

9. TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Introduction

9.1 This chapter of the ES assesses the likely significant effects of the Development on the environment in respect of townscape and visual effects. The assessment considers the townscape features, character and quality of the Site and its context; the visibility of the Site and the nature and quality of existing views; and the predicted effects on townscape features and character and on views, resulting from the Development. The assessment also sets out the mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects; including the likely residual effects after these measures have been employed and with the establishment of proposed planting over 15 years. This chapter has been prepared by Andrew Cox, Senior Landscape Planner at Barton Willmore. Andrew is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI).

9.2 This chapter should be read in combination with the appended illustrative and narrative material:

- Appendix 9.1: Policy Context
- Appendix 9.2: Methodology
- Appendix 9.3: Illustrative Material incorporating:
 - Figure 1 Site Context Plan
 - Figure 2 Topographical Features Plan
 - Figure 3 Visual Appraisal Plan
 - Figure 4 Site Appraisal Plan
 - Figure 5 Site Appraisal Photographs
- Appendix 9.4: Townscape Character Areas incorporating:
 - Figure 6 Townscape Character Existing Baseline
 - Figure 7 Townscape Character Future Baseline
- Appendix 9.5: Landscape Effects Table
- Appendix 9.6: Visual Effects Table
- Appendix 9.7: Accurate Visual Representations.

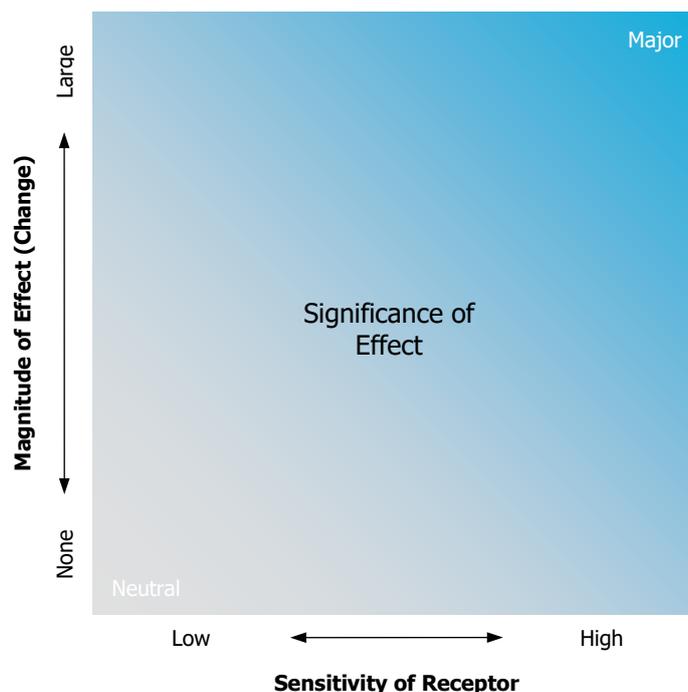
Planning Policy Context

9.3 The planning policy context is set out in Appendix 9.1.

Assessment Methodology

- 9.4 The methodology employed to prepare this chapter is drawn from principles set out in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' Third Edition (GLVIA 3), published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. The detailed methodology used in the preparation of this chapter is provided in Appendix 9.2.
- 9.5 In summary, the fundamental considerations in the assessment of townscape and visual effects are the sensitivity of townscape features, visual receptors and townscape character areas (based on considerations of value and susceptibility); and the magnitude of change, be it adverse and/or beneficial, that these receptors are likely to experience as a result of the construction and operational phases of the Development. Effects are considered for the Development at Year 1 of operation; and at Year 15 of operation, which accounts for the ongoing establishment of planting associated with the Development.
- 9.6 Significance of effects is rated on a scale of neutral to major. Assessment of significance of effects is subject to professional judgement but, in broad terms, as shown in Diagram 9.1, where a receptor of high sensitivity experiences a large magnitude of effect as a result of the Development, the significance of effect is likely to be major. Conversely, where a receptor of low sensitivity experiences a very small magnitude of effect as a result of the Development, the significance of effect is likely to be negligible.

Diagram 9.1: Significance of Townscape and Visual Effects



- 9.7 Where it is considered that there is potential for both beneficial and adverse changes, these magnitudes of effect are noted and the balance of these considerations used to draw conclusions on significance of effect.
- 9.8 In this assessment, a distinction is drawn between what are considered to be the significant and non-significant effects. Effects of moderate significance or above are considered to be significant and are described within this chapter as well as in the detailed assessments of landscape and visual effects. Effects of less than moderate significance are also described but are not considered to be significant and are therefore not typically included within this chapter, unless this is with reference to their change to, or from, a significant effect.

Limitations and Assumptions

- 9.9 The baseline townscape and visual appraisal used in this chapter was undertaken in winter conditions to understand the scenario of maximum visibility owing to the absence of leaves on deciduous trees whereas the AVRs are based on photography that was captured in summer months.

Baseline Conditions

Site Location

- 9.10 As shown in Appendix 9.3, Figure 1 the Site is located to the north-east of the centre of Walthamstow. Walthamstow lies in the north-eastern area of London, approximately 9km north-east of the City of London. Walthamstow lies to the south of the district of Chingford, to the west of Upper Walthamstow and Snaresbrook, to the north of Leyton and to the east of Tottenham. The Site lies within the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF). To the west of the LBWF lie the London Boroughs of Enfield, Haringey and Hackney, including the districts of Edmonton, Tottenham, Seven Sisters and Clapton. To the south lies the London Borough of Newham; and to the east lies the London Borough of Redbridge.

Topography and Hydrology

- 9.11 As shown in Appendix 9.3, Figure 2 The dominant topographical features in the wider area are the valley of the River Lea and the Walthamstow Forest ridge. The former lies at an elevation of approximately 6m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to the west of the Site and the latter rises to 60-70m AOD to the east of the Site. The Site itself is located on the lower slopes of the Walthamstow Forest ridge at an elevation of 30m AOD, the land falling imperceptibly across the Site from the south-east to the northwest. A hill outlier of the wider

ridgelines, to the south-west of the Site reaches a high point of approximately 40m AOD in the vicinity of Church Hill, approximately 1km from the Site.

- 9.12 There are no notable natural hydrological features in the local context area. There is a large scale civic fountain and pool in front of the Town Hall and this is currently being refurbished to make it accessible to the public. The wider context includes ponds and watercourses associated with Gilberts Slade within Walthamstow Forest. There are two covered reservoirs approximately 700 metres to the east of the Site. Walthamstow Wetlands and reservoirs are a defining characteristic of the Lea Valley to the west.

Vegetation

- 9.13 The ridgeline to the east is marked by the southern extents of Epping Forest, comprising extensive areas of woodland, parts of which are designated as Ancient Woodland. The forest is dominated at the canopy level by Oak species, with some Ash and Hornbeam which is often coppiced; and understorey and heathy scrub including Gorse, Hazel, Sweet Chestnut, Willow and Birch species. Areas of rough grassland are interspersed with the woodland.
- 9.14 In the built-up townscape, canopy vegetation on principal routes and in substantial public spaces typically comprises London Plane and Lime species. Smaller-scale street trees, including Rowan, Cherry and Hornbeam species are evident alongside roads.

