

Belmont Castle Nursing Home Portsdown Hill Road Bedhampton

Visual Impact Assessment

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Prepared by:

Tim Griffin Bsc, MA, MLI
Chartered Landscape Architect

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TGD Landscape Ltd

10 North End Close
Chandlers Ford
Eastleigh
Hampshire, So53 3HY

Tel: 023 8036 5825
Mobile: 07974 900280

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1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This study has identified key publicly accessible viewpoints from which the site might be seen.
- 1.2 A combination of existing development, topography and existing vegetation significantly limit views of the site from publicly accessible viewpoints.
- 1.3 The most significant viewpoints are mid-distance views from the north and east of the site. The majority of these views are from public roads and the proposed extension will have negligible visual impact on all but one of the viewpoints.
- 1.4 There are also some narrow views into the site from Portsdown Hill Road as it passes along the frontage. The proposed extension will be to the rear of the existing building, and at a lower level, so any visual impact here is negligible.
- 1.5 Although the site occupies an elevated position, in all views the existing building 'nestles' into the landscape with the existing mature trees wrapping around the site. The line of mature Beech trees along the frontage are particularly important in views as these create a leafy backdrop to the site.
- 1.6 The busy A3M motorway runs close to the east of the site, and the B2177 passes the frontage. As a result, road noise is intrusive and detracts from the potential tranquillity of the site.
- 1.7 The setting of the site is not an unspoilt landscape of high value, with existing housing is already a component in wider views. The development on this site will not represent a new element in the overall scene.
- 1.8 The existing brick built Belmont Castle recedes in views due to the dark coloured brick used in construction. In contrast, the neighbouring dwelling of 22 & 24 Portsdown Hill Road is intrusive in most views due to the colour of the white render and the lack of screening trees.
- 1.9 The majority of the mature boundary trees will be retained to ensure that the existing screening of the site is maintained in the long-term.
- 1.10 The fieldwork demonstrates that the visual impact of the proposed extension on the quality and character of the immediate and wider landscape will be negligible and for most casual observers the proposed extension will scarcely be appreciated.

2.0 Introduction & Site Location

- 2.1 TGD Landscape Ltd have been appointed to undertake a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) in order to assess the potential visual effects of the development of land at Belmont Castle, Portsdown Hill Road, Bedhampton. The site is currently being used as a Retirement Home
- 2.2 The location of the land (hereafter referred to as 'the site') is shown on the aerial photograph opposite. The site is located on the western edge of Bedhampton just beyond the busy A3M Motorway. The local landscape is dominated by the Portsdown Hill Chalk Scarp.
- 2.3 The site lies near the crest of the eastern end of Portsdown Hill, occupying an elevated position with the land falling away in the northern sector of the site. The site is well enclosed by existing trees, although there are some views to the north across a wide valley towards the South Downs.
- 2.4 The original building on the site is a nineteenth century Grade II listed villa in a mock castle style, including castellations and a tower. This was added to in the late 1980's with an extension similar in style to the original building.
- 2.5 The southern boundary along the frontage to Portsdown Hill Road is well defined by a line of mature Beech trees. To the immediate west of the site there are existing dwellings (Nos. 22 & 24 Portsdown Hill Road) beyond which there are open fields, leading up to Portsmouth Golf Course. There are gaps in the tree screen around Nos. 22 & 24 and as a result this building is exposed and intrusive in most views
- 2.6 Adjacent the northern boundary of the site there is an area of scrub with scattered established trees that extends up to the motorway screen planting that runs along the A3M. To the east of the site lies Towers Farm, which includes a large Farmhouse with ancillary buildings and parking. This is a mixed use site with limited tree cover.
- 2.7 The busy A3M motorway runs close to the site to the east (beyond Towers Farm) and the B2177 passes the frontage. As a result road noise is intrusive and detracts from the potential tranquillity of the site.
- 2.8 There are a significant number of trees within the site and along its boundaries. All trees have been the subject of a detailed arboricultural investigation prepared by Eco Urban Consulting.
- 2.9 Belmont Castle lies within Landscape Character Area 12 Portsdown Hill of the Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment February 2007. The Character Type is designated as Settled Chalk Ridge.

