

Dacorum Borough Council  
Dacorum Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study:  
Draft Report | April 2020







# Dacorum Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study



ARUP



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|                       |             | <b>Name</b>   | <i>Simon Jenkins</i>  | <i>Andrew Tempany</i>   | <i>Joe Wheelwright</i>  |
|                       |             | <b>Signature</b>  |    |    |    |
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|                       |             | <b>Name</b>   | <i>Simon Jenkins</i>  | <i>Joe Wheelwright</i>  | <i>Mark Job</i>   |
|                       |             | <b>Signature</b>  |  |  |  |

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Job number 263905-00



Cedar Lodge

Cedar Lodge, Kings Langley

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# 1.0 Introduction

## Scope and purpose of the study

Ove Arup and Partners Limited (Arup) was commissioned by Dacorum Borough Council in December 2019 to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Study of specific land parcels associated with the fringes of the principal settlements of the borough (see Figure 1), to inform the Stage 3 Green Belt Review and residential allocations within the emerging Local Plan.

In 2015 Arup as commissioned to undertake the Stage 2 Green Belt Review, which also included high level landscape appraisal of the parcels assessed. This new study provides an additional level of detail to that earlier landscape appraisal, making reference to it where appropriate, and creates a comprehensive landscape evidence base for decision makers in Dacorum Borough.

The landscape sensitivity study and its findings are just one of a number of layers of information that will need to be considered in the planning balance by decision makers when considering the future direction of spatial planning and growth in the borough.

This report outlines the methodology and findings for the study and is structured as follows:

- Section 2 - The landscape of Dacorum Borough;
- Section 3 - Landscape assessment methodology; and
- Section 4 - Landscape sensitivity study findings and recommendations.

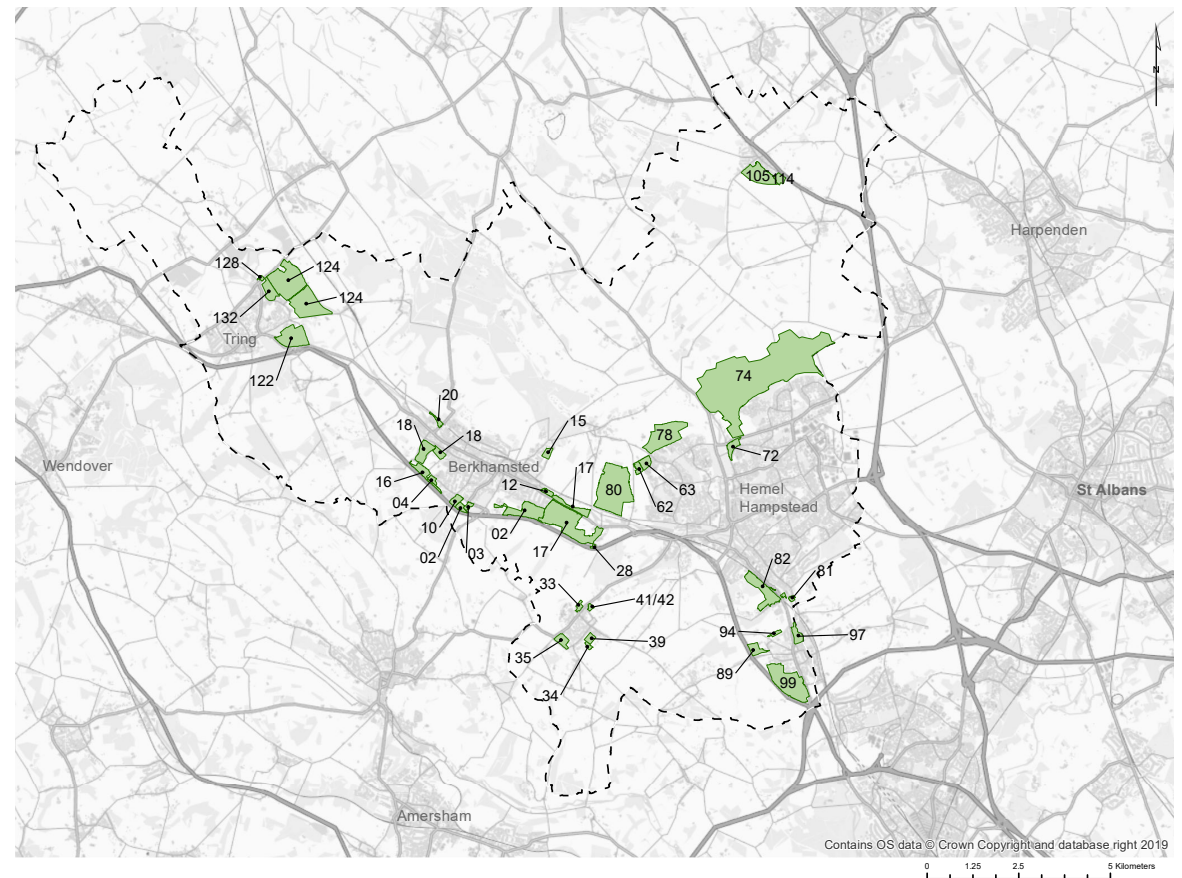


Figure 1 Land parcels assessed in this study

## 2.0

# The landscape of Dacorum Borough

The rural landscapes of Dacorum encompass a great diversity of landscape types and elements associated largely with a chalk geology and with the outstanding nationally designated landscape of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which cover much of the central part of the borough and is associated with the dramatic chalk scarp slopes and undulating foothills of the Chiltern Hills, which form a prominent and scenic backdrop in many locations. The Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2019-2024<sup>1</sup> identifies a number of special qualities of the AONB which are relevant to the character and experience of the landscape, and these include (summarised from the statement of significance in the Plan):