Land Use / Settlement

- 9.15 Surrounding the Site, the predominant land use is residential, although commercial uses extend along Hoe Street and Wood St to the south-west and south respectively. Small pockets of light industrial use are situated to the north-west of the Site at Clifford Road and to the south of the Site near Wood Street Station. There is a pocket of civic land-use at Walthamstow Town Hall on Forest Road to the west of the Site. Educational facilities are commonplace around the Site, including Woodside Primary to the immediate south of the Site; Bremer secondary to the north; and Whitefield Academy to the north-east. Walthamstow College is located to the west of the Site adjacent to the Town Hall on Forest Road.
- 9.16 Walthamstow Town Centre lies to the south-west of the Site and is a busy commercial centre that includes retail land use along the approximately 1km extent of Walthamstow High Street, Wood Street is a district centre with a unique and distinctive high street that is currently being influenced by the regeneration of the Marlowe Estate. There is an Overground Rail Station at Wood Street which connects Liverpool Street Station to the south and Chingford to the north.

- 9.17 To the east, the forested ridgeline includes substantial areas of wooded and more open informal open space, notably in the vicinity of Forest Road.
- 9.18 In appraising the patterns of land use, it is noted that the following taller buildings are present within the wider context of the Site:
- St. David's Court, Forest Road (12+ storeys) approximately 100m to the south-west of the Site
 - Northwood Tower, Wood Street (21+ storeys) approximately 400m to the south of the Site;
 - St George's Court, Whipps Cross (13+ storeys), approximately 1.2km to the south of the Site
 - St. Nicholas Court, Chingford (13+ storeys) approximately 1.7km to the north of the Site
- 9.19 Numerous clusters of taller built form are evident in the wider townscape, including a group of taller buildings in the vicinity of Walthamstow Central Station and a smaller residential group to the west of the Site within the Blackhorse Lane Opportunity Area.

Designations

- 9.20 As shown in Appendix 9.3, Figure 1 there are relatively few designated features situated within the townscape context of the Site.

Planning Designations

- 9.21 The Site is not located within any area designated for townscape quality. Extensive areas of land on the ridgeline to the east are designated as CROW Access Areas. On the valley floor to the west lies the Lea Valley Regional Park. The Site does not lie within an Area of Special Character, nor does it lie within the view corridors or backdrops identified in the LVMF.

Heritage Assets

- 9.22 As shown in Appendix 9.3, Figure 1 no listed buildings lie within the Site. To the west there is a group of six Grade II listed assets that form part of the Civic Centre (1937-1942) including Walthamstow Town Hall and the Assembly Hall. There is a substantial three storey detached house at Brookscroft opposite the Civic Centre (590 Forest Road) which is also Grade II listed. To the south of the Site the Grade II Old Butchers Shop is located on Wood Street. Thorpe Coombe Hospital and the Walthamstow House (Corpus Christi School) (both Grade II) are

located to the south-west, 275m and 375m distant respectively. Approximately 1km to the south-west, a cluster of listed buildings are present in the vicinity of St Mary's Church, including the church itself (Grade II* listed) and a number of Grade II listed buildings and other features. Walthamstow Village Conservation Area designation covers this area. A further conservation area is present at Forest School, set within woodland approximately 1km to the south-east.

Public Rights of Way and Other Designated Routes

- 9.23 As shown in Appendix 9.3, Figure 1 other than the roads and associated footways within the street pattern, a number of routes extend across the wider townscape. The most important Sustrans cycle routes are the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route through the Lea Valley, the C23 cycleway to the south of Wood Street and, more locally to the Site, the Q2 Quietway Link to the north of Wood Street. There is a promoted Hornbeam Trail route for walkers through Walthamstow Forest.
- 9.24 The Enjoy Waltham Forest project (formerly Mini-Hollands) aims to improve the public realm for walkers and cyclists within the borough, notably through the provision of segregated cycle routes, widened pavements and traffic calming measures. The key project of relevance to the Site is the Forest Road to Wood Street cycle route that has improved the public realm to the immediate south-west of the Site, narrowing carriageways, improving crossings and introducing natural stone paving and therefore reducing the dominating influence of motor vehicles.
- 9.25 The section of Forest Road to the south of the Site is part of the London Cycle Network (LCN). LCN 54 is an 18km east-west route from East Finchley to Woodford. East of Wood Street, however, is not cycle friendly due to very narrow cycle lanes and is dominated by motor vehicles.
- 9.26 In terms of the future baseline, further improvements are anticipated for Forest Road and the area between Forest Road and the North Circular.

Landscape and Townscape Character - Published Studies

- 10.1 The Site is covered by landscape and townscape published character studies at the national and regional level. A summary of the relevant published studies is provided below.

National

9.27 The Site is located in the southern part of National Character Area (NCA) 111: Northern Thames Basinⁱ. The character area is described as “*a diverse area which extends from Hertfordshire in the west to the Essex coast in the east... Included within this NCA are the suburbs of North London...*” The NCA description and Statements of Environmental Opportunity do not provide further comment on the character of the urban setting of the Site.

Regional Character Areas: London's Natural Signaturesⁱⁱ

9.28 The Site is located within Natural Landscape Area 7: Essex Plateau. The focus of the identification of these is to provide “Design Clues’ based on Key Influences. For this reason, the impact of the Development on these is not assessed, but commentary of relevance to the Site and Development is noted below.

9.29 The soils of the Essex Plateau are described as being seasonally wet so generally unsuited to early settlement or agriculture and instead containing large areas of royal hunting forest, comprising a mix of woodland and open grassland. Historic settlement cores (including Walthamstow) are described as therefore being sparse and generally relating to the major roads out of the capital. The assessment goes on to note that there was limited Victorian expansion associated with Walthamstow, but that the main suburbanisation of the area occurred during the inter-war period.

9.30 Key Influences on this Natural Landscape Area include the extensive interconnected ridgetop woodlands on the skyline.

London's Local Character and Densityⁱⁱⁱ

10.2 The report identifies the following main typologies within the study area:

- 20th Century Suburb;
- Victorian Entrepreneurship; and
- Historic Town Centre.

10.3 The Site is identified within the 20th Century Suburb typology. The key characteristics for this are as follows:

"- Inter-war and older examples generally are perimeter block in format and comprise terraces, semi-detached and detached houses all

with gardens;

- *Post-war and more modern suburban housing tends to be either free-form or cul-de-sac in layout;*
- *Wide streets with street trees/grass verges as well as front gardens;*
- *Generous plot sizes with front and back gardens;*
- *Generally two storey development; and*
- *Street trees."*

10.4 The following commentary is made on the capacity of the 20th Century Suburb:

"Traditionally the suburbs have been considered a stumbling block to the city's intensification. However, ideas are now emerging which point towards sensitive infill, partial redevelopment and reinvented typologies that could make significant leaps forward. The potential for the classic semi-detached home to be extended and sub-divided into flats (as many Victorian terraces have been) does exist. However, this would need to be planned to ensure the supporting infrastructure can be delivered alongside."