The key characteristics of this Landscape Type are:

- An elevated chalk ridge of Portsdown chalk with a steep south side contrasting with an undulating north side
- A number of redundant small chalk quarries
- The vegetation pattern includes open fields, some field boundary trees and hedgerows with small scattered woodland copses
- Strong bands of tree and shrub vegetation along the urban edge of Purbrook.
- A large scale landscape of 'big skies' and wide views
- An elevated open landscape, above the surrounding urban areas of Portsmouth, Purbrook and Havant
- Fort Purbrook is a distinctive prominent feature of the area
- Copses on the ridge line contrast with open downland landscape



■ The site

2.10 Specific local key issues

- Visually prominent buildings along ridgeline
- Un-restored quarries
- Busy B2177
- Poor quality non native planting and poor quality hedgerows
- Erosion of agricultural landscape patterns through expansion of equine activity
- Protection of archaeological features both above and below ground
- Protection of calcareous grassland



Proposed Site Layout Plan

3.0 Development Proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is to provide a standalone care home building that will run in conjunction with the existing residential home. The proposed care home will house 48 residents.
- 3.2 The design team have been aware of the elevated position of the site and potential visual impact. The proposal has been developed to address these concerns.
- 3.3 The importance of the existing mature trees to the setting and screening of the site is recognised and all significant existing trees are retained. Any trees removed to enable development are of limited value.
- 3.4 Sited on the very edge of the urban area the new building takes, as its precedent, the existing building located within the grounds. The design seeks to provide a sensitive response to the original building's Grade II listed status.
- 3.5 The proposal is to build a new standalone care home sited to the north of the existing building on the sloping ground that sits within an existing tree screen. Placed here, and designed in a cranked form in plan, the proposal will create an intimate central garden between itself and the existing building.
- 3.6 Because of the elevated location of the site the layout has been developed to be a part two, part three storey development which will be partially sunk into the landscape at undercroft level. The height of the new build is reduced from the previous proposal with the loss of an entire storey of accommodation. This lowering in height of the building results in a significant reduction in the overall potential visual impact of the development.
- 3.7 Because the proposed building is cut into the hillside the overall mass of the building is reduced which ensures that it remains subservient to the original Listed building.
- 3.8 The visual impact of the proposal will be mitigated by the existing mature trees that are located along all boundaries of the site. The line of canopy beech trees along the frontage to the south are particularly important as in views from the north and west these are skyline trees that form an attractive backdrop to the development.
- 3.9 Any trees and large shrubs lost along the western and eastern boundaries due to the proposed development will be replaced with new native trees and attractive ornamental shrub planting.
- 3.10 A comprehensive tree management strategy covering all existing trees on the site will be drawn up by the consultant arboriculturalist. This will include a guide to the on-going care of these trees to ensure that they continue to screen the site in the long-term.

4.0 Baseline Study

4.1 Topography

- 4.1.1 The site is in an elevated position towards the crest of the hill and sits above the surrounding urban areas of Portsmouth, Purbrook and Havant.
- 4.1.2 The topography surrounding the site is typical of the Landscape Character Area being an elevated ridge of Portsdown chalk with a steep south side contrasting with gently undulating landform on the north side. Apart from Portsdown Hill, there are few landmark hills or important high points in the vicinity.
- 4.1.3 The site itself is relatively flat in the southern sector where the existing care home is located. To the north of this the land falls away with a steep bank down closer to the northern boundary.

4.2 Vegetation

- 4.2.1 There are no significant woodlands close to the site but the locality is reasonably well treed with most fields boundaries, roads and lanes being enclosed by established hedgerows and mature trees.
- 4.2.2 The site itself, although occupying an elevated location, is well enclosed by existing established trees. Most of the mature trees are around the boundaries and these 'wrap around' the existing care home so that the buildings 'sit' comfortably in the wider landscape scene.
- 4.2.3 The line of canopy Beech trees along the frontage to Portsdown Hill Road contribute to the softening of the streetscene. These trees also form the backdrop to the site in most views from the north and west so that the building appears to 'nestle' into the landscape.
- 4.2.4 Screen planting alongside the A3M is maturing and contributes to localised screening.
- 4.2.5 There are some large remnant parkland trees in the northern part of the site including a mature Cedar, an Evergreen Oak and a Swamp Cypress.

