology, key views and viewpoint locations;*
- *Identification of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (visual envelope) for the proposed development;*
- *Identification and field assessment of potential receptors within the visual envelope; and*
- *Appreciation of the nature and importance of existing views experienced by the identified receptors.*

3.20 A site appraisal of potential impacts upon visual amenity was carried out. Site recording involved the completion of standardised recording forms and annotation of survey plans, supported by a photographic record of views from key receptor locations and using wireline projections.

Identification of Visual Receptors

3.21 For there to be a visual effect there is the need of a viewer (or visual receptor). Visual receptors include users of residential properties, recreational facilities and other outdoor sites used by the public such as roads, railways and footpaths, which would be likely to experience a change in existing views as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed development.

3.22 Views from nearby key viewpoints are illustrated by photomontage and wireline diagrams and views from more distant viewpoints are illustrated by photographs; and views from those potential viewpoints with limited visibility of the proposed development proposals are assessed but not illustrated with either wirelines or photomontages.

Appreciation of Existing Views

3.23 The visual assessment involved an initial desk-based review of OS mapping to establish the wider context, followed by site surveys to establish the form and nature of specific views and the role of the proposed development area in such views.

3.24 Site survey notes were recorded using a standardised spreadsheet that included receptor type and number, the nature of the existing view, the distance, angle and extent of the view of the proposed development, etc.

3.25 The evaluation involved the following tasks:

- *Analysis of the sensitivity of the viewpoint receptors to the anticipated change in their view; and*
- *Identification of the anticipated magnitude of change in existing views at these locations.*

Receptor Sensitivity

3.26 The sensitivity of a receptor to the proposed development has been considered in relation to the susceptibility of the receptor, for example, the inhabitants of a residential dwelling are generally considered more sensitive to change than occupiers of a factory unit. The susceptibility of visual receptors to change in views and visual amenity depends on the activity or occupation of people. The people are the visual receptors who may be residents, recreational users, visitors and commuters. The judgement of susceptibility to change and value are assessed and how they contribute to the sensitivity of the visual receptor. The importance of the changed view to the receptor also contributes to an understanding of sensitivity to change. Therefore, orientation, nature of use, scenic quality and receptors' expectations of the changed view in respect of existing context are all considered as a part of this evaluation. For example, a front-on changed view from the main habitable rooms of a dwelling would result in higher sensitivity to change than a side-on or rear changed view from the same receptor. The sensitivity of a receptor therefore depends upon the nature of the receptor and the importance to that receptor of the view being changed.

3.27 In this assessment sensitivity is ranked on the following scale, which has been adapted from GLVIA methodology:

- ***High sensitivity****: dwellings, footpaths, tracks and vantage points where the changes form part of an important/principal view such as a renowned local viewpoint;*
- ***Medium sensitivity****: dwellings, footpaths, tracks and vantage points where the changes form part of a less important view, and roads where the changes form part of an important view; and*

- ***Low sensitivity****: dwellings, footpaths, tracks and vantage points where the changes form part of an unimportant view, roads where the changes form a part of a less important view, and farm buildings (not used as dwellings) and industrial buildings where the changes form part of an important view.*

Magnitude of Change

3.28 The magnitude of change considers the extent of the proposed development visible, the extent of the existing view that would be occupied by the proposed development, the influence of the proposed development within the view and the viewing distance from the receptor to the proposed development. This has involved a combination of site, and desk-based analysis. On site, the elements of the proposed development potentially visible were recorded on the survey sheets. The analysis also involved the use of wireline projections and draft photomontages to assist the assessors with the evaluation.

3.29 In the assessment of visual effects, the magnitude of change is considered in terms of the type of change taking place in a view from a receptor and the degree of change which would take place in that view.

3.30 Magnitude of change is measured on the following scale, which has been adapted from GLVIA methodology:

- ***High magnitude:*** *where the proposed development would cause a very noticeable change in the existing view;*
- ***Medium magnitude:*** *where the proposed development would cause a noticeable change in the existing view;*
- ***Low magnitude:*** *where the proposed development would cause a perceptible change in the existing view; and*
- ***Negligible****:* where the proposed development would cause a largely imperceptible change in the existing view.

Assessment of Effects

3.31 The main criteria used to evaluate the visual impact are centred on the extent to which the proposed development would modify established views. The assessment of effects is based on consideration of both sensitivity to change and magnitude of change.

3.32 The determination of the effects is derived from the assessment of sensitivity to change and the magnitude of change combined with professional judgement.

3.33 The final assessment adopts the following categories to illustrate the level of visual effects:

- ***Substantial adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: very noticeable deterioration/ improvement in the existing view;*
- ***Moderate adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance****: noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing view;*
- ***Slight adverse (or beneficial) degree of significance:*** *perceptible deterioration/ improvement in the existing view; and*
- ***Negligible degree of significance****: largely imperceptible deterioration or improvement in the existing view.*

3.34 For the purposes of this assessment, degree of significance of moderate and above are considered to be significant and are applicable for landscape and visual assessments that require an EIA.

3.35 An assessment has been made of the visual effects upon receptors which would occur as a result of the proposed development at the viewpoint locations. However, the visual prominence of the development would vary according to weather conditions. The assessment has therefore been carried out in accordance with best practice, by assuming the "worst case" scenario; that is, on a clear, bright day in winter. The assessment also takes into account changes in vehicle movement patterns and other proposal-related operations.

Visual Baseline Conditions

Viewpoints

3.36 The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- *Consultation with the local planning authority, regarding methodology, key views and viewpoint locations.*
- *Identification and field assessment of potential receptors within the visual envelope and an appraisal of their sensitivity.*
- *Appreciation of the nature and importance of existing views experienced by the identified receptors*.

3.37 The visual assessment involved an initial desk-based review of OS mapping to establish the wider context within which views initially appear to be set, followed by site surveys to establish the form and nature of specific views and the role of the proposed development area in such views. The site survey was informed by the computer generated ZTV mapping which indicates where the development may be visible from.

3.38 Table 3 shows the chosen viewpoints and reasons for inclusion in the assessment.

Methodology for Preparation of Landforms

3.39 The design of the mounds was prepared using the DTM - a combination of the Ordnance Survey's Terrain 50, topographical survey data and LIDAR data.