London Borough of Waltham Forest Characterisation Study (July 2009)

9.31 Under the heading 'The Borough of Waltham Forest', the document describes Waltham Forest as a relatively young district, being formed by the amalgamation of areas that had distinct and separate characters:

"Leytonstone and Walthamstow in the south with their largely Victorian and later Edwardian history and Chingford in the north, largely a product of early twentieth century development".

9.32 The document notes:

"Aside from the pre-Victorian settlements, development in the borough largely followed the arrival of the railway, with the earliest mass Victorian development in Leyton and Leytonstone followed by Walthamstow, ranging from St James and the Coppermill area across to Wood Street."

9.33 In terms of development density, the document states:

"In broad terms, development density gradually decreases as one moves north in the Borough, with the obvious exceptions being the town centres and areas closest to good transport links."

9.34 With regard to building heights, the document states:

"One uniting feature is the general tendency towards two storey development, either as terraces, demi-detached or detached homes.

...

A number of taller buildings remain throughout the borough, but these tend not to relate to either the key urban centres, the transport links or the topography and as such do not create a meaningful or helpful structure which might reinforce the hierarchy of spaces and places."

9.35 Under the heading of "Understanding the Features of the Borough", the document describes the legibility of the borough, in terms of topography, routes, linkages, landmarks and vistas. The description of the topography of the borough notes "*The lie of the land is central to legibility in Waltham Forest. The gentle slope southwards and westwards towards the Lea Valley provides a strategic level context for overall orientation. The edges of the borough provide definition in the form of the Forest edge and the Valley edge*". In terms of Landmarks, the Walthamstow Town Hall complex on Forest Road is an important landmark building noted 500m to the west of the Site, similarly St Mary's Church, approximately 1km to the south-west. In terms of vistas, the document notes views out of the borough and internal views from Pole Hill, to the north of Chingford, but notes that whilst views across the Lea valley are obtained from the central and western parts of the Borough, "*there are no strong avenues or viewing corridors within the Borough itself.*"

9.36 In terms of Green Space, the Implications for Local Character in Walthamstow are noted as:

"Markedly more urban and less green in character. Street trees therefore play important role in softening character."

9.37 With regard to Building Height, the Policy Recommendation is:

"Two storey buildings predominate in the residential area of the borough. New development should generally reflect this building height as a key characteristic of the borough, unless clear and demonstrable design reasons suggest otherwise. Storey heights can be increased where appropriate along key routes and in central locations and also where the scale of the space is appropriate to accommodate additional height."

9.38 In terms of Pressures for Development, under Transport Infrastructure it is stated:

"In many instances, the major routes have a negative impact on local character and support the division of areas. Opportunities in the future to knit areas back together through new links and landscaping could have a beneficial impact on local character."

9.39 The characterisation of the Borough has been done at a number of scales, although the only particularly distinctive description of different areas has been provided at a very fine scale (down to block level), in the form of nearly 400 character areas. For the purposes of this assessment, the assessment of effects on townscape character has rationalised these areas

into slightly larger areas with reasonably coherent character and consider land up to approximately 500m from the Site, as beyond this, it is not considered that significant effects will occur.

9.40 The commentary from the published assessment in relation to the Site is noted. The Site lies within the W158 – Clifford Road character area. The following are listed as characteristic features of the Clifford Road area:

- Industrial estate centred around a much taller inter-war brick structure;
- Other units conform to the typical single-storey corrugated metal sheds for modern light industrial use; and
- Parking and servicing a significant factor.

Conservation Area Appraisals

9.41 Conservation Area Appraisals set out characteristics, including identified views, which have been considered in the Visual Appraisal exercise, where relevant. Although the Development will not affect these conservation areas directly, the appraisals provide detail on townscape characteristics in wider areas of the townscape on which the Development may have an indirect influence. On this basis, observations in these documents of relevance to townscape and visual considerations associated with the Site and Development are set out below.

9.42 The Walthamstow Village Conservation Area is located to the south-west of the Site. In relation to views, the Walthamstow Village Conservation Area leaflet document states the following:

“The Conservation Area is situated near the summit of a hill, and... the later development of Walthamstow which now totally surrounds the old village nucleus has meant that long views into and out of the area have now largely been obscured.”

Local Townscape Character

9.43 A local townscape characterisation exercise that goes beyond published character studies has been undertaken and provides the baseline for the assessment of townscape character. Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) have been identified and reference made to the characteristics identified within the LBWF Characterisation Study.

9.44 The TCAs inevitably include some variation in character (as set out in detail in the Characterisation Study) but the observations below summarise the key unifying features and,

where relevant, areas from the Characterisation Study have been amalgamated in order to make the assessment more meaningful and proportionate.

- 9.45 The themes considered in relation to each area are aligned with the London Plan Character and Context Supplementary Planning Guidance definition of Character (p.14) that emphasises, among other points:

"...the physical or built elements that make up the place, the cultural, social and economic factors which have combined to create identity, and the people associated with it through memories, association and activity."

- 9.46 The following localised Townscape Character Areas (TCAs) have been identified:

- TCA1 Clifford Road;
- TCA2 Upper Walthamstow
- TCA3 Walthamstow Village
- TCA4 Wood Street
- TCA5 Walthamstow Forest
- TCA6 Forest Road
- TCA 7 Wigram and Fernhill
- TCA 8 Forested Ridgeline Western Slopes

- 9.47 The forested ridgeline of Walthamstow Forest (TCA 5) to the east has been included despite not being considered within the LBWF Characterisation Study. The extent and spatial distribution of the TCAs identified are illustrated in Appendix 9.4 alongside the baseline descriptions and sensitivity assessments for each TCA.

Site Appraisal

- 9.48 The Site Appraisal Plan (Figure 4) and Site Appraisal Photographs (Figure 5) are shown in Appendix 9.3.

- 9.49 The Site comprises a rectangular block approximately 175m east-west and 75m north-south (approximately 1.76ha), not dissimilar in dimensions to some of the traditional perimeter blocks of housing in the surrounding area. There is a 5m elevation difference between the highest part of the Site in the south-east (30m AOD) and the lowest parts in the north-west (25m AOD). There are retaining walls and steep embankments in the south-eastern corner of the Site and the remainder of the Site is flat to accommodate a Homebase retail service. The existing built form consists of a simple rectangular box. Outside the metal clad Homebase

retail shed which occupies approximately half of the Site there is public parking to the west, staff car parking and delivery access to the north, and external storage areas to the east.