4.3 Land Use

- 4.3.1 The land use in the area is mixed with significant areas of residential development to the north, east and west.
- 4.3.2 Portsmouth Golf Course lies to the east of Belmont Castle, whilst the main roads of the A3M and the A27, together with the railway line, all pass within 1 km of the site.
- 4.3.3 Although there are some open fields to the east, this is not an unspoilt landscape and the presence close to the site of the busy A3M and B2177 detracts from the potential tranquillity of the area.

4.4 Public Rights of Way

- 4.4.1 There are few Public Rights of Way (PRoW) close to the site, although The Wayfarers Walk National Trail follows the route of the B2177 immediately along the frontage of the site.
- 4.4.2 There is a Public Footpath to the north of the site along Scratchface Lane that links College Road in the west with Hillmead Gardens to the east. This is a well used footpath, particularly by College Students, which passes over a footbridge over the A3M.

- 4.4.3 Most potential views of the site are from the adjacent road network including the busy A3M.

4.5 Landscape Perception and Sensitivity

- 4.5.1 This is an elevated open landscape, above the surrounding urban areas of Portsmouth, Purbrook and Havant.
- 4.5.2 The site itself is on the crest of the hill but the existing trees help screen the site and Belmont Castle 'sits' comfortably in the wider landscape.
- 4.5.3 Existing residential dwellings are a significant element in the local scene. It is worth noting that Nos. 22 and No 24 Portsdown Hill Road are not well screened by existing vegetation and these exposed, white rendered buildings are intrusive in wider views towards the site.
- 4.5.4 The presence of existing development and the network of roads detract from the setting of the site. This is not an unspoilt countryside location.
- 4.5.5 Although there are two very high sensitivity scores for the defences at Fort Purbrook and a small area of adjacent downland, the area is dominated by Portsmouth Golf Course which has altered the historic character of the ridge on which the Fort is located. The loss of boundaries and historic features has also had a detrimental impact and so the overall sensitivity score is Low.

4.6 Habitat designations

- 4.6.1 There are no known habitat designations on or close to the site.
- 4.6.2 The site has limited ecological value although the mature trees have some habitat significance. The lower northern section of the site has been neglected for some time and there is some emerging scrub here that provide cover for local fauna.

4.7 Landscape Heritage

- 4.7.1 There are no known historic or archeological designations on or close to the site.

4.8 Conclusions from Landscape Assessment

- This site is unremarkable with limited landscape or habitat value.
- Although the site occupies an elevated position existing trees help Belmont Castle to 'sit' comfortably in the scene.
- The potential tranquillity of the site is reduced by adjacent development and traffic along the A3M and the B2177.
- There is limited potential for wider views from publicly accessible viewpoints due to enclosure by existing residential development, existing vegetation and rising ground to the north.
- There is scope for new native tree planting, both within the site and along the boundaries, to bolster tree cover and reinforce the wider landscape setting.
- The proposed development will not detrimentally impact on the setting or character of the Grade 2 Listed Villa.

5.0 Assessment Methodology

- 5.1 The visual assessment methodology used in the preparation of this report has been developed from ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition’ (2013).
- 5.2 The desktop survey included the review of Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photography, and landscape character assessment documents.
- 5.3 A desktop study (based on the Explorer Series of Ordnance Survey Maps) identified the potential key views from publicly accessible areas (see plan on Page 7). This was followed by a photographic survey which was undertaken on the 24th September 2018. Each potential view identified during the desktop study was visited and photographed.
- 5.4 The weather conditions were clear and sunny. The photographs provide a summer perspective when the vegetation was in leaf. This means that during winter months when deciduous trees are not in leaf there may be a slight increase in potential visual impact.
- 5.5 The survey was carried out on foot and included all publicly accessible areas such as open access land, public open spaces, roads, bridleways and footpaths. Photographs were taken from all potential viewpoints identified through the desktop study. The current composition of views was recorded and the likely changes as a result of the proposal were considered.

