



Land at Balerno

Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA)



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Ecus Limited (Ecus) has prepared this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in relation to the proposed development at a parcel of land located to the north of the village of Balerno, near Edinburgh (the Site). A Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) is sought for the Site for the development of residential properties and associated infrastructure, hereafter referred to as the Proposed Development. This report has been prepared on behalf of [REDACTED] in order to accompany an outline planning application for the Proposed Development. The locations of the Proposed Development and application area or 'the Site', are illustrated in Figure 1.1. The Site is approximately 33.8 hectares (ha) in area, which includes arable farmland, grassland, semi-natural broadleaf woodland, scattered trees and running water.
- 1.1.2 The Proposed Development does not meet the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulation 2017 (the EIA Regulations) and therefore does not require a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).
- 1.1.3 The purpose of this LVA is to appraise the landscape and visual effects on the Site and its context as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.4 The main objectives of the LVA are as follows:
- to appraise the baseline conditions of the Site and its environs and to identify any relevant legislation, policy and guidance concerning Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity;
 - to determine and evaluate the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors to the type of changes proposed;
 - to set out any mitigation measures that may be required in order to prevent, reduce or offset any likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Development; and
 - to outline the potential resulting residual effects following implementation of the mitigation measures.
- 1.1.5 The assessment is supported by a series of plans (Figures 1.1-1.4) and photographs (Figures 2.1-2.9) to illustrate how the scale and layout of the Proposed Development would influence the existing landscape and visual context or 'baseline'.
- 1.1.6 Construction, year of opening and year 15, as operational periods of the Proposed Development, are appraised.

2. Methodology

2.1 Guidance and Methodology Overview

2.1.1 The LVA makes some reference to the EIA Regulations however, it has not been undertaken to comply with the EIA regulations. The LVA methodology meets best practice published guidance:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Third Edition*. Spon Press (GLVIA3).
- Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency (2014). *Landscape and seascape character assessments*.
- Landscape Institute (2011) Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11, Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment

2.1.2 Other sources of information include:

- SNH National Landscape Character Assessment (2019) Online - [HTTPS://WWW.NATURE.SCOT/PROFESSIONAL-ADVICE/LANDSCAPE/LANDSCAPE-CHARACTER-ASSESSMENT/LANDSCAPE-CHARACTER-ASSESSMENT-SCOTLAND](https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-character-assessment-scotland)
- The Lothians Landscape Character Assessment, ASH Consulting Group 1998.
- Edinburgh Landscape Character Assessment, LUC in association with Carol Anderson, 2010
- Edinburgh Green Belt Study Stage 1 Report, LUC in association with Carol Anderson, 2008.
- Edinburgh Green Belt Study Stage 2 Report, LUC in association with Carol Anderson, 2008.
- Edinburgh Green Belt: Landscape Character Assessment, LUC in association with Carol Anderson, 2008.
- The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) planning policy and guidance;
- Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping; and
- The City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) for Public Rights of Way (PRoW) numbers

2.1.3 The GLVIA3 advises the separate assessment of landscape and visual impacts although the procedure for assessing each of these is closely linked. Landscape effects are considered under the term 'Landscape Resource' and visual effects are considered under the term of 'Visual Amenity'. A clear distinction has been drawn between landscape and visual impacts as described below:

- Landscape Resource: impacts and effects on the combination and distribution of physical components that contribute to the landscape character and quality and how it is experienced; and
- Visual Amenity: Impacts and effects on the assembly of components which provided a visual setting or backdrop experienced by visual receptors (e.g. residents, footpath users, tourists etc.).

2.1.4 The LVA is divided into three main stages:

- identification of existing or 'baseline' Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity, including the landscape planning policy context;
- project description, design and mitigation; and
- assessment of landscape and visual effects and identification of any residual effects following mitigation and conclusions.

2.1.5 The appraisal process for the LVA has comprised a combination of desktop and field studies including the following:

- an overview of the planning policy context of relevance to the LVA with an overview of statutory plans, relevant landscape designations and planning policies for the area;
- Geographical Information System (GIS) analysis of the topography within the Study Area and production of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping (Figures 1.1 and 1.4);
- consultation with the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) to agree appraisal Viewpoints and scope;
- a site visit to undertake an appraisal of the Site and landscape character, verification of the ZTVs, visual receptors of the Proposed Development and to undertake the Viewpoint appraisal;
- identification of the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors to the type of change arising from the Proposed Development;
- assessment of magnitude of change arising from the Proposed Development on the Site, landscape character, landscape designations and visual receptors; and
- preparation of mitigation recommendations with the aim, where possible, of avoiding or reducing adverse landscape or visual effects, determined during the course of the appraisal.

2.1.6 It is the consideration of sensitivity to the type of change arising from the Proposed Development and magnitude of change together that allows a judgment to be made as to the nature and level of landscape or visual effect and determination of the significance of these effects.

2.1.7 Heritage assets are only considered in the LVA if current day users of publicly accessible locations, such as visitor locations, could experience change in views and thus their recreational experience. Any effects on the setting and historic associations of these assets, and historic landscape character are not within the scope of the LVA.

2.2 Study Area

2.2.1 In order to appraise landscape and visual effects a 2 km 'Study Area' has been used.

2.3 Landscape Appraisal

2.3.1 The landscape appraisal identifies and evaluates changes to the fabric, character and quality of the Landscape Resource and how it is experienced. Landscape receptors that could be affected by the scheme include the following:

- physical resources such as building and built features, landform, trees, watercourses and land-use;

- visual and perceptual characteristics of the landscape: scale, pattern/urban grain, visual characteristics such as skylines and level of enclosure, condition and management;
- Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and Landscape Character Types (LCTs);
- statutory national landscape designations such as National Parks and local landscape designations;
- visitor locations where value is placed on the recreational value of the landscape, such as PRoW or Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDLs); and
- cultural heritage assets that contribute to landscape character, such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas or Scheduled Monuments.

2.3.2 The landscape character of the Site and the Study Area is shown in Figure 1.3. Impacts on landscape character may occur due to the removal, addition to or alteration to key characteristics of the landscape. This magnitude of change is determined by considering in tandem the scale or size of the effect, the geographical extent of the area affected, and the duration of effect and its reversibility. Magnitude of change is described on a scale as high, medium, low, negligible or no change. The detailed criteria for determining sensitivity of landscape receptors and magnitude of change are described in detail in Appendix 1.

2.4 Visual Appraisal

2.4.1 Visual effects are the changes on the views experienced by people and their Visual Amenity resulting from the Proposed Development.

2.4.2 Visual receptors, which could be affected by the Proposed Development, include the following:

- residents in their homes and areas where they live;
- recreational users e.g. walkers, cyclists or horse riders;
- tourists or visitors; and
- road, rail or PRoW users.

2.4.3 Visual Receptors of the Site and the Study Area are shown in Figure 1.2.

2.4.4 In order to appraise the sensitivity of a visual receptor, consideration must be made of susceptibility to the type of change posed by the Proposed Development, and the value of the receptor. The static view of a residential receptor would have a high sensitivity compared to the transient view of a road user for example.

2.4.5 Magnitude of landscape change is appraised by considering the scale and size of the change in addition to the geographical extent of the area affected, the duration of effect and its reversibility. Appraisal of magnitude considers the extent of the area affected by visual changes, the proportion of the view subject to change, the degree or prominence and contrast of the Proposed Development within the setting, and the duration of the change. Magnitude of change is described on a scale as High, Medium, Low, Negligible or No Change. Detailed criteria for determining the sensitivity of visual receptors and magnitude of change is provided in Appendix 1.

2.4.6 Views from a private property are not a material consideration in determining planning applications unless the proposed change is sufficiently unpleasant or intrusive to cause unacceptable harm to residential visual amenity. A detailed residential appraisal has

not been undertaken within the scope of the LVA, although an appraisal of likely changes in views experienced by residential receptors based on representative views from public areas has been undertaken.

- 2.4.7 Sequential effects on views occur when the observer has to move to another Viewpoint to see different views of the same development or other developments. Routes including roads, PRow, railways and navigable water-bodies are used to appraise sequential effects. Detailed criteria for assessing sequential visual effects are described in Appendix 1.

2.5 Appraisal Criteria

- 2.5.1 The level and importance of an effect is ascertained by considering in tandem the sensitivity of the baseline landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of change as a result of the Proposed Development.
- 2.5.2 In accordance with recommendations in GLVIA3, professional judgement is then employed to determine the nature and level of effect, and therefore significance. A matrix is not used and conclusions are not formulaic due to variations in levels of sensitivity and magnitude of change within the range of criteria used. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 below, outline key considerations.

Table 2.1: Scale of Importance of Landscape Effects

Nature of Effect	Scale of Importance
<p>Effects on highly valued rare, distinctive, particularly representative landscape character, designations or features.</p> <p>Large scale effects over a wider geographical area.</p> <p>Significant enhancement or degradation of landscape character, designations of features.</p>	More important
to	
<p>Loss of new, uniform, homogeneous elements, features, characteristics, qualities.</p> <p>Loss of lower-value elements, features, characteristics; Effects on areas in poorer condition or degraded character.</p> <p>Effects on lower-value or non-designated landscapes.</p> <p>Maintenance of existing landscape character or small-scale loss/limited change to landscape.</p>	Less important

Table 2.2: Scale of Importance of Visual Effects

Nature of Effect	Scale of Importance
<p>Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and Visual Amenity.</p> <p>Effects on people and recognised and important Viewpoints from designed landscapes or from recognised scenic routes.</p> <p>Large-scale changes which introduce new elements in the view, with a high degree of contrast and prominence.</p> <p>Long-term irreversible changes in view.</p>	More important
to	
<p>Small changes or changes involving features already present in the view or presenting a low degree of contrast.</p> <p>Reversible, short-term changes in view.</p> <p>Transient views (such as experienced by a road user) where the change in view is experienced for a short duration.</p>	Less important

- 2.5.3 The scale of landscape and visual effects has been divided into seven broad classifications of effect, defined in this LVA as 'Major', 'Major/Moderate', 'Moderate', 'Moderate/Minor', 'Minor', 'Negligible' or 'No effect'.
- 2.5.4 Professional judgement is then made as to whether the effects are 'important' or not. As such, effects described within the LVA as Major and Major/Moderate are considered to be important.
- 2.5.5 The nature of effects can be positive, termed in the report as 'beneficial' or negative, termed in the report as 'adverse,' or neutral. Neutral effects would include negligible changes where there is limited change to the landscape and no discernible change in view or where effects are neither adverse nor beneficial. Some examples are provided in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3: Nature of Effect

	Nature of Change	
	Examples of Beneficial Effects	Examples of Adverse Effects
Landscape	<p>Proposed Development fits with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.</p> <p>Enhancement of landscape character, quality and condition.</p>	<p>Introduction of elements uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Removal/ loss of key distinctive characteristics.</p>
Visual Effects	<p>Improvements to the composition of the view.</p> <p>Improved change in view.</p> <p>Discordant elements are</p>	Non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements introduced into the view.

	Nature of Change	
	Examples of Beneficial Effects	Examples of Adverse Effects
	screened or removed from view.	