- 9.50 In terms of its immediate context, the Site is bounded by Forest Road to the south and Fulbourne Road to the west. To the east lies the London Overground railway and to the north lies the Hawker Place development which comprises Delamere Court and Cannock Court - three to four storey flats constructed in 2006 – with associated amenity and parking areas. The boundary treatment between Delamere Court and Cannock Court and the Site comprises timber fencing such that there is no physical permeability and views are screened at a low level.
- 9.51 The dominant characteristics of the Site are its utilitarian character and its lack of coherence with the immediate and wider townscape. This incoherence is the result of its distinct but utilitarian character, as well as perceptual barriers, notably the rail corridor to the east and the dual carriageway of Forest Road to the south which reinforce the sense of dislocation of the Site character. Permeability through the Site is restricted to a pedestrian access off Forest Road and the vehicular access to the north-west.
- 9.52 Forest Road to the south is an east-west strategic route through the borough, it is grade-separated from the Site as it rises to meet the rail overbridge, beyond which, to the east, it continues to rise up to the forested ridgeline.
- 9.53 To the west of the Site lie Sterling House and Willow House: office buildings that contribute negatively to local character due to their indistinct and featureless architecture, lack of active frontages and poor relationship with surrounding space. Both buildings are identified for redevelopment in the Wood Street Area Action Plan.
- 9.54 To the south of the Site, on the far side of Forest Road is a mixed character with inconsistent frontages and landuse. The area is primarily residential with recent small scale infill of flats and houses adjacent to the rail corridor; interwar terraced housing at Wigram Square (set around a large lozenged shaped area of unused public open space); and a four storey flatted development adjacent to the library on the corner of Wood Street. The library is closed and awaiting redevelopment.
- 9.55 The vegetation within the Site is generally in good condition and has a role in defining the character of Forest Road. However, the Homebase and carpark have a very limited contribution to the existing townscape character and provide limited visual interest or contribution to the street scene.

- 9.56 On this basis, notwithstanding the role that the TPO trees play, the character of the Site is considered to be of not more than medium-low value as overall, it comprises largely inconsequential components and characteristics. It is of low susceptibility to the type of development proposed, as it would be tolerant of substantial change of this type. Overall, the character of the Site is considered to be of low sensitivity to the type of development proposed.
- 9.57 Townscape features within the Site vary in value from high for trees, many of which are TPO, and which make a positive contribution to character, to low value for buildings, routes and hard surfacing, planting and grassed areas which are inconsequential townscape features. The susceptibility of all identified townscape elements to the type of development proposed is medium. Other townscape elements are replaceable and there is the intention to design to avoid tree loss. It is therefore considered that trees are of high sensitivity, buildings are of medium sensitivity, and routes and hard surfacing, planting and grassed areas features are of low sensitivity.

Visual Baseline

- 9.58 A visual appraisal of the Site and its environs has been undertaken to determine the likely visibility of the Site from these areas. The visual envelope of the Development has been established throughout the iterative design process, in close liaison with LBWF officers who have attended a number of meetings during the design process.
- 9.59 Approximately 60 publicly-accessible viewpoints were visited on the ground in March 2020 and June 2020 to understand the existing visibility of the Site from the surrounding area. In accordance with Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) 3rd Edition, a proportional set of illustrative materials and viewpoints for assessment was proposed for agreement with LBWF (i.e. not every viewpoint has to be shown or assessed and only those which most represent the nature of views from particular areas or show specific views have been selected).
- 9.60 Of the photographs taken at the viewpoints visited, locations 1-21 were agreed with LBWF as providing a sufficiently comprehensive range of representative and specific visual experiences in the surrounding area from which to understand the baseline situation and assess likely visual effects. Of these views, eleven were agreed with LBWF to be presented as verifiable fully rendered photomontage views: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 16 and 21; and seven as verifiable wireline images: 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 19. The remaining views 3, 7 and 20 are provided as existing view photographs. The view locations are shown in Appendix 9.3 Figure 4 and are considered further below.

- 9.61 There are no notable views or interesting vistas of the wider townscape from within the Site due to the strong physical enclosure provided by vegetation within the Site and adjacent built form. The Site sits in a low-lying area relative to most of the surroundings and there are no vantage points with the exception of the inaccessible south-eastern corner of the Site from which views to the west along the Forest Road corridor are obtained.
- 9.62 Enclosure is provided by canopy tree groups along Forest Road and Fulbourne Road. Built forms outwith the Site to the north and west restricts views across lower lying areas. Views out to the east are contained by a belt of trees on the railway embankment. There are filtered short-range views across Forest Road towards residential properties to the south of the Site. There are mid-range filtered views from the Site to the south-west and St David's Court (+10 storeys) is a prominent element in these views.
- 9.63 Neither the Site nor any of its individual features are an important component within any of the mid to long distance views from the surrounding townscape. When viewed from short to mid-range the group of TPO Plane trees along Forest Road within the Site are an attractive feature in their own right and they also serve as a visual screen, filtering views of the Homebase shed and car park.
- 9.64 Given the relatively flat topography and built up nature of the surroundings there are relatively few opportunities for views into the Site and these generally occur from close range only. The majority of the views from distance and photomontages are included to illustrate the increased height within the Site.
- 9.65 Views from the wider townscape are provided to demonstrate the most commonly occurring types of visual experience of the Site that will occur. The views can be classified into five broad groups as follows:
- Close range views representing residential receptors adjacent to the Site
 - Transient views along the east-west axis of Forest Road
 - Transient views from the north-south axis of Wood Street and Fulbourne Road –
 - Panoramic views from areas of public open space including parks, recreation grounds, sports pitches and allotments
 - Limited locations where increased elevation allows a vantage for potential longer distance views

Close range views from residential areas to the south of the Site

- 9.66 From locations to the south of the site including Forest Road, Wigram Square and Radbourne Crescent, views into the Site are generally restricted by intervening vegetation, built form and urban infrastructure. View 4 is from the junction of Wigram Square and Forest Road some 25m from the Site. Views are available into the Site from this location albeit filtered by the avenue of Plane trees around the Homebase car park and the belt of deciduous vegetation in front of Homebase.
- 9.67 View 7 is taken from the lozenge shaped open space at the centre of Wigram Square. Views into the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation and built form although there is a glimpse of a small part of the Site. This glimpse is orientated due north and is aligned with the access road to the estate which bisects a row of terraced housing. View 20 is taken from a parking area adjacent to the newly constructed block of flats in the southwestern corner of Radbourne Crescent. Views into the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation and rail infrastructure. View 21 is taken from Delamere Court in Hawkers Place to the north of the Site. Intervening vegetation, fencing and built form provide partial screening of the Site.

Views along the east-west axis of Forest Road

- 9.68 These views are characterised by the channelling effect of a fairly wide road. Forest Road is orientated along a broadly east-west alignment and there is a marked slope down to the west in the vicinity of the Site such that long distance views across the Lea Valley occur. From these roadside locations views into the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation, built form and urban infrastructure.
- 9.69 View 1 is from the pavement adjacent to the west-bound carriageway opposite Waltham Forest College. The location is some 400m from the Site. Views into the Site are restricted by intervening topography, built form and vegetation along Forest Road. St David's Court (12+ storeys) and the newly constructed Thorpe Coombe hospital are visible on the right hand side of the photograph.
- 9.70 View 5 is taken from the elevated Overground rail overbridge some 30m from the Site. View 6 is taken from the junction of Forest Road and Fernhill Road. Views into the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation and rail infrastructure.

