

7. BASELINE VISUAL SURVEY

- 7.1. This chapter describes the visual elements of the landscape around Old Oak Farm redevelopment, initially in the areas immediately surrounding the new building and then at a wider distance, including major views from the surrounding countryside.
- 7.2. Site visits were carried out in June and August 2023. This assessment was carried out in summer when the trees were in full leaf. In winter, without vegetation on the trees and hedges, the scenario may be different and views may be clearer and impacts more significant.

Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI)

- 7.3. A zone of visual influence is defined as the area from within which the site and any modifications made to it may be seen. For Old Oak Farm this was defined based on an analysis of the topography, local maps and the site visits and then verified by field survey, including visiting as many locations within the ZVI or with potential views as possible. The survey defined specific places from which views could be obtained and thereby identified the specific receptors of those views. Where screening of the site was provided, by topographical elements, tree belts or other vegetation, this amended the ZVI.
- 7.4. Fig 7.1 shows the approximate ZVI identified from the site walkover.

Definition of Visual Receptors

- 7.5. A LVIA will consider viewpoints from which the proposal will be seen by different groups of people (receptors) and usually these are public viewpoints such as land and buildings providing public access, transport routes and places where people work. It is not usual for private viewpoints to be taken into consideration.
- 7.6. Views and locations of viewpoints have not been verified with the local planning authority.
- 7.7. All views where there is a potential change due to development are included and presented at a scale and size in accordance with the recommendations of the Landscape Institute Advice Note 11/01 regarding photomontages for LVIA. All photos were taken with a DSLR camera Canon 100D with zoom lens set at approximately 35mm to approximate a full frame SLR camera with a 50mm lens. All panoramas have been combined using cylindrical combination and the view height was 1.4m. There are no photomontages so the photographs are not printed at a size as required for comparison.
- 7.8. Each viewpoint has been assessed on an individual visual impact assessment table which is included alongside each viewpoint photograph.

Viewpoints

- 7.9. The viewpoints selected for consideration are shown in Fig. 7.1. Some of these viewpoints have no direct or clear view of Old Oak Farm and it is anticipated that there will be no view of the proposed development from these locations. The viewpoints selected for full analysis and impact assessment in chapter 8 have generally been chosen from locations where there is a glimpsed or full view of the Woolley Green Farm development.

7.10. Visual Landscape

- 7.11. Old Oak Farm lies on the side of a valley which runs from Bow Lakes and Fisher's Pond in the north to Crowdhill in the south. Due to this topography there are long views from parts of the property over the valley towards the Owslebury downs to the north. However, due to the extensive enclosure by vegetation on the site there are very limited views into

and out of the property from the south, east and west.

- 7.12. The area of Lower Slackstead is gently rolling enclosed agricultural fields with hedges and copses dividing the open spaces. The rolling topography prevents long and expansive views, except from high, open points, such as Woolley House. Where buildings are set at a lower level, such as Woolley Green farm, the skylines are restricted by ridgelines and woodland edges. Views are contained by these enclosing factors, which can lead to winding and enticing glimpses of wider landscapes.

Visual Amenity

- 7.13. The topography and enclosure of Old Oak Farm means that views of the property are restricted from the south, east and west, with only glimpsed views from the north-west along Winchester Road as the land falls to the north.
- 7.14. There are no views from the nearby public right of way to the east and west and no views also from the garden centre to the west.
- 7.15. There are views from the house Waratah to the immediate south as the upper storey windows over look the paddocks; however the intervening hedges do restrict views from lower storeys.
- 7.16. There are views from the fields to the north including along Bow Lake which will have clear views up the hill towards the property. There are also likely to be views from the houses along B2177 Portsmouth Road although these are likely to be restricted in parts due to intervening vegetation and woodland copses. There are no clear views from Portsmouth Road itself.
- 7.17. There are unlikely to be views from the footpaths further to the north including around Nob's Crook, due to the intervening woodland and vegetation. There may be views from more distant footpaths and roads higher on the downs but these will be very distant, as the property does not lie on the ridgeline - Waratah is the highest property and lies above Old Oak Farm - it is unlikely to be individually discernible.
- 7.18. Due to the nature of the natural enclosure of the farm by both topography and hedges and copses there are limited views to Woolley Green Farm. There are no long distance views, however there are local clear views from the Monarch's Way. There are glimpsed views from the houses along Does Lane at Lower Slackstead, particularly from their rear gardens and there is also a view from the office of Woolley House. There are glimpsed views from Does Lane where it runs along the Woolley House entrance although these are mostly blocked during summer months when the leaves are on the trees.