2.6 Residual Effects

- 2.6.1 Best practice when undertaking a LVA is that it is an iterative process. It requires that potential effects be appraised and their importance determined; for mitigation proposals to be identified; and then residual effects (i.e. with mitigation in place) re-appraised to demonstrate the effectiveness of the mitigation proposed.
- 2.6.2 It should be noted that some of the landscape and visual mitigation is incorporated during the design process through, for example refinement of the design, and thus integrated within the final design. This may involve siting and design of built elements.
- 2.6.3 Other than this process of 'mitigation by design', the primary landscape and visual mitigation would arise through the planting of vegetation. As such, residual effects are considered during a future year of opening, in this case, Year 15. This timescale assumes continued operation of the Proposed Development and maturing of landscape planting.

2.7 Appraisal Timescales

- 2.7.1 The interaction between landscape and visual receptors, and the Proposed Development are considered at different stages as detailed below:
- Construction Phase: construction activities and temporary works, demolition of built elements and removal of landscape features to facilitate the development and construction activities associated with buildings, structures and associated infrastructure. The timescale for construction is assumed to be short-term.
 - Year 1 of opening: completion of the Proposed Development and presence of new built structures and infrastructure, initial landscape planting and operational activities associated with the Proposed Development.
 - Year 15 future year of opening (residual): 15 years following completion. This timescale assumes continued operation of the Proposed Development and maturing of landscape planting.
- 2.7.2 The LVA refers to the duration of effect as short-term lasting up to five years, medium-term effects lasting six to 15 years and long-term effects lasting beyond 15 years. The effect could be irreversible i.e. permanent, or reversible, i.e. temporary. Effects could also be indirect as a result of the Proposed Development, such as the visual impact of vehicles on roads accessing the Site.

2.8 Distinction Between Impacts and Effects

- 2.8.1 An 'impact' is defined as the result of an action affecting a particular element of the environment or receptor. An 'effect' is a broader based view of the culmination of one or more impacts. Both involve a degree of professional judgement and some extrapolation. For example, the proposal may cause a number of 'impacts' on views from a number of parts of a settlement, while the sum of those impacts would be defined as the 'effect' on the settlement.

2.9 Field Survey Method

- 2.9.1 The field survey was carried out on the 4th March 2020 by a Chartered Landscape Architect (CMLA), when vegetation was partially in leaf. Appraisal Viewpoints are located on publicly accessible land.

2.10 Distances

- 2.10.1 Where distances are stated in the LVA, this is the approximate (c.) distance between the Site boundary of the Application Area and the nearest part of the receptor in question, unless stated otherwise.

2.11 Graphic Techniques

- 2.11.1 All Viewpoints are presented in accordance with best practice guidelines in the GLVIA3 and LI Advice Note TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals.

2.12 Proposed Development Assessed

- 2.12.1 [REDACTED] are looking to apply for Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) to develop the identified parcel of land for the development of residential properties and associated infrastructure. There is an absence of a Site plan at the time of carrying out this appraisal.
- 2.12.2 Any alterations to the development proposals and following completion of the site layout, may result in different effects to those appraised in this report and this may require the appraised effects to be reviewed in the light of any notable changes.

2.13 Consultations

- 2.13.1 A pre-application meeting was held with the City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), (LPA) to introduce the scheme and discuss the requirements of the planning submission.
- 2.13.2 A public consultation event was held at Balerno Bowling Club on the 20th November 2019 to seek feedback on the proposed scheme, including identification of potential visual impact concerns. Nothing of key concern was noted.

3. Planning Policy and Legislation

3.1 European Policy

- 3.1.1 The European Landscape Convention (The Council of Europe), which came into force in the UK in 2007, commits member states to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes.

3.2 National Planning Policy

- 3.2.1 The key national policy document relevant to land use planning is Scottish Planning Policy (SPP 2014). As part of Scotland's commitment to sustainable development it is recognised that the planning system has an important role through its influence on the location, layout and design of new development.
- 3.2.2 The SPP promotes consistency in the application of policy across Scotland whilst allowing sufficient flexibility to reflect local circumstances. It directly relates to:
- the preparation of development plans;
 - the design of development, from initial concept through to delivery; and
 - the determination of planning applications and appeals.
- 3.2.3 Policy principles relating to the natural environment are set out in paragraph 194 where it states that 'the planning system should *"facilitate positive change while maintaining and enhancing distinctive landscape character."*
- 3.2.4 The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets the context for development planning in Scotland and provides a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. It sets out the Government's development priorities over the next 20-30 years and identifies national developments which support the development strategy.
- 3.2.5 Scotland's third National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3 2014), includes a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. The natural environment forms the foundation of the spatial strategy set out in NPF3.

3.3 Local Planning Policy Context

City of Edinburgh Local Development Plan

- 3.3.1 The Site is located in the city of Edinburgh and the development plan for the area is the City of Edinburgh Local Development Plan (ELDP), which was adopted in 2016. Policies relevant to the LVA are outlined below.
- 3.3.2 The Site is partially located within the Union Canal area of the Edinburgh Green Belt covered by planning policy ENV 10 within the ELDP, with a presumption against development unless meeting with the strict policy criteria.
- a) *For the purposes of agriculture, woodland and forestry, horticulture or countryside recreation, or where a countryside location is essential and provided any buildings, structures or hard standing areas are of a scale and quality of design appropriate to the use.*
- b) *For the change of use of an existing building, provided the building is of architectural merit or a valuable element in the landscape and is worthy of retention. Buildings should be of domestic scale, substantially intact and structurally capable*

of conversion.

- c) For development relating to an existing use or building(s) such as an extension to a site or building, ancillary development or intensification of the use, provided the proposal is appropriate in type in terms of the existing use, of an appropriate scale, of high-quality design and acceptable in terms of traffic impact.*
- d) For the replacement of an existing building with a new building in the same use provided:
 - 1) the existing building is not listed or of architectural / historic merit;*
 - 2) the existing building is of poor-quality design and structural condition,*
 - 3) the existing building is of domestic scale, has a lawful use and is not a temporary structure; and*
 - 4) the new building is of a similar or smaller size to the existing one, lies within the curtilage of the existing building and is of high design quality.**

3.3.3 The Balerno area is additionally covered by Policy Env 11 Special Landscape Areas within the Local Development Plan, which states:

'Planning permission will not be granted for development which would have a significant adverse impact on the special character or qualities of the Special Landscape Areas shown on the Proposals Map'

3.3.4 Policy Env 6 Conservation Areas – Development within the LDP is also relevant to the proposals due to its proximity of the Balerno Conservation Area. This policy states:

Development within a conservation area or affecting its setting will be permitted which:

- a) preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the conservation area and is consistent with the relevant conservation area character appraisal*
- b) preserves trees, hedges, boundary walls, railings, paving and other features which contribute positively to the character of the area and*
- c) demonstrates high standards of design and utilises materials appropriate to the historic environment.*

Planning applications should be submitted in a sufficiently detailed form for the effect of the development proposal on the character and appearance of the area to be assessed.

3.3.5 Also relevant to the proposals is Policy Env 7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes within the LDP which states:

Development will only be permitted where there is no detrimental impact on the character of a site recorded in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes, adverse effects on its setting or upon component features which contribute to its value. Elsewhere, adverse effects on historic landscape features should be minimised. Restoration of Inventory sites and other historic landscape features is encouraged.

3.3.6 Due to the location of National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 75 which passes through

the Site, Policy Tra 9 Cycle and Footpath Network within the LDP is relevant to the proposals. This policy states:

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would:

a) prevent the implementation of proposed cycle paths/footpaths shown on the Proposals Map

b) be detrimental to a path which forms part of the core paths network or prejudice the continuity of the off-road network generally

c) obstruct or adversely affect a public right of way or other route with access rights unless satisfactory provision is made for its replacement

d) prejudice the possible incorporation of an abandoned railway alignment into the off-road path network

Edinburgh Design Guidance, 2017

- 3.3.7 The adopted Edinburgh Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2017) was produced to help understand the Council's requirements for the design of new development in Edinburgh area. The design guide sets out important principles for design of developments including the retention and enhancement of existing features, creation of new settlements with a sense of place, and the contribution to the surrounding landscape character.

4. Baseline Conditions

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section identifies the Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity of the Site and its surroundings, termed 'baseline conditions'. Whilst this section considers the general landscape character, landscape designations and Visual Amenity of the Study Area, the detailed appraisal focusses on the locations that lie in the ZTV, that are potentially within the visual influence of the Proposed Development, highlighting potentially sensitive receptors within the context of the proposals that may experience important changes resulting from the Proposed Development.

4.2 Site Location and General Description

- 4.2.1 The Site is located on the northern periphery of the village of Balerno approximately 11 km to the west of Edinburgh. See Figure 1.1.
- 4.2.2 The Site covers a total area of approximately 33.8 hectares (ha). It is a broadly regular shaped parcel of land, roughly rectangular and consists of undeveloped green field land. It is predominately arable farmland and topography slopes northwards from a high point along the southern boundary. Access is provided by Ravelrig Road which runs north to south bisecting the centre of the Site. A disused railway embankment runs across the Site, in a north west to south east direction, as well as gas main and electrical asset infrastructure being present across the north half of the Site.
- 4.2.3 The Site is bounded by:
- Edinburgh to Glasgow / Carstairs active railway to the north;
 - Undeveloped open space to the west forming a local nature conservation site, and with Ravelrig Hill beyond;
 - Ravelrig Heights housing development currently under construction located to the south; and
 - Kingfisher Heights housing development currently under construction to the south east, with further undeveloped land to the east.

Extent of the Study Area

- 4.2.4 Guidance states that potentially important effects should be appraised and a judgement has been made on the potential geographical extent of these effects based on the extent of visibility of the proposals, the distribution of landscape designations and the distribution of sensitive receptors. The Study Area has been established by ascertaining the ZTV relative to the distribution of sensitive receptors. A judgement has been made on the geographical extent of any potential significant effects based on the extent of visibility of the proposals and a core area of 2 km has been the focus for the appraisal.
- 4.2.5 This appraisal has found that the primary factors affecting the extent of potential visual effects and the Study Area are the following:
- the settlement of Balerno to the south and south east which limits views from these directions and provides a definitive visual and physical barrier;
 - the trees and pockets of woodland along the site boundaries, in particular to the west, south and east, as well as vegetation along the dismantled railway line and

Ravelrig Road which pass through the site, and which all limit visibility beyond to the south;

- the surrounding topography, particularly the rising land to the south of the Site;
- areas of woodland/woodland copses within the wider landscape;
- Vegetation lining surrounding roads, including hedgerows and woodland copses; and
- Boundary vegetation associated with field boundaries.

Landscape Receptors and Features of the Site

- 4.2.6 The following section provides a brief overview of the landscape characteristics of the Site and its context. These characteristics are appraised in terms of sensitivity to the specific type of Proposed Development as described in Section 6 Appraisal of Landscape Effects and Section 7 Appraisal of Visual Effects.

Landform

- 4.2.7 The Site is located on the south western side of Edinburgh. Across the Study Area landform gradually rises in a southerly direction, with the highest point at Dalmahoy Hill (246m) in the western part of the site, just beyond Ravelrig Hill. Landform is smoothly rolling with occasional rivers cutting through the landscape.
- 4.2.8 The Site is located on the northern slope of the ridgeline on which the settlements of Currie and Balerno have been developed and forms the upper section of the slope which continues northwards from the edge of Balerno to the Murray Burn. The topographic pattern is typical of the rolling agricultural landscapes of low ridges and shallow valleys which typify much of the landscape surrounding the western side of Edinburgh.
- 4.2.9 The Site slopes in a roughly south to north direction, with the highest point at the south west corner (approx. 184m AOD) and the lowest at the north east corner (approximately 120m AOD). There are some localised variations in levels across the site, in association with the dismantled railway line which forms a gentle embankment, and Ravelrig Road which cuts through the site.