Landscape sensitivity

- 5.6 The sensitivity of the landscape has been assessed in accordance with the criteria contained in the table below. The determination of sensitivity is based upon the capacity of the landscape to accommodate change.

SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPE	
Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Important elements or landscape of a particularly distinctive and highly valued character and rarity, typically of, international, national or regional in scale (e.g. World Heritage Sites, National Parks, AONB). A landscape where the intrinsic character may be susceptible to slight changes.
Medium	Valued elements or landscape of moderate importance and rarity typically of regional or local scale undesignated but valued through perhaps through demonstrable use or support. A landscape capable of accepting limited change with some effects on landscape character, feature or elements.
Low	Elements or landscape of relatively low importance and rarity or degraded, typically of local scale. Identified as having some redeeming features and possibly identified for improvement. Tolerant of substantial change without adverse impact on character, features or elements.

Visual receptors

- 5.7 Visual receptors within the study area are identified and categorised by their sensitivity, depending on their activity, location and context. These are set out in the table below.

SENSITIVITY OF VISUAL RECEPTORS	
Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Viewers within national or internationally designated landscapes (National Parks, AONB's, World Heritage Sites) Viewers within residential properties Viewers from the setting of a Scheduled Monument or Listed Buildings Viewers using Public Rights of Way or Open Access Land Viewers within regionally designated landscapes
Medium	People engaged in outdoor recreational sports Viewers in vehicles on local roads Recreation/play area user groups
Low	Viewers in vehicles traveling through the area on major transport corridors Viewers working inside commercial and industrial premises People engaged in formal sports

Magnitude of effect

- 5.8 The magnitude of effect (or the scale of change) has been evaluated in relation to both the landscape and visual receptors. When evaluating the impact on receptors, the following considerations have been taken into account:
- The extent of the view that would be occupied by the development: e.g. full, partial, or glimpsed.
 - The proportion of the development that would be visible: e.g. full, most, small amount, or none.
 - The distance of the viewpoint from the development.
 - Whether the view is transient or one of a sequence of views, as from a moving vehicle or footpath.
 - Seasonal differences of the degree of vegetative screening.
 - The duration of the change (temporary, short term, long term, permanent).
 - The nature of the effect (beneficial, adverse, neutral, singular or cumulative).

5.9 During the photographic survey the effect on each viewpoint was ascribed a level of magnitude, the criteria for each level is set out in the table below.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECTS	
Magnitude	Criteria
High	The proposals would form a dominant part of the landscape and would be immediately apparent to the observer
Medium	The proposals may form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall scene and may be readily noticed by the observer.
Low	The proposals would form only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer
Negligible	Only a small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and/or they are at such a distance to be scarcely appreciated and as such would barely affect the overall view
None	No part of the proposal would be discernible

