

METHODOLOGY FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of the effects of development on '*landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity*' (GLVIA3¹, paragraph 1.1). Although it refers to landscape, GLVIA3 (paragraphs 2.6 - 2.8) also makes clear that the same principles apply to townscapes and seascapes. GLVIA3 is the main source of guidance on the principles and processes of LVIA and recognises that, having ratified the European Landscape Convention, the United Kingdom Government has obligations to deal with such matters. The guidance also considers the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 1.1.2 Landscape is a definable set of characteristics resulting from the interaction of natural, physical, and human factors. It is a resource. Its assessment is distinct from visual assessment, which deals specifically with effects on the views and visual amenity of different groups of people at receptor locations. GLVIA3 (paragraph 2.22) makes clear that these two elements, although inter-related, should be assessed separately and that the assessment should clearly demonstrate the difference between them.
- 1.1.3 GLVIA3 (paragraph 2.23) states that professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA process; whilst there may be some scope for objective measurement of landscape and visual changes, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements. It is critical that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.
- 1.1.4 GLVIA3 sets out a framework for making such judgements. It describes a step-by-step approach in which: judgements about the value and susceptibility of the receptor are combined into a judgement about sensitivity; judgements about the size/scale of the effect, its geographical extent and its duration and reversibility are combined into a judgement about the magnitude of the effect; and finally, the judgements about sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the effect are combined to judge the level of the effect. If the assessment forms part of an EIA, a threshold will then be identified as to which effects are considered significant and which are not. In non-EIA appraisals, this step is not required, though levels of effect will be described in terms of their relative importance.
- 1.1.5 GLVIA3 is not prescriptive about how the judgments should be made. This is a matter for individual practitioners to decide and explain. This document therefore sets out the criteria and definitions used by COOPER Landscape Planning, in both EIA and non-EIA landscape and visual assessments.

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition, April 2013).

2.0 Landscape Effects

- 2.1.1 The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as *'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'*. Landscape applies neither to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside.
- 2.1.2 GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.34) recommends assessment of the effects on landscape receptors, these being the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected. They will include individual elements (such as hedges or buildings), aesthetic and perceptual aspects (for example sense of naturalness, tranquillity, or openness), or, at a larger scale, the character of a defined character area or landscape type. Designated landscapes, such as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), may also be treated as landscape receptors, in which case attention is also given to effects on their special qualities.
- 2.1.3 This assessment is being undertaken because the proposed development has the potential to remove or add elements to the landscape, to alter aesthetic or perceptual aspects, and to add, remove or alter characteristics, and thus potentially change overall character.
- 2.1.4 A methodical assessment is required of the sensitivity of receptors to the proposals, as well as the magnitude of effect which would be experienced.
- 2.1.5 The criteria and definitions used in making these judgements are now set out below.
- 2.1.6 The sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining assessments of the value attached to each receptor and the susceptibility of each receptor to the type of change which is proposed (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.39).
- 2.1.7 Landscape value is assessed as part of the baseline. Susceptibility and sensitivity form part of the detailed assessment of the effects and are specific to the particular project.
- 2.1.8 Landscape receptors may be valued at community, local, national, or international level. Existing landscape designations provide the starting point for this assessment, as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Value of Landscape Designations

Designation	Description	Value
World Heritage Sites, candidate World Heritage Site	Unique sites, features or areas identified as being of international importance according to UNESCO criteria. Consideration should be given to their settings, especially where these contribute to the attributes of outstanding universal value for which such an area of landscape is valued.	International
National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Scenic Areas	Areas of landscape identified as being of national importance. Consideration should be given to their settings, especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	National

Designation	Description	Value
(in Scotland)		
Parks, gardens, and designed landscapes	Gardens and designed landscapes included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as Grade I, II* or II, or included in Historic Scotland's Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland.	National
Local Landscape Designations (such as Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value and similar) included in local planning documents; or other landscapes of identified value	Areas of landscape identified as having value, which are either recognised at the local authority level by a local designation or other equivalent recognition of value OR are landscapes considered to have elevated value, having regard to the criteria in Table 2 below and/or by virtue of demonstrable physical attributes.	Local Authority
Undesignated landscapes	Landscapes which do not have any formal designation, and which are not considered to have demonstrable physical attributes that elevate their value, but which may be valued by local communities.	Community
Undesignated landscapes with negative attributes	Landscapes with no designations or demonstrable physical attributes that elevate their value, which are in poor condition or are degraded or fundamentally altered by presence of man-made structures judged to be intrusive.	Low