Land Cover and Vegetation

- 4.2.10 The landcover is predominantly arable farmland, consisting of medium to large scale field, often geometric in form. Field boundaries provide strong field boundary definition, with a mix of hedgerows, fences and some stone walls. Occasional pasture is located along valley sides and higher ground, with woodland and scrub typically associated with river valleys. Horse paddocks and stables are becoming more noticeable in parts such as settlement edges and close to Dalmahoy Hill. Woodlands, shelterbelts and copses form notable features within the landscape, alongside farmland, settlement and associated with features such as golf clubs and designed landscapes.
- 4.2.11 The Site itself is predominantly arable farmland, and is typical of the surrounding landcover, defined on all sides by either field boundaries of mature trees, woodland or existing residential development. A dense belt of mature woodland forms the western boundary to the Site and covers the lower flanks of Dalmahoy Hill which rises further west with its associated quarries. A woodland block lies at the south eastern corner of the site, separating the site from the housing development currently under construction at Kingfisher Park. The Tree Survey undertaken by Ecus Ltd (2019)¹ notes that trees

¹ Ecus Ltd (November 2019). BS 5837:2012 Tree Survey

of very high quality are present here. A belt of trees is also present along the southern boundary of the site, a significant number of trees line either side of Ravelrig Road through the site, and a developing woodland is present along the disused railway line through the site. The Tree Survey (Ecus, 2019) identifies 37 trees and two tree groups which are Category A; 27 trees and 4 tree groups which are category B, 34 trees and five tree groups which are Category C and only two Category U trees. Vegetation is predominantly deciduous. Species are typical of a lowland agricultural landscape, and include beech, sessile oak, sycamore, ash, rowan and hawthorn.

- 4.2.12 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken by Ecus Ltd² which has identified limited ecological value for flora. However, two silver birch located on the south-western boundary have bat roost potential, and a number of other trees have not been investigated further due to tree trunks being ivy clad at the time of the survey.

Land-Use

- 4.2.13 The dominant land-use in the Study Area is arable farmland and other agricultural uses which sits alongside settlement. The study area forms the wider setting of Edinburgh and the settlements of Balerno and Currie are prominent. Some recreational land use is also evident through the presence of Dalmahoy Golf Course.
- 4.2.14 The Site is predominantly made up of open agricultural fields. It is influenced by local road network, with Ravelrig Road dissecting the Site, and the northern part of the site containing an overhead high voltage power line. The northern edge is bound by the railway line and influenced by the overhead lines associated with this. No buildings are present within the Site; although adjoining settlement greatly influences the southern and eastern boundaries.

Settlement Pattern and Built Character

- 4.2.15 Balerno and the adjacent settlements of Currie and Juniper Green are linear settlements which have evolved along the south west to north east aligned ridgeline followed by the A70, Lanark Road West, one of the south-west radial routes into Edinburgh.
- 4.2.16 The northern boundary of Balerno adjacent to the proposed development Site comprises relatively recent residential developments, and an area immediately adjacent at Ravelrig Heights which is currently under construction. Another area of housing under construction is located to the south east at Kingfisher Park. These developments form relatively prominent features within the local landscape and have a strong influence on its character. A number of dispersed farmsteads are located throughout the Study Area and are common on the sloping land north of Balerno and Currie.
- 4.2.17 Linear features such as transport corridors, the railway line and overhead transmission lines form prominent features which fragment and interrupt the landscape. Landfill operations such as the former quarry at Kaimes Hill are also highly visible manmade elements.
- 4.2.18 The Site itself is predominantly farmland, although Ravelrig Road dissects the site from north to south and a high voltage overhead power line cuts through the northern part of the Site. The close proximity to the settlement of Balerno has a discernible influence over the character of the Site.

² Ecus Ltd (November 2019). Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA).

Historic Character

- 4.2.19 The Site does not contain any Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments. However, a number of Listed Buildings are located within the Study Area. The nearest listed building is situated approximately 245 m south of the southern Site boundary. There is no inter-visibility between the Site and this Listed Building due to the trees that line the southern boundary of the Site, as well as the construction of the new residential development in the adjacent field to the south. Other Listed Buildings are typically located within the built-up area of Balerno and Currie to the south and south east.
- 4.2.20 The Balerno Conservation Area is situated approximately 310 m south of the Site but shares no inter-visibility due to the built-up townscape of the expansion of Balerno.
- 4.2.21 There are two Scheduled Monuments within the Study Area, Lennox Tower approximately 1.2km to the south east and Dalmahoy Hill, fort approximately 1.3km to the west. Very limited or no inter-visibility exists between these heritage assets and the site due to changing topography, surrounding built up development and intervening vegetation.
- 4.2.22 Northfield Gardens and Designed Landscape (GDL) lies approximately 250m to the south of the Site, immediately south of the Ravelrig Heights housing development. This designed landscape is an example of a Traditionalist garden, laid out in 1910 and which forms the setting for a Category B Listed Building. Malleny Gardens and Designed Landscape is located approximately 800m to the south east of the Site beyond the settlement of Balerno. This is a 19th century Dutch-style gardens which provides the setting for Malleny House. Due to the enclosed nature of both of these gardens, and intervening housing development, no inter-visibility would be experienced between the GDLs and the Site.

Perceptual and Visual Character

- 4.2.23 The Study Area provides an important landscape setting of Edinburgh. It has a rural character with agricultural field pattern broken up by field boundary trees and hedgerows, areas of woodland and occasional streams/rivers. The Study Area is however, visually influenced by the presence of settlements, golf courses, railway line and road corridors, pressures which are increasingly fragmenting the landscape and creating a more disjointed character.
- 4.2.24 Long, expansive views are possible from elevated aspects, becoming more confined on lower slopes.
- 4.2.25 The scenic quality of the landscape is reduced due to its fragmented pattern, with high voltage power lines, settlement, transport corridors and industry strongly influencing the overall character. These built elements form notable features within the landscape and reduce the tranquillity of the area.
- 4.2.26 The Site is typical of other farmed areas within the study area and is representative of the surrounding landscape. It does not possess any unique or rare features, albeit it does form part of the landscape setting for Balerno and Currie.
- 4.2.27 From within the Site, longer views are possible due to the sloping nature of the landform, however mature vegetated boundaries to the west, east and south, along with the adjacent settlements of Balerno and Currie, limit views in these directions. However, the Site has an open aspect to the surrounding landscape to the north.

Landscape Condition and Management

- 4.2.28 The Site overall is currently well managed as arable farmland, with evidence of recent arable practices throughout the site. The western part of the site, north of the dismantled railways is less well managed with more overgrown unkempt grassland present and is influenced by the housing construction site at Ravelrig Heights to the south west and the existing housing beside Dalmahoy Crescent to the south.
- 4.2.29 As identified within the Tree Survey (Ecus 2019) a number of good quality trees and woodland are present within the site and along its boundaries, which form important ecological, arboricultural, and landscape value. The northern boundary is more open and influenced by the passing railway line. Grassland and vegetation along this boundary are less well maintained. The south western boundary with Ravelrig Heights is defined by a sinuous band of uncultivated and overgrown pasture. This will be retained as undeveloped land to create a buffer with Ravelrig Heights development.
- 4.2.30 The wider setting is characterised by arable farmland interspersed with farm steadings, stables and paddocks, and the small linear development at Newhouse on Long Dalmahoy Road. Some of the steadings have been enlarged through the addition of new housing plots on their periphery and contrast with the more traditional agglomeration of built form around a farm.
- 4.2.31 In some places the landscape appears neglected with use as a short cut for traffic, contrasting infrastructure of the railway corridor, some evidence of fly tipping, and some dilapidation of old estate stone walls. However, the framework of mature woodland, tree belts, and the pattern of rectilinear fields give an overall cohesion the setting.

4.3 Landscape Character

National Character

- 4.3.1 Between 1994 and 1999, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) commissioned, in partnership with others, a number of regional landscape character assessments to be completed. The Lothians Landscape Character Assessment (ASH Consulting Group), 1998 covers the Site and for many years provided baseline information regarding landscape character at a regional level. Building on these original LCA studies, a single dataset has now been created by SNH, and the 2019 Landscape Character Type map and associated Landscape Character Type Descriptions³ now supersedes the original Lothian LCA and provides landscape character information and descriptions and a national level. These are illustrated on Figure 1.3.
- 4.3.2 The Site lies within SNH Landscape Character Type 274 - Lowland Plain. The key characteristics of relevance to the Site and Study Area are set out below:
- Smoothly rolling, large scale agricultural plain with local interruptions of volcanic hills forming visual foci.
 - Rivers cut through the farmland in incised valleys.
 - High quality agricultural land with a predominantly rural character, divided into a strong pattern of large arable fields by fences, hedges, occasional walls and a network of shelterbelts.

³ SNH National Landscape Character Assessment (2019)
[HTTPS://WWW.NATURE.SCOT/PROFESSIONAL-ADVICE/LANDSCAPE/LANDSCAPE-CHARACTER-ASSESSMENT/LANDSCAPE-CHARACTER-ASSESSMENT-SCOTLAND](https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-character-assessment-scotland)

- Policy woodlands and shelterbelts associated with designed landscapes, mansions, gatehouses and boundary walls contributing to character.
- Numerous villages and hamlets, including industrial settlements.
- Substantial but localised urban fringe influence around Edinburgh Airport, motorways and settlement expansion.
- Gentle sinuous sweep of the Union Canal as it leaves Edinburgh and heads northwest.
- Industrial heritage legacy, with prominent quarrying, landfill and shale bing impacts.
- Important setting for western Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Landscape Character Assessment, 2010

- 4.3.3 In 2006 Land Use Consultants (LUC) was commissioned by the CEC to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) of the landscape of the City of Edinburgh local authority area. The City of Edinburgh Landscape Character Assessment developed the Lothians Landscape Character Assessment, 1998, into a more detailed LCA. Before it was fully published in 2010, earlier drafts were used to inform the Edinburgh Green Belt Study - Stages 1 & 2 (2008) and Edinburgh Green Belt: Landscape Character Assessment (2008).
- 4.3.4 As classified within the Edinburgh Landscape Character Assessment, the site lies within LCT Rolling Farmland and specifically LCA 27 Gowanhill Farmland. This LCA is described as follows:
- 4.3.5 A narrow corridor of farmland lying between the wooded policies of Dalmahoy and the linear settlement of Currie and tapering south of Kaimes Hill towards its western boundary.
- 4.3.6 This area forms a gently dipped valley contained to the south by the twin hills of Kaimes and Dalmahoy and a long ridge extending east. The linear form of this area of farmland is accentuated by the railway and two electricity transmission lines which are aligned through it. Predominantly arable farmland has an increasingly fragmented character on the urban fringes of Currie and close to Dalmahoy Hill, where horse paddocks and stables are a feature. While there are few woodlands within this character area, wooded policies on the periphery of the Dalmahoy estate and the Riccarton campus form a backdrop to farmland. Remnant thorn hedgerows are patchy and areas of gorse and scrub colonise steeper slopes near areas of pasture. Dispersed farmsteads are sited against narrow angular roads and are visually dominated by tall transmission line towers. Landfill operations within the former quarry at Kaimes Hill are a highly visible feature on the western edge of this character area. Housing on sloping ground north of Currie visually influences this character area and forms a hard and visually exposed built edge against farmland.
- 4.3.7 The Pentland Hills form a distant backdrop to views from this area. While this area has high inter-visibility with Currie, it is largely screened from view from key roads and from Edinburgh due to the containment provided by adjacent landform and woodlands.
- 4.3.8 The assessment notes that the area is typical of other farmed areas on the fringes of Edinburgh, and strongly influenced by communications, settlement and industry. It is also stated that the LCA is not unique or rare within Edinburgh or Lothians, although it does provide a degree of landscape setting to the settlement of Currie. It is noted as

having low scenic quality due to the fragmented pattern, influenced by high voltage power lines, settlement and industry.