Significance of impacts

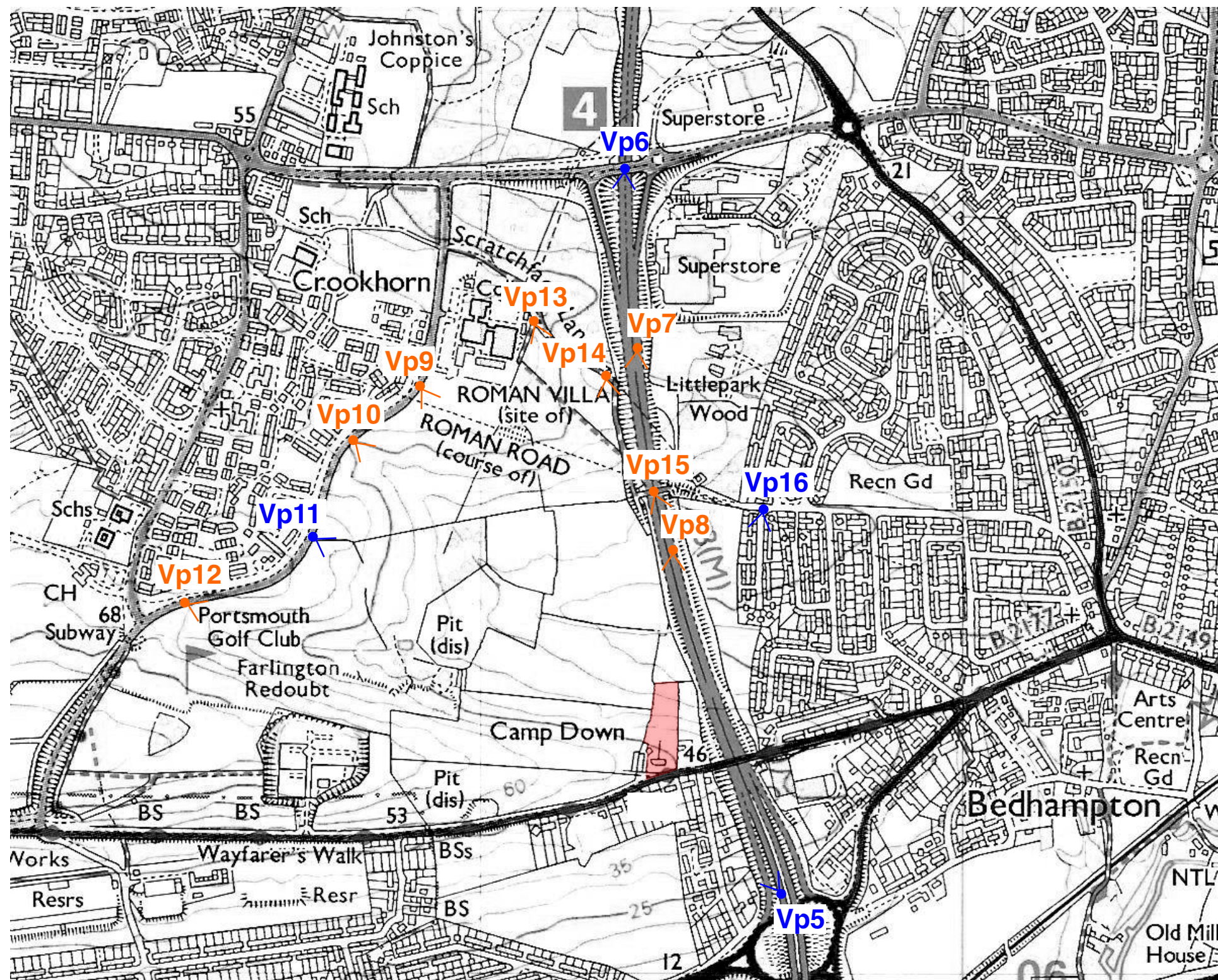
5.10 The resulting significance of the potential impacts has been determined following consideration of both the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the effects. Impact significance is a function of magnitude and sensitivity, as described in the table below. The table sets out the grades assigned to each impact:

Sensitivity Magnitude	High	Medium	Low
High	Acute	Substantial	Moderate
Medium	Substantial	Moderate	Slight
Low	Moderate	Slight	Slight
Negligible	Slight	Negligible	None
None	None	None	None