3.40 Each of the mounds were initially prepared individually initially before amalgamating all the mounds as one DTM.

3.41 This DTM of the mounds was then used in the subsequent ZTV and wirelines.

Methodology for Preparation of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

3.42 The preparing of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) or Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) involves:

- Preparation of the Digital Terrain Model (DTM): Using the using digital terrain software which produces a bare ground model as represented by the Digital Terrain Model (DTM). The DTM used a combination of the Ordnance Survey's Terrain 50 DTM, Lidar Digital Surface Model (DSM - 2m grid). The curvature of the earth and refraction through the atmosphere are taken into account but not the effects of screening due to woodland, buildings and other surface features. Additionally, the topographical survey of the proposed site was overlaid in the DTM for accurate positioning of the development components which does represent small topographic features precisely.

- *Preparation of the ZTV Plan:* The development components are inserted into the DTM using the dimensions (height, width and length) and grid reference.

- *The exported ZTV Plan:* The ZTV indicates where the development would be visible on the basis of a clear line of sight existing over bare ground as represented by the Digital Terrain Model (DTM). The curvature of the earth and refraction through the atmosphere are taken into account but not the effects of screening due to woodland, buildings and other surface features. The ZTV does not take into account small scale local variations in topography, or the possible

screening effects of hedgerows, individual trees and woodland, walls or similar features that can alter the visual envelope locally, particularly when close to the viewpoint. Therefore, while the ZTV indicates areas of potential visibility of the proposals, in reality not all locations within the ZTV would necessarily afford a view of the proposed development. Nevertheless the ZTV are valuable tools in assessing both the landscape character and visual impact.

Methodology for Preparation of Photographs

3.43 The site survey includes a photographic record of the viewpoints. At each of the viewpoints the following details are recorded;

- the grid *reference (of the viewpoint)*
- *the angle of view (of the photo viewpoint)*
- *the ground height level or elevation*
- *the viewer height (measured to the lens of the camera)*
- *the date (of survey)*
- *the direction of view (to the development)*
- *the distance to the development (from the viewpoint)*
- *the grid reference of the development*
- *the height of the* development

3.44 The photographs have been taken using a digital SLR camera with a full frame sensor using a 28mm or 50mm fixed focal length lens.

Methodology for the Preparation of Wirelines

3.45 Wirelines (or wire frame drawings) are the visual representation of landform shown as contours laid over the bare ground. These are essential in order to prepare the photomontages.

3.46 The wirelines have been prepared using digital terrain software which produces a bare ground model as represented by the Digital Terrain Model (DTM). The DTM used a combination of the Ordnance Survey's Terrain 50, topographical survey data and LIDAR data. The curvature of the earth and refraction through the atmosphere are taken into account but not the effects of screening due to woodland, buildings and other surface features.

3.47 The wirelines were checked against the photographs and site survey notes and directions of views. The wirelines are then lined up with the photographs at a suitable scale.

Methodology for Preparation of Photomontages

3.48 The photomontages are prepared by overlaying the wirelines as a transparency over the photographs to accurately position the development. This is achieved by lining up landform features in the photograph and the wirelines as well as inserting 'markers' in the DTM which are shown in draft wirelines indicating the location of corners of buildings, pylons or other key landscape elements that can be allocated a grid reference position and can be seen in the photograph.

3.49 The representation of the type of development proposed is replicated from other photos and positioned in the location of the wireline development.

3.50 The final preparation of the wirelines and photomontages are positioned below the existing photograph and presented as a figure and intended to be printed at a scale of A3. The details outlined in paragraph 3.43 are included as a spreadsheet and the images are annotated as appropriate.

4 BASELINE

Landscape Character Baseline

4.1 The following section sets out the process of examining landscape character of the site within the framework of the existing National Character Areas to the regional Cumbria County Council landscape classification of types and sub-types to the site specific assessment. This sets the scene of the landscape character assessments pre-prepared for the site and informs the more site – specific assessment.

National Landscape Character Areas

4.2 The site reside is in the National Character Area (NCA) 7 – **West Cumbria Coastal Plain**. The NCA consists of an undulating coastal landscape of varying width with open views to the Cumbria High Fells NCA and across the Irish Sea to Galloway and the Isle of Man. The West Cumbrian Coastal Plain is closely linked culturally to the Cumbria High Fells. Both are adjacent to the eroded dome of the Lake District fells.

Key characteristics include:

- The area has a diverse, open coastline ranging from depositional sand, shingle and pebble beaches and sand dunes, through low soft cliffs of glacial or industrial origin, to high sandstone cliffs with a rich and varied flora and fauna, including dune grasslands, seabird colonies and the natterjack toad.
- There are lowland river valleys with limited ancient semi-natural woodland, and expansive estuarine landscapes with lowland raised mires, salt marshes, mudflats and intertidal habitats with large numbers of wintering waders and wildfowl.
- Important areas of brownfield biodiversity, often in urban-fringe locations, are characterised by rare plants, reptiles and invertebrates including the small blue butterfly.
- The area includes open pastoral farmland with occasional woodlands, basin and valley fens, remnant semi-natural grasslands/meadows associated with stream sides, low-lying land, and localised pockets of arable land supporting species such as curlew and wintering hen harrier.
- There are areas of ancient enclosure with medium to large rectilinear fields and few hedgerow trees. They are bounded by hedges (often gappy and augmented by wire fences), stonewalls on higher ground, and stone-faced earth banks locally known as 'kests' along the coast.

- There is limited tree cover, with most woodland to be found on steeper slopes and along river corridors. There are some plantation woodlands and shelterbelts associated with the upland margins of the area and former open cast mining sites.
- There is a dispersed rural settlement pattern of hamlets and isolated farmsteads with some villages.
- Distinctive building materials are a combination of locally quarried red sandstone, red brick and render augmented by coastal pebbles along the southern coast.
- Larger urban settlements and coastal towns are closely linked with the growth and location of the area's strong industrial history of coal and iron ore mining, processing ore, smelting and ship-building.
- Extensive urban-fringe influence is linked to highly visible industrial past and present, including quarrying, open cast mining, restoration and reclamation initiatives, manufacturing and processing plants and the nuclear energy industry.
- A rich history is evident in the pattern of land use and heritage features dating from the Neolithic period onwards, including earthworks, forts and castles and all the Roman coastal forts that form part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.