4.3.9 The Site immediately adjoins LCT Pentland Flanks and specifically LCA 36 Cockburn geometric wooded farmland to the west, and LCT Rural Outcrop Hills; LCA 32 Kaimes and Dalmahoy Hills at its north western corner.

4.3.10 LCA 36 Cockburn geometric wooded farmland is described as follows:

- This landscape character area extends over a north west facing slope above the settlement of Balerno and the Water of Leith. The slope rises to a low ridge of about 265m AOD. The strong shelter belt influence also extends into some fields which lie to the north of the Water of Leith.
- The dominant influence on the landscape is the regular layout of fields and shelterbelts which are imposed across the landscape. These shelterbelts are generally of mixed tree species although some are more dominant with conifers. Some minor watercourses run through the landscape character area and these have largely been modified to follow the field boundaries.
- Some of the tree belts are in a declining condition with loss of trees and no replacement planting. The farmland is used for a mixture of arable and pasture. The roads within the landscape follow the lines of the shelter belts and there are a number of scattered farmsteads within the landscape character area. Above the Water of Leith a string of 19th century villas extend along the road and these have associated policy woodlands which reflect the shelterbelt pattern of the farmland to the south.
- The woodland belts enclose and restrict views both into and out of this landscape character area. There is some intervisibility with landscape character areas 33 and 37 which are adjacent, however this is largely limited.
- The recent construction of the Scottish Water facility has had a minor impact on the character of the area. Changes in farming activities could influence the use of the land and character of the shelter belts.

4.3.11 LCA 32 Kaimes and Dalmahoy Hills is described as follows:

- Kaimes and Dalmahoy Hills lie along the line of the Colinton fault which is a steep change in landform from the gently rising farmland to the north and the gently sloping hillsides to the south rising to the Pentlands. Kaimes Hill, 259m AOD has been subject to quarrying in the past and the quarry has been subsequently filled by tipping, leaving the jagged quarried ridge of rock standing above the adjacent modified landform. Dalmahoy Hill rises to 246m AOD and has also been quarried. Processing facilities for current quarrying lie on the north side of the ridge and are clearly visible from the A71 and the Edinburgh-Glasgow rail line. Both hills are dolerite sills, where magma rose through the rock strata but was trapped and solidified before reaching the surface.
- The reclaimed tip area of Kaimes Hill is used for grazing. Dalmahoy Hill has areas of gorse, bracken and rough grass. There is a trig point on Dalmahoy Hill and both hills provide extensive views over the surrounding area.
- Both hills are prominent in the landscape and are visible from large areas of the west Edinburgh landscape. Kaimes Hill is particularly noticeable due to its jagged and modified outline. Both hills are crowned with scheduled Iron Age hillforts, although the vitrified fort on Kaimes Hill has been largely destroyed by quarrying.

4.4 Landscape Designations

- 4.4.1 Designations that are concerned with the historic environment do not form part of this appraisal and the potential effect on these heritage designations is not considered. Landscape designations relevant to the LVA are outlined below.

National and Local Landscape Designations and Policy Areas

- 4.4.2 Landscape designations within the Study Area are shown on Figure 1.2 and those located within the ZTV are summarised in Table 4.1 below. The Listed Buildings and structures included below are limited to those that function as visitor locations and/or make a special contribution to the landscape, and where views from these locations may be affected by the Proposed Development.

Table 4.1: Landscape Designations and Policy Areas

Designation	Importance	Description and relevance to LVA
Green Belt	Local	Although not strictly a landscape designation, the Site is located within the Edinburgh Green Belt. Policy Env 10 Development in the Green Belt and Countryside (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) is of relevance.
Special Landscape Area 08 - Water of Leith - West	Local	This SLA lies, approx. 400m away at its closest point to the south. Policy Env 11 Special Landscape Areas (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) and Statements of Importance are of relevance.
Special Landscape Area 09 - Pentlands	Local	This SLA lies, approx. 600m away at its closest point to the south. Policy Env 11 Special Landscape Areas (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) and Statements of Importance are of relevance.
Conservation Area - Balerno	Local	The Balerno Conservation Area is situated approximately 310 m south of the Site but shares no intervisibility due to the built-up townscape of the expansion of Balerno. Therefore, there will be no impact to the Conservation Area resulting from development within the Site. Policy Env 6 Conservation Areas – Development (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) relates to this asset.
Historic Garden Designed Landscape - Inventory Site: Northfield	Local	This designed garden lies 250m approx. to south of site, within the settlement of Balerno. Policy Env 7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) is of relevance.
Historic Garden Designed Landscape - Inventory Site: Malleny	Local	This designed garden lies 800m approx. to south east of site, nestled on the south eastern edge of the settlement of Balerno. Policy Env 7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) is of relevance.
Cycleway Footpath Safeguard: Off road alternative NCNR 75	Local	This cuts through the site. Policy Tra 9 Cycle and Footpath Network (Edinburgh Local Plan 2016) is of relevance.
NCN 75 - Long Distance Cycle Route (passes through the site along Ravelrig Road)	Regional	Sustrans Route 75 connects Leith in east Edinburgh with Portavadie on the Cowall Peninsula in Argyll. Within the Study Area the path travels along Long Dalmahoy Road from the west, cuts through the site along Ravelrig Road and then travels east along the Water of Leith valley.

Designation	Importance	Description and relevance to LVA
PRoW	Local	Several Core Paths and local public footpaths cross surrounding countryside close to the Site, which are illustrated on Figure 1.2.
Listed Buildings	Local	As defined by Historic Environment Scotland. A number of Listed Buildings are located close to the Site, within the neighbouring settlements of Balerno and Currie.

4.5 Visual Baseline

Extent of Visibility

4.5.1 The Bare Ground ZTV is presented in Figure 1.1.

4.5.2 The appraisal Viewpoints in Table 4.2 below (refer to Figure 1.1 for locations) represent a range of views and receptors within the ZTV of the Proposed Development.

Table 4.2: Appraisal Viewpoints

Viewpoint Number and Location	Grid Reference (E/N)	Approximate Location and Distance	Visual Receptors	Sensitivity
1. Ravelrig Road, northern edge of Balerno	315890E, 667236N	Adjacent to site - south	Road Users Recreational Users of NCN 75 & Core Path CEC 16. Kirknewton	Low High
2. Ravelrig Road at crossing with dismantled railway line	315784E, 667578N	Adjacent to site - north	Road Users Recreational Users of NCN 75 & Core Path CEC 16. Kirknewton	Low High
3. Long Dalmahoy Road, edge of Dalmahoy Golf Course	315318E, 668088N	630m north of the site	Road Users Recreational Users of NCN 75 & Core Path CEC 16. Kirknewton	Low High
4. Long Dalmahoy Road, east of Cocklaw Farm Steading	316537E, 668395N	850m – north east	Road Users Residential Receptors	Low High
5. Curriehill Road – north east of the site	317354E, 668544N	1.5km – north east	Road Users Recreational Users of Core Path CEC 17. Riccarton	Low High
6. Gowanhill Farm Road	316007E, 668091N	450m – north	Road Users Recreational Users of Core Path CEC 16. Kirknewton Residential receptors	Low High

Viewpoint Number and Location	Grid Reference (E/N)	Approximate Location and Distance	Visual Receptors	Sensitivity
7. Newmills Road	316409E, 667597N	250m – east	Road Users Recreational Users of Core Path CEC 16. Kirknewton	Low High
8. Ravelrig Hill	315033E, 666863N	300m – south west	Recreational users – open access	High
9. Long Dalmahoy Road	314747E, 667863N	600m – north west	Road Users	Low

Visual Receptor Groups Appraised in the LVA

- 4.5.3 The following visual receptors are located in the ZTVs (Figure 1.1) and have been verified in the field as potential visual receptors of the Proposed Development. The location of visual receptors is shown in Figure 1.2.

Settlements and Residential Receptors

- 4.5.4 All settlements (within 2 km) and residential receptors (within 1 km) are of high inherent sensitivity and the following are identified as having potential visibility to the Proposed Development.

Table 4.3: Residential Receptors Appraised in the ZTV

Receptor Reference	Location	Nature of View	Approximate Distance to Site, Orientation from Site
Balerno	Immediately south of the Site	Some direct views towards the site limited by property boundary vegetation.	New development at Ravelrig Heights adjoins southern site boundary
Currie	South east of the Site	Some direct views towards site albeit limited by settlement edge vegetation. New development under construction (Kingfisher Park) will curtail views towards Site. Views from edge of housing development will be immediately adjacent to south east Site, albeit limited by boundary vegetation.	Current settlement edge approx. 400m to south east. New development at Kingfisher Park will adjoin the site.

Receptor Reference	Location	Nature of View	Approximate Distance to Site, Orientation from Site
Riccarton	North east of the Site	Intervening vegetation particularly along edge of settlement would curtail views towards the Site.	1.6km NE
R1	Gowanhill Farm (properties no. 3,7 & 9), Gowanhill Farm Road	Cluster of two storey properties. Some direct views towards the Site albeit limited by property boundary vegetation, roadside vegetation and intervening vegetation within adjacent farmland.	360m N
R2	Unnamed bungalow opposite Gowanhill Farm, Gowanhill Farm Road	Single storey detached property. Some direct views towards the Site albeit limited by property boundary vegetation and intervening vegetation within adjacent farmland.	360m N
R3	Unnamed property, Gowanhill Farm Road	Single storey detached house heavily enclosed by surrounding vegetation within property's curtilage. Some partial views possible.	200m E
R4	Cocklaw Farm Steading (no's 1-4), Long Dalmahoy Road	U shaped cluster of properties, with some facades orientated towards the Site. Views through curtilage boundary towards Site.	740m NE
R5	Cocklaw Farm Cottage	Two storey row of properties orientated towards Site. Cocklaw Farm Steading is located immediately SW and largely curtails longer distance views.	780m NE
R6	Currievale Farm (cluster of properties no's 4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,15,16,17), off Curriehill Road	Cluster of properties, with some facades orientated towards the Site, although main orientation of properties appears to be away from the Site. Partial views from south western properties.	950 m NE
R7	1-3 Newhouses Cottages, Long Dalmahoy Road	Single storey properties orientated towards the Site. Direct views possible.	500 m N

Receptor Reference	Location	Nature of View	Approximate Distance to Site, Orientation from Site
R8	Tui Steading, Long Dalmahoy Road	Detached property orientated towards the site. Direct views possible, albeit some screening from vegetation within-curtilage.	500 m N
R9	Dalmahoy Mains, Long Dalmahoy Road	Detached property with outbuildings orientated towards the site. Oblique views possible, albeit some screening from vegetation within-curtilage and substantial screening within intervening landscape.	920 m NW

Recreational Receptors

- 4.5.5 Recreational receptors are of mixed levels of sensitivity depending on the importance of the surrounding landscape on the receptor. Sensitivity is set out in the table below. The following receptor has been identified as having potential visibility to the Proposed Development within 2 km.