Views to and from Important Landscape and Cultural heritage features

- 7.19. The closest landscape heritage feature is the scheduled monument of the park pale of Marwell which is an early example of early emparkment, including an earthwork boundary enclosing the medieval deer park which surrounded Marwell Manor. This lies directly to the north of Old Oak Farm but there is no public access to the monument.
- 7.20. The closest listed buildings have no view of Old Oak Farm.

Visual Receptors

- 7.21. Visual receptors include passers-by on Winchester Road and Portsmouth Road to the west and north. Also visitors to InExcess Garden Centre and to the tracks to access the houses to the south of the site. Residents of the house Waratah to the south is also considered.



P1: The entrance to Old Oak Farm from Winchester Road outside In Excess garden centre also showing the entrance track to The Mount, Hillfield and Waratah



P2: Winchester Road looking north with the native hedge boundary to Old Farm on the right. The houses in view are just to the south of the caravan park.



P3: The entrance to Old Oak Farm from Winchester Road also showing the entrance track to The Mount and Waratah

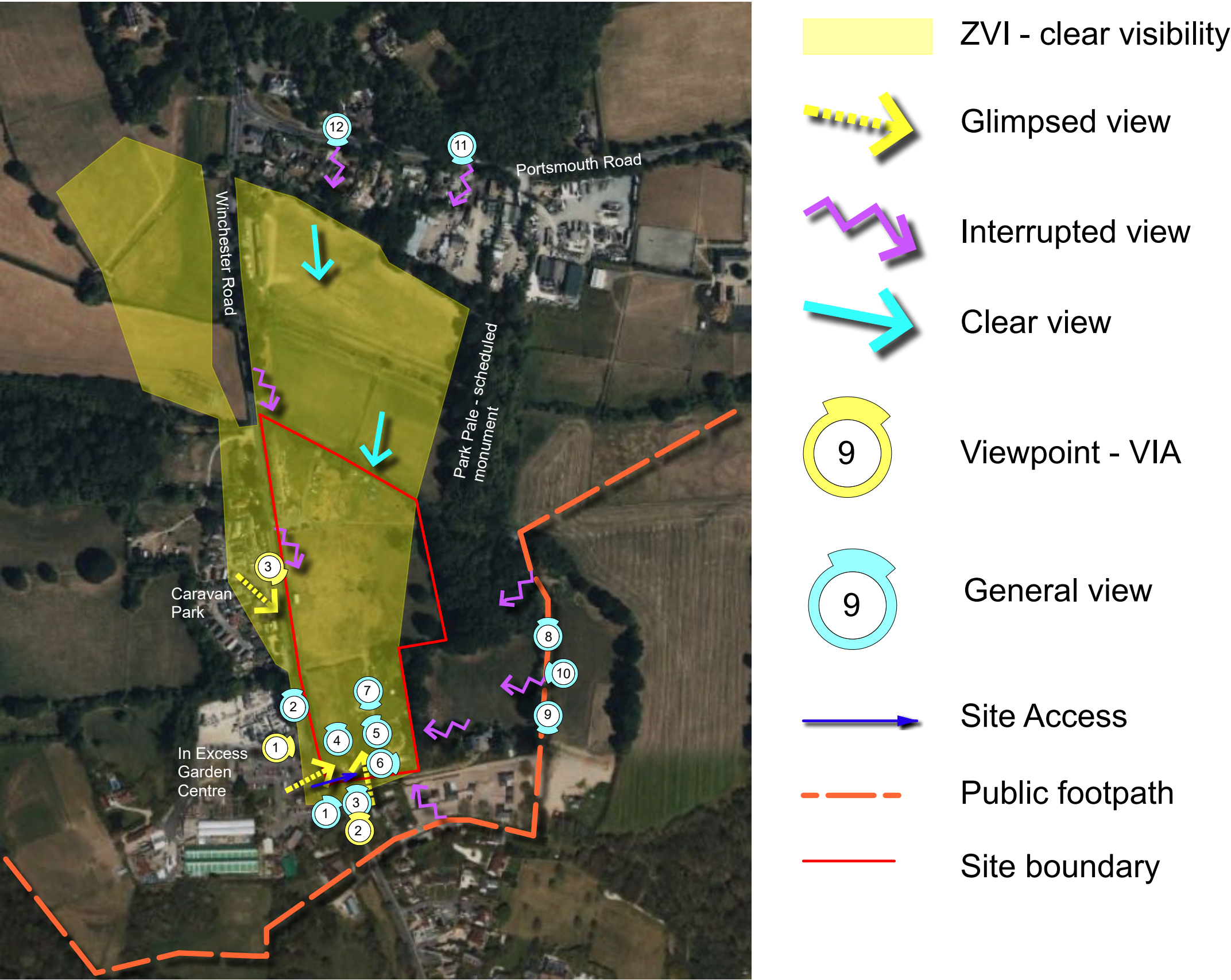


Fig. 8.1 Zone of visual influence and viewpoints



P4: View looking north from location of plot 2 towards Winchester Road, caravan park and to woods of Colden Common beyond Bow Lake in the valley



P5: View looking north-west from the internal track to the paddocks showing caravan park and stored materials



P6: Existing mobile homes and outbuildings enclosed by fir hedge. Trees beyond are on eastern boundary



P7: Existing track with fir hedge to left looking to southern boundary showing first storey windows of Waratah





P8, 9, 10: Views from the footpath to the east showing views along the woodland copse to the east of Old Oak Farm which connects with the scheduled monument of the Park Pale and further to Marwell. Intervening vegetation prevents any views of Old Oak Farm



P11, 12: Views looking south from Portsmouth Road to the north showing no views through the vegetation and buildings to Old Oak Farm. Some of the buildings may be able to view the site from their rear gardens or windows

8. VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Viewpoint One - View from In Excess Garden Centre Access Drive

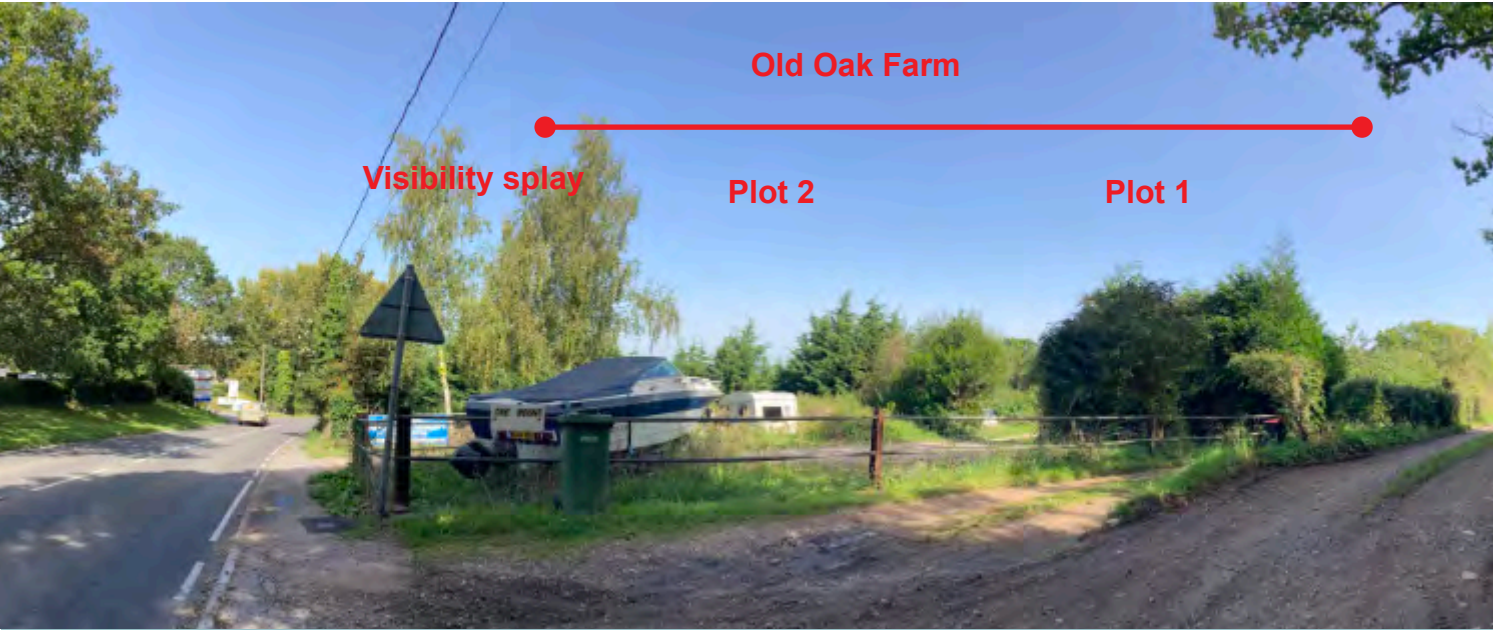
- 8.1. This view is looking east across Winchester Road towards Old Oak Farm. The native hedge along the western boundary of Old Oak Farm is visible as are the mature trees on the eastern boundary. The roof of the horse box is just visible over the hedge.
- 8.2. This horse box lies along the line of the northern hedge of Plot 2. The building of Plot 2 will lie to the right of the viewpoint and may be visible but is more likely to be hidden behind the existing hedge, and will be further screened with the additional planting which is proposed along the boundary and at the end of the garden.
- 8.3. The visual effect significance with initially be **Low Adverse** in summer months when the trees are in leaf. The views in winter months may be more significant. As the trees and hedge mature, the impact is likely to lessen to **negligible**.



Old Oak Farm - Viewpoint One			
Location and nature of viewpoint	View from entrance driveway to In Excess garden centre and Winchester Road		
Description of scene	This view is looking east across Winchester Road towards Old Oak Farm. The native hedge along the western boundary of Old Oak Farm is visible as are the mature trees on the eastern boundary. The roof of the horse box is just visible over the hedge		
Elevation of viewpoint	45m AOD	Approximate direction of view	East
Landscape designations at viewpoint	none	Receptors	Users of Winchester Road and In-Excess garden centre
Approximate distance to closest edge of Site	200m	Sensitivity of receptors	Medium
Extent of Site visible	Roof of horse box over hedge. Mature trees on eastern boundary.		
Potential visual effects	The horse box lies along the line of the northern hedge of Plot 2. The building of Plot 2 will lie to the right of the viewpoint and may be visible but is more likely to be hidden behind the existing hedge and will be further screened with the additional planting which is proposed along the boundary and at the end of the garden.		
Magnitude of Change	Low: Where the development proposals will be individually appreciated in the overall view, causing a minor deterioration/ Having a minor effect on the character of the scene		
Permanent / Temporary	Permanent	Reversible / Irreversible effect	Irreversible
Direct / Indirect effect	Direct	Avoidable / Unavoidable	Unavoidable
The effects from this viewpoint are therefore considered to be:			
Time	Visual effect significance (<i>magnitude x sensitivity</i>)		
	Winter effect	Summer effect	
Day of opening	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	
Year One	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	
Year Fifteen	Low Adverse/negligible	Low Adverse/negligible	