Adjacent National Landscape Character Area

4.3 The site lies adjacent to the national landscape character area No. 8 – Cumbrian High Fells.

Local Landscape Character Type / Subtype

4.4 The proposed site resides in the Cumbria County Council Character landscape character type 5 – Lowland and with the subtype **5d – Urban Fringe.**

Location

This landscape sub type is found around the edges of Whitehaven, Cumbria

4.5 **Key Characteristics**

- Long term urban influences on agricultural land
- Recreation, large scale buildings and industrial estates are common
- Mining and opencast coal workings are found around Keekle and Moor Row
- Wooded valleys, restored woodland and some semiurbanised woodland provide interest

4.6 **Physical Character**

Carboniferous rock overlain by fluvial glacial drift is found around Workington,

4.7 **Land cover and Land use**

These agricultural landscapes have been subjected to urban and industrial influences for a long time and in many parts maintain a rural character. Field patterns remain distinct in the largely pastoral areas, often bounded by strong hedges and hedgerow trees. The urban influences vary. In West Cumbria small settlements associated with former mining and associated activities spread over a ridge and valley landscape. While deep mining of iron ore has largely gone, agricultural areas on restored opencast coal sites introduce modern 20th century field patterns amongst more regular field patterns associated with parliamentary enclosure. Woodland, wetland and scrub has been reintroduced through restoration schemes. Derelict land is dotted throughout the landscape. Despite the scars of former industries, much of the countryside character is still intact with wooded valleys retained along valleys that cut across the landscape. Large modern agricultural buildings are also common.

4.8 **Perceptual character**

This is a busy area where modern development dominates the pastoral character. The towns can be seen as progressively encroaching and areas have an air of neglect. The more agricultural areas and parts where woodland and open green spaces remain are important green lungs close to the towns and cities which provide respite from the busy areas and a connection to the wider countryside.

4.9 **Sensitive characteristics or features**

Wooded valleys, restored woodland, some semi urbanised woodland, and the intact field patterns of farmland reinforced by hedges and hedgerow trees are sensitive to changes in land management and settlement expansion. Open green spaces and fields close to settlement edges are sensitive to unsympathetic development.

4.10 **Vision**

This changing landscape will be enhanced through restoration. Management practices will create a stronger definition between town and country areas integrating adjacent discordant land uses into the landscape and managing and restoring landscape features. Woodland planting will be used strategically to create a bold landscape structure unifying disparate uses in developing areas while the reinforcement of rural 'green' qualities will help maintain rural character and provide visual relief.

4.11 **Development**

Green infrastructure provides an opportunity to seek enhancements to the landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritages adjacent to urban areas and to create green corridors between settlements.

4.12 **GUIDELINES - Natural Features**

- Establish new woodlands or tree groups on prominent skylines in order to soften their windswept appearance and provide screening where climatic conditions allow.
- Carry out schemes of structural planting to contain settlements, punctuate and reinforce the identity of each settlement and contain urban edges.
- Use planting and general environmental improvements to frame views and define open spaces and recreational links along river valleys.

Landscape Character of the Site

4.13 ***Landscape History:*** The underlying geology of the site is loamy soil, natural drainage type and natural fertility with semi-natural habitats characteristic which would have been grassland arable and woodland. In 1980s opencast mining was carried out on the site and vast areas were mined. Subsequently, soils were restored on site from quarries and opencast spoil. Although the soils and areas were filled to restore the open cast areas, the topsoil depth was very shallow and the underlying clay based poor quality soils has caused drainage issues. Coupled with this there are large areas that were ploughed in ridge and furrow, leaving long ditches that retain water. This has resulted in many trees not establishing and dying due to the underlying water retention issues.

4.14 ***The Landscape Character*** of the site consists of recreational land amongst a setting of open fields, woodland, residential, educational and commercial land use. The current use of the site is for recreational purposes including golf and the restaurant.

4.15 The landscape cover is a mix of grassland, woodland, road/path systems, ponds, the main club house buildings, the driving range buildings, a series of fencing and golf fairways. Mostly the grassland is mown short and provide large swards of green areas. There is a mix of ponds, some very established and attracting a variety of wildlife and habitats.

4.16 There is a public right of way across the site which is along an established route and partially within wooded areas.

4.17 The landform is elevated in places and within the wider context is part of a large ridge joining Moresby Park to the north and the urban area of Hensingham to the south. To the west and the east the ridge slopes away.

4.18 Due to the elevated location, there are commanding views to the east of the distant western Lakeland Fells, which gives the connection with the wider landscape, although there are intervening large scale buildings. These adjacent commercial buildings of the industrial estate to the east include large scale buildings that are dominant.

4.19 The boundaries of the site include woodland, fencing and hedgerows.

4.20 The attraction of the present site is the semi-rural location and long-distance views. However, there are real opportunities to establish beneficial planting.

4.21 There is a line of large pylons across the south west sector of the site. This dominates the skyline.

4.22 There are sections of wooded areas around the site that join hedgerows and ponds providing established habitat connections and beneficial height of planting where trees have had the opportunity to grow on site. Otherwise many trees are dead, dying and suffering from the poor drainage issues.

Landscape Designations

4.23 The site is not within a landscape designation.

4.24 There are a number of public rights of way in the area including a public footpath across the site. These are detailed in table 2 in the appendix.

4.25 The National Cycle Route NCN 72 is 1.5km to the west of the site.

4.26 There is a SSSI at St Bees within 3km and an Ancient Woodland within 1km of the site.

4.27 There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within 2km of the site.

4.28 The Listed Buildings nearest to the site are in the Whitehaven / Hensingham area to the west / south-west over 1km away from the site.

Visual Amenity Baseline Conditions

4.29 A ZTV was prepared to establish the visual envelope of the site. This in turn established the potential viewpoints. In consultation with Copeland Borough Council the following 15 viewpoints were agreed.

Baseline Views

4.30 A number of potential viewpoints were examined within the study area in the immediate vicinity of the proposal and the following 15 viewpoints were identified from the above key areas as being representative of the views in the study area.