Table 4.4: Recreational Receptors Appraised in the ZTV

Receptor Reference	Location	Nature of View	Approximate Distance to Site Orientation from Site	Sensitivity
V1	Dalmahoy Hotel and Country Club	Limited views towards the Site due to topography and woodland cover.	550 m N	Medium

Sequential Receptors – Users of Routes

- 4.5.6 The users of the routes listed below are affected by the ZTV and are appraised in terms of effects on sequential views of users. Locations of footpaths are illustrated on Figure 1.2. Pedestrians and cyclists using designated routes are considered to be of high sensitivity receptors as their focus is on the landscape and views. Road users are considered to be of low sensitivity.

Table 4.5: Routes Appraised in the ZTV

	Location	Orientation of Route and Nature of View	Approximate Distance to Site, Orientation
Footpaths and Bridleways			
S1	NCN Route 75	Direct views where the route passes along Ravelrig Road through the Site. Views from south largely curtailed as route passes through the built development of Balerno. More direct views from north, albeit filtered by roadside vegetation.	0 m – extends N & S
S2	Core Path CEC 16 - Kirknewton	Direct views where the route passes along Ravelrig Road through the Site. Views from south largely curtailed as route passes through the built development of Balerno. More direct views from north and east, albeit filtered by roadside vegetation.	0 m – extends N & S and passes to E
S3	Core Path CEC 17 – Riccarton	Oblique and partially elevated views towards the Site. Open views across farmland, in the context of intervening vegetation	1.5km E
S4	Core Path CEC 18 – Water of Leith	Views completely curtailed by built form as route travels along valley within settlement of Balerno and Currie.	450 m S/SE
S5	Core Path CEC 19 – Harlow and Threipmuir	Largely outside of the ZTV or passing through built form. Partially elevated, with Site located beyond the context of the settlement of Balerno and Currie.	800 m S
S6	Unnamed local footpath adjoining western Site boundary	Adjacent to site, along the dismantled tramway and continuing north west through Dalmahoy Hill Plantation and south up Ravelrig Hill. A range of views possible, with close range views both open and filtered by vegetation, elevated direct views from Ravelrig Hill and more enclosed views from the north west, limited by vegetation.	0m W
S7	Unnamed local footpath to the south of Currie	Footpath set within mature vegetation and to the south of Currie and south east of Balerno.	1 km SE
S8	Unnamed local footpath to the south of Balerno	Footpath set within mature vegetation and to the south of Balerno.	1.2 km S
Transport Corridors			
S9	Ravelrig Road	Rural Road. Direct views where the road passes through the Site, albeit filtered by roadside vegetation. Views from north more open on the approach to the Site. Built development of Balerno limits views from the south	0 m – extends N & S
S10	Gowanhill Farm Road	Rural Road. When travelling south direct views towards the site are possible with vegetation within intervening farmland filtering views.	200m NE
S11	Newmills Road	Rural Road. Oblique views westwards towards the site, filtered by intervening vegetation.	200m E

	Location	Orientation of Route and Nature of View	Approximate Distance to Site, Orientation
S12	Long Dalmahoy Road	Oblique views southwards towards the Site and elevated ground, occasionally filtered by intervening roadside and field boundary vegetation.	550m N
S13	Warriston Farm Road	Rural road. When travelling south direct views towards the site are possible with vegetation within intervening farmland filtering views.	880m NE
S14	Curriehill Road	Oblique views westwards towards the Site, occasionally filtered by intervening field boundary vegetation.	1.5km NE
S15	Glasgow / Carstairs Railway Line	Direct open views for a short distance as the railway line follows the northern boundary of the Site.	0 m N

5. Proposed Development and Mitigation

5.1 Proposed Development

- 5.1.1 The Proposed Development masterplan is currently being developed. This LVA refers to the conceptual layout produced by ema architects and masterplanners and contributes to the development of the site layout. The conceptual site layout shows the massing of built form and green spaces with proposed circulation across the Site. The concept is beginning to develop areas for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and landscape. The built development will be predominantly residential with the opportunity for community buildings to be incorporated.
- 5.1.2 The development proposals seek to retain the majority of the existing boundary vegetation, retain the landscape setting to the north of the Site and concentrate built development to the south of the Site.
- 5.1.3 The former railway line will be utilised as a pedestrian/cycle route providing a valuable connection to the surrounding countryside and Balerno.
- 5.1.4 The conclusions and recommendations of this LVA will be reflected in the masterplan.

5.2 Mitigation

- 5.2.1 This appraisal has been undertaken on the assumption that the following mitigation is incorporated into the master planning and detailed design of the Proposed Development.
- 5.2.2 Mitigation is instrumental in the avoidance, minimisation or reduction of the magnitude of change on the landscape receptors and views, and also in the avoidance or minimisation of adverse effects.
- 5.2.3 The following measures would be incorporated into the design and implementation of the Proposed Development in order to help mitigate these potential adverse effects.
- Minimise removal of existing vegetation, particularly on Site boundaries where the existing vegetation should be strengthened with additional vegetation.
 - Strengthen existing landscape features including strengthening the vegetation along the line of the dismantled railway and to the north of the built development. These areas will become green buffers.
 - Continue the 'linear park' alongside the former railway line, acting as an extension of Kingfisher Park to the east.
 - Establish visual connections from north to south via landscape corridors. These will also provide valuable pedestrian connections and ensure the development is permeable.
 - The development should seek to define a strong settlement edge to the north of Balerno linking into the surrounding housing estates.
 - The development should use landscape to transition the built development into the open green space and rural landscape to the north providing a cohesive and attractive landscape structure. A strong structure planting scheme should be developed enabling the landscape to integrate with the surroundings.
 - In-curtilage tree planting and landscape structure within the built development should focus on key locations where vistas are created at key junctions, main

entrances, corners and boundaries of the built development. Tree planting within rear gardens as well as on street planting will contribute to the long term softening of the development.

- Promote pedestrian/cycle links whilst minimising breaks in vegetation in order to minimise potential visibility towards Proposed Development from outside the Development Site.
- Proposed plant mixes for the open space areas and landscape framework should incorporate a small percentage (5-10%) of coniferous species. This would introduce a small element of winter screening to the proposed development without becoming uncharacteristic of the surrounding vegetation character.
- It will be important to select appropriate species and planting matrices to ensure good plant establishment.
- Ongoing maintenance of the planting during the establishment phase and subsequent landscape maintenance and management will be required to ensure that the structure planting establishes and matures to form a setting for the proposed development. A landscape management plan should be prepared to support the planting proposals.
- Make architectural reference to the vernacular, and particularly limit roof heights to two storeys in the main; structure houses as detached or semi-detached units.
- Minimise additional lighting of roads and housing by using directional lighting.
- These mitigation measures and recommendations should be incorporated into any further master planning and detailed design development of the indicative proposals.

Construction

5.2.4 The following mitigation measures would be incorporated into the construction period:

- Construction compounds and works areas would be lit during working hours. Use of lights would be carefully controlled to minimise upward and outward light pollution and potential glare for nearby receptors. In addition, control measures would be in place to ensure that the minimum area is lit, for a minimum period of time.
- Site compounds and stockpiles would be sensitively located and away from nearby views where practicable.
- Hoarding would be placed on the perimeter of the construction site to assist in screening construction activity from the ground level to minimise adverse visual effects.
- Landform would be shaped sensitively.

5.2.5 A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) would be developed and used to regulate the environmental aspects of the construction phase including dust, noise, light and waste when details of the final design and construction timings and methods are known. The CEMP would also set out traffic management arrangements such as access points, permissible haul routes and delivery times, in order to minimise the impact of waste removal vehicles on sensitive receptors.

5.3 Potential Residual Effects

5.3.1 Key proposals relevant to the appraisal are as follows:

- Built form would be introduced onto the Site with the introduction of residential dwellings and potentially other community buildings. A maximum two storey high built development is assumed.
- During operation, vehicular journeys within the Site and on Ravelrig Road would generally increase, mainly due to the presence of residents.

Construction Period

5.3.2 The following elements of the construction period have been appraised within this LVA:

- Construction of buildings, access roads, paths and associated construction.
- Use of HGVs including excavators and cranes, and presence of workers.
- Ground clearance including arable farmland.
- Construction compounds, stockpiles and hoarding for storage of local materials and welfare facilities.
- Borrow pits used for the temporary storage and disposal of surplus material (mixture of rock and vegetation).
- Use of the existing main entrance off Ravelrig Road for construction vehicles.

5.3.3 There may be occasional need for lighting although this would be minimal.

6. Appraisal of Landscape Effects

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Landscape effects include the direct and indirect effects on receptors such as landscape elements and features, as well as the effects upon the general landscape character, its quality or condition and the visual and perceptual characteristics of the landscape. Landscape effects are set out in Table 6.2 at the end of this section.

6.2 Landscape Sensitivity

Site and Local Landscape Sensitivity to the Proposed Development

- 6.2.1 The sensitivity of the Landscape Resource has been identified in terms of its inherent susceptibility to the Proposed Development and its value.

Table 6.1: Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape Features and Character	Sensitivity to built development	Description
Physical Characteristics		
Landform	High	The Development Site extends across the north facing flank of Ravelrig Hill and the proposed housing will be visible in views from the north.
Land Cover and Vegetation	Medium	The Site is used as arable farmland, traversed by the tree lined route of Ravelrig Road which crosses the centre of the Site from south to north and the tree belt across the embankment of the disused railway, which crosses the Site from south east to north west. Woodland frames the Site to the east and west and a line of mature trees follows the southern boundary.
Land-use	Low	Arable Farmland
Settlement Pattern and Built Character	Low	Framed by the northern edge of Balerno across the ridgeline to the south. There is no development on the Site other than the power line and pylons and a below ground gas main which traverse the northern edge of the Site.
Visual and Perceptual Characteristics		
Degree of Openness / Enclosure	Medium	Relatively open across the western extent of the site, becoming more contained in the east where the tree belts and woodland limit the extent of views.
Landscape scale	Medium	Medium.
Landscape pattern / Complexity / Order	Medium	Broadly rectilinear field pattern, emphasised by the alignment of Ravelrig Road, the railway to the north and the belt of woodland to the west. The traversing alignment of the dismantled railway embankment follows the terrain.
Tranquillity and Remoteness	Medium	The edge of settlement, the traffic on Ravelrig Road and regular trains passing to the north all contribute to sense of existing activity in the landscape.
Degree of inter-visibility with other landscapes	Medium	The Development Site is relatively visible, particularly across the north western flank from the lower lying farmed landscape to the north between the railway and the line of Long

Landscape Features and Character	Sensitivity to built development	Description
		Dalmahoy Road.
Landscape Condition/ Management	Medium	An intact farming landscape with some discordant elements such as the railway infrastructure, the transmission lines and pylons. Locally areas of fly tipping.
Value		
Landscape Designations and Designated Elements	Medium	The Site is within Green Belt and the line of the dismantled railway is identified as a safeguarded route for a footpath/cycleway in the LDP.
Scenic Quality	Medium	The framework of fields, woodland, tree belts and scattered settlement have some rural character.
Recreational / Amenity Value and Accessibility	Medium	Obvious access and routes through the Site are limited other than crossing the Site along Ravelrig Road.
LCA 27 Gowanhill Farmland	Low - Medium	The LCA is typical of other farmed areas on the fringes of Edinburgh, and strongly influenced by communications and power infrastructure, settlement and industry. It is not unique or rare within Edinburgh or the Lothians, although it does provide a degree of landscape setting to the settlements of Currie/Balerno. It is noted as having low scenic quality due to the fragmented pattern, influenced by high voltage power lines, settlement and industry.
LCA 36 Cockburn geometric wooded farmland	Medium	The Site is not visible from this LCA due to the woodland belts which enclose and restrict views both into and out of this landscape character area, and it has not been appraised further.
LCA 32 Kaimes Hill and Dalmahoy Hill	Medium	Both hills provide extensive views over the surrounding area and there are elevated views towards the Site which lies to the north-east, although Ravelrig Wood restricts inter-visibility.

