

Iron Line, Millom

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Addendum 7th April 2025 (Rev 03)



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In May 2023, a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) was prepared by One Environments in regard to proposed development at the Iron Line in Millom, Cumbria (planning ref 4/23/2249/0F1). Following changes to the design, a new full planning application is to be submitted and this addendum is prepared to consider potential effects on landscape and visual receptors in the vicinity of the proposal.
- 1.2 On the basis that design amendments are of a scale and nature unlikely to change the significance of effect on receptors, it is deemed unnecessary to produce a fresh LVA. This addendum is used to demonstrate that position.
- 1.3 For ease of comparison, document chapters directly reflect those of the original LVA
- 1.4 As a landscape practice, Layer.studio have a long established track record of producing this type of document and more specially, the author is a Chartered Member of The Landscape Institute whom, over a twenty year period, has produced 30+ Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments.

2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 Firstly, the baseline position is reviewed to establish whether or not the list of potential landscape and visual receptors remains relevant. Secondly, the assessment of each receptor is revisited to determine if the significance of effect has changed.
- 2.2 In accordance with paragraph 6.2 of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition), published by Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, this is an *“approach which is proportional to the scale and nature of the proposed development.”*

3.0 Planning Policy

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in December 2024 but changes do not impact upon the baseline position.
- 3.2 Regional policy remains the same as 2023.
- 3.3 At local level, the original LVA considered Copeland Local Plan 2013–2028 (Core Strategy and Development Management Policies) and highlighted the following as relevant:
- Policy ST1 – Strategic Development Principles
 - Policy ENV5 – Protecting and Enhancing the Borough’s Landscapes
 - Policy DM26 – Landscaping
- 3.4 Since application 4/23/2249/0F1 was submitted, the policy context has changed with the adoption of Copeland Local Plan 2021–2039 providing a framework for guiding development and investment up to 2039 in the former Copeland area of Cumberland outside the Lake District National Park.
- 3.5 Policies of relevance are:

N6: Landscape Protection

“Copeland’s landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:

- a) Supporting proposals which enhance the value of Copeland’s landscapes;
- b) Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development conserves and enhances the distinctive characteristics of that particular area in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and value;
- c) Ensuring development proposals demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will conserve and where possible enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park and Heritage Coast where proposals could impact on their setting and views into and from the National Park or Heritage Coast;
- d) Requiring a Landscape Appraisal, and where appropriate a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, to be submitted where development has the potential to impact upon landscape character or a protected landscape. Where harm is identified the development will only be permitted where the benefits of the development outweigh any potential harm and mitigation and compensation measures must be provided.

Proposals will be assessed according to whether the proposed structures and associated landscaping relates well in terms of visual impact, scale, character, amenity value and local distinctiveness and the cumulative impact of developments will be taken into account as part of this assessment.

Development proposals must be informed by the Council’s Landscape Character Assessment, Settlement Landscape Character Assessment the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit and where appropriate, the Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment¹⁰⁸ from the earliest stage.”

4.0 Baseline Environment

- 4.1 There are no changes to the landscape and visual baseline. National, regional and local character guidance remains the same and the list of visual receptors still stands because the proposed building's scale and location has not changed in a way that would alter the zone of theoretical visibility.

5.0 Proposed Development

- 5.1 The project still seeks to create a regionally significant tourist attraction with a new visitor centre, enhanced pedestrian routes and interpretation opportunities. Localised changes from application 4/23/2249/0F1 are:
- Building located approximately 10m south, with the finished floor level at a marginally lower AOD.
 - Similar overall height but the upper storey is now designated as a café instead of a 360 degree open air viewing platform. During the winter, this may mean that interior lighting of the café will be visible for a few hours after dark.
 - Visitor centre accessed via existing track, rather than constructing a new and diverted road to the north
 - Single car park close to building, rather than split across two more satellite locations.
 - Omission of works to Hodbarrow Beacon.
- 5.2 For clarity, the description of development is
- 5.3 *"Erection of visitor centre with café/shop, group room, staff/volunteer, toilet facilities and vehicle parking; consolidation, repair and installation of interpretive sculpture to Towsey Hole Windmill; refurbishment of existing Tern Island Hide; new bird hides, pathways, gateway features, street furniture, and demarcation of spaces at existing car park; enhancement of wildlife habitats; associated landscaping and drainage infrastructure; and maintenance of byway with restricted vehicular access –The Iron Line Project."*