VP1

4.31 Viewpoint 1 (See figure 1) – **Round Close Park**.

4.32 This viewpoint is representative of residents and road users.

VP2

4.33 Viewpoint 2 (See figure 2) – **PRoW between Round Close Park and Moresby Parks**.

4.34 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP3

4.35 Viewpoint 3 (See figure 3) – **Moresby Parks Road / PRoW**.

4.36 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users and road users.

VP4

4.37 Viewpoint 4 (See figure 4) **Moresby Parks Road**.

4.38 This viewpoint is representative of road users and residents.

VP5

4.39 Viewpoint 5 (See figure 5) – **PRoW East of Moresby Parks**.

4.40 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP6

4.41 Viewpoint 6 (See figure 6) – **PRoW West of Red Lonning Road**.

4.42 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP7

4.43 Viewpoint 7 (See figure 7) – **PRoW West of Red Lonning Road**.

4.44 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP8

4.45 Viewpoint 8 (See figure 8) **PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course**.

4.46 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP9

4.47 Viewpoint 9 (See figure 9) – **PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course (left)**

4.48 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP10

4.49 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 10) **PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course (right)**.

4.50 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users and road users.

VP11

4.51 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 11) **PRoW West of Moresby Parks Road on Golf Course**.

4.52 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users and road users.

VP12

4.53 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 12) **PRoW West of Moresby Parks Road on Golf Course**

4.54 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP13

4.55 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 13) **Roundabout at junction of Red Lonning Road and Moresby Parks Road**.

4.56 This viewpoint is representative of road users.

VP14

4.57 Viewpoint 14 (See figure 14) **Minor road between Moresby Parks Road and Steel Brow near Weddicar Rigg**.

4.58 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

VP15

4.59 Viewpoint 15 (See figure 15) **Frizington Hall**

4.60 This viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

Other Views

4.61 Other viewpoints in the area may be residents' views from neighbouring dwellings, views from the Common Land for recreational users and road users on local lanes.

5 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Landscape Character Assessment

5.1 The following section provides an assessment on the effects that the proposed development would have on the landscape character areas and designated sites, within the 5km detailed study area. The assessment evaluates the likely effects during construction and also in the longer term.

5.2 The judgement of the sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of change informs the assessment of the degree of significance.

The Effect on the Landscape During Construction

5.3 Construction activities which have the potential to affect the landscape character include:

- Movement of construction vehicle to and from to site
- The excavation of distribution of spoil mounds around the site
- Planting of trees

5.4 From the description of the construction activities as outlined above, any effects on the landscape character during the construction phase would be temporary for a short duration.

5.5 Therefore, the short-term and temporary nature of the construction activities on the landscape character would be Negligible.

The Effect on National Landscape Character Areas

5.6 Landscape Character areas of this large scale would not be affected by the small scale of the proposal.

The Effect on the Cumbria Landscape Character Areas

5.7 The effect of the proposal on the landscape character type 5 – Lowland and the subtype **5d – Urban Fringe** would not change the key characteristics. Recreation is common is this landscape character subtype as are mining and opencast coal workings and woodland.

5.8 The site was once an open cast coal site as accords with the key characteristics.

5.9 The effect of the proposal is beneficial to landscape character by increasing the key characteristic of woodland and providing continual recreation in this area.

5.10 The magnitude of change to this landscape character sub-type would be Negligible and ultimately beneficial.

The Effect on the Landscape Character of the Site

5.11 The local landscape character of the site would change beneficially with the establishment of trees and woodlands across the entire site.

5.12 There would be improvements of the drainage system that is essential in draining surface water from the fairways. This was an issue with the state of the site after the previous restoration of opencast mining and shallow soil was spread with underlying clay. The proposed earthworks and re-distribution of soils across the site would improve the water percolation.

5.13 Additionally, the large areas that were ploughed in ridge and furrow and have left long ditches that retain water, would be improve through the re-distribution of soil across the site.

5.14 As well improved surface waste drainage, there would be more trees and trees that are allowed to thrive in good conditions, whereas before many trees are dying due to the underlying water retention issues.

5.15 The existing local landscape character has the recognised use for recreation as a golf course. There are existing trees and woodland that would connect to the proposed woodland areas. The land cover would remain as grass on the fairways with many new trees and woodland link areas.

5.16 The landform would be changed in different locations forming sinuous and smooth mounds that would be at suitable heights and scales with the surrounding settings.

5.17 The boundaries of the site would be enhanced and strengthened by further trees.

5.18 The entrance would be improved by shrub planting along either side.

5.19 Although trees would not be planted against the large pylons and powerlines, the presence of higher elements of trees in the landscape would ameliorate to some degree the detractive nature of the pylons.

5.20 The main benefit of the proposal would be the extensive planting across the site and the enhancement of precious habitats which would increase biodiversity.

The Effect on Landscape Designations

4.62 All landscape designations have been checked and there would not be any direct effects on these.

Landscape Character Summary

5.21 The magnitude of change to landscape character type 5 – Lowland and the subtype 5d – Urban Fringe would be Negligible and ultimately beneficial.

5.22 There would be no direct effect on landscape designations and no landscape and visual effect on heritage designations.

5.23 The local landscape character, established as a golf course of the site would be beneficially changed with the remodelling of landforms, improved drainage, and the establishment of trees and woodlands across the entire site.

5.24 There are existing trees and woodland that would connect to the proposed woodland areas. The land cover would remain as grass on the fairways with many new trees and woodland link areas.

5.25 The landform would be changed in different locations forming sinuous and smooth mounds that would be at suitable heights and scales with the surrounding settings.

5.26 The boundaries of the site would be enhanced and strengthened by further trees.

5.27 The main benefit of the proposal would be the extensive planting across the site and the enhancement of precious habitats and increase biodiversity.

Visual Amenity Assessment

5.28 This section addresses issues relating to potential degree of significance upon the visual amenity of the study area likely to result from the proposals. It describes and evaluates the potential change in views of the existing landscape during construction and once in operation, and the extent to which these affect residents, visitors and users of the landscape.

Basis of Assessment

5.29 The key elements and characteristics of the proposed development which may give rise to visual effects are as follows:

- Movement of construction vehicle to and from to site
- The excavation of distribution of spoil mounds around the site

5.30 All disturbed areas would be restricted as far as practicable to the specified areas.

The Effect on the Visual Amenity during construction

5.31 Construction activities which have the potential to affect the visual amenity include:

- Movement of construction vehicle to and from the site
- The excavation of distribution of spoil mounds around the site

5.32 From the description of the construction activities as outlined above, any effects on the visual amenity receptors and their views during the construction phase would be for the duration of each phase.