6.3 Landscape Effects

- 6.3.1 The following appraisal in Table 6.2 considers the magnitude of the change resulting from the Proposed Development, which is then combined with sensitivity previously identified, in order to assist in determining the relative level of effect on each of the landscape features and characteristics of the Site.
- 6.3.2 The current Site Plan is a conceptual masterplan developed by ema architect's and masterplanners which shows the areas for proposed built development, public open space and circulation.
- 6.3.3 The construction period is temporary and therefore any impacts on landscape elements and landscape character are considered to be short-term effects. Operational effects after 15 years, when the landscape structure has had time to mature, are considered long term.
- 6.3.4 Landscape effects during the construction period (1.) and after years one (2.) and fifteen (3.) of operation are set out in Table 6.2. Most effects could occur within the Site itself, whilst effects on landscape character and designations could occur on and

off the Site.

Table 6.2: Landscape Effects

Direct Effects		
Landform		
<p>1. Excavations to form the foundations and platforms for houses and associated roads and footpaths and services, would cause localised changes in landform. Stored soil would create visible bunds. The final ground level would be re-profiled to return the site to a level landform before the end of the construction period.</p> <p>2. No further change to construction period.</p> <p>3. No further changes to Year 1.</p>		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Major/Moderate
Year 1	No further change	No further change
Year 15	No further change	No further change
Land cover/ vegetation		
<p>1. There would be localised areas of tree and scrub removal at the entrances to the Site from Ravelrig Road. Areas of proposed structure planting of native trees and shrubs will be planted in advance of the proposed development where possible.</p> <p>2. At Year 1 further areas of native species-based structure planting and in-curtilage tree, shrub, wildflower meadows and areas of grassed lawns will be established throughout the Site at the earliest available planting season following the completion of each phase of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>3. Further maturing of the native species-based structure planting and the in-curtilage planting will increase vegetative cover.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate beneficial
Land-use		
<p>1. The Site would be temporarily dominated by construction processes during the transition to an area of residential development.</p> <p>2. The parts of the Site identified as development land would change from arable land to housing and associated tree belts and amenity areas. Land-use would remain the same elsewhere.</p> <p>3. No further change to Year 1.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium - High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major
Year 1	High	Major
Year 15	Medium	Major/Moderate
Settlement Pattern and Built Character		
<p>1. The areas of identified development land would be developed into built areas of housing with a hierarchy of roads and other infrastructure which would be new to the Site,</p> <p>2. No further changes to the construction period other than the establishing of areas of new structure planning and in-curtilage planting.</p> <p>3. No further changes to Year 1 other than maturing of planted trees.</p>		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major
Year 1	High	Moderate/ major
Year 15	High	Moderate/ major
Effects on the Visual and Perceptual Qualities of the Landscape		
Degree of Openness / Enclosure		
<p>1. The Site will become more enclosed than the baseline as new buildings are constructed.</p> <p>2. No further change to construction period.</p> <p>3. Further maturing of tree planting near all elements would further reduce a sense of openness although trees would partially screen views to built development.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Moderate/ major
Year 1	High	Moderate/ major

Year 15	High	Moderate/ major
Landscape scale		
<p>1. The Site is well defined by the existing tree belts and adjacent woodland. The Proposed Development would introduce housing across the arable fields and break the expanse of the fields to a domestic residential scale. Beyond the Site the development would sit within the existing landscape framework and the influence on the adjoining areas of farmland would be reduced, with the surrounding area retaining much of the character of the existing scale.</p> <p>2. No further change.</p> <p>3. New areas of structure planting would begin to mature.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate
Landscape pattern / Complexity / Order		
<p>1. The construction period would create a complex landscape, exposing underground development, creating stock piles of materials, compounds, machinery and new buildings (adverse). Beneficially the influence will be localised due to the existing tree belts, with the pattern of the wider landscape protected.</p> <p>2. Areas of bare soil would be revegetated, and new areas of structure planting and in-curtilage planting will begin to establish.</p> <p>3. The structure planting and in-curtilage planting will begin to mature.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major/Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate
Tranquillity and Remoteness		
<p>1. Ground based activities, including the movement of construction vehicles, plant and personnel and erection of buildings would have an adverse effect on the tranquillity of the Site.</p> <p>2. During operation there would be an increased presence of people vehicular movement.</p> <p>3. No further change.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major/ Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate
Degree of inter-visibility with other landscapes		
<p>1. The Site would be partially visible in filtered views from the lower lying lands to the north. Some of the larger machinery (cranes) would be clearly visible from distances of over 1 km from the Site. However, direct visibility to the Site is limited to local views and the elevated fields to the north-west.</p> <p>2. The operational built elements would be less visible than some of the construction elements.</p> <p>3. Maturing tree planting on the Site would reduce inter-visibility and soften views to the housing in particular.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate
Year 1	Low	Minor/moderate
Year 15	Low	Minor/moderate
Landscape Condition/ Management		
<p>1. There will be a level of landscape management required to enhance the existing tree belts beside the Site to ensure their long-term health and interplant to thicken and repair cover where trees are missing or absent. Works will be required to sensitively introduce road access to the Site necessitating the removal of areas of tree cover. Overall, there would be a substantial improvement to the condition of the vegetation structure on completion.</p> <p>2 New structure planting will be introduced and in-curtilage tree and shrub planting will be completed.</p> <p>3. The well managed landscape will begin to mature over the short to medium term.</p>		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate beneficial

Year 1	Medium	Moderate beneficial
Year 15	Medium	Moderate beneficial
Value		
Landscape Designations and Designated Elements		
The Site is located within the West Edinburgh Green Belt and is not affected by other designations. Refer to appraisal of effects on Green Belt which is made on Green Belt within the Study Area.		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major/Moderate
Year 1	High	Major/Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate
Scenic Quality		
1. Construction activities would introduce movement, temporary excavations, stockpiling, large machinery, roads and new housing, and will have an adverse effect on the scenic quality of the Site. There would be some effect on the setting of neighbouring rural areas. Trees and hedges will assist in filtering views to the Proposed Development. The greatest effect would be Ravelrig road and Long Dalmahoy Road to the north.		
2. The completion of construction activity and implementation of the final phases of structure planting and in-curtilage planting will establish the Site as new area of built development on the north western edge of Balerno.		
3. Maturing of the structure planting and in-curtilage tree planting will soften the Proposed Development In views from the surrounding landscape.		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Moderate/ major
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate
Recreational / Amenity Value and Accessibility		
1. Access to site for recreation will be limited during the construction phases.		
2. The new strategic footpath/cycleway will be opened along the route of the disused railway.		
3. No further changes.		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Moderate/ major
Year 1	Medium	Moderate beneficial
Year 15	Medium	Moderate beneficial
LCA 27 Gowanhill Farmland, within the Site		
The construction of the Proposed Development across the Site will introduce significant change to its landscape character. The arable farmland will change to areas of residential housing set within the retained structure of the existing tree belts.		
The increase in tree planting would be characteristic of the LCT.		
1. There would be localised adverse effects resulting mainly from construction processes and increases in built development within a rural environment.		
2. Effects would be reduced slightly through establishment of the landscape.		
3. Maturing trees within and around the Proposed Development will assist in integrating the housing with the edge of settlement location, softening the new built for in views.		
Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major/Moderate
Year 1	High	Major/Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate
LCA 27 Gowanhill Farmland, within the Study Area		
Much of the Site is well contained to direct views from the more open arable landscape to the north. The south western sector of the Site is more open to direct distant views from the north and development in this sector of the Site will have a more direct influence on the character of wider views, extending the built edge of Balerno to the north.		
1. There would be localised adverse effects from the construction process. There would be localised adverse effects from the introduction of a significant area of built development within the rural environment on the edge of Balerno.		
2. Effects would be reduced slightly through establishment of the landscape.		
3. Further maturing of trees would soften and integrate the new development more fully, forming a logical edge to the settlement.		

Sensitivity: Medium	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major/Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Medium Low	Moderate/Minor
LCA 32 Kaimes Hill and Dalmahoy Hill		
The mature woodland following the western boundary of the Site, running from north to south across the flank of Ravelrig Hill would screen the majority of views to the Proposed Development except to more distant sectors of the Proposed Development to the east, where there may be filtered views to the proposed housing.		
1. There would be some limited filtered views to the construction of the proposed housing which would increase the perceived level of built development within the neighbouring LCA which is characterised by a relatively undeveloped rural landscape, with occasional farmsteads and settlement.		
2. Effects similar at Year 1 to construction.		
3. Maturing structure planting and in-curtilage planting would begin to mature to soften direct views to the Proposed Development by Year 15.		
Sensitivity: Medium/High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate
Year 1	Low	Moderate/Minor
Year 15	Low	Moderate/Minor

*If an effect is deemed to be important it is underlined and bold. All effects considered adverse unless stated otherwise.

6.4 Effect on Landscape and Heritage Designations and Policy Areas

- 6.4.1 Effects on Registered Common Land / Open Land, Long Distance Footpaths, PRoW and Listed Buildings are assessed within the assessment of visual effects.

Green Belt and Brownfield Area

- 6.4.2 The Development Site is located within Green Belt. It is considered however, that with the landscape treatment proposed, the development could be successfully accommodated within the wider Green Belt context. It is considered that the Site has sufficient capacity to absorb the scale of the development proposed, without adversely affecting the wider character of this area of the Green Belt or the landscape setting of the development to the north of Balerno, and therefore that the development of the Site would not be detrimental to the principles of the Green Belt designation.
- 6.4.3 Development across the site will extend the northern edge of Balerno northward to the existing well-defined tree belt extending along the alignment of the dismantled railway line. The lands either side of Ravelrig Road are well contained and with the exception of the north western extent of the site, are not directly open to views from the surrounding landscape to the north. Extending the settlement edge northward here will enable a logical settlement extension to an existing well-defined landscape feature.
- 6.4.4 The route of the dismantled railway is earmarked in the Local Development Plan as a route for a new Footpath/cycleway which could be sensitively integrated into the Proposed Development.
- 6.4.5 The existing settlement edge is seen on the ridgeline to the south. Extending development down the ridge to the north would be less directly prominent in views and the implementation of an effective structure planting and site wide in-curtilage planting will soften the elevation of built form seen as seen in views from the north.
- 6.4.6 The proposed development would be well contained from view. There would be locally important effects arising during the construction phase. However, the substantial retention of the existing tree belts framing the fields, the existing mature tree cover

along Ravelrig Road and beside the dismantled railway line, alongside the implementation of a comprehensive structure planting strategy and comprehensive in-curtilage tree and shrub planting will increasingly soften views to the proposed development. By Year 15 it is considered that the perception of built development, although not fully screened, would be significantly reduced and would not be considered to be an 'important' effect.