- Panoramic views from and across the escarpment interwoven with intimate dip slope valleys and rolling fields;
- Nationally important concentrations of species diverse chalk grassland;
- Significant ancient hedgerows, field trees, orchards and parklands;
- One of the most wooded landscapes in England,

with 23% woodland cover, of which approximately 56% is ancient, with the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation or (SAC) forming a particularly rich part of this landscape texture; and

- Relative tranquillity and peace in close proximity to large populations, one of the most accessible protected landscapes, with relatively dark skies, secret corners and a surprising sense of remoteness.

These characteristics are to varying extents often also experienced in the foothills and adjacent landscapes which form part of the AONB's setting. Large tracts of the rural landscapes of Dacorum are therefore often of historic and sensitive character. The variations in landscape character across the borough are summarised below.

In the north around Tring and outlying villages the landscape is more readily associated with the low-lying floodplain landscapes of the Vale of Aylesbury, with pastoral farmland and black poplars, whilst the other principal settlements are more closely associated with the largely pastoral chalk river valleys and historic arterial transport routes extending from the Chiltern Hills (Berkhamsted – Bulbourne Valley,

Hemel Hempstead – Bulbourne and Gade Valleys, Kings Langley – Gade Valley and Markyate – Ver Valley). The notable exceptions are some of the larger plateau villages such as Bovingdon, surrounded by an often ancient Enclosure arable and pasture farmland landscape of intimate, small scale fields.

Elevated hinterlands to the valleys, whether the Chilterns escarpment or the wider network of ridges which envelope the distinctive network of dry chalk valleys are often wooded, forming prominent skylines. This is particularly apparent within the AONB between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead (the Ashridge Estate) and in the distinctive network of historic designed landscapes and parklands which are often located in valleys and on hillsides in proximity to settlements (e.g. Markyate and Hemel Hempstead).

This fine grain landscape is reflected in the scale of the landscape character areas defined in Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment, which are re-produced in Figure 2 along with their relationship to the AONB designation. These character areas have formed the starting point for the individual landscape analyses of the parcels later in this report.

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1 Chilterns Conservation Board, 2019, Chilterns AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