Transient views from the north-south axis of Wood Street and Fulbourne Road

- 9.71 There are three northerly views along this axis. View 8 is taken from the location on Wood

Street opposite the Woodside Primary school. Views into the Site are restricted by vegetation and built form within the school site. View 17 is taken from Stocksfield Road which runs parallel to Wood Street. Views into the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation and built form. View 18 is taken from outside the Old Butchers Shop listed building on Wood Street. Intervening built form screens views of the Site.

- 9.72 There are two southerly views along this viewing corridor. View 9 is taken from the junction of Fulbourne Road and Clifford Road. There are clear views of the access road into the Site albeit views of the majority of the Site are restricted by intervening vegetation and the built form of Sterling House. View 20 is taken from the junction of Fulbourne Road and Brookscroft Road. Intervening built form screens views of the Site.

Views from areas of public open space

- 9.73 Views from areas of public open space are typically characterised by soft landscape features at close range and an absence of built form in the immediate foreground. View 12 is taken from the Hale End allotments to the north-east of the Site. Views into the Site are restricted by vegetation and built form. View 15 is taken from the Chestnuts Recreation Ground to the west of the Site. Views into the Site are restricted by vegetation and built form. View 19 is taken from Bisterne Avenue Park to the south of the Site. Views into the Site are restricted by built form.

Vantage points

- 9.74 Those rare locations where an increased elevation allows longer distance views are represented by view 11: a footbridge over Forest Road; view 14: Wadham Road rail overbridge near the North Circular; and view 16 taken from elevated landform near Walthamstow village. In all cases views into the Site are screened by built form and vegetation.

Future Baseline

- 9.75 In terms of planning policy the Draft Local Plan and Key Diagram set out the spatial strategy and vision for growth and regeneration of the borough. These documents are taken to describe the future baseline for the purposes of this assessment. The most relevant aspects of the vision are illustrated on the future townscape figure in Appendix 9.4 and listed below:

- Designation of the Forest Road Corridor as a new Strategic Location (policy 14)
- Designation of Wood Street as a new Strategic Location (policy 16)

- Retention of the existing designated Wood Street District Centre boundary
- Designation of the Clifford Road Industrial Estate as a Borough Employment Area

9.76 The potential redevelopment of Willow House and Sterling House, identified in the Wood Street Areas Action Plan, could result in a stronger frontage to Fulbourne Road and Forest Road which would assist in the definition of a more urban setting.

Likely Significant Effects

9.77 Those aspects of the Development likely to give rise to townscape and visual effects are as broadly as follows:

- Removal of the Homebase retail facility, car parking and 9 existing Category B trees
- The introduction of 583 residential units up to eighteen stories high in a perimeter block layout and distributed across three broad architectural typologies (see below for details)
- Creation of approximately 1 ha. of public open space incorporating new soft landscape features including trees, planting, rain gardens, podium gardens and green rooves (see Appendix 9.4 for full details)

9.78 The three architectural typologies are as follows:

- Formal civic scale buildings to define Forest Rd to the south of the Site, including building canvases similar to other Wood Street Walls interventions in the borough (blocks A and C)
- Informal terrace along the northern edge of the Site comprising various combinations of brick colour, recessed and cantilevered balconies, differing orders of window groupings, and an undulating silhouette (blocks B, D and E)
- Taller building within the south-east of the Site (Block F)

9.79 As explained in Appendix 9.2, a balance of beneficial and adverse changes in townscape features and character and views arising from the Development has been considered. Potential beneficial changes are likely to arise in a number of ways, as set out below.

9.80 In respect of a coherent response to context and character:

- Transformation of an area with fragmented urban grain to a more robust and positive character and thereby stitching the urban fabric together in accordance with the LBWF Character and Intensification Study

- Reinforcing spatial hierarchies through the introduction of increased building heights along the Forest Road "spine", linking Epping Forest, Wood Street, the Town Hall Campus (the civic hub of the borough) and Walthamstow Wetlands.
- Introducing a coherent rectilinear pattern of development with perimeter active frontage which is the dominant typology within the wider context of residential streets.
- Positively responding to topography and existing character by introducing a gateway corridor that helps to define the threshold between eastern elevated suburban land fringing the forest and the western lower valley flanks characterised by urban regeneration, retail activity and civic influences.
- Creating a new built form skyline which interprets the underlying topography by gesturing upwards towards the elevated forested ridge in the east.

9.81 In respect of movement and legibility

- Using focal points and civic scale built form along Forest Road to define the gateway corridor along the southern edge of the Site and emphasise the intensification of the wider Forest Road frontage.
- Providing multiple new access routes into the Site along Forest Road to improve permeability, legibility and accessibility.
- Contributing positively to the streetscape along Forest Road to invite movement along the spine road.

9.82 In respect of sense of place and identity:

- Reinvigorating a part of the townscape that is currently lacking in human and visual interest.
- Providing active frontages to generate liveliness and interest in accordance with Policy D3 of the Intend to Publish London Plan.
- Improving the sense of arrival from the east and north.
- Improving the sense of progression between town and forest.
- Integrating unique yet identifiable Wood Street Walls artwork onto the buildings and ground plane
- Providing varied architecture that respects its context in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Local Plan

9.83 In respect of public spaces and nature:

- Providing a hierarchy of well-designed, robust and multi-functional public spaces that feel

safe, secure and attractive for all to use and have trees and other planting for people to enjoy, in accordance with the NPPG, London Plan and the Draft Local Plan

- Enhancing blue and green infrastructure by providing rain gardens, green roofs and other vegetation with associated new habitats that will connect into the existing networks

9.84 In respect of the future baseline:

- Complementing the regeneration of the Forest Road Corridor Strategic Location by transforming land that currently detracts from the townscape immediately adjacent to the proposed designated growth area in the Draft Local Plan
- Introducing built form that will make a positive contribution to the emerging skyline and provide a progression in scale should taller development come forward at Willow House
- Supporting legibility of a potential cluster of taller buildings that mark the Forest Road / Wood Street junction which is located at the intersection of two Strategic Locations in the Draft Local Plan
- Provision of a future-ready design which will complement potential Forest Road streetscape improvements such as floating bus-stop, planted verges, widened footways and cycleways and narrower carriageway

9.85 In addition to these potential beneficial changes, adverse changes would potentially arise from a number of factors:

- Loss of openness related to the Site.
- Potential for disruption of an existing coherent skyline in certain views such as channelled vistas along residential streets
- Increase in perception of enclosure arising from the vertical scale of the built form
- Contrasts in height and character with prevailing townscape character or as perceived in views.
- Screening of an existing visually interesting backdrop, be it vegetated, the townscape or the horizon.