2.1.9 Where landscapes are not designated or where no other local authority guidance is available (for example, previous local landscape designations or Landscape Character Assessments) an assessment of landscape value can be made by reference to Table 2 below. This is based on Box 5.1 in GLVIA3. The table shows that an assessment of value is made for each receptor, whether it is comparable to a landscape designation, or whether it is of value to local people and communities. For example, an intact landscape in good condition, where scenic quality, tranquillity, and/or conservation interests contribute to the landscape, or where there are important cultural or historical associations, might be of equivalent value to a local landscape designation. Conversely, a degraded landscape in poor condition, with no scenic qualities or natural or cultural heritage interest, is likely to be considered of limited landscape value.

2.1.10 In applying the criteria, and in accordance with the judgement of Justice Ouseley², an assessment is also made to determine whether the site has demonstrable physical attributes which elevate its value.

² CO/4082/2014 Neutral Citation Number: [2015] EWHC 488 (Admin) In the High Court of Justice Queen's Bench Division the Administrative Court Before: Mr Justice Ouseley Between: Stroud District Council, Claimant V Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Defendant.

Table 2
Landscape Value of Non-Designated Landscapes (From Box 5.1)

Factor	Criteria
Landscape Quality	Intactness of the landscape demonstrated by, for example, presence of characteristic natural and man-made elements, which are generally in good condition; absence of significant incongruous elements (or elements having only localised or temporary effects).
Scenic Quality	General appeal of the landscape to the senses through, for example, combinations of some of the following: a clear and recognisable sense of place; striking landform or patterns of land cover; strong aesthetic qualities such as scale, form, colour and texture; simplicity or diversity; presence of ephemeral or seasonal interest.
Rarity	Presence of landscape character areas, types or features that are relatively rare in the local area.
Representativeness	Presence of locally important examples representing landscape character areas or types, or characteristics/features/elements.
Conservation Interests	Presence of some of the following where they contribute positively to experience of the landscape: natural heritage features, including geological or geomorphological features, wildlife and habitats, including those that are designated or notified as SSSIs and features such as veteran trees or trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders; cultural heritage features, including buildings, especially listed buildings, settlements including conservation areas, gardens, parkland and other designed landscapes not on the register, and historic landscape types which demonstrate the time depth of the landscape.
Recreation Value	The extent to which experience of the landscape makes an important contribution to recreational use and enjoyment of an area.
Perceptual Aspects, including tranquillity	Presence of ephemeral or seasonal interest and/or notable sensory stimuli such as sounds and smells, qualities of light, or weather patterns. Opportunities to experience a sense of relative wildness and/or relative tranquillity in comparison with other local landscapes in the vicinity, demonstrated by the degree of influence of overt man-made structures, level of visual and audible intrusions, and degree of perceived naturalness.
Associations	Evidence that the landscape is associated with locally important written descriptions of the landscape, or artistic representation of it in any media, or events in history, or notable people or important cultural traditions or beliefs.

- 2.1.11 Susceptibility is the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development. The assessment of susceptibility involves the characteristics of the proposals and the ability of a landscape or feature to accommodate that change. Criteria set out in Table 3 below.
- 2.1.12 Aspects of the character of the landscape that may be affected by a particular type of development include landform, skylines, land cover, enclosure, human influences including settlement pattern and aesthetic and perceptual aspects such as the scale of the landscape, its form, line, texture, pattern and grain, complexity, and its sense of movement, remoteness,

wildness or tranquillity. They will vary with the type of development being considered. For example, an urban landscape which contains several industrial buildings may have a low susceptibility to buildings of a similar scale and character. Conversely, a rural landscape containing only remote farmsteads is likely to have a high susceptibility to large-scale built development.

Table 3
Landscape Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the proposed development because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Medium	The landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Low	The landscape receptor has low susceptibility to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape are generally able to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.

2.1.13 The sensitivity of landscape receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between value and susceptibility. Figure 1 shows the general, not formulaic, nature of the relationship. Table 4 describes the levels, with professional judgement applied on a case by case basis.