Viewpoint Two - View from Winchester Road at access track to the houses to the south of Oak Farm and looking north over the site

- 8.4. This view is looking north across the southern part of the site from the entrance to the track to the south. The view includes In Excess Garden Centre to the left (west), the entrance into Old Oak Farm and over the track to the right (east). Various caravans and a boat are visible in the entrance to the site, plus the entrance gate and fencing. The existing evergreen hedges are visible which prevent longer views to the north.
- 8.5. The south- western part of the site is visible. None of the existing buildings are visible.
- 8.6. Plot one will be sited behind the existing evergreen hedge which lines the edge of the track. Due to the reduced levels of this part of the site it is unlikely that any of the buildings of Plot one will be visible in this view. The only part of the building that may be visible is the roof which is angled to the south. The roof is finished as a green roof which should blend with the surrounding vegetation to be less visible.
- 8.7. Plot two will be sited behind the evergreens currently behind the caravan. The evergreens will initially be retained until other vegetation has matured and due to the low nature of the house, set into the landscape it is unlikely that much will be visible. Once the vegetation has matured it is unlikely to be viewed at all.
- 8.8. The entrance from Winchester Road will change significantly. The boat and caravans will be removed and the area tidied, with a new road surface with a rigid permeable surface to prevent it migrating onto the road. In order to create improved visibility for access onto Winchester Road the existing fence, gate and vegetation will be cleared to a certain distance away from the road. Some of the existing hedge on Winchester Road will be removed to allow for improved sight lines. A new fence, gate and hedge will be reinstated and new planting including native woodland species and wildflower meadow species will be implemented. Ultimately the evergreen hedge will be removed but only when the new native hedge is high enough to provide suitable screening. The hedge will be retained initially.
- 8.9. These works will significantly enhance this area of the site and will act to provide additional visual screening.
- 8.10. The visual effect significance will initially be **Low Adverse** or **Negligible**. As the new planting matures the improved entrance, the removal of the caravan etc. and the new layout will result in a **Beneficial** impact.



Old Oak Farm - Viewpoint Two			
Location and nature of viewpoint	This view is looking north across the southern part of the site from the entrance to the track to the south		
Description of scene	The view includes In Excess Garden Centre to the left (west), the entrance into Old Oak Farm and over the track to the right (east). Various caravans and a boat are visible in the entrance to the site, plus the entrance gate and fencing. The existing evergreen hedges are visible which prevent longer views to the north.		
Elevation of viewpoint	45m AOD	Approximate direction of view	north
Landscape designations at viewpoint	Public Right of Way	Receptors	Walkers and users of Winchester Road
Approximate distance to closest edge of Site	50m	Sensitivity of receptors	Medium
Extent of Site visible	The south- western part of the site is visible. None of the existing buildings are visible.		
Potential visual effects	Plot one will be sited behind the existing evergreen hedge which lines the edge of the track. Due to the reduced levels of this part of the site it is unlikely that any of the buildings of Plot one will be visible in this view. The only part of the building that may be visible is the roof which is angled to the south. The roof is finished as a green roof which should blend with the surrounding vegetation to be less visible. Plot two will be sited behind the evergreens currently behind the caravan. The evergreens will initially be retained until other vegetation has matured and due to the low nature of the house, set into the landscape it is unlikely that much will be visible. Once the vegetation has matured it is unlikely to be viewed at all. The entrance from Winchester Road will change significantly. The boat and caravans will be removed and the area tidied, with a new road surface with a rigid permeable surface to prevent it migrating onto the road. In order to create improved visibility for access onto Winchester Road the existing fence, gate and vegetation will be cleared to a certain distance away from the road. Some of the existing hedge on Winchester Road will be removed to allow for improved sight lines. A new fence, gate and hedge will be reinstated and new planting including native woodland species and wildflower meadow species will be implemented. Ultimately the evergreen hedge will be removed but only when the new native hedge is high enough to provide suitable screening. The hedge will be retained initially.		
Magnitude of Change	Low: where development proposals will be individually appreciated in the overall view, causing a slight deterioration. Forming a minor element in the scene.		
Permanent / Temporary	Permanent	Reversible / Irreversible effect	Irreversible
Direct / Indirect effect	Direct	Avoidable / Unavoidable	Unavoidable
The effects from this viewpoint are therefore considered to be:			
Time	Visual effect significance (<i>magnitude x sensitivity</i>)		
	Winter effect	Summer effect	
Day of opening	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	
Year One	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	
Year Fifteen	Beneficial	Beneficial	