5.33 The short-term and temporary nature of the construction activities on the visual amenity receptors and their views would be for the duration of each phase.

5.34 The magnitude of effects is assessed from each viewpoint in more detail.

Visual Appearance of the Proposal

5.35 Each phase of work would consist of delivery of material to site, distribution of material on site and the planting of the mounds.

5.36 The resulting mounds would be a combination of elements of trees, shrubs and grass. After each phase of material has been distributed planting would immediately follow to establish greening of the site as soon as possible.

Assessment of Effects

5.37 As described in the baseline, 15 key representative viewpoints were identified within the 5km overall study area.

5.38 The ZTV shows the wider area of 5km where the proposed development may be seen, however, this is a bare earth model and localised screening such has hedgerows, trees and intervening buildings are not taken into account.

5.39 Several viewpoints were considered and in consultation with Copeland Borough Council, additional viewpoints were added.

5.40 The ZTV prepared (plan 3) shows that views of the proposed development within the ZTV are limited to this visual envelope. This means that theoretically it is possible to see the development, although views are limited, some views would only be glimpses or fleeting views and other views screened by intervening trees or buildings.

5.41 Within the ZTV the following viewpoints have been chosen as key viewpoints representative of different visual receptors in the study area – residents, road users and recreational users.

5.42 The ZTV analysis showed that the concentration of views would naturally be close to the golf course and contained with the landform to the north, west and south with some slighter wider views to the east.

VP1

5.43 Viewpoint 1 (See figure 1) – **Round Close Park**
This viewpoint is representative of residents and road users.

5.44 The **Existing View** is the nearest public accessible view to the adjacent housing and potential views that residents would see. This view is through an existing gateway directly onto the golf course. Existing trees form a strong boundary either side of this gateway and further trees can be seen within the golf course. The existing 11th fairway can be seen in the centre of the view.

5.45 The **Change in View** would include the mounds 1 and 2 in the foreground, seen through the gateway and across the track. Mounds 3 and 13 would be screened by the existing woodland right of view. This view would only be seen from this gateway from this public accessible location.

5.46 There are private dwellings within Round Close Park where there could be similar views from back gardens, which have not been verified.

5.47 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Low.

5.48 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors) at this viewpoint would be Medium for residents And Low for road users.

5.49 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Slight/Moderate for residents and Slight for road users which is not significant.

5.50 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight which is not significant.

VP2

5.51 Viewpoint 2 (See figure 2) – **PRoW between Round Close Park and Moresby Parks** and representative of recreational users.

5.52 The **Existing View** is from across a hedgerow from a footpath, looking up across the golf course. Distant trees on the site can be seen beyond the open grassland of the 13th fairway. Views in the other direction include Moresby Parks Road and Moresby Park.

5.53 The **Change in View** would include mound 19 which would be seen in the direction of this view from the public footpath. The change would be noticeable, although at a distance from the viewer. The horizon would change with the additional mound forming a new horizon.

5.54 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium.

5.55 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.56 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Moderate.

5.57 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting in the foreground would screen this view and the planting over the proposed mounds would completely encapsulate the mound with only a view of trees.

5.58 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight / Moderate.

VP3

5.59 Viewpoint 3 (See figure 3) – **Moresby Parks Road / PRoW** and representative of road users and recreational users.

5.60 The **Existing View** is from Moresby Parks Road and at the end of the public footpath. The golf course rises up in elevation from the road and there are scattered trees along this edge adjoining the road. Further taller trees are seen within the golf course and beyond the 13th fairway.

5.61 **Change in View –** the main difference would be the presence of mound 19 in the foreground behind the existing hedgerow. The appearance of the fairway would remain as grass landcover. At the northern edge of this area proposed planting would create more height over time and would screen this section of the course in time.

5.62 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium, *where the proposed development would cause a noticeable change in the existing view*.

5.63 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors at this viewpoint would be Medium for residents and Low for road users.

5.64 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Slight/Moderate for residents and Slight for road users which is not significant.

5.65 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** includes further planting along the boundary to the north this would screen any views into the fairway from the north over time.

5.66 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight.

VP4

5.67 Viewpoint 4 (See figure 4) – **Moresby Parks Road** and representative of road users and residents.

5.68 The **Existing View** is further north of VP3 and nearer to the residential area of Moresby Parks. At this slightly more elevated location, the context of the golf course can be seen in relation to Moresby Parks Road and the adjacent open field containing the public footpath. There are scattered trees that are located around the boundaries of the golf course and seen along the skyline that are also within the site.

5.69 **Change in View –** similarly to VP3, this view would include the landform of mound 19 in the foreground. There would also be a glimpse of mound 18 in the background, which would probably be indiscernible. There would be no view of the fairway, being all behind mound 19. Proposed tree planting in the foreground behind the existing hedgerow would eventually screen the landform of mound 19 and views behind of the golf course.

5.70 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium.

5.71 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors at this viewpoint would be Medium for residents and Low for road users.

5.72 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Slight/Moderate for residents and Slight for road users which is not significant.

5.73 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** would be the woodland in the foreground and along the boundary to the north. This would screen any views into the fairway from the north over time.

5.74 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight.

VP5

5.75 Viewpoint 5 (See figure 5) – **PRoW west of Moresby Parks** and representative of recreational users.

5.76 The **Existing View** is open and far reaching in all directions. The direction of view is across open fields, the edge of Moresby Parks residential area and large commercial buildings within Whitehaven Commercial Park. The large pylons regularly punctuate the skyline and at a lower level the mature trees are covering the area around the golf course.

5.77 **Change in View –** the change in the landform would be barely perceptible at this distance and behind existing built form and trees. The proposed trees would be visible over time and integrate well with the existing trees in view.

5.78 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Negligible.

5.79 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.80 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Negligible/Slight.

5.81 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting in the foreground would screen this view and the planting over the proposed mounds would completely encapsulate the mound with only a view of trees.

5.82 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Negligible and beneficial.