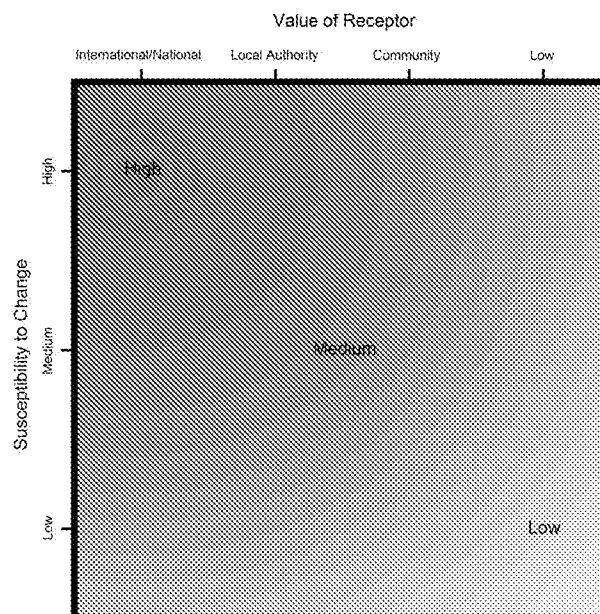


Figure 1
Example Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility

Table 4
Levels of Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of national value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.
Medium	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.
Low	The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development. OR The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.

2.1.14 The magnitude of change is assessed by the size of the change against the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change. This is defined by Table 5 below, with the size and scale of change in the landscape considering the following factors:

- the loss or addition of landscape elements; and/or
- the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
- whether this is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape.

Table 5
Size of Landscape Change

Category	Description
Large level of landscape change	There would be a large level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development: - becomes a dominant feature in the landscape, changing the balance of landscape characteristics; and/or - would dominate important visual connections with other landscape types, where this is a key characteristic of the area.
Medium level of landscape change	There would be a medium level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example: - the proposed development would be more prominent, but would not change the overall balance or composition of the landscape; and/or - key visual connections to other landscape types may be interrupted intermittently by the proposed development, but these connections would not be dominated by them.
Small level of landscape change	There would be a small level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, there would be no introduction of new elements into the landscape and the proposed development would not significantly change the composition/balance of the landscape.
Negligible level of landscape change/no change	There would be a negligible level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development would be a small element and/or would be a considerable distance from the landscape receptor/the proposed development will cause no change to the landscape.

2.1.16 The geographical extent of landscape change is determined by the area over which it will influence the landscape, as set out in Table 6 below. For example, this could be at the site level, in the immediate setting of the site, or over some or all the landscape character types, or areas affected.

Table 6
Geographical Extent

Category	Description
Large extent of landscape change	The change will affect all or most of the landscape receptor under consideration.
Medium extent of landscape change	The change will affect approximately half of the landscape receptor under consideration.
Small extent of landscape change	The change will affect a small extent of the landscape receptor under consideration.
Negligible extent of landscape change	The change will affect only a limited or negligible extent of the landscape receptor under consideration.

2.1.17 The duration of the landscape change is categorised in Table 7 below, which considers whether the change will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Table 7
Duration and Reversibility

Category	Description
Permanent/Irreversible	Change that will last for over 15 years and is permanent or irreversible.
Long-term Reversible	Change that will endure for over 15 years and is potentially, or theoretically reversible.
Medium-term Reversible	Change that will last for up to 15 years and is wholly or partially reversible.
Temporary/Short-term Reversible	Change that will last from 0 to 5 years and is reversible - including construction effects.

2.1.18 The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of landscape effects are illustrated graphically in Figure 2 below. Various combinations are possible, and the overall magnitude of each effect is determined using professional judgement, rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.

