

File Note.

Project name:	Orchard Farm, Pershore
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1. Introduction

1.1. This note has been prepared following receipt of the Landscape Officer's Consultation response on the Outline Planning Application for (up to) 300 residential units and associated infrastructure on land at Orchard Farm, Pershore.

1.2. Following further discussion at a (virtual meeting) held on 6th December 2023, the Applicant, where landscape and visual matters are concerned, agreed to submit the following additional information:

- Provision of winter photographic panoramas from the following views (which were summer panoramas within the submitted Pegasus LVIA, September 2023):

17: View looking north from the edge of Pershore Cemetery car park;

18: View from the northern part of Pershore Cemetery, looking north;

19: View from the Wychavon Way over Bredon Hill in the Cotswolds AONB;

20: View from the Wychavon Way in the Cotswolds AONB; and

21: View from Defford Road looking along the southern boundary of the site.

- Clarification of what is meant by "cumulative effects" as set out in the submitted Pegasus LVIA.

1.3. This information is provided as part of the File Note.

2. Winter Photographic Panoramas

2.1 These are provided on the attached document, ref. Figure 7A. With regard to the assessment of likely visual effects, these remain the same as those in respect of the summer assessment for views 17; 18; 19; and 20. This is because intervening features effectively block views of the site from those locations, with vegetation/foliage playing little or no part (views 17 and 18); or they are at such distance that there is no discernible difference between a winter and a summer assessment (views 19 and 20).

- 2.2 With regard to viewpoint 21 however, looking along Defford Road in the vicinity of the site entrance, the likely effects in winter are different to those in summer, as set out in detail on the assessment sheet.

3. Cumulative effects

- 3.1. Landscape and visual cumulative effects are referenced in paragraphs 2.11 – 2.14 of the Pegasus LVIA, with reference to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3).
- 3.2. Likely cumulative landscape effects are set out paragraph 6.59; and cumulative visual effects at paragraph 7.28.
- 3.3. In the Landscape Officer's consultation response, on page 4 it is noted that, with specific regard to cumulative landscape and visual effects,
- “The site does, however, sit directly adjacent to the existing edge of Pershore where there has been expansion on recent years at Dowling Drive/Desjardins Way and roads off those and an extension to Conningsby Drive. The further expansion as proposed does, however need to be duly considered in combination with that recent development – and how, cumulatively, residential development is creeping westwards from the urban core of Pershore further into open countryside. In my opinion, there would be an adverse cumulative impact of this proposed development when considered in combination with the recent development to the western edge of Pershore – both on the landscape character of the Wooded Estatelands LT which is identified as a wooded agricultural landscape, and with respect to visual effects with the expansion of Pershore away from its urban core into open countryside and onto higher contours, also affecting the visual setting of Tiddesley Wood as a key landscape feature including in more distant views”*
- 3.4. In GLVIA3, the scope and definitions of cumulative effects are set out at paragraphs 7.1 – 7.5. Typically, cumulative effects are considered for LVIA when carried out as part of EIA.
- 3.5. At paragraph 7.4, it notes that (cumulative effects) is an evolving area of practice that is relevant to all forms of development and land use change. This will include residential development. It goes on to say that it is not appropriate to prescribe the approach to such assessment since the issues related to cumulative effects depend upon the specific characteristics of both the pre-development proposal, and the location.
- 3.6. Careful thought as to an appropriate approach is required, and the scope of landscape and visual cumulative effects can be agreed at the outset with the competent authority, typically where EIA development is concerned.
- 3.7. At paragraph 7.16 of GLVIA3 it notes that stakeholders will be concerned about the totality of the cumulative effect of past, present and future proposals. This appears to be the consideration adopted by the Landscape Officer here.
- 3.8. For the purposes of this application, and for clarification, the Pegasus LVIA has adopted what is considered to be a realistic and proportionate approach. This includes the following:

- That the existing (albeit recent) and operational residential developments that neighbour this application boundary are considered to be part of the landscape and visual baseline, and not a consideration as part of a separate assessment of cumulative effects;
- That other proposed residential-led development, currently part of a live planning application should be considered as part of a separate assessment of cumulative effects; and
- That other proposed development that has an extant planning permission, but is not yet built and uncertain of when it is expected to be completed, should be part of a separate assessment of cumulative effects.

- 3.9. It is entirely reasonable to consider recently built-out and operational schemes as part of the current baseline given the impacts of that built-out scheme are known. This is a readily accepted approach and even those which are yet to be completed can be considered in the baseline as acknowledged in the Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 17 re. cumulative effects which states “*Where other projects are expected to be completed before construction of the proposed NSIP and the effects of those projects are fully determined, effects arising from them should be considered as part of the baseline.....*” Whilst it is acknowledged this is not a NSIP, the principle remains relevant.
- 3.10. The Pegasus LVIA has taken into consideration the impacts of the ‘built out scheme plus the proposed scheme’, so any cumulative effects are inherent in those conclusions.
- 3.11. As part of an assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects, for a non-EIA form of development, the assessment in the Pegasus LVIA is considered both reasonable and in proportion with the nature of the proposed development.
- 3.12. To assess cumulative effects on the basis of past, present and future proposals together with the proposed development is not considered, in this case, to comprise a reasonable approach. Considering a built out operational scheme (however recent) as a ‘separate cumulative scheme’ would raise difficulties in establishing what the baseline to assess the proposed development against, is, specifically in the definition of how far back you go. There may be some forms of (typically EIA) development that may demand such an approach for specific and agreed reasons, but that is not the case here.