VP6

5.83 Viewpoint 6 (See figure 6) – **PRoW West of Red Lonning Road** and representative of recreational users.

5.84 The **Existing View** is a view of the golf course from the west on an indistinct footpath across a field. Viewpoints 6 and 7 are taken from the same location in different angles, due to the linear nature of the view and differing landforms.

5.85 **Change in View –** as seen in the photo, there is a linear screen of existing trees across this western side of the golf course. A lot of these trees are mature and reasonably tall in the foreground and would screen views of changes to the golf course behind. There may be a view of the northern mound(s) where there is not existing tree cover. After establishment of proposed tree planting, most of the proposed landform changes would not be visible.

5.86 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Low.

5.87 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.88 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Slight/Moderate.

5.89 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting, particularly around northern are of the golf course would integrate into the view of existing trees and provide screening.

5.90 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight to Negligible/Slight.

VP7

5.91 Viewpoint 7 (See figure 7) – **PRoW West of Red Lonning Road** and this viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

5.92 The **Existing View** is from the same location as Viewpoints 6 and at a different angle, looking further south towards the existing golf course, along Red Lonning Road. Again, there is the continuation of mature, tall trees towards the south and the entrance of the golf course.

5.93 **Change in View –** there may be some change to landform seen near the entrance and south of the golf course. The proposed tree planting would be seen and over time, link the existing tree cover along this western side of the gold course to the entrance.

5.94 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Low.

5.95 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.96 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Slight/Moderate.

5.97 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting, particularly around northern are of the golf course would integrate into the view of existing trees and provide screening.

5.98 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight to Negligible / Slight.

VP8

5.99 Viewpoint 8 (See figure 8) **PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course** and this viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

5.100 The **Existing View** is a typical view from this footpath that crosses the golf course (also see Viewpoints 9, 10 and 11). The footpath is well-marked and channels people across and through the golf course in between fairways.

5.101 **Change in View -** the proposed landform of mound 13 would be in the foreground and very noticeable (being within the golf course). As soon as landforms have been completed, the grass would soon establish and green up the southern half of mound 13. Likewise proposed tree planting to the north of this footpath and on mound 13 would start to form a green cover over the landform.

5.102 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be High.

5.103 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.104 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Moderate / Substantial.

5.105 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting trees and grass would particularly around northern are of the golf course would integrate into the view of existing trees and provide screening.

5.106 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight.

VP9

5.107 Viewpoint 9 (See figure 9) – **PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course (left)** and this viewpoint is representative of road users and recreational users.

5.108 The **Existing View** is looking to west and north and also Viewpoint 10 is taken from the same Viewpoint location and in a different angle. The view is towards the existing clubhouse, woodland and across fairways, all within the golf course.

5.109 **Change in View -** the proposed landform of mound 13 would be visible on this side of the woodland, a whole section of the view of mound 12 would be screened by existing woodland. Mound 6 would form part of the landform linking directly to this viewpoint location. Due to the proximity to the change in the landform, from this location there would be a noticeable change in landscape characteristics.

5.110 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium.

5.111 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.112 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Moderate.

5.113 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting trees would all be on this proposed landform of mound 6 in the foreground, therefore with the successful establishment of trees in the foreground, most of this view would be screened.

5.114 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Slight to Negligible / Slight.

VP10

5.115 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 10) **PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course (right)** and representative of recreational users and road users.

5.116 The **Existing View** is looking towards the north and east and at the same location as Viewpoint 9 with aa different angle. The view across the golf course fairways with a distant view of residential dwellings in the background and a glimpse of the edge of distant fells.

5.117 **Change in View -** the proposed landform of mound 6 would dominate the view and screen most of the fairway behind. Due to the proximity to this change of the landform, there would be a noticeable change in landscape characteristics.

5.118 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium.

5.119 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.120 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Moderate.

5.121 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting trees would be immediately in front of this view and therefore most of this view would be screened after the successful establishment of the proposed trees over this landform.

5.122 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Negligible / Slight.

VP11

5.123 Viewpoint 11 (See figure 11) **PRoW West of Moresby Parks Road on Golf Course** and representative of residents and road users.

5.124 The **Existing View** is from the public footpath that runs across the site and through the woodland. There are only a few small existing trees and scrub along this road. This views currently looks into the open grassland area. Woodland is seen in the background.

5.125 **Change in View –** the proposed landform in the foreground would partially screen views of landscape elements behind. The change would be visible from the immediate footpath and also from Moresby Parks Road.

5.126 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium.

5.127 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.128 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Moderate.

5.129 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting trees would immediately in front of this view and therefore most of this view would be screened after the successful establishment of the proposed trees over this landform.

5.130 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Negligible / Slight.

VP12

5.131 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 12) **PRoW West of Moresby Parks Road on Golf Course** and this viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

5.132 The **Existing View** is from the other side of the road of Moresby Parks Road. The view shows the entrance to the footpath and the grassland with a few trees. There is woodland in the background along with scattered tall trees.

5.133 **Change in View –** the proposed landform in the foreground would partially screen views of landscape elements behind. The change in the view would be noticeable and would quickly become a young woodland.

5.134 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Medium.

5.135 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors (recreational users) at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.136 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Moderate.

5.137 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** of planting trees would be immediately in front of this view and therefore most of this view would be screened after the successful establishment of the proposed trees over this landform.

5.138 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Negligible / Slight.

VP13

5.139 Viewpoint 10 (See figure 13) **Roundabout at junction of Red Lonning Road and Moresby Parks Road** and this viewpoint is representative of road users.

5.140 The **Existing View** is across the roundabout and junctions and a view of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland at the south-eastern corner of the golf course. The tall and mature trees completely screen the presence of the golf course and fairways from this view.

5.141 **Change in View** – there would not be a perceptible change in the view due to the screening of the tall trees. Even in winter months, the site would still be screened due to the coniferous woodland.

5.142 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be None.

5.143 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors at this viewpoint would be Low.

5.144 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be None.

5.145 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** would include tree planting, but even these trees would be imperceptible.

5.146 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be None.

VP14

5.147 Viewpoint 14 (See figure 14) **Minor Road between Moresby Parks Road and Steel Brow near Weddicar Rigg** and this viewpoint is representative of recreational users.

5.148 The **Existing View** is from an elevated location where there are far reaching views of the fells to the east and towards the site to the west. The site is behind trees,

large industrial buildings of Whitehaven Commercial Park and the built form of Moresby Parks.