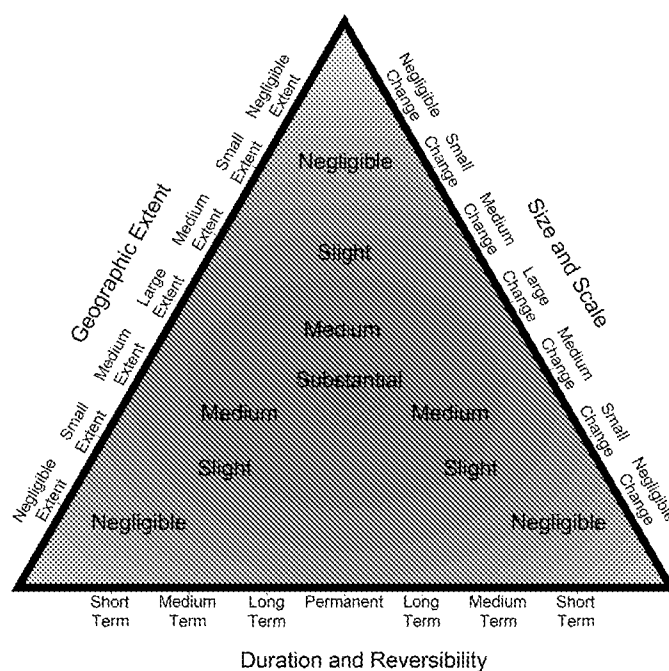


Figure 2
Determining the Magnitude of Landscape Change

2.1.19 The assessment of landscape effects, and whether these are significant is illustrated by Figure 3. It is not formulaic, instead judgements are made about each landscape effect using this diagram as a guide.

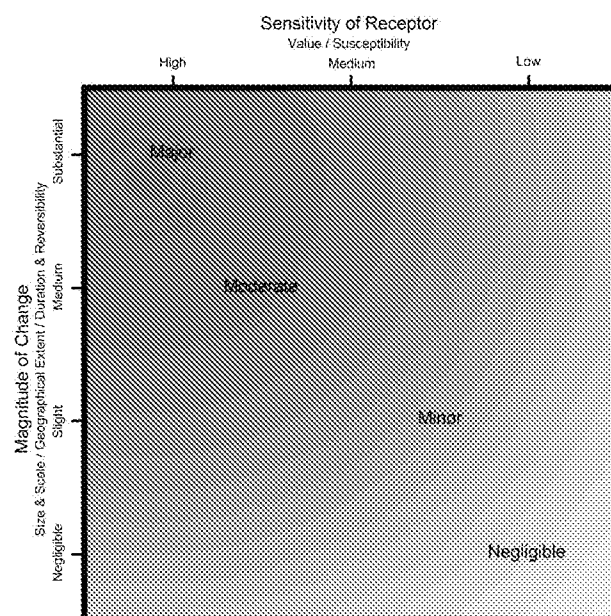


Figure 3
Landscape Effects and Importance or Significance

- 2.1.20 Effects that fall in the red (darker) section of the diagram, that is those which are major effects by virtue of the more sensitive receptors and/ or the greater magnitude of effects, are generally considered to be the significant or important. Those effects falling outside this category are generally considered to be not significant. However, GLVIA3 states '*there are no hard and fast rules about what effects should be deemed significant*', and in some cases professional judgement may determine that a moderate effect is significant.
- 2.1.21 Moderate effects are considered on a case by case basis, to determine whether the effect is significant, or not.
- 2.1.22 Landscape and visual assessments being based on receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of change. To ensure a consistency and transparency to the assessments process, it is useful for the assessor to have an initial touchstone of the likely effects, and this is provided using Table 8 below. This table is not formulaic, it provides initial guidance only, with the results then modified by site specific factors, on their merits, using the methodology above.

Table 8: Consistency Test

Sensitivity	High	Medium	Slight	Negligible
High	Major Effect	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect
Medium	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor-Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect
Low	Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect	Minor or No Effect	Minor or No Effect

3.0 Visual Effects

3.1.1 Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development. They may include:

- communities within settlements (i.e. towns, villages, and hamlets);
- people using nationally designated or regionally promoted footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways and others using areas of Open Access Land agreed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- users of the local public rights of way (PRoW) network;
- visitors at publicly accessible sites, including, for example, gardens and designed landscapes, historic sites, and other visitor attractions or outdoor recreational facilities where the landscape or seascape is an important part of the experience;
- users of outdoor sport and recreation facilities;
- visitors staying at caravan parks or camp sites;
- road users on recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes;
- travellers using other roads who may pass through the study area because they are visiting, living, or working there;
- rail passengers; and
- people at their place of work.

3.1.2 Receptors within private dwellings or offices are not considered as potential receptors, unless stated otherwise. This is because no public access is available to these properties. A receptor outside or close to residential properties may be used instead to provide a representative view.

3.1.3 Judging visual effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

3.1.4 Assessment viewpoints are chosen, in discussion with the competent authority and other stakeholders.

3.1.5 Sensitivity of visual receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of visual receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the views (GLVIA3, paragraph 6.30).