- 6.4.7 The existing mature trees along the dismantled railway, enhanced with new structure planting will provide a strong defensible edge to the housing area, and it will create an effective transition to the more open, agricultural landscapes to the north. The transitional landscape to the north, which carries the overhead power lines and pylons beside the railway, will be enhanced with new structure planting to form a new permanent settlement edge.

Summary of Landscape Effects

- 6.4.8 In summary a number of adverse, 'important' and mainly temporary effects would occur on landscape character and elements, during construction and at Year 1 within the area of the Site itself as follows:

- 'Land-use' of the Site during construction which would be dominated by construction processes.
- 'Settlement Pattern and Built Character', and the 'Degree of Openness/Enclosure' of the Site during construction, and at Year 1 and Year 15 where a significant part of the Site would be developed into a relatively densely built area of housing.
- 'Tranquillity and Remoteness' of the Site during construction when ground based activities, including the movement of construction vehicles, plant and personnel and erection of buildings would have an adverse effect on the tranquillity of the Site.
- The Green Belt during construction and at Year 1 when the perceived level of development within the Site would affect perceptions of openness in views across the wider landscape from the north.
- The 'Scenic Quality' of the Site during construction and at Year 1 due to visual disruption.

- 6.4.9 The growth of planted trees would significantly mitigate these effects other than on the landscape elements 'Openness and Enclosure' by Year 15.

- 6.4.10 There would a Minor/moderate beneficial effect to Land cover/vegetation due to the establishment of tree planting throughout the Site by Year 15.

- 6.4.11 The Site would become more accessible to the public with links to surrounding footpaths, with Moderate beneficial effects after completion.

7. Appraisal of Visual Effects

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Visual effects are concerned wholly with the effect of the Proposed Development on the Visual Amenity of visual receptors. Visual effects may occur as the result of the physical obstruction or blocking of a view and visual intrusion of the Proposed Development into an existing view, the wider landscape setting and the overall effect on Visual Amenity as experienced by the viewers or visual receptors. Other visual effects include the effect of visual dominance due to colour, movement and height of structures, relative to the surrounding area.
- 7.1.2 In order to assist the appraisal, a ZTV (Figure 1.1) has been used to identify potential visual receptors within the Study Area, which have been verified in the field.

7.2 Viewpoint Appraisal

- 7.2.1 In order to inform the visual appraisal, nine panoramic photographs representing views from the selected Viewpoints have been prepared. The Proposed Development has been marked on the Viewpoint photographs presented in Figures 2.1 – 2.9. The detailed Viewpoint appraisal is set out in Appendix 2 and a summary of visual effects on Viewpoints is set out in Table 7.1 below.
- 7.2.2 An appraisal of the potential effects caused by the Proposed Development on users of the representative Viewpoints, is set out in Section 7.3.

Table 7.1: Summary of Effects on Viewpoints

Viewpoint and Receptors	Construction	Year 1	Year 15 (residual effect)
Viewpoint 1 - Ravelrig Road, northern edge of Balerno Road Users Walkers/Cyclists	Road Users: <u>Major/Moderate</u> Walkers/Cyclists: <u>Major</u>	Road Users: <u>Major/Moderate</u> Walkers/Cyclists: <u>Major</u>	Road Users: Moderate Walkers/Cyclists: <u>Major/Moderate</u>
Viewpoint 2 - Ravelrig Road at railway overbridge Road Users Walkers/Cyclists	Road Users: Minor Walkers/Cyclists: Moderate/Minor	Road Users: Minor moderate beneficial Walkers/Cyclists: Moderate/Minor	Road Users: Minor moderate beneficial Walkers/Cyclists: Moderate/Minor
Viewpoint 3 - Long Dalmahoy Road, edge of Dalmahoy Golf Course Road Users Walkers/Cyclists	Road users: Minor/ moderate Walkers/Cyclists: <u>Moderate/ major</u>	Road users: Minor/ moderate Walkers/Cyclists: <u>Moderate/ major</u>	Road users: Minor Walkers/Cyclists: Moderate
Viewpoint 4 - Long Dalmahoy Road, east of Cocklaw Farm Steading	Road users: Minor Residents: Moderate	Road users: Minor Residents: Moderate	Road users: Minor Residents: Moderate/Minor

Viewpoint and Receptors	Construction	Year 1	Year 15 (residual effect)
Road Users Residential Receptors			
Viewpoint 5 - Curriehill Road – north east of the Site Road Users	Road users: Minor	Road users: Minor	Road users: Negligible
Viewpoint 6 - Gowanhill Farm Road Residents/ Walkers	Residents/Walkers: <u>Major/Moderate</u>	Residents/Walkers: <u>Major/Moderate</u>	Residents/Walkers: Moderate
Viewpoint 7 - Newmills Road Road Users Footpath Users	Road users: Negligible/None Walkers: Negligible	Road users: Negligible/None Walkers: No change	Road users: Negligible/None Walkers: No change
Viewpoint 8 - Ravelrig Hill Recreational Walkers	Walkers: Negligible	Walkers: No change	Walkers: No change
Viewpoint 9 - Long Dalmahoy Road Residents Road Users	Residents: <u>Major</u> Road users: Moderate	Residents: <u>Major</u> Road users: Moderate	Residents: <u>Major/Moderate</u> Road users: Moderate/Minor

**If an effect is deemed to be important it is underlined and bold. All effects considered adverse unless stated otherwise.*

7.2.3 In summary, recreational and residential receptors at four Viewpoints would experience important levels of temporary effect during construction and at Year 1; recreational and residential receptors at two Viewpoints would experience important levels of effect after Year 15 (permanent). All effects would be adverse or neutral.

7.3 Visual Effects on Receptor Groups

7.3.1 The Viewpoint appraisal has helped inform the appraisal of visual effects on receptor groups in the following section. As identified in the baseline section, a number of potential visual receptors of the scheme would be located within the Study Area.

7.3.2 Visual receptor locations are presented on Figure 1.2 and those located within the ZTV have been appraised in the tables below.

Residential Receptors

7.3.3 A number of dwellings are located within the ZTV of the Proposed Development on the network of suburban and rural roads within c.1 km of the Site. All residential receptors have an inherent high sensitivity to change. The appraisal has been undertaken from the nearest publicly accessible locations to each property and as such, makes a

number of assumptions about visibility extrapolating from views from the nearest publicly accessible locations.

Table 7.2: Effects on Residential Receptors

Balerno		
The northern edge of Balerno follows the ridgeline immediately to the south of the Site. There will be some direct views from properties on the southern edge of Balerno, towards the Site, limited by property boundary vegetation. The new development at Ravelrig Heights also adjoins southern Site boundary and will experience locally direct or filtered views. Effects are likely to be greatest during construction during which some trees on Ravelrig Road would be felled and houses would be constructed. Effects are represented by Viewpoint 1.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Low	Moderate
Year 1	Low	Moderate
Year 15	Low	Moderate/minor
Currie		
Currie lies approximately 400 m to the south east of the Site. There will be some direct views towards the Site, albeit limited by settlement edge vegetation. New development under construction (Kingfisher Park) will curtail views towards Site, with the existing boundary vegetation further limiting views. Effects are represented by Viewpoint 7.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Low	Moderate/minor
Year 1	Low	Moderate/minor
Year 15	Low	Minor
Riccarton		
Riccarton Campus of Herriot Watt University lies approximately 1.6 km to the north east of the Site. Terrain and the existing well-defined woodland belts around the southern and western edges of the estate curtail views to the Site. Viewpoint 5 is representative of views experienced beyond the edge of the campus.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	No change	No change
Year 1	No change	No change
Year 15	No change	No change
R1 and R2		
Property Cluster R1, Gowanhill Farm (properties no. 3,7 & 9), and Property Cluster R2, unnamed bungalow opposite Gowanhill Farm, Gowanhill Farm Road, are both located 360 m to the north of the Site. There will be some filtered views towards the Site, limited by property boundary vegetation and intervening vegetation within adjacent farmland. Effects are represented by Viewpoint 6.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Low	Minor
R3		
Property Cluster R3, unnamed property, Gowanhill Farm Road, is located 200 m to the east of the Site. There will be some partial, heavily filtered views towards the Site, limited by dense boundary vegetation.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Negligible	Minor
Year 1	Negligible	Minor
Year 15	Negligible	Minor
R4 and R5		
Property Cluster R4, Cocklaw Farm Steading (no's 1-4), and R5, Cocklaw Farm Cottage, Long Dalmahoy Road, is located 740-780 m to the north east of the Site. Cluster of properties, with some facades orientated towards the Site, although main orientation of properties is away from the Site. Partial views from south western properties. Effects are represented by Viewpoint 4.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect

Construction	Low	Moderate/minor
Year 1	Low	Moderate/minor
Year 15	Low	Minor
R6		
Property Cluster R6, Currievale Farm (cluster of properties no's 4,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,14,15,16,17), off Curriehill Road, is located 940 m to the north east of the Site. Cluster of properties, with some facades orientated towards the Site, although main orientation of properties is away from the Site. Partial views from south western properties.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Low	Moderate/minor
Year 1	Low	Moderate/minor
Year 15	Low	Minor
R7 and R8		
Property Cluster R7, 1-3 Newhouses Cottages, and R8, Tui Steading, Long Dalmahoy Road, are located 500 m to the north of the Site. There would be clear visibility from a number of properties to the Site. Views are represented by Viewpoints 3 and 9. Most elements of the Proposed Development would be visible in partial filtered views. Development in the western sector of the Site will be open to direct views during the Construction Phase and in the short term thereafter. At Year 15, after boundary trees have started to mature, visual effects of the housing would be softened.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate/ major
Year 1	Medium	Moderate/ major
Year 15	Low-medium	Moderate
R9		
Property Cluster R9, Dalmahoy Mains, Long Dalmahoy Road, are located 920 m to the north of the Site. Views are represented by Viewpoint 9. Most elements of the Proposed Development would be visible in partial filtered views, softened by vegetation within-curtilage and substantial vegetation cover within the intervening landscape. Development in the western sector of the Site will be open to direct views during the Construction Phase and in the short term thereafter. At Year 15, after boundary trees have started to mature, visual effects of the housing would be softened.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Moderate
Year 15	Low-medium	Moderate

**If an effect is deemed to be important it is underlined and bold. All effects considered adverse unless stated otherwise.*

Recreational Receptors

- 7.3.4 Recreational receptors are appraised in Table 7.3. Users of recreational footpaths are appraised in Table 7.4.