5.149 **Change in View** – There would be imperceptible changes and probably none seen from this distance, although as the proposed trees grow, in times these may be seen.

5.150 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Negligible.

5.151 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.152 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Negligible/Slight.

5.153 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** would include tree planting.

5.154 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Negligible.

VP15

5.155 Viewpoint 15 (See figure 15) **Frizington Hall** and representative of recreational users.

5.156 The **Existing View** is from across the valley and this is a glimpsed view towards the site to the west. The site is behind trees and large industrial buildings of Whitehaven Commercial Park.

5.157 **Change in View** – There would be little, if any changes seen from this location and distance from the site.

5.158 The **Magnitude of Change** at this viewpoint is judged to be Negligible.

5.159 The **Sensitivity** of the receptors at this viewpoint would be Medium.

5.160 The resulting **Degree of Significance** would be Negligible/Slight.

5.161 The proposed **Mitigation Measures** would include tree planting.

5.162 The **Residual Degree of Significance** would be Negligible.

Other viewpoints within the area

5.163 Other views in the region were considered using the ZTV as a guide and checking on site.

5.164 Other views would be from Moresby Park and private gardens or views such as from upper windows. The representative VPs 3, 4 and 5 give a good impression of similar views form this area.

5.165 The Lake District National Park boundary is just under 5km south east of the site. There may be a very slim chance of a glimpse of the site from within the LDNP but the ZTV shows only a small element that < 0.25 degrees visible vertical angle, so very unlikely.

Visual Amenity Assessment Summary

5.166 The visual assessment commenced with the preparation of a ZTV and exploration of potential viewpoints and visual receptors. Several viewpoints were considered and in consultation with Copeland Borough Council, additional viewpoints were added.

5.167 The visual receptors consisted of residents, recreational users and road users.

5.168 The ZTV analysis showed that the concentration of views would naturally be close to the golf course and contained with the landform to the north, west and south with some slighter wider views to the east.

5.169 The viewpoints considered key locations and the magnitudes of change varied from None, where the site is screened by trees to High, where the footpath is in the centre of the golf course.

5.170 The would be temporary changes to views when some mounds are remodelled, by all views of the proposed landforms would be have planting in the form of trees, hedgerows, shrubs or grass.

5.171 The resulting view of the gold course would be much improved and attractive with an overall beneficial residual magnitude of change.

Mitigation Measures

5.172 Mitigation measures are the extensive planting schemes right across the site. The planting consists of trees, hedgerows, shrubs and grassed areas.

5.173 Mitigation measures are intended to reduce any potential effects on the landscape character or visual amenity.

5.174 The design of the landforms are smooth and natural connecting to the wider landscape. The size and scale of the landform is proportional to the medium scale of the site.

5.175 The design of the tree planting provides woodlands that have integrated understorey planting at the perimeter of proposed woodland areas. This provides a rich cross section of plants, diverse habitats, good screening and attractive boundaries around the fairways.

5.176 The type of planting included is all indigenous and typical of this area and landscape character.

5.177 The proposed planting includes:

- Tree Planting
- Hedgerows
- Shrubs

- Grassland

5.178 The benefits of the mitigation measures are:

- Adherence to Landscape Character Type guidelines
- Habitat creation and extension with wildlife links to existing habitats
- An increase in biodiversity
- A connection of habitats between the existing woodland areas
- An improvement to the landscape character
- Fulfilment of global crisis and need of tree planting

5.179 The benefits of the proposed planting would enhance the landscape character after establishment of planting.

APPENDICES

Table 1 Landscape Character Degree of Significance

The following table is a visual guide to understanding how the magnitude of change relates to the degree of significance over different sensitivities of landscape character. As the assessment is based on subjective judgement and not formulaic calculations, this table is for guidance only.

Magnitude of Change	*Degree of Significance*		
High	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial	Substantial
Medium	Slight / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
Low	Slight	Slight / Moderate	Moderate
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible / Slight	Slight
	Low	***Medium***	***High***
	Landscape Receptor Sensitivity		

Table 2 Landscape Receptors – Sensitivities, Magnitude of Change and Degree of Significance

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Landscape Character Types (within 5km)					
4 Coastal Sandstone	2km W	This is an adjacent landscape character type and the proposed golf course development would not affect the key characteristics of this landscape character type.	Medium	None	None
5a Ridge and Valley	1.1km N + E	This is an adjacent landscape character type and the proposed golf course development would not affect the key characteristics of this landscape character type.	Medium	None	None

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
5b Lowland Farmland	5.2km S	This landscape character type is within the vicinity of the proposed development for the golf course site and would not affect the key characteristics of this landscape character type.	Medium	None	None
5d Urban Fringe	Site resides in this LCA	Landscape character type – the development of the site would occur within this landscape character.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
9a Open Moorland	1km	This landscape character type is within the vicinity of the proposed development for the golf course site and some areas may have an association to the site.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
9d Ridges	2.6km	This landscape character type is within the vicinity of the proposed development for the golf course site and some areas may have an association to the site.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
11a Foothills	5.3km	This landscape character type is within the vicinity of the proposed development for the golf course site and some areas may have an association to the site.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
U Urban Areas	473m	This landscape character type is within the vicinity of the proposed development for the golf course site and some areas may have an association to the site.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
Special Site of Scientific Interest (within 3km)					
St Bees Head (SSSI)	2.6km	With this distance between the proposed development of the golf course and the designation, the landscape quality would not be affected.	High	None	None
Public Rights of Way (within 1km)					

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Rose Cottage – Harras Moor (disused air shaft)	N/A	The proposed development of the golf course will have direct implications upon this footpath visually and possibly physically for recreational users.	Medium	Medium	Moderate
Harras Moor (disused air shaft)- Harras Road	0km	Possible glimpses of the proposed development of the golf course but mostly screened by woodland for the road and recreational users.	Medium	Medium	Moderate
Scilly Bank- Summer Hill farm (main road access)	0km	Some visibility of the proposed development of the golf course for residents, road and recreational users at exposed sections of the route, seen near Hill Farm access point.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible / Slight
Moresby Park Road- Round Close Park Housing	66m	Possible glimpses of the proposed development of the golf course, but mostly screened by woodland from residents, recreational and road users.	Medium	Low	Slight / Moderate
Boundary Park Road – Scilly Bank	0km	Possible glimpses of the proposed development of the golf course, mostly localised vegetation screening for residents, road and recreational users.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible / Slight