9.86 A number of approaches to mitigating such effects are inherent in the design of the Development which has a sensitive relationship with the existing townscape as follows:

- Stepping down of the massing to respect neighbours to the north
- Retaining TPO and other perimeter trees within the Site to help assimilate the Development into the existing green infrastructure and streetscene
- Articulation of massing and heights using balance and rhythm to hold the eye and create

visual interest

- Providing three storey built form along parts of Forest Road to break up the massing and complement development on the opposite side of the road

9.87 The lower buildings of the Lanes are broken down into smaller elements give a more domestic feel to the architecture to reflect the proximity to the neighbouring Delamere Court in Hawkers Place

- Modulating building heights so the Development appears less obtrusive when glimpsed over intervening features, notably low-rise built form of different characteristics.
- Retaining trees (including TPO Planes on Forest Road and Fulbourne Road) and providing additional tree planting to provide a progression in scale from the human to larger built form.
- Use of a varied palette of colours and materials including recessive pale brick.
- Horizontal expression and asymmetrical façade articulation of tallest forms to break up vertical building elevations and provide a progression of scale.

9.88 The detailed assessment of the townscape and visual effects set out in Appendix 9.5 and Appendix 9.6 describes the beneficial and adverse aspects of changes arising from the Development on the relevant receptors, providing where relevant, a magnitude of change that represents the balance between the beneficial and adverse aspects. This is then combined with the receptor sensitivity to provide a conclusion on the significance of the effect.

Construction Phase

9.89 Inevitably, there will be temporary townscape and visual effects resulting from demolition and construction during this period. It is likely that these will be more significant than following completion, given the additional movement and disruption by demolition and construction activity within the Site, as well as the unfinished nature of the built forms during construction, in contrast to the more settled appearance of the completed state of the Development.

9.90 Townscape and visual effects are likely to arise from large items of machinery, including tower cranes, and the structures under construction (refer to Chapter 5 Construction Methodology & Phasing for a description of works and programme). In addition, site compounds will be used for the actual construction of the Development and further compounds are likely to be needed for the storage of materials and to provide welfare facilities for construction workers. These will include areas for parking. These features often constitute the most significant

temporary visual effects of any scheme. Views nearest to these compounds and the structures under construction would experience the most significant temporary adverse effects. The effects of construction are considered in the context of the existing network of busy vehicle routes within and surrounding the Site which result in shifting patterns within the townscape.

Effects on Townscape Features of Construction before Mitigation

- 9.91 As set out in Appendix 9.5, the comprehensive re-development of the Site will inevitably cause disruption to the townscape features of the Site during construction. For routes and hard surfacing; grassed areas; specimen trees; shrubs; and buildings, the Development would cause significant effects due to removal of the majority of the townscape features.

Visual Effects of Construction before Mitigation

- 9.92 As set out in Appendix 9.6, construction activity on the scale proposed will inevitably result in noticeable or pronounced temporary adverse changes in views. It is concluded that visual receptors at all assessed view locations with the exception of view 14 (North Circular), would experience temporary adverse effects of the construction of the Development, before mitigation, that would be significant due to noticeable disruption including effects on the skyline.

Effects on Townscape Character of Construction before Mitigation

- 9.93 As set out in Appendix 9.5, the character of the Site would be subject to a large magnitude of temporary adverse change from construction activity, leading to adverse effects of moderate significance. Whilst the character of TCAs 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 within approximately 500m of the Site, would experience indirect temporary adverse effects, the presence of existing infrastructural influences on character or the degree of enclosure preventing views of the Site would result in lower magnitudes of temporary adverse change and effects would not be significant.

Completed Development

Effects on Townscape Features of Operation at Year 1 before Mitigation

- 9.94 As set out in Appendix 9.5, at Year 1, trees and buildings within the Site would experience a beneficial effect of moderate significance. This would result from the planting of 112 new trees and the introduction of varied architecture that responds positively to both its urban and forest context is in accordance with Policy DM29 of the Local Plan.

Visual Effects of Operation at Year 1 before Mitigation

- 9.95 As set out in Appendix 9.6 and illustrated in the AVRs in Appendix 9.7, the only location that would experience a noticeable or pronounced magnitude of change of view, which notwithstanding potential beneficial changes, would on balance result in adverse effects is View 21 – Hawkers Place. There would be a marked appreciation of the loss of openness in this view. A pronounced increase in the perception of enclosure would arise from the horizontal and vertical scale of the built form.
- 9.96 This adverse change would be partially offset by a small magnitude of beneficial change resulting from the varied architecture and associated visual interest. There is a clear contrast between the elevational treatments and materiality of the different built forms in the view and this assists in legibility as treatments create character areas within the Development to signify different townscape functions. Block F is clearly differentiated in red and white and with increased height to mark a focal point on the eastern edge of the new gateway adjacent to Forest Road. The buff brick used for Blocks C and E helps to define a progression of scale between Block F and the lower informal terrace of Blocks B and D. The low-rise terrace along the northern edge of the Development is of mixed colours and forms to reflect its association with the public open spaces within the Development. A new built form skyline would be provided which interprets the underlying topography by gesturing upwards towards the elevated forested ridge in the east.
- 9.97 Significant adverse visual effects would undoubtedly arise at viewpoint 21 albeit these are partially mitigated as follows:
- Stepping down of the massing so that Blocks B and D (which are closest in the view) are of a similar height to the existing development in Hawkers Place.
 - Use of a varied palette of colours and materials including recessive pale brick
 - Breaking up the massing so that it does not appear overbearing or visually dominant
 - The tallest parts of the Development (Block F) are furthest from view and therefore the level of intrusion from this element is minimised
- 9.98 In terms of the sequential effects arising for users of Fulbourne Road and Forest Road, views 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 10 are representative. As set out in Appendix 9.6, the significance of effect would range from negligible beneficial to minor beneficial and would be not significant overall.

Effects on Townscape Character of Operation at Year 1 before Mitigation

- 9.99 As set out in Appendix 9.5, at year 1, there would be direct significant beneficial effects on the character of the Site and the newly created TCA 9, largely resulting from the coherent pattern of development, improved legibility and permeability, creation of new areas of public open space and associated enhancements to the visual and human interest of the built form and enhancing the sense of place. There will be beneficial indirect effects on townscape character as a result of stitching the urban fabric together and reducing fragmentation in accordance with the LBWF Character and Intensification Study.
- 9.100 In terms of indirect effects on TCAs in the wider townscape, it is considered that limited adverse effects would result and whilst at near distances (within approximately 500m), the perceived influence of the Development would potentially be noticeable from parts of TCAs 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8, the overall effects on TCAs would be of less than moderate significance and therefore not significant. The most relevant adverse effect of the Development in these instances is the contrasting scale and character to the existing predominantly low-rise residential built form.

Mitigation

Mitigation Measures during Construction

- 9.101 Means employed to reduce the adverse effects of construction will be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be secured by a planning condition. Specific measures to reduce the temporary townscape and visual effects of construction are as follows:
- the use of visually interesting hoarding around the construction site and screens on built form under construction, including at high level, to reduce the visibility of construction activity and provide a less transient character to the emerging built form;
 - controlling the lighting of construction compounds and machinery to minimise upward and outward light pollution through lantern design, direction and baffling and, in addition, ensuring that the minimum area only is lit, for the minimum period;
 - agreeing appropriate working hours with LBWF to ensure that adverse visual effects of construction are not experienced by residential receptors at times when they could reasonably expect a cessation of construction activity, for example evenings, weekends and bank holidays;
 - locating compounds and stockpiles in the least visible locations within the Site;
 - limiting movement of material between stockpiles so that these do not shift over time,

- thereby adding to the sense of fragmentation of the townscape structure; and
- protecting all retained vegetation on the Site during construction by fencing, to be installed before the commencement of any phase of development; and in compliance with BS5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations^{iv}.