3.1.6 Different levels of value are attached to the views experienced by people at representative viewpoints, with the assessment taking account of factors such as:

- recognition of the view through some form of planning designation or by its association with

heritage assets;

- the popularity of the viewpoint, in part denoted by its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, or on tourist maps, by information from stakeholders and by the evidence of use, including facilities provided for its enjoyment (seating, signage, parking places, etc.); and
- other evidence of the value attached to views by people, including consultation with local planning authorities, some of whom have carried out assessments of valued views, and professional assessment of the quality of views.

3.1.7 The assessment of the value of those views is summarised in Table 9 below.

Table 9
Value of Views

Value	Criteria
High	Views from nationally (and in some cases internationally) known viewpoints, which: ◆ may have some form of planning designation; or ◆ are associated with internationally or nationally designated landscapes or important heritage assets; or ◆ are promoted in sources such as maps and tourist literature; or ◆ are linked with important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or ◆ have important cultural associations. Also, may include views judged by assessors to be of high value.
Medium	Views from viewpoints of some importance at regional or local levels, which: ◆ may have some form of local planning designation associated with locally designated landscapes or areas of equivalent landscape quality; or ◆ are promoted in local sources; or ◆ are linked with locally important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or ◆ have important local cultural associations. Also, may include views judged by the assessors to be of medium value.
Low	Views from viewpoints which, although they may have value to local people: ◆ may have no formal planning status; or ◆ are not associated with designated or otherwise high-quality landscapes; or ◆ are not linked with popular visitor attractions; or ◆ have no known cultural associations. Also, may include views judged by the assessors to be of low value.

3.1.8 Other considerations apply:

- views in a rural or designed context (e.g. an avenue of trees or designed view from a parkland), especially if associated with landscapes of national or local authority value, where residential receptors are positioned to take advantage of the views, will generally be considered to be of high value;
- views in a semi-rural or general townscape context, and/or where locations of residential receptors are not positioned to take full advantage of views, will generally be considered of medium value;

and

- views in an urban/industrial context, and/or where locations of residential receptors are not positioned to take advantage of views, will generally be considered of low value.

3.1.9 The susceptibility of different types of people to changes in views is a function of:

- the occupation or activity of the viewer at a given viewpoint; and
- the extent to which the viewer's attention or interest be focussed on a view and the visual amenity experienced at a given view.

3.1.10 The susceptibility of change for viewers is assessed with reference to the guidance in Table 10 below, noting that GLVIA3 states that '*this division is not black and white and, in reality, there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change.*' Therefore, the susceptibility should be described in the relevant text in the assessment.

Table 10
Visual Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	※ Residents; ※ People engaged in outdoor recreation where their attention is likely to be focused on the landscape and on views; ※ Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; and ※ Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by the residents.
Medium	※ Travellers on scenic routes where the attention of drivers and passengers is likely to be focused on the landscape and on views; and ※ People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which may involve appreciation of views, e.g. users of golf courses.
Low	※ People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of views; ※ People at their place of work whose attention is focused on their work, where the setting is not important to quality of working life; and ※ Travellers, where the view is incidental to the journey.

3.1.11 The sensitivity of visual receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between the value of views and the susceptibility of the different receptors to the proposed change, as indicated in Figure 4 and Table 10 below. These summarise the general nature of the relationship, but the combination of the two factors is not formulaic. Table 10 provides examples of common combinations but is not comprehensive and other combinations may be judged appropriate. Professional judgement is applied on a case by case basis in determining the sensitivity of individual receptors, with the diagram and table serving as a guide.

3.1.12 Where, considering the component judgements about the value and susceptibility of the visual receptor, sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment may be appropriate.