Viewpoint Three - view from Caravan Park on Winchester Road

- 8.11. This view is from the entrance to the Caravan Park looking north and east along Winchester Road.
- 8.12. This view is looking north from the Monarch's Way as it runs along the track from Ampfield Wood towards the site
- 8.13. The view is of the native hedge along the Winchester Road. The buildings of the site are not visible. The entrance is visible if standing further into the road.
- 8.14. It is unlikely that any of the proposed buildings will be visible in this view and as such the visual effect significance will be **Neutral**.
- 8.15. It is likely that there are views from the caravans within the caravan park which will include the new buildings, particularly plot two. This is apparent from the photos which are taken within the site which show the caravans. However, an assessment from within the caravan park was not possible due to its private access.
- 8.16. There may be visual effects of the buildings onto users of the caravan park, however the new planting of the northern hedge to plot two, plus the additional standard trees proposed to screen this viewline is likely to minimise this impact, especially as the planting matures.



Old Oak Farm - Viewpoint One			
Location and nature of viewpoint	View from entrance driveway to In Excess garden centre and Winchester Road		
Description of scene	This view is looking east across Winchester Road towards Old Oak Farm. The native hedge along the western boundary of Old Oak Farm is visible as are the mature trees on the eastern boundary. The roof of the horse box is just visible over the hedge		
Elevation of viewpoint	45m AOD	Approximate direction of view	East
Landscape designations at viewpoint	none	Receptors	Users of Winchester Road and In-Excess garden centre
Approximate distance to closest edge of Site	200m	Sensitivity of receptors	Medium
Extent of Site visible	Roof of horse box over hedge. Mature trees on eastern boundary.		
Potential visual effects	The horse box lies along the line of the northern hedge of Plot 2. The building of Plot 2 will lie to the right of the viewpoint and may be visible but is more likely to be hidden behind the existing hedge and will be further screened with the additional planting which is proposed along the boundary and at the end of the garden.		
Magnitude of Change	Low: Where the development proposals will be individually appreciated in the overall view, causing a minor deterioration/ Having a minor effect on the character of the scene		
Permanent / Temporary	Permanent	Reversible / Irreversible effect	Irreversible
Direct / Indirect effect	Direct	Avoidable / Unavoidable	Unavoidable
The effects from this viewpoint are therefore considered to be:			
Time	Visual effect significance (<i>magnitude x sensitivity</i>)		
	Winter effect	Summer effect	
Day of opening	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	
Year One	Low Adverse	Low Adverse	
Year Fifteen	Low Adverse/negligible	Low Adverse/negligible	



9. OTHER VIEWPOINTS

- 9.1. Guidance from the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment normally state that viewpoints should be considered from public accessible points, except where requested and agreed with the local authority. In this situation, the main points and receptors identified above are all publicly accessible, however, there are some additional visual receptors which are worth considering, even though access to them to carry out a visual survey was not possible. These include:

Waratah

- 9.2. This house lies immediately due south from Old Oak Farm, although there are two intervening hedges and tracks. Waratah is at a higher elevation than Old Oak Farm, and its rear windows at first storey level are clearly visible from parts of Old Oak Farm where they are higher than the hedges. There will be clear views over the valley extending from Old Oak Farm down to Bow Lake and Fisher's Pond and to Colden Common beyond to the north. The existing views will include views of parts of Old Oak Farm where the vegetation permits, but views directly into the property will involve looking down at a significant angle.
- 9.3. The proposed building designs including setting the buildings into the landscape with selective terracing will minimise the visual impact to Waratah and will not obstruct the view over the valley currently enjoyed by the residents from their rear windows. The view will change, and will probably be tidier than currently but there should be no obstruction.

Bow Lake and the surrounding fields

- 9.4. These field lie immediately north of Old Oak Farm and extend to the buildings located along the south side of Portsmouth Road. Users of these fields are currently able to see the buildings within Old Oak Farm where permitted by vegetation, and they will be able to see the proposed buildings. The glazing along the northern elevation will be visible above and between any new hedges and tree planting. However, these new buildings will be located below the existing skyline on which the rear windows of Waratah are currently visible and should not result in a significant visual impact.

Houses along southern side of Portsmouth Road

- 9.5. There are several houses and commercial properties lining Portsmouth Road. Although there are no clear views from Portsmouth Road itself there may be some properties which have views of Old Oak Farm from their rear gardens and rear windows. However, there are significant blocks of intervening vegetation, including the trees around the scheduled monument of the park pale. Where there are views, these are likely to be received in the same way as those from Bow Lake, with the new properties more distant and set below the skyline on which Waratah will be visible. There is unlikely to be a highly significant visual impact at this distance.

Footpaths in Colden Common

- 9.6. Although there are footpaths running through the woodlands and fields around Fisher's Pond and the fields to the north-west, these are almost all almost enclosed within the woods or by hedges resulting in no clear views of Old Oak Farm. Where there are views, these are distant, with the proposed buildings again lying below the skyline on which sits Waratah. There is unlikely to be a highly significant visual impact at this distance.



Fig 9.1 Waratah on the skyline above Old Oak Farm



Fig 9.2 Caravan Park



Fig 9.3 Properties on Portsmouth Road beyond Bow Lake

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1. Old Oak Farm lies towards the top of a hill rising from the Bow Lakes river valley to the north to Fair Oak and Crowdhill to the south. The farm lies just below the ridgeline and gives good views to the north over the valley towards Colden Common and Owslebury. This is an area of mixed rural agricultural land with extensive development, mostly low level housing developments, punctuated with woodland copses. Although the views are extensive, the general development within the area does not result in a remote feel to the area.
- 10.2. Due to the natural enclosure by vegetation and the lack of public footpaths nearby with a view, there are few receptors with a clear view into the site. Although the site lies on the side of the valley sloping up from Bow Lake to the south, with long open views to the north, there are no receptors in this area to enjoy the view towards Old Oak Farm.
- 10.3. The existing property consists of two mobile homes (Old Oak Farm and Hotel California) and associated outbuildings including caravans and vans. There are also foundations for a stable block building on the southern boundary, although the block has yet to be completed. These are located on the easternmost part of the property.
- 10.4. The remainder of the area is in use as associated garden and includes chicken coops, dog kennels, and household items that would usually be stored inside a garage or other outbuilding. Various old cars and caravans are also kept on the site primarily for residential storage purposes but also in connection with the keeping of the applicant's horses. The site has an unkempt appearance.
- 10.5. The proposal is to remove the existing mobile homes from beneath the mature Oak trees on the eastern boundary towards the centre of the site. One dwelling (Plot 1) would be placed on the higher, southern side of the access track, cut into the embankment, and another (Plot 2) would be sited on the lower, northern side of the access track. A mono-pitch contemporary design is proposed with large floor to ceiling windows to take advantage of the far reaching views to the north.
- 10.6. The proposal will result in the tidying of the area generally, with the removal of the general detritus of vans, cars, boat, rubbish and other paraphernalia. The mobile homes will be removed out of the root zones of the mature oaks on the eastern boundary ensuring their longevity. The access to Winchester Road will be improved, with the existing fence and gate replaced and some of the vegetation cleared to increase the visibility splay, improving the view of cars for the residents of all the houses in Old Oak Farm, The Mount and Waratah areas using the tracks. The biodiversity of the site will be improved by new native hedge planting along the boundaries to the houses and and the property generally, and by the removal of most of the existing evergreen hedges, once the native hedges have sufficiently matured. Two new ponds will be provided in the gardens and the paddock grassland will be enhanced and allowed to grow long in places. New woodland planting will take place where space permits, with new standard tree planting in selective places north of plot 2. Together, these improvements will increase the net biodiversity of the site and will enhance the area for both residents and wildlife creating a beneficial landscape impact.
- 10.7. Due to the lack of receptors with clear views of the current property and southern section of the site it is unlikely that there will be any significant visual impact of the proposed buildings onto people who can see the property from public areas including close and distant footpaths. There may be views for receptors in private areas such as the caravan park, Waratah and Portsmouth Road who will be able to see the proposed buildings, but due to their careful design with sloping green roofs and being set into the sloping ground and lying below the skyline on which Waratah stands, these potential impacts are unlikely