Mitigation Measures during Operation

- 9.102 All tree planting will be undertaken in accordance with BS 8545 :2014 – Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape. Any plant which dies or fails to thrive within the first five years of operation will be replaced within less than 1 year. For the fifteen year operation period, a management company will be responsible for ensuring that all soft landscape elements within the scheme (both newly planted/seeded and existing vegetation) will meet the objectives set out in a landscape maintenance and management plan (LMMP), which will be secured by a planning condition.

Residual Effects

Construction Phase

Residual Effects of Construction on Townscape Features

- 9.103 As set out in Appendix 9.5, effects on all identified townscape features would remain significant as before mitigation.

Residual Visual Effects of Construction

- 9.104 The proposed mitigation measures would result in a slight reduction in the magnitude of adverse change. However, as set out in Appendix 9.6, residual effects of construction would be significant as before mitigation for all views with the exception of View 14: North Circular.

Residual Effects of Construction on Townscape Character

- 9.105 As set out in Appendix 9.5, effects on the character of the Site would remain significant as before mitigation.

Completed Development

Residual Effects of Operation on Townscape Features at Year 15

9.106 As set out in Appendix 9.5, at Year 15, trees and buildings within the Site would continue to experience significant beneficial effects. The new planted areas, established at year 15, would also experience significant beneficial effects.

Residual Visual Effects of Operation at Year 15

9.107 At near-distance viewpoint 21 the significant adverse effect experienced at year 1 would continue at year 15.

9.108 As stated in Appendix 9.6, the establishment of the proposed planting within the public realm elements of the Development would result in an additional beneficial significant effect at viewpoint 2. The significance of effect would increase from minor to moderate for the reasons stated in Appendix 9.6.

9.109 In terms of the sequential effects arising for users of Fulbourne Road and Forest Road, there would be short sections along these routes where significant beneficial effects would occur (view 2 is representative). The residual effects on the entire routes would, however, on balance, be of minor beneficial significance and not significant.

Residual Effects on Townscape Character of Operation at Year 15

9.110 The significant beneficial effect to the Site character and TCA 9 would continue at year 15.

9.111 There would be no other significant effects albeit indirect beneficial effects on other TCAs would be better appreciated by year 15 due to the establishment of the planting within the Development. Built form and public open spaces within the Site would become better integrated into their surroundings and better understood, thus increasing beneficial effects on movement and legibility. Spatial hierarchies as perceived from within surrounding TCAs within approximately 500m of the Site would be reinforced through the massing along the Forest Road spine in accordance with the Urban Design SPD. Introducing a gateway corridor character will invite movement towards Forest Road and the Civic Hub of the borough in accordance with the Draft Local Plan.

Cumulative Effects

9.112 This section considers the potential for townscape and visual effects from the Development in combination with other committed developments that could give rise to significant cumulative effects, as set out in Chapter 2 EIA Methodology of this ES.

9.113 An initial list of developments to be considered as having the potential to cause or contribute to significant effects was included in the scoping report. The location of these developments is shown on Figure 2.1.

9.114 Those Developments most likely to cause or contribute to significant effects as follows:

- 4. Marlowe Estate 2-7 storey development of 436 residential units and commercial space, located approximately 400m to the south of the Site.
- 6. Land at Hylands Road – 4-9 storey development of 120 affordable residential units, located approximately 400m to the east of the Site.
- 7. Thorpe Coombe Hospital – 2-5 storey development of 91 residential units, located approximately 200m to the west of the Site.

9.115 The locations of the cumulative schemes above are overlain on the future townscape character plan (Figure 7, Appendix 9.4).

9.116 Other cumulative schemes were considered unlikely to cause or contribute to significant effects as follows:

- 2. Ross Wyld nursing home has been discounted due to its relatively modest scale (2-5 storeys being similar to the prevailing townscape surrounding it) and the distance from the Site (1.2km)
- 3. Juniper House, Walthamstow Town Centre has been discounted due its 1.5km geographical separation from the Site and the presence of intervening landform, built form and vegetation around Walthamstow Village which would result in minimal overlap between the two visual envelopes
- 5. Central House is located in Walthamstow Town Centre and has been discounted for similar reasons to Juniper House stated above.

Construction Phase

9.117 This assessment considers the worst-case scenario of concurrent construction activity of the

Development and the cumulative schemes.

- 9.118 There would be no notable cumulative changes to townscape elements such as trees resulting from the cumulative schemes hence no additional significance of adverse effects.
- 9.119 There would be no increase in adverse visual effects of construction from the assessment viewpoints albeit there are a limited number of locations where the Development and the cumulative schemes would be perceived from the same location. However, in all cases it would be the cumulative schemes that would increase the effect and not the Site such that there would not be a material difference to the perception of construction activity introduced to the view by the Development.
- 9.120 Given that the cumulative developments are not located in the same TCA as the Site there will be no increase in direct adverse effects of construction on townscape character. There would be a slight increase in the indirect adverse effects resulting from the influence of construction on the character of nearby parts of TCA 2 and TCA 8 as a result of the cumulative schemes which would extend the influence of construction activity over more of these TCAs. This would result in cumulative adverse effects, after mitigation, of moderate significance, which would remain significant.

Completed Development

- 9.121 In terms of townscape features, the cumulative schemes feature public realm enhancements and would slightly increase the residual beneficial changes, although the resultant beneficial effects would be of minor-moderate significance and therefore not significant. Furthermore, there would be an increase in the beneficial magnitude of change to buildings as the proposed built forms are of coherent and visually interesting design, replacing residential buildings which make no positive contribution to the townscape. As a result, for townscape features there would be beneficial effects of moderate significance which would remain significant.
- 9.122 The combination of the cumulative schemes, with the Development, would result in taller built form in the vicinity of Forest Road and Wood Street. The overall pattern of development and regeneration along these roads would complement the vision of the Draft Local Plan which seeks to direct growth in these areas. As a result, there would be a slight increase in beneficial change in views and townscape character.
- 9.123 There would be additional massing of built form apparent in successive views from a very limited number of locations in the surrounding area, notably from nearer distances to the east and south. As a result, there would be a slight increase in adverse change resulting from the

perception in views and on townscape character of enclosure arising from the vertical scale of the additional built forms; contrasts in height and character with prevailing townscape; potential interruption of coherent skylines; and reduction of a visually interesting backdrop.

- 9.124 In terms of the Viewpoints used for the assessment of visual effects, these changes would not be apparent due to intervening built form and vegetation which generally restricts panoramic views. Whilst the additional cumulative schemes would increase the perception of vertical scale in the predominantly low-rise context, the cumulative adverse effects of operation, after mitigation, in these views would be of minor significance at most and therefore not significant. Similarly cumulative effects arising to users of Forest Road and Fulbourne Road would not be significant.
- 9.125 In terms of effects on townscape character, for the reasons given above, the cumulative schemes would slightly alter the level of both adverse and beneficial change in TCAs 2 and 8 such that, on balance, these would result in a negligible adverse significance and thereby would not be significant.