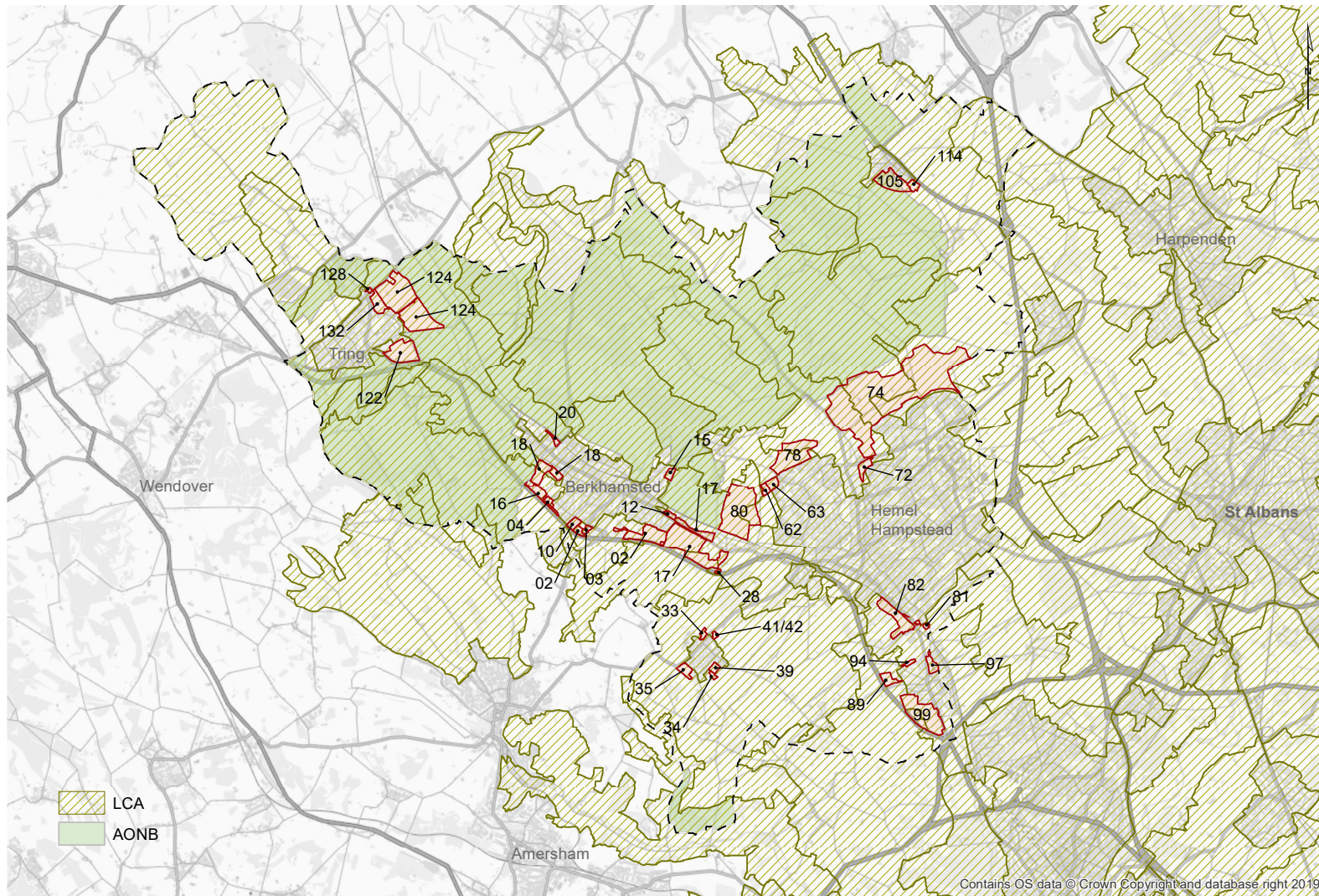


Figure 2 Land parcels, Dacorum Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and the Chilterns AONB



# 3.0

## Landscape assessment methodology

### Assessment methodology and criteria

This study assesses the landscape sensitivity of the land parcels to residential development, to help inform Dacorum's position with regard to housing allocations and to guide their spatial planning.

The assessment methodology for determination of the landscape sensitivity of the parcels to change arising from residential development is based on the following steps:

1. Identification of landscape value.
2. Assessment of landscape susceptibility to the change in question.
3. Assessment of landscape sensitivity, considering landscape value and susceptibility.
4. Development of landscape guidance to inform spatial planning options development.

The definitions and thresholds for each of the steps are set out below. These are based on professional experience of undertaking similar work and knowledge of the local landscape of Dacorum Borough. The steps were verified by site survey by landscape architects undertaken in December 2019 and January 2020.

The methodology has also been informed by industry guidance, notably the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance<sup>1</sup>, the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3)<sup>2</sup> and Natural England's current thinking on landscape sensitivity assessment<sup>3</sup>.

The methodology has also been informed by the earlier methodology for the outline landscape and visual appraisal in the Stage 2 Dacorum Green Belt Review of 2015, with a number of specific refinements for this study. These are notably in relation to rationalising some of the assessment criteria for clarity and usability, and the addition of five-point assessment

scales rather than three-point ones, reflecting the finer grain of the analysis in Stage 3. The refinements to the methodology also enable it to align with Natural England's current thinking on landscape sensitivity<sup>4</sup>.

The methodology has been designed for use at the parcel scale, noting relationships with wider landscape character as relevant and has been designed specifically for use in relation to medium and large scale residential development.

The parcels which achieve between a low and a moderate sensitivity score and do not have other clear reasons for not being developed (based on professional judgement), will have high level development principals suggested to mitigate some of the negative effects development might have, or how to improve on, the parcel and its surroundings.

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1 Tudor, C, Natural England, 2014, An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, NE579 (As amended, 2018)

2 Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition

3 Tudor, C, Natural England, 2019, An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management

4 Ibid

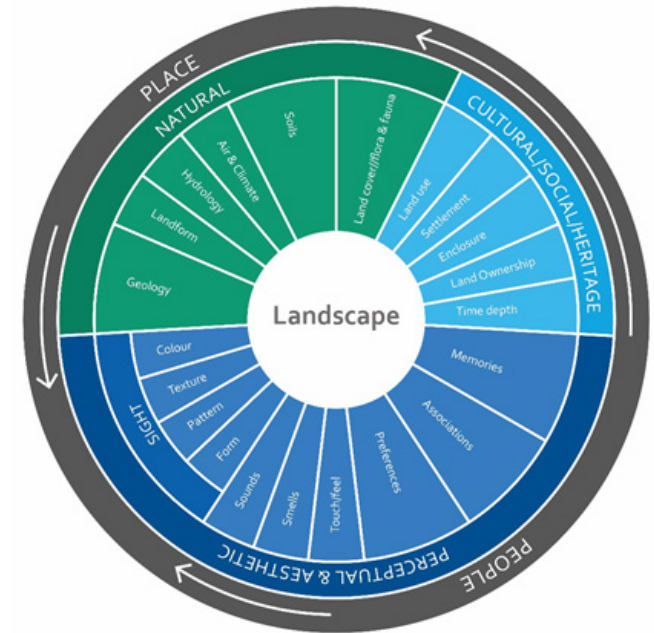
## Landscape value

A useful starting point for understanding landscape value is the definition of landscape and landscape character. Landscape is defined by the European Landscape Convention (ELC)<sup>1</sup> as:

**“An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”.**

Landscape character is made up of physical and cultural/social elements and the way we perceive these, or how they combine to create our experience of the landscape. Their key elements of landscape are shown on Figure 3<sup>2</sup>. In the context of the ELC, ‘all landscapes matter’ e.g. they are all of value to someone, irrespective of designation or perceived quality. Landscape value refers to the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, whether this be the landscape as a whole or individual elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual qualities which contribute to the character of the landscape. The range of factors identified below (drawn from GLVIA3) that can help in the identification of valued landscapes include:

- Designated landscape interests (e.g. Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or AONB);
- Landscape quality (condition);
- Scenic quality (this may include consideration of special qualities in the AONB, where relevant);
- Representativeness of wider landscape character;
- Rarity;
- Conservation interests (heritage or ecological);
- Recreational value;
- Experiential qualities,;
- Community values (drawing from information in the LCA), and;
- Cultural associations (such as links to events, writers, poets, artists etc);



**Figure 3:** The elements of landscape character (Arup, adapted from Natural England)

<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe, 2000, European Landscape Convention, European Treaty Series, No. 176

<sup>2</sup> Tudor, C, Natural England, 2014, Op Cit

## Assessment Criteria

The assessment criteria with regard to landscape value are set out below.

Landscape value has been assessed on a five-point scale from national to local/neighbourhood level, based on the above attributes. Value thresholds are defined in Table 1.

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>National</b></p> <p>May form part of a nationally designated landscape such as the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or may contain nationally rare landscape types or elements or unique, archetypal or notably intact examples, or conservation interests (heritage/ecological) designated/recognised at the national level. May be strongly representative of archetypal landscape type. May be recognised for its scenic quality or recreational resource at the national level through designation (e.g. representation of special qualities of the AONB). May have featured in or inspired artistic or literary works of national importance and may also form an integral part of nationally designated historic designed landscapes or their setting, or landscapes otherwise of national importance, or forming an essential and documented part of the setting of nationally significant buildings.</p> |
| <p><b>County</b></p> <p>May contain regionally rare or important landscape types or elements, or notable examples (e.g. the Black Poplars north of Tring or chalk river valleys and watercress beds). May also contain notable examples of important landscape types at the county level or be broadly representative of this. May include assets designated as being of county level importance, e.g. locally listed landscapes on the county register, or may be recognised for its recreational quality/importance e.g. Regional Park or Country Park. May have featured in artistic/literary works of regional/sub-regional importance.</p>   |
| <p><b>Borough</b></p> <p>May contain notable concentration of locally rare landscape types/examples of district importance, or have moderate degree of representativeness of wider landscape character. May include assets of local importance, e.g. may be part of the setting for a locally listed landscape or may include locally designated nature conservation interests. May have featured in artistic or written works of district level importance.</p>  |
| <p><b>Community</b></p> <p>May contain moderate or partial concentration of locally rare landscape types or elements or have relatively low degree of representation of wider landscape character. May include assets of community importance or of importance to the settlements within the Borough, or which contribute to character and/or landscape elements valued at the wider community level.</p>   |
| <p><b>Neighbourhood</b></p> <p>Where the criteria defined for the above thresholds are largely absent.</p>  |

**Table 1:** Landscape value threshold definitions

## **Landscape Susceptibility**

With reference to GLVIA3, landscape susceptibility is the degree to which a defined landscape and its associated visual qualities and attributes might respond to the specific development type / development scenario or other change without undue negative effects on landscape character and visual resource.

Table 2 sets out the landscape susceptibility criteria, thresholds and the five-point scale used for this study. In reality, the low-moderate and moderate-high susceptibility categories are intermediate and only used if absolutely necessary. Hence, detailed definitions are not provided for these intermediate categories since they will include elements from the categories

immediately above and below in the five point scale, based on professional judgement.

The landscape criteria on which the assessment criteria are based draw from key positive characteristics in the Dacorum Borough LCA and represent landscape characteristics important or prevalent in the Dacorum context. It should be noted that, whilst there is potential for tension between criteria in respect of scale/pattern and visual matters, the criteria do not ‘cancel each other out’, rather a professional judgement is used to identify what is important to take forward in the assessment. Within the criteria, different combinations of the attributes may be present, and professional judgement will again be used to determine those most relevant to the assessment.