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Victoria Road - Harras Reservoir	398m	Visibility to the proposed development of the golf course for residents and recreational users would be unfettered by any screening types	Medium	Negligible, if any	Negligible, if any
Moresby parks- Walkmill Bridge	46m	Possible glimpses of the proposed development of the golf mostly obscured by localised vegetation screening and coppices to residents and recreational users.	Medium	Negligible, if any	Negligible, if any
Havergarth- Harras Park Footpath	690m	Negligible glimpses of the proposed development of the golf obscured due to topographic feature to recreational users.	Medium	None	None
Havergarth – Harras Road	500m	Negligible glimpses of the proposed development of the golf course but mostly screened by woodland and housing developments from recreational users.	Medium	None	None
Harras Reservoir – Harras Road	266m	Visibility to the proposed development of the golf course for residents and recreational users would be unfettered by any screening types	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
Moresby road – Red Lonning via Mayfield School	360m	No visual implication to road, recreational or residential users from the development of the golf course due to screening by woodlands	Medium	None	None

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
National Cycle Routes (within 2km)					
NCN 72	1.5km W	The proposed development of the golf course would be not be seen from this route.	High	None	None
Scheduled Monuments (within 2km)					
None	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ancient Woodlands (within 2km)					
Site north west of the site, Millgrove Wood	980m N	Given the separation distance there would be no effect on the settings of the Ancient Woodlands	High	None	None
Areas of outstanding natural beauty (within 2km)					
None	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
World Heritage Sites					
Lake District National Park	4.8km SE	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Designation/ Feature/ Character Area	*Approximate distance from VP1 (at closest point)*	*Rationale for judgement*	*Sensitivity to Change*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
Listed Buildings (within 1km)					
None	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 2 Visual Amenity Degree of Significance

The following table is a visual guide to understanding how the magnitude of change relates to the degree of significance for different sensitivities of visual receptors. As the assessment is based on subjective judgement and not formulaic calculations, this table is for guidance only.

Magnitude of Change	*Degree of Significance*		
High	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial	Substantial
Medium	Slight / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
Low	Slight	Slight / Moderate	Moderate
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible / Slight	Slight
	Low	***Medium***	***High***
	Visual Receptor Sensitivity		

Table 3 Viewpoint Locations, Sensitivities, Magnitude of Change and Degree of Significance

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 1	Round Close Park	0.034km 203°	299301 519043	Residents and Road Users.	Change in landforms may be seen through the gateway and across the track, but some mounds would be screened by the existing woodland.	Medium (recreational users) Low (road users)	Low	Slight/ Moderate (recreational users) Slight (road users)
VP 2	PRoW between Round Close Park and Moresby Parks	0.005km 197.85°	299566 518989	Recreational Users	The change would be noticeable, although at a distance from the viewer. The horizon would change with the additional mound forming a new horizon.	Medium	Medium	Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 3	Moresby Parks Road	0.020km 209.75°	299763 519026	Recreational Users and Road Users	The change of the landform in the foreground behind existing hedgerow. The appearance of the fairway would remain as grass landcover.	Medium (recreational users) Low (road users)	Medium	Moderate (recreational users) Slight/ Moderate (road users Users)

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 4	Moresby Parks Road	0.055km 203.30°	299758 519075	Road Users and Residents	There would be change in the landform in the foreground and a glimpse of landform changes in the background, which would probably be indiscernible.	Medium (recreational users) Low (road users)	Medium	Moderate (recreational users) Slight/ Moderate (road users Users)
VP 5	PRoW East of Moresby Parks	0.490km 197.17°	300067 519384	Road Users	The change in the landform would be barely perceptible at this distance and behind existing built form and trees.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 6	PRoW West of Red Lonning Road	0.153km 63.63°	298865 518354	Recreational Users	The view of the proposed change to landforms are mostly screened with some glimpses.	Medium	Low	Slight/ Moderate
VP 7	PRoW West of Moresby Parks	0.160km 112.63°	298865 518354	Recreational Users	Some change to landform near the entrance and south of the golf course.	Medium	Low	Slight/ Moderate
VP 8	PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course	0.002km 112.52°	299039 518378	Recreational Users	The proposed landform would be in the foreground and very noticeable.	Medium	High	Moderate / Substantial

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 9	PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course(left)	0.002km 309.85°	299247 518280	Recreational Users	The change in the landform would be visible in the foreground. Due to the proximity, there would be a noticeable change.	Medium	Medium	Moderate
VP 10	PRoW East of Red Lonning Road on Golf Course (right)	0.002km 39.85°	299247 518280	Recreational Users	The change of the landform would dominate the view and screen most of the fairway behind. Due to the proximity, there would be a noticeable change.	Medium	Medium	Moderate

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 11	PRoW West of Moresby Parks Road on Golf Course	0.032km 302.08°	299744 518327	Recreational Users	The change in the landform would be in the foreground and partially screen views behind.	Medium	Medium	Moderate
VP 12	Junction of Moresby Parks Road and minor road leading to Steel Brow	0.0.45km 308.59°	299754 518321	Recreational Users	The proposed landform in the foreground would partially screen views behind and be noticeable.	Medium	Medium	Moderate
VP 13	Roundabout at junction of Red Lonning Road and Moresby Parks Road	0.092km 346.96°	299570 517742	Road Users	There would be perceptible change in the view due to the screening of the tall trees.	Low	None	None

Ref. VP	*Location*	*Distance and direction to site*	*Grid Ref*	*Reason for Inclusion (Visual Receptors)*	*Rationale for Judgement*	*Sensitivity*	*Magnitude of Change*	*Degree of Significance*
VP 14	Minor road between Moresby Parks Road and Steel Brow near Weddicar Rigg	1.5km 273.30°	301239 518479	Recreational Users	There would be imperceptible changes and probably none seen from this distance.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible/ Slight
VP 15	Frizington Hall	2.28km 300.50°	301781 517071	Recreational Users and Road Users	There would be little, if any changes seen from this location and distance from the site.	Medium	Negligible	Negligible/ Slight