Table 7.3: Effects on Recreational Receptors

V1 – Dalmahoy Hotel and Country Club		
The hotel and country club are positioned to the north of an extensive golf course which falls to the north from Long Dalmahoy Road at c.125 m AOD to the club house at 100 m AOD. The golf course includes extensive tree belts between the fairways and there would be no views to the Proposed Development other than from peripheral locations beyond the grounds. These views are represented by Viewpoints 3 and 9 on the Long Dalmahoy Road, 550 m to the north.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Low	Minor
Year 1	Low	Minor
Year 15	Low	Minor

**If an effect is deemed to be important it is underlined and bold. All effects considered adverse unless stated otherwise.*

Sequential Receptors

- 7.3.5 Users of footpaths have been appraised as having a high sensitivity and users of roads, a low sensitivity. An appraisal of static and sequential across the entire length of each route affected by the ZTV within the Study Area is set out in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4: Sequential Effects on Route Users

Footpaths		
S1 – NCN Route 75 and S2, Core Path CEC 16 - Kirknewton		
<p>The cycle route and core path route follow Ravelrig Road on a north to south alignment through the centre of the Site. The road is lined by mature trees on the Site boundary and is slightly sunken which together will filter and contain views into the Site. There will be views to housing intermittently, and short sections of clear views into the new development within the Site through the breaks in vegetation at road entrances into the Proposed Development and at the southern edge of Balerno. These views are represented by Viewpoints 2 and 3 which demonstrate that the change in views caused by the new development would be greater during construction and in the short term thereafter.</p> <p>An eastern fork of the core path also follows the north south alignment of Old New Mills Road to the east, and connects via Gowanhill farm Road to Long Dalmahoy Road. Views from this section of the core path are represented by Viewpoints 6 and 7. From this section of the route views will be intermittent, filtered by roadside vegetation and intervening tree belts. There will be more distant views from Long Dalmahoy Road to the north where the Proposed Development will be visible intermittently across the rising ridge of land to the south of Balerno, set within the existing framework of tree belts which will be strengthened with new structure planting.</p> <p>Considered both in terms of static effects and sequentially, whilst some change would be perceived during the journey, they would not affect the experience of cyclists and walkers to an important level in the long term.</p>		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Major/Moderate
Year 1	Medium	Major/Moderate
Year 15	Low	Moderate
S3 - Core Path CEC 17 – Riccarton		
<p>The path runs from north to south beside Curriehill Road and there will be a c.500 m section of the route south of the junction with Long Dalmahoy Road which will experience distant filtered views towards the site, as illustrated by Viewpoint 5. The Proposed Development within the south western extent of the Site will be visible in distant views during the construction phase and in the short to term thereafter. The proposed in-curtilage planting will soften the profile of the housing in the medium term.</p>		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Low	Moderate
Year 1	Low	Moderate
Year 15	Low	Minor
S4 - Core Path CEC 18 – Water of Leith		
<p>Views are completely curtailed by terrain and built form as the route passes along the incised valley of the Water of Leith within settlement of Balerno and Currie.</p>		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	No Change	No Change
Year 1	No Change	No Change
Year 15	No Change	No Change
S5 – Core Path CEC 19 – Harlaw and Threipmuir		
<p>The route lies to the south of Balerno and visibility is curtailed by terrain and the existing built form.</p>		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Negligible	Negligible
Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
S6 - Unnamed local footpath		
<p>An unnamed local footpath passes although woodland beyond the western boundary of the</p>		

Site. There will be direct and filtered views to the Proposed Development along the route as it descends down the northern flank of Ravelrig Hill. The change in views caused by the new development would be greater during construction (Major), and in the short time thereafter, reducing to Moderate as the structure planting and in-curtilage planting begin to mature (Moderate).		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Major
Year 1	High	Major
Year 15	Medium	Major/Moderate
S7 and S8 – Unnamed local footpaths to the south of Currie and Balerno		
A network of unnamed footpaths pass to the south of Balerno and Currie, through the agricultural land at the edge of the settlements. Views north from the routes are filtered by intervening built form, tree belts and woodland and direct views to the Proposed Development are unlikely.		
Sensitivity: High	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Negligible	Negligible
Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
Roads		
S9 – Ravelrig Road		
Ravelrig Road passes on a north to south alignment through the centre of the Site. The road is lined by mature trees on the Site boundary and is slightly sunken which together will filter and contain views into the Site. There will be views to housing intermittently, and short sections of clear views into the new development within the Site through the breaks in vegetation at road entrances into the Proposed Development and at the southern edge of Balerno. These views are represented by Viewpoints 2 and 3 which demonstrate that the change in views caused by the new development would be greater during construction and in the short term thereafter. Considered both in terms of static effects and sequentially, whilst some change would be perceived during the journey, they would not affect the experience of the road user to an important level.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Minor/ moderate
Year 1	Medium	Minor/ moderate
Year 15	Medium	Minor/ moderate beneficial
S10 - Gowanhill Farm Road		
The road lies to the north east of the Proposed Development. Views towards the Site are limited by field boundary hedgerows, except at gateway breaks. From these locations Viewpoint 6 demonstrates that there would be clear views to the Proposed Development. The disruption of the construction period would be greatest resulting in Minor/ moderate effects at the Viewpoint. The housing element would be partially visible in filtered views, extending the area of built development towards the viewer. As the structure planting and in-curtilage planting matures, effects would reduce to Minor. Considered statically and sequentially effects on route users would be limited.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Medium	Moderate/Minor
Year 1	Medium	Moderate/Minor
Year 15	Low	Minor
S11 - Newmills Road		
The road lies 200 m beyond the eastern boundary of the site and traverses the hillside to the north of Balerno/Currie, descending to join Gowanhill Farm Road to the north. Viewpoint 7 taken from a break in the hedgerow beside the road demonstrates the oblique nature of views across the slope and the filtering effects of the vegetation along the disused railway. There will be heavily filtered views to the Proposed Development. The disruption of the construction period and at Year 1 would be greatest resulting in Minor effects at the Viewpoint. Effects will reduce in the short to medium term as the proposed structure planting and in-curtilage planting mature. Considered statically and sequentially effects on route users would be limited.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect

Construction	Low	Minor
Year 1	Low	Minor
Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
S12 - Long Dalmahoy Road		
The road is located 550 m to the north of the Site, running east to west through farmland beneath Ravelrig Hill. There will be clear views to the Proposed Development in the western sector of the Site and filtered intermittent views to the remainder of the Proposed Development. Viewpoints 3 and 9 illustrate typical views towards the Site. Effects would be greatest during the construction phase and in the short term thereafter, reducing as the proposed in-curtilage planting and structure planting development and soften the views to the proposed housing.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	High	Moderate
Year 1	High	Moderate
Year 15	Medium	Moderate/Minor
S13 – Warriston Farm Road		
The road is located 880 m to the north-east with elevated, intermittent views across the adjacent farmland. The route lies in visual shadow but passes across a slight ridge to the south of Warriston Farm revealing distant views to the rising ridgeline at Balerno and Currie. Views in the direction of the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation cover.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Negligible	Negligible
Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
S14 – Curriehill Road		
The road runs from north to south 1.5 km to the north east of the Site. There will be a c.500 m section of the route south of the junction with Long Dalmahoy Road which will experience distant filtered views towards the site, as illustrated by Viewpoint 5. The Proposed Development within the south western extent of the site will be visible in distant views during the construction phase and in the short to term thereafter. The proposed in-curtilage planting will soften the profile of the housing in the medium term.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Low	Minor
Year 1	Low	Minor
Year 15	Low	Negligible
S15 – Glasgow / Carstairs Railway Line		
The railway passes to the north of the site, partly at grade in the east and in a shallow cutting to the west. There will be direct views to the northern open fields which will be retained as productive farmland. The well vegetated line of dismantled railway line will filter views to the areas of housing in the southern sectors of the site. There will be short term filtered views during the construction phase and in the short term thereafter, with views becoming increasingly filtered over the short to medium term as the structure planting and in-curtilage planting begin to mature.		
Sensitivity: Low	Magnitude of change	Effect
Construction	Negligible	Negligible
Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
Year 15	Negligible	Negligible

*If an effect is deemed to be important it is underlined and bold. All effects considered adverse unless stated otherwise

Summary of Visual Effects

- 7.3.6 There will be locally important effects on walkers and residents at Gowanhill Road where there will views towards the Proposed Development (during construction and at Year 1), increasing the portion of the view affected by built development within a rural context. The structure planting and in-curtilage planting will mature to soften the limited direct views by Year 15.

- 7.3.7 Properties on Long Dalmahoy Road will have direct and open views to the Proposed Development in the south western sector of the Site. From these properties the new housing will be clearly visible, increasing the portion of the view affected by built development on the northern edge of Balerno. The proposed housing will extend below the ridgeline and will be less prominent in views than the ongoing development at Ravelrig Heights. The comprehensive approach to structure planting and in-curtilage planting across the Site will soften the direct effects over the short to medium term. The well-defined vegetation structure along the dismantled railway line to the north of the Site forms a well-defined landscape feature and will provide a logical edge to development across the site.
- 7.3.8 The appraisal of effects on users of routes has found that there would be a number of adverse, 'important' effects on views from locations close to the Site including recreational receptors (NCN 75 and core path CEC 16) using Ravelrig Road and the unnamed local footpath immediately to the west of the Site. The effects on receptors will be important during the construction phase and in the short time thereafter, reducing as the proposed structure planting and in-curtilage planting mature to soften and integrate the Proposed Development.

8. Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1.1 The Proposed Development would be sited and designed to minimise any adverse effects on landscape elements, landscape character or views where possible. Equally the Proposed Development has been developed to minimise adverse effects on the Edinburgh Green Belt. The masterplan is being developed to strengthen existing landscape features, to mitigate potential adverse effects, and to define a strong settlement edge to the north of Balerno.
- 8.1.2 This LVA has appraised the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the Landscape Resources and Visual Amenity of the Site within a 2 km Study Area.
- 8.1.3 A number of adverse, 'important' and mainly temporary effects would occur on the landscape character and elements of the Site (Landscape Resource), during construction and at Year 1 within the area of the Site. This would be as the result of the Site being dominated by construction processes. Development of a significant part of the Site into a relatively densely built area of housing, will create a relatively large scale of new built development over an area of arable farm land. The growth of trees which will be proposed as part of the Landscape Strategy, would mitigate these effects by Year 15 when trees have begun to mature however, the attribute of 'Openness' will be eroded.
- 8.1.4 The Site is located within the Edinburgh Green Belt. Inter-visibility between the Site and the area beyond is limited by the existing landscape framework. During construction and the first 15 years of operation the new residential area will affect to a degree, the perception of openness in some local views. Longer term effects would be softened by maturing in-curtilage tree planting and the comprehensive structure planting across the Site and in particular the strengthening of the vegetation along the line of the dismantled railway. No other designations or policy areas would be affected to an important degree.
- 8.1.5 The Site would also become more accessible to the public with links to surrounding footpaths and the formalising of a footpath cycleway along the northern boundary of the built development, following the route of the dismantled railway line.
- 8.1.6 The appraisal of effects on properties has found that there would be a number of adverse, 'important' effects on views from the cluster of properties at Gowanhill Farm and from the scattered properties along Long Dalmahoy Road. From these properties the Proposed Development would be clearly visible, increasing the horizontal extent of the view affected by built development within a rural context. The in-curtilage planting and trees planted on the northern boundary of the housing area would soften effects by Year 15. The remaining properties within c.1 km radius of the Site would not be affected to any great degree.
- 8.1.7 Recreational receptors would be little affected within the Study Area.
- 8.1.8 The appraisal of effects on users of footpaths, bridleways and the network of small roads surrounding the Site has found that the Proposed Development would cause static and/or sequential effects on receptors on from Ravelrig Road and also in views from the informal footpath to the west of the Site.
- 8.1.9 It is important to appreciate that effects on Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity are an inevitable consequence of development of this type. Where important levels of effect have been identified, these are primarily limited to the construction and early operational phases. The maturing of areas of new tree planting located particularly on

the northern boundary of the Site, would soften effects by Year 15 of operation.

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