**Table 2:** Landscape susceptibility criteria, thresholds and definitions

| Criterion                                     | Rationale  |              |   |               |  |
|---|--|--------------|---|---------------|--|
| Landform                                      | <p>Landscapes with a high degree of landform intricacy and variation (e.g. scarps and foothills, dry valleys and ridges) would have the greatest susceptibility to change resulting from residential development, whilst landscapes of simple topography and low levels of landform relief would be less susceptible.</p> <p>Data sources: OS Explorer Map, Aerial photography, Landform Panorama contour data or similar, British Geological Survey (BGS) mapping.</p>  |              |   |               |  |
|   | Low  | Low-Moderate | Moderate  | Moderate-High | High   |
|   | Very flat, consistently even. No variation, monotonous.  |              | Moderate level of landform variation and distinction. May be a small part of a wider and more varied topographic system (e.g. gentle ridges and valleys).                                 |               | Elevated, dramatic or highly prominent landforms (e.g. scarps). Very intricate, varied or fine grained, textured landforms (e.g. complex ridge and valley systems).  |
| Scale and pattern, including cultural pattern | <p>Landscapes with a tight-knit, intimate spatial scale and intricate, complex pattern or texture (e.g. flood meadows in chalk river valleys) would typically have a greater to change arising from residential development than would large scale, simple landscapes, due to the relative potential for effect on legibility or loss of elements difficult to replace.</p> <p>Landscapes with a strong sense of historic continuity, time depth or intactness e.g. parklands, designed landscapes, planned estate farmland and villages, would typically have a higher to change arising from residential development than would eroded or fragmented landscapes where such qualities are largely absent.</p> <p>Date sources: OS Explorer Map, Aerial photography, Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), if available, LCA and historic OS mapping, field survey.</p> |              |   |               |  |
|   | Low  | Low-Moderate | Moderate  | Moderate-High | High   |
|   | <p>Large scale, simple regular or rectilinear. Largely arable field systems with eroded framework and boundary loss.</p> <p>Very weak associated sense of time depth and legibility.</p>   |              | <p>Medium scale with medium level of variation to pattern, or some areas of more intact pattern balanced with areas of boundary loss.</p> <p>Some sense of time depth and legibility.</p> |               | <p>Highly intricate, varied, irregular, intimate scale and mosaic or textured pattern. May include landscape elements that would be highly vulnerable to loss (e.g. chalk valleys and flood meadows).</p> <p>Established or intact landscapes with very great sense of time depth and legibility</p> |

| Criterion<br>(attribute)   | Rationale   |              |  |               |   |
|--|---|--------------|--|---------------|---|
| <p>Landscape defined by traditional, historic settlement and vernacular buildings strongly associated with the landscape (e.g. hamlets associated with village greens, historic valley-side villages) would typically have a higher to change arising from residential development than would landscapes characterised by modern, expanded settlements. Well integrated settlement edges within the wider context (e.g. by topography and vegetation) would typically be more susceptible than exposed or abrupt settlement edges, which may offer mitigation potential.</p> <p>Data sources: OS and historic mapping, aerial photography, field survey.</p> |   |              |  |               |   |
| Development character and edges  | Low   | Low-Moderate | Moderate   | Moderate-High | High  |
|  | <p>Very modern settlement with little apparent relationship to its landscape. Very weak, exposed or poorly integrated settlement edges, with detracting elements.</p> |              | <p>Partially intact historic settlement pattern with some sense of relationship to wider landscape (e.g. an expanded valley side village perhaps with some key views and landmarks). Partially intact and partially integrated settlement edges with some breaches or erosion.</p> |               | <p>Settlement makes a notable contribution to key characteristics of its character area. Very intact, strong historic settlement pattern and materiality. Very well integrated edges – materials, planting, landform.</p> |

| Criterion<br>(attribute)  | Rationale  |              |   |               |  |
|---|--|--------------|---|---------------|--|
|   | <p>Landscapes with a strong sense of tranquillity and/or relative remoteness, or landscapes representing or relating strongly to the special qualities of the AONB would have a higher susceptibility to change resulting from residential development than would landscapes defined by overt or obvious modern or intrusive human influences/developments.</p> <p>Data sources: Tranquillity mapping, field survey, LCA information, AONB Management Plan and Special Qualities where applicable.</p> |              |   |               |  |
| Perception<br>(including scenic quality, sense of tranquillity and separation from urbanising influences) | Low  | Low-Moderate | Moderate  | Moderate-High | High   |
|   | Very weak, defined by proximity to urbanising or infrastructure influences (including physical, visual and aural presence of motorway and rail corridors etc).<br><br>Cultural associations are very weak or absent.   |              | Varied – some sense of the landscape forming a gap or setting, although some urbanising or infrastructure influences may also be apparent.<br><br>Landscape may have a partial sense of scenic quality and tranquillity.<br><br>Landscape may also have peripheral or tangential cultural associations. |               | Landscape forms or creates a clear gap or sense of settlement setting, with little or no proximity to urbanising or infrastructure influences. Landscape may also have a very strong sense of scenic quality, tranquillity and relative remoteness.<br><br>Landscape may also have strong community, artistic, literary or cultural associations.<br><br>(e.g. Ashridge and its literary/artistic associations with John Skelton, Gerald Massey, GS Cautley and others). |