to be significantly high.

11. SUMMARY

Landscape Character Impact Assessment

- 11.1. The overall significance for this Landscape Character Area in the immediate site area is summarised as: **Low Adverse/Neutral**. There will be a low, direct, unavoidable and permanent effect on the immediate landscape character of the site due to the re-development within the site. This is due to the use of part of one of the paddocks for the construction of Plot 2. The inclusion of two replacement houses will have little impact on the landscape character other than the clearance of the vegetation within parts of the garden and the alteration of the topography in places to accommodate the buildings.
- 11.2. The existing evergreen hedges will be retained during construction to give visual screening of the construction works but as soon as the proposed native hedges are sufficiently mature these hedges will be removed to allow the native species to flourish.
- 11.3. The paddocks will be enhanced with wildflower meadow over-seeding and leaving to long grass in accordance with the ecological recommendations and the detritus and derelict fencing and caravans/outbuildings will be removed.
- 11.4. Additional woodland planting will be provided at the entrance and throughout the gardens and the existing wooded boundaries will be retained and protected.
- 11.5. All planted boundaries will be retained and enhanced with additional hedgerow species and replacement trees and parts of the paddocks will be enhance and encouraged to flourish as wildflower meadows.
- 11.6. The combination of these landscape enhancements will result in a net gain of biodiversity provision together with increased habitats, hedgerows and trees. Together this will allow the landscape effect to become **Beneficial** when the planting has matured at years five to fifteen.
- 11.7. The wider setting of the site within the local and national character areas will not be significantly affected by the proposals. The field pattern, amount of development or overall character of the setting will not be changed and the development will not be discernible. The effect on the wider landscape character areas is anticipated to be Neutral.

Visual Impact Assessment Summary

- 11.8. The lack of visual receptors due to the lack of public access with no local footpaths with views and good visual enclosure and the careful design of the buildings to set them into the existing slope below the top of the ridgeline means that the new development will not generally be seen from points in the wider landscape.
- 11.9. There may be private views from residences in the caravan park and along Portsmouth road but these views will be of the new buildings set into the existing landscape and will be managed and reduced by the proposed planting.
- 11.10. The maximum impact expected will be **Low Adverse**, from viewpoints along Winchester Road while the view of the entrance to Old Oak Farm from the pavement and the tracks to the south will be improved with the removal of the caravan, evergreen hedges, fence and gate and inclusion of a visibility splay with new woodland planting and hedges. In these views, the expected impact will be **Beneficial** once the new planting has matured.