6.0 Potential Effects

- 6.1 Receptors subject to the original appraisal are tabulated below and accompanied by an explanation of why there's no change to the significance as determined previously.

6.2

Landscape Receptor	Justification
National Character Area NCA 07 West Cumbria	As stated previously "the scale of the proposals would not have an effect on the scale that is relevant to this character area"
County Character Type 2 Coastal Margin	As stated previously "the scale of the proposals would not have an effect on the scale that is relevant to this character area"
CBC Landscape Character Area 2Dii-	Building materials remain suited to setting and reflects the site's industrial heritage.

Coastal Derelict ex Industrial Fringe	
CBC Landscape Character Area 2Div Hodbarrow Coastal Urban Fringe	Key proposals still relate to the windmill, footpaths and habitat, all of which are at low level and compact in scale. Significance of effect remains unchanged from the previous application.

Visual Receptor	Justification
1 – Residents off Boundary Lane	The visitor centre is of a similar mass and located at a marginally lower AOD. Topography and vegetation will offer the same level of screening.
1 – User of public right of way FP 415014	
2 – Residents at Red Hills Cottages	The visitor centre is of a similar mass and located at a marginally lower AOD. The first floor will be partially visible on elevated ground. Existing vegetation will offer some screening.
2 – User of public right of way FP 415014	
3 – Caravan Park visitors	Private viewpoint.
4 – Visitors to Hodbarrow Beacon	No change to view due to intervening vegetation.
5 – User of public right of way FP 415017, England Coast Path	The visitor centre is of a similar mass and located at a marginally lower AOD. The first floor will be partially visible on elevated ground and as previously, existing vegetation will offer some screening.
6 – User of public right of way BOAT 415023, England Coast Path	The visitor centre is of a similar mass and located at a marginally lower AOD. The first floor will be partially visible on elevated ground with magnitude of change as per the previous proposal.
7 – User of public right of way FP 415009, England Coast Path	The visitor centre is of a similar mass and located at a marginally lower AOD. The first floor will be partially visible on elevated ground between foreground buildings.
8 – Adjacent to car park at Roanhead Beach/Sandscale Nature Reserve close to public right of way FP 602031	The visitor centre will be visible in the panoramic view but the distant viewpoint means magnitude of change will be as per the previous application
9 – User of public right of way FP 602031	The visitor centre will be barely distinguishable in the panoramic view

10 – User of public right of way FP 602079	The visitor centre will not be distinguishable in the panoramic view
11 – User of public right of way FP 415008	The visitor centre is of a similar mass and located at a marginally lower AOD. The first floor will be partially visible on elevated ground and as previously, existing vegetation will offer some screening.
11 – Motorists on Haverigg Road	Viewed transiently. New built form would be screened from view by existing hedgerows
12 – Motorists on A5093	Built form screened by existing hedgerows
A – User of public right of way FP 415015 adjacent to Mainsgate Road	The visitor centre will be substantially screened by the slag heap.

7.0 Summary and Conclusion

- 7.1 The design subject to this planning application does not differ enough to change the significance of effect beyond what was assessed as part of application 4/23/2249/0F1.
- 7.2 From long distance locations across the Duddon Estuary, the magnitude of change is small and barely distinguishable.
- 7.3 From viewpoints at shorter distance, topography and vegetation will at worst, partially screen the proposed visitor centre.