| Criterion<br>(attribute)   | Rationale   |              |   |               |  |
|----------------------------|---|--------------|---|---------------|--|
|                            | <p>Landscapes defined by ‘naturalistic’ or largely undeveloped skylines would have a greater to change arising from residential development than would skylines characterised by modern development or infrastructure influences, due to the potential for development to affect the prominence of such skylines.</p> <p>Landscapes characterised by elevated or open, expansive views with wide intervisibility between one landscape and another, or with prominent landmarks and settings, would typically have a higher susceptibility to change resulting from residential development than would visually highly contained landscapes. Similarly, landscapes with advertised or well publicised views, or ones enjoyed by a broad cross-section of people (receptors) would be more susceptible than those which do not.</p> <p>Data sources: Field survey.</p> |              |   |               |  |
| Skylines, visual and views | Low   | Low-Moderate | Moderate  | Moderate-High | High   |
|                            | <p>Skyline is dominated by modern settlement and development.</p> <p><b>Views:</b></p> <p>Highly contained and enclosed. Views are kept short by density of vegetation, development or the nature of landform.</p>  |              | <p>Variable – partially naturalistic skyline, partly developed. Development may have a degree of integration by vegetation and/ or topography, such that it does not dominate skyline.</p> <p><b>Views:</b></p> <p>Moderately extensive views, with some degree of visual filtering provided by landform and vegetation, or the disposition of development.</p> |               | <p>Almost entirely undeveloped, such that naturalistic skylines are the prominent or defining characteristic.</p> <p><b>Views:</b></p> <p>Very strong sense of openness with expansive, far reaching views. Strong sense of intervisibility between character areas or landmarks and their settings.</p> |



## Landscape Sensitivity

With regard to GLVIA3, landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value.

The landscape sensitivity of the characteristics and qualities of each parcel to change arising from potential residential development is assessed, taking into account the judgements on value and susceptibility. Sensitivity is assessed on a five-point scale (Table 3), although variations of sensitivity within the parcels are also noted in the assessment, where appropriate.

## Landscape Guidance

The sensitivity ratings are used to focus the development of concise landscape guidance for each parcel particularly where development may be accommodated, and to inform later spatial options development. Guidance is based on landscape character and visual considerations and the sensitivity judgement.

**Table 3:** Landscape sensitivity thresholds and definitions

|  |
|--|
| <b>High</b><br>The landscape is highly sensitive to change arising from residential development. A very high degree of care will be needed in considering the location, design and siting of any change within the landscape.  |
| <b>Moderate-High</b><br>The landscape has a moderate-high sensitivity to change arising from residential development. A high degree of care will be needed in considering the location, design and siting of any change within the landscape   |
| <b>Moderate</b><br>The landscape has a moderate sensitivity to change arising from residential development. Although the landscape may have some ability to absorb change, some alteration in character may result. Considerable care is still needed in locating and designing such developments within the landscape.  |
| <b>Moderate-Low</b><br>The landscape has a moderate-low sensitivity to change arising from residential development. The landscape may have relatively greater ability to absorb change although care is still needed in locating and designing such developments within the landscape. There may be opportunity for mitigation, enhancement and restoration.                       |
| <b>Low</b><br>The landscape has a low sensitivity to change arising from residential development. Change can potentially be more easily accommodated or there may be considerable opportunities to integrate such developments within the landscape, to positively create new character, or restore/enhance the landscape. Sensitive design is still needed to accommodate change. |



Grand Union Canal, Kings Langley

## 4.0 Landscape sensitivity study findings and guidance

This section sets out the landscape sensitivity assessment of each of the defined parcels using the methodology set out in Section 3. For each parcel an assessment is made of landscape value and landscape susceptibility, drawing these together into an overall assessment of landscape sensitivity. Based on the assessment landscape guidance is then developed to inform direction of growth in Dacorum's spatial planning process.

Where appropriate, comparison is made with the findings of the earlier landscape appraisal which formed part of the Stage 2 Green Belt Review.

The assessment of each parcel was undertaken on site by qualified and experienced landscape architects in December 2019 to January 2020.

The parcels are as follows:

| Parcel | Relevant settlement    |
|--------|------------------------|
| 02     | Berkhamsted            |
| 03     |                        |
| 04     |                        |
| 10     |                        |
| 12     |                        |
| 15     |                        |
| 16     |                        |
| 17     |                        |
| 18     |                        |
| 20     |                        |
| 28     | Berkhamsted/Bourne End |
| 33     | Bovingdon              |
| 34     |                        |
| 35     |                        |
| 39     |                        |
| 41/42  |                        |

| Parcel | Relevant settlement |
|--------|---------------------|
| 62     | Hemel Hempstead     |
| 63     |                     |
| 72     |                     |
| 74     |                     |
| 78     |                     |
| 80     |                     |
| 81     |                     |
| 82     | Kings Langley       |
| 89     |                     |
| 94     |                     |
| 97     | Markyate            |
| 99     |                     |
| 105    | Tring               |
| 114    |                     |
| 122    |                     |
| 124    |                     |
| 128    |                     |
| 132    |                     |