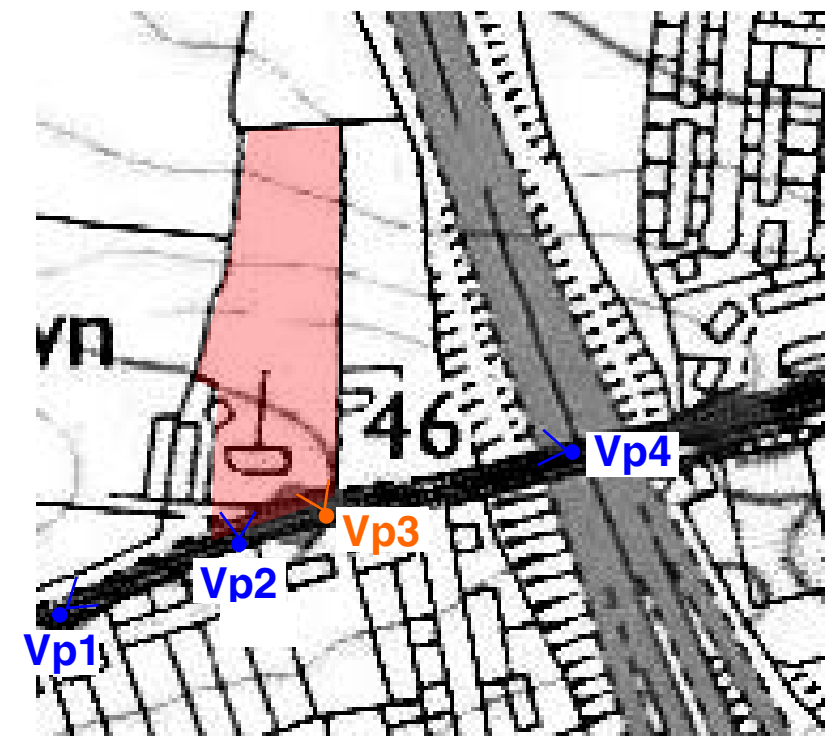
Limitations and assumptions

- 5.11 Whilst the character assessment is quantitative, the remaining elements of the assessment are qualitative, involving a degree of professional judgement in balancing the relationship between differing concerns.
- 5.12 This assessment considers only publicly accessible viewpoints. Views from private buildings or land has not been taken into account other than where noted.

6.0 Viewpoints Plan



Close views



KEY

-  Open view of part of proposed site without mitigation
-  Glimpsed view without mitigation
-  No view of proposed development

VP 1



Viewpoint 1 (Distance - 150m looking east towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking east from Portsdown Hill Road standing in front of No. 41 'Heathcliffe'. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NONE - No part of the proposed development would be discernible as the site is screened by existing roadside trees
Magnitude of change	NONE
Recommended Mitigation	NONE REQUIRED
Significance of Impact	NONE

VP 2



Viewpoint 2 (Distance - opposite entrance to site looking north)

Baseline Description	View looking north into the site outside No 33 ‘Highclere’ opposite the existing entrance to the site. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NONE - No part of the proposed development would be discernible in this view because the extension is set at a lower level to the rear and the proposed upper storey will not extend above the top of the existing building
Magnitude of change	NONE
Recommended Mitigation	NONE REQUIRED
Significance of Impact	NONE

VP 3



Viewpoint 3 (Distance - opposite exit from site looking north)

Baseline Description	View looking north into the site outside No 31 'Blakeney House' opposite the existing exit from the site. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along the roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and would barely effect the overall view
Magnitude of change	The existing building and established Yew on the right side effectively screens views of the vast majority of the new build. There may be narrow glimpses of a small part of the new extension but as this building is set at a lower level it will be less intrusive in the scene
Recommended Mitigation	The landscape strategy plan indicates the retention of the existing trees to maintain existing screening
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

VP 4



Viewpoint 4 (Distance - 200m looking west towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking west from the road bridge over the A3M. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NONE - No part of the proposed development would be discernible as the site is screened by existing vegetation
Magnitude of change	NONE
Recommended Mitigation	NONE REQUIRED
Significance of Impact	NONE

VP 5



Viewpoint 5 (Distance - 400m looking north towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking north from the hard shoulder on the A3M just past Junction 5. This view is representative of potential views seen primarily by viewers in vehicles travelling through the area on major transport corridors. Existing maturing roadside screen planting blocks views towards the site
Sensitivity	LOW - Primarily viewers in vehicles using a major transport corridor
Magnitude of effects	NONE - No part of the proposed development would be discernible in this view because existing vegetation screens the site
Magnitude of change	NONE
Recommended Mitigation	NONE
Significance of Impact	NONE