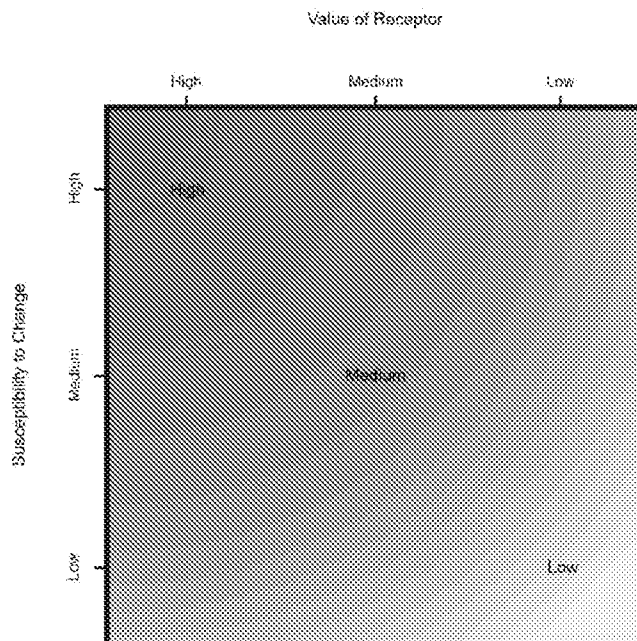


Figure 4
Visual Sensitivity Defined by Value and Susceptibility

Table 11
Visual Sensitivity Definitions

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of high value. OR The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of high value. OR The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the medium level.
Medium	The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the low level. OR The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the medium level. OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the high level.

Sensitivity	Criteria
Low	The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the low level. OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the medium level. OR The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity, and relevant views are of value at the low level.

3.1.13 The magnitude of visual change is established by comparing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change. Representative viewpoints are used to assess the typical change experienced by different groups of visual receptors at different distances and directions from the proposed development.

3.1.14 The criteria used to assess the size and scale of visual change are as follows:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and distance of view;
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of factors such as form, scale and mass, line, height, colour, and texture; and
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, for example whether views will be full, partial or glimpses or sequential views while passing through the landscape.

3.1.15 The above criteria are summarised in Table 12 below.

Table 12
Size or Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Large change	visual The proposed development will cause a complete or large change in the view, resulting from the loss of important features in or the addition of important new ones, to the extent that this will substantially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers.
Medium change	visual The proposed development will cause a clearly noticeable change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will alter to a moderate degree the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial/intermittent.
Small change	visual The proposed development will cause a perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will partially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial only.
Negligible change	visual The proposed development will cause a barely perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will barely alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be glimpsed only.

Category	Criteria
No change	The proposed development will cause no change to the view.

- 3.1.16 The geographical extent of the visual change identified at representative viewpoints is assessed by reference to a combination of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), where this has been prepared, and field work. The way that geographical extent is assessed varies with circumstances.
- 3.1.17 Most commonly, several representative viewpoints are used as sample points to assess the typical change experienced by a group of visual receptors in locations at different distances and directions from the proposals. The geographical extent of the visual change is then judged for each group of receptors (for example, people using a particular route or public amenity), drawing on the relevant viewpoint assessments, plus information about the approximate number and distribution of that particular group of people in the study area.
- 3.1.18 The geographical extent could be small if the change is experienced at only one or two locations and/or by a smaller number of viewers. Community views may be experienced from a small number of dwellings, or affect numerous properties in the community, or several different communities. Similarly, changes to a view from a public footpath may be visible from a single isolated viewpoint (a small geographical extent), or over a prolonged stretch of the route (a large geographical extent).
- 3.1.19 For specific (rather than representative) viewpoints the following factors will be relevant:
- the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
 - the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and
 - the extent of the area over which changes would be visible.
- 3.1.20 For example, from an elevated area of Open Access Land, the proposed development may be widely visible from much or all the accessible area, be close to it and so occupy a wide angle of the view, suggesting large geographical extent. Alternatively, the proposed development may be visible from only a small proportion of the area, be quite distant from it and so occupy a small proportion of the view, suggesting small geographical extent.
- 3.1.21 Table 13 below describes the most common categories of geographical extent based on these two approaches.

Table 13
Geographical Extent of Change

Category	Description
Large extent of visual change	Either: The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors in many locations across the Study Area or from the majority, or a large proportion, of a linear route and/or by large numbers of viewers. Or: The proposed development is visible from much or all a specific site, is close to it and so occupies

Category	Description
	a wide angle of the view.
Medium extent of visual change	Either: The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors in several locations across the Study Area or from a moderate proportion of a linear route and/or by moderate numbers of viewers. Or: The proposed development is visible from a moderate part of a specific site, is at a moderate distance from it and so occupies a moderate angle of the view.
Small extent of visual change	Either: The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors at a small number of locations across the Study Area or from limited sections of a linear route and/or by a small number of viewers. Or: The proposed development is visible from a small part of a specific site, is at some distance from it and so occupies a small angle of the view.
Negligible extent of visual change	Either: The proposed development is not visible in the Study Area or is seen by the group of receptors at only one or two locations or from a very short length of a linear route and/or by a very small number of viewers. OR: The proposed development is visible from only a very small part of a site, is at a considerable distance from it and so occupies a very small angle of the view.