## Parcel 02 - South of Berkhamsted



Location plan

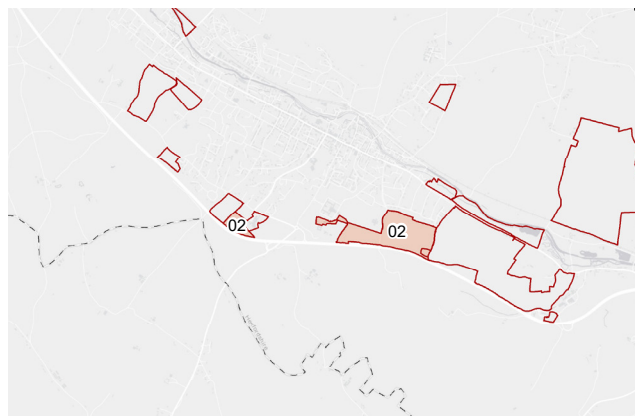
Parcel 02 falls within character area 110 Ashlyns And Wigginton Plateau within the Dacorum Landscape Character Assessment.

The susceptibility, value and sensitivity of the landscape to change resulting from residential development are discussed below.

### Evaluation of landscape value

The Landscape parcel is assessed as having *neighbourhood* landscape value in light of the following:

- The moderate condition of the landscape due to the medium level of intactness;
- a number of features demonstrate the parcel and the immediate surroundings' high representativeness of wider landscape character as described in the key characteristics of the LCAs from the Dacorum Borough Character Assessment: estates and estate planting, grassland or ley crops, a gently undulating plateau, part of suburban fringe of Berkhamsted including sports fields and school buildings and areas of woodland;
- there are no designations within the parcel although Ashlyns Hall is a grade II\* listed building and in the listing the setting is mentioned: "Set in small landscaped park with fine cedars" and the parcel includes a cedar which contributes to the setting of the nationally important listed building;
- the recreational value attached to the PRoW along the eastern edge of the parcel serving the local neighbourhood; and
- the parcel contributes to the setting of Ashlyns Hall is a grade II\* listed building of cultural value; and national significance.