Summary

- 9.126 The Development would give rise to both beneficial and adverse changes in townscape features and character and in views. The balance of these changes has been used to draw conclusions on the significance of effects. Potential beneficial changes are likely to arise in a number of ways, as summarised below.
- 9.127 An entirely new gateway townscape character area would be created as a result of the Development (TCA 9) and it would function as a gateway along Forest Road, providing a transition between urban low lying land to the west and the elevated suburban land fringing the forest to the east.
- 9.128 The Development would transform a fragmented urban grain to a more robust character in accordance with the LBWF Character and Intensification Study. In addition to the improved definition of Forest Road, the Development would form a coherent pattern of contemporary built form alongside the adjacent Hawkers Place to the north and Gallery Court to the north-west such that a second gateway would emerge when travelling along Fulbourne Road.
- 9.129 Introducing new residential and public use to the Site would provide a greater level of activity, and a transformed character with visually interesting built form and a more rewarding visual experience both within the Site and along Forest Road. The removal of the functional retail facility with expansive parking lot and introduction of varied architecture and associated open

spaces and landscaping would improve the character and provide a catalyst for future regeneration. The coherent and positive response to local character and context would create an appropriate level of containment, visual interest and activity to complement the surrounding land uses, as well as adding visual and human interest to the streetscene.

9.130 The Development would provide more active frontages, with human interest, to complement the character of Wood Street, extending vibrancy into an area of the townscape which has a mostly negative contribution to the wider townscape.

9.131 The Development would re-invigorate the townscape, providing a positive interface with Forest Road and an enhanced townscape setting for Hawkers Place. The incorporation of 9,800 sqm high quality robust and multi-functional public open spaces (including 2,200 sqm of play space) and 112 new trees will make the Site more visually interesting, legible and accessible. The enhanced blue and green infrastructure network would integrate the Site into its context and further soften the character of the spaces and provide a progression in scale to large scale built form.

9.132 In addition to these potential beneficial changes, adverse changes would potentially arise from a number of factors:

- Loss of openness related to the Site.
- Potential for disruption of an existing coherent skyline in certain views such as channelled vistas along residential streets
- Confusion and incoherence related to potentially misleading landmark as experienced in certain views
- Increase in perception of enclosure arising from the vertical scale of the built form.
- Contrasts in height and character with prevailing townscape character or as perceived in views.
- Screening of an existing visually interesting backdrop, be it vegetated, the townscape or the horizon.

9.133 A number of approaches to mitigating such effects are inherent in the design of the Development which has a sensitive relationship with the existing townscape as follows:

- Stepping down of the massing to respect neighbours to the north
- Retaining TPO and other perimeter trees within the Site to help assimilate the Development into the existing green infrastructure and streetscene
- Articulation of massing and heights using balance and rhythm to hold the eye and create

visual interest

- Providing three storey built form along parts of Forest Road to break up the built form and complement the two to four storey development on the opposite side of the road
- The lower buildings of the Lanes are broken down into smaller elements give a more domestic feel to the architecture to reflect the proximity to the neighbouring Delamere Court in Hawkers Place
- Modulating building heights so the Development appears less obtrusive when glimpsed over intervening features, notably low-rise built form of different characteristics.
- Retaining trees (including TPO Planes on Forest Road) and providing additional tree planting to provide a progression in scale from the human to larger built form.
- Use of a varied palette of colours and materials including recessive pale brick
- Horizontal expression and asymmetrical façade articulation of tallest forms to break up vertical building elevations and provide a progression of scale

10.5 There would inevitably be adverse effects on townscape features within the Site as a result of the construction process, a number of which would be significant. During construction there would be significant adverse effects on the character of the Site; and on views and parts of townscape character areas within approximately 500m of the Site.

10.6 It is the perceived contrast between the vertical scale of the Development and the predominantly domestic scale and character of the nearby residential townscape that gives rise to adverse changes resulting from the operation of the Development on views and townscape character. There is just one significant adverse effect on views, this being the residential area of Hawkers Place to the immediate north of the Site. There would not, on balance, be significant effects on townscape character.

10.7 In terms of cumulative effects, accounting for the effects of the Development with schemes at Thorpe Coombe, Marlowe Estate, and Hylands Road there would be a slight increase in adverse change during construction albeit affecting receptors where significant effects would already occur. There would be a slight increase in both adverse and beneficial change during operation of the cumulative schemes although this would not make any material change when compared with the assessment of the Development in isolation.

10.8 Table 9.1 contains a summary of the likely effects of the Development.

Table 9.1: Table of Significance – Townscape and Visual Effects

Potential Effect	Nature of Effect (Permanent/Temporary)	Significance (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/Adverse/Negligible)	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures	Geographical Importance*							Residual Effects (Major/Moderate/Minor) (Beneficial/Adverse/Negligible)
				I	UK	E	R	C	B	L	
Construction											
Townscape Features	Temporary	Moderate adverse	Hoarding/screening Lighting control Working hours control Compound and stockpiling siting Control of movement of materials Tree protection							*	Moderate adverse
Views		Moderate adverse to Minor Adverse						*	*	Moderate adverse to Minor Adverse	
Townscape Character		Moderate adverse to Negligible Adverse						*	*	Moderate adverse to Negligible Adverse	
Completed Development											
Townscape Features	Permanent	Minor Beneficial to Moderate Beneficial	Articulation Materials Planting Landscape maintenance and management plan							*	Moderate Beneficial
Views		Moderate Adverse to Minor Beneficial					*	*	Moderate Adverse to Moderate Beneficial		
Townscape Character		Neutral to Moderate Beneficial					*	*	Neutral to Moderate Beneficial		
Cumulative Effects											
<i>Construction</i>											
Townscape Features	Temporary	Moderate adverse	(none additional to above)							*	Moderate adverse
Views		Moderate adverse to Minor Adverse					*	*	Moderate adverse to Minor Adverse		
Townscape Character		Moderate adverse to Negligible Adverse					*	*	Moderate adverse to Negligible Adverse		
<i>Operation</i>											
Townscape Features	Permanent	Minor Beneficial to Moderate Beneficial	(none additional to above)							*	Moderate Beneficial
Views		Moderate Adverse to Minor Beneficial					*	*	Moderate Adverse to Moderate Beneficial		
Townscape Character		Neutral to Moderate Beneficial					*	*	Neutral to Moderate Beneficial		

*** Geographical Level of Importance**

I = International; UK = United Kingdom; E = England; R = Regional; C = County; B = Borough; L = Local

REFERENCES

- ⁱ Natural England (2013) *National Character Area profile 111: Northern Thames Basin*
- ⁱⁱ Alan Baxter, Sheils Flynn, Natural England (2011) *London's Natural Signatures: The London Landscape Framework*
- ⁱⁱⁱ Historic England (2016) *London's Local Character and Density*
- ^{iv} British Standards Institution (2012) *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations, Fourth Edition*