3.1.22 The duration of the visual change at viewpoints is categorised in Table 14 below, which considers whether views will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

Table 14
Duration and Reversibility

Category	Description
Permanent/Irreversible	Change that will last for over 15 years and is considered irreversible.
Long-term Reversible	Change that will last for over 15 years and is considered potentially reversible.
Medium-term Reversible	Change that will last for 5 to 15 years and is wholly or partially reversible.
Temporary/Short-term Reversible	Change that will last from 0 to 5 years and is reversible, including construction effects.

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of visual effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Figure 5 below. Various combinations are possible, and the overall magnitude of each effect is made using professional judgement.

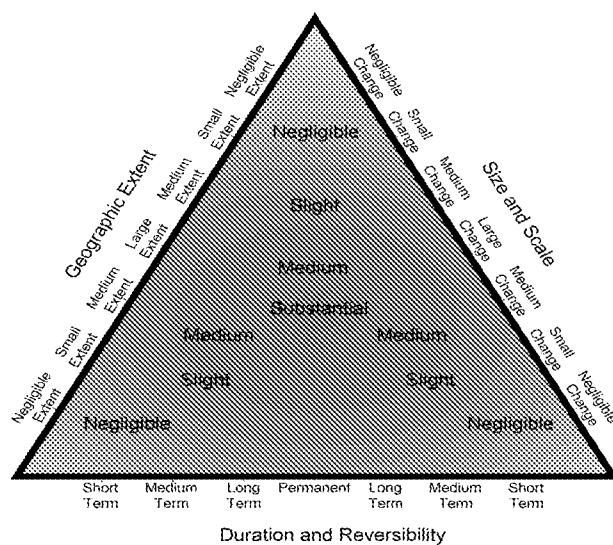


Figure 5
Magnitude of Visual Change

3.1.23 Visual effects, and whether these are either significant or important, are defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the magnitude of the change. Figure 6 summarises the nature of the relationship and indicates broad levels of effect. Judgements are made about each visual effect using this diagram as a guide.

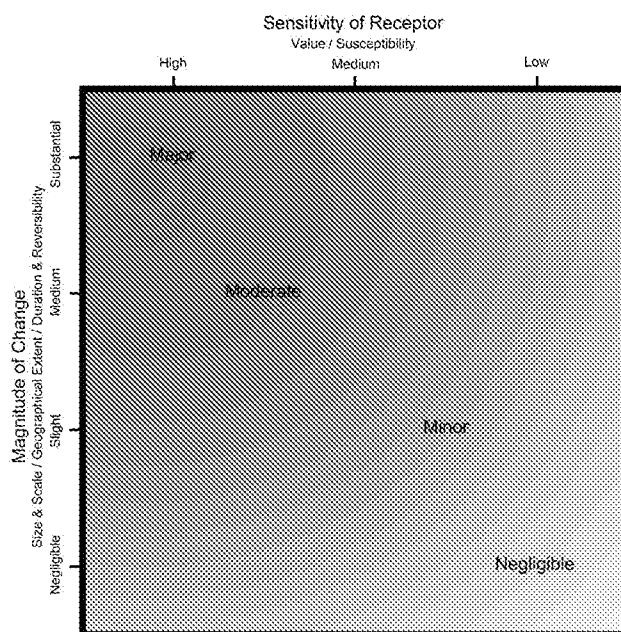


Figure 6
Assessment of Visual Effects and Overall Significance

3.1.24 Effects that fall in the red (darker) section of the diagram are the significant visual effects. Those effects falling outside the major or major/moderate categories are generally considered to be not significant, noting that GLVIA3 states 'there are no hard and fast rules about what effects should be deemed significant' and in some cases professional judgement may

determine that a moderate effect is significant.

- 3.1.25 Landscape and visual assessments being based on receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of change. To ensure a consistency and transparency to the assessments process, it is useful for the assessor to have an initial touchstone of the likely effects, and this is provided using Table 5, below. This table is not formulaic, it provides initial guidance only, with the results then modified by site specific factors, on their merits, using the methodology above.

Table 15: Consistency Test

Sensitivity	High	Medium	Slight	Negligible
High	Major Effect	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect
Medium	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor - Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect
Low	Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect	Minor or No Effect	Minor or No Effect