Parcel context plan

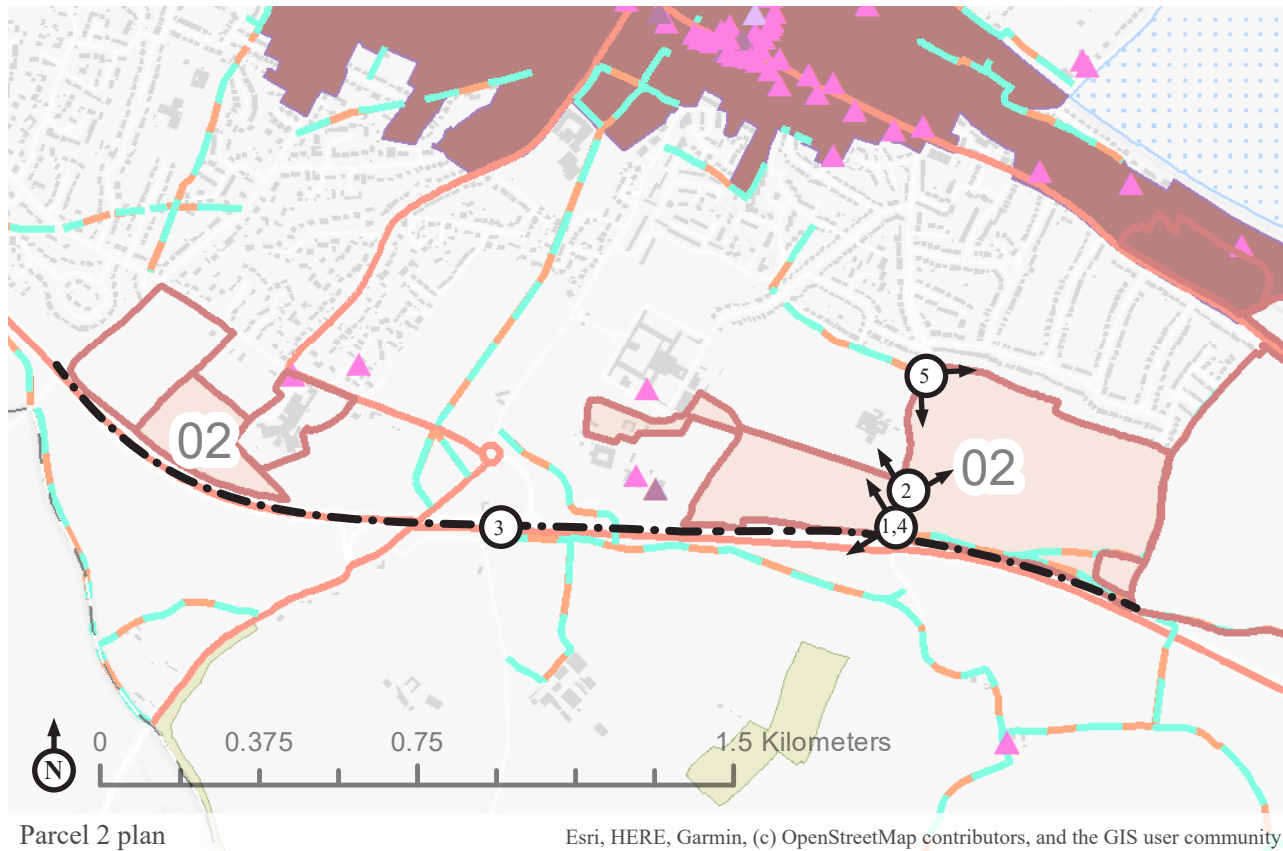
**Table 4 - Landscape susceptibility**

| Criterion  | Comment  | Susceptibility score |
|--|--|----------------------|
| Landform   | <p>The landform within the parcel is varied due to the size and spread of the parcel but the artificial A41 embankment runs along the southern edge of the both areas of the parcel.</p> <p>The western area of the parcel rises to the west to the crest of a very gentle rounded hill.</p> <p>The eastern area forms part of the rounded ridgeline running east west with a gentle fall to the east.</p> <p>Surrounding the parcel the landform falls both to the north and south and the crest of the hill visually separates the A41 from the areas north of the parcel.</p> <p>The level of landform variation is judged susceptible to change from residential development.</p>  | Moderate-High        |
| Development character and edges  | <p>The smaller western area of the parcel adjoins the back of a small complex of warehouses with a woodland belt along all of the irregular boundaries.</p> <p>The larger area of the parcel has Swing Gate Lane and the Thomas Coram Church of England School dividing the parcel further but the built development is largely well screened by hedgerows and scattered trees.</p> <p>The eastern area of the parcel is lined to the north by a relatively linear row of back gardens to residential properties with a mixture of boundary treatments and degrees of openness to the properties, but is largely well vegetated.</p> <p>The grand house west of the eastern area of the parcel, Ashlyns Hall Grade II* listed building, is also visible as the gardens open up onto the agricultural land of the parcel. However, the other development influences identified above reduce susceptibility to moderate.</p> | Moderate             |
| Perception (including scenic quality, sense of tranquillity and separation from urbanising influences) | <p>The scenic quality is positively influenced by the rural surroundings and generally good degree of screening of the urbanising influences surrounding the area of the parcel.</p> <p>The level of tranquillity and perception of separation of the parcel is notably affected by the road noise of the A41, especially in areas south of the crest of the hill or ridgeline. These markedly affect susceptibility in terms of perception - moderate susceptibility in these terms.</p>  | Moderate             |



Parcel aerial plan

| Criterion                                     | Comment  | Susceptibility score |
|---|--|----------------------|
| Scale and pattern, including cultural pattern | <p>The parcel is made up of three irregularly shaped fields. The area of the parcel to the west is small and within a context of similarly small fields separated from the wider network of green spaces by the A41, the A416 and the southern edge of Berkhamsted.</p> <p>In the eastern area of the parcel the fields are medium to large and form part of a wider arrangement of large agricultural fields following the direction of the ridgeline between the A41 and London Road.</p> <p>The cultural pattern within the parcel is largely absent as there are no remaining internal field boundaries when compared to a 1900's historic OS map.</p> <p>The Ashlyns Hall is a grade II* listed building and is an early 19th century villa which is adjacent to the parcel. A standalone cedar tree within the parcel suggests that it was formally part of a the retained designed landscape associated with Ashlyns Hall.</p> <p>The A41 has severed the wider cultural pattern of a series of parkland landscapes e.g. Haresfoot which was formerly adjacent to Ashlyns. Whilst the landscape of Ashlyns is susceptible the erosion of the landscape pattern and the severance created by the A41 reduces susceptibility to moderate.</p> | Moderate             |
| Skylines, visual and views                    | <p>The views of the western area of the parcel are short and primarily defined by the surrounding vegetation. The exception are views southward over the A41 buffer planting of the opposite wooded ridge.</p> <p>In the eastern area of the parcel views are medium to long distance over the open arable landscape and elevated position. Most views are limited by the trees surrounding the fields and influenced by the rounded hilltop but views from the eastern edge are possible across the valley to the north including views of the wooded escarpment of the Chilterns AONB.</p> <p>Landmarks include Ashlyns Hall which is clearly visible across the open field and the standalone cedar tree also creates a visual point of interest.</p> <p>Detracting factors include rows of pylons which influence both areas of the parcel, slightly reducing susceptibility in these terms to moderate-high overall.</p>  | Moderate-High        |
| <b>Overall susceptibility to change</b>       |  | Moderate-High        |



- Key
- Landscape parcel
  - Other land parcels
  - Main Road
  - Public Rights of Way

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ancient Woodland
- Listed Buildings:
- I
- II\*
- II

1. Ashlyns Hall and the standalone cedar tree creating local landmarks and suggest a former designed landscape.
2. View along Swing Gate Lane and the woodland buffer to the Thomas Coram Church of England School.
3. The A41 and embankment along it.
4. Panoramic view of the medium to large open arable fields along the crest of the hill with a wooded skyline.
5. Panoramic view of the large open arable fields along the mixed back garden edges of the surrounding development