VP 6



Viewpoint 5 (Distance - 1.2km looking south towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south from road bridge over the A3M at Junction 4. This view is representative of potential views seen primarily by drivers of vehicles along road and pedestrians walking over the bridge. Only a very small part of the site is discernible in this view and at such a distance that it will scarcely be appreciated
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Primarily viewers in vehicles using local roads
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and they are such a distance to be scarcely appreciated and as such would barely affect the overall view
Magnitude of change	The existing mature trees on the horizon that wrap around the site ensure that the proposal 'sits' comfortably in the scene
Recommended Mitigation	The landscape strategy plan indicates the retention of the existing mature trees to maintain the screening effect
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

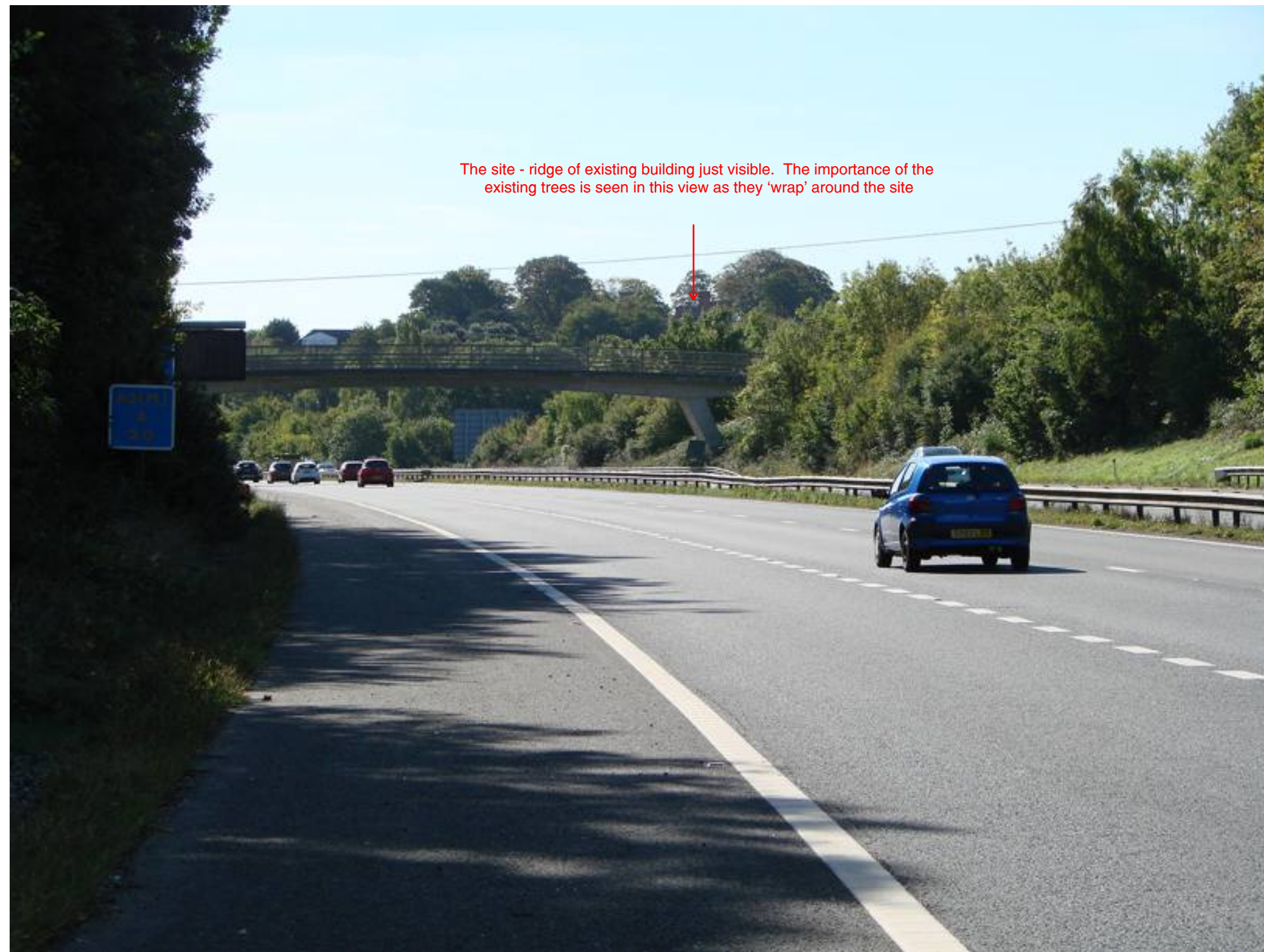
VP 7



Viewpoint 7 (Distance - 800m looking south towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south towards the site from the hard shoulder on the A3M just south of the slip road onto the motorway at Junction 4. This view is representative of potential views seen primarily by viewers in vehicles travelling through the area on major transport corridors
Sensitivity	LOW - Primarily viewers in vehicles using a major transport corridor
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and at such a distance to be scarcely appreciated by drivers
Magnitude of change	The mature trees on the site act as an effective backdrop to the existing building. The ridgeline does not break the horizon by extending above the tree canopy and is therefore less prominent in views. Since the proposed extension is being set at the lower level to the existing building it is unlikely that the construction will have any noticeable effect on this view (see zoom view on next page)
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively screen the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

7.0 Photographs

**VP 7 zoom view**

This zoom view is included for clarity to demonstrate how the existing building 'nestles' into the landscape with the existing mature trees creating a backdrop to the site. The proposed extension will barely be perceptible in this view as it is set at a lower height than the existing building. There may be a slight increase in potential glimpses of the site in winter months when the trees are not in leaf

VP 8



Viewpoint 8 (Distance 500m looking south towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south towards the site from the hard shoulder on the A3M just south of the Scratchface Lane footbridge over the motorway. This view is representative of potential views seen primarily by viewers in vehicles travelling through the area on major transport corridors
Sensitivity	LOW - Primarily viewers in vehicles using a major transport corridor
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and will be scarcely appreciated by drivers who are focussed on the road
Magnitude of change	The mature trees on and adjacent the site act as an effective backdrop to the existing building. The ridgeline does not break the horizon by extending above the tree canopy and is therefore less prominent in views. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it is unlikely that the construction will have any significant impact on this view (see zoom view on next page)
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

7.0 Photographs



VP 8 zoom view

This zoom view is included for clarity to demonstrate how the existing building 'sits' comfortably into the scene with the existing mature trees 'wrapping' around the site. The proposed extension will barely be perceptible in this view as it is set at a lower height than the existing building. There will be some increase in potential glimpses of the site in winter months when the trees are not in leaf

VP 9



Viewpoint 9 (Distance 800m looking south east towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south east from College Road close to Havant and South Downs College. This view is representative is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and is at sufficient distance to be scarcely appreciated in the wider scene
Magnitude of change	The existing building ‘nestles’ within the landscape and sits below the horizon. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it is likely to be largely screened by existing boundary trees (see zoom view on next page). There may be a slight increase in views during winter months when trees drop their leaves
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views of the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

7.0 Photographs



VP 9 zoom view

This zoom view is included to demonstrate the limited impact of the existing building, but also to highlight the intrusiveness in the scene of the exposed neighbouring dwellings (Nos. 22 & 24 Portsdown Hill Road). The existing building on site recedes in views because of the darker colour of the brick. Since the extension will be built in similar coloured materials this should also merge into the surrounding vegetation. Although a part of the existing building is seen in this view (because of a gap in the boundary screen) it is worth noting that where the extension will be located there is an existing boundary tree screen. This will help screen views of the extension. There will be some increase in potential glimpses of the site in winter months when the trees are not in leaf

VP 10



Viewpoint 10 (Distance 800m looking south east towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south east towards the site from College Road. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and is at a sufficient distance to be scarcely appreciated in the wider scene
Magnitude of change	The existing building ‘nestles’ within the existing trees and sits below the horizon. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it is likely to be largely screened by existing boundary trees. There may be a slight increase in views during winter months
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views of the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

VP 11



Viewpoint 11 (Distance - 900m looking south east towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south east from the footpath alongside College Road. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NONE - No part of the proposed development would be discernible in this view because existing vegetation and rising ground block views of the site
Magnitude of change	NONE
Recommended Mitigation	NONE
Significance of Impact	NONE

VP 12



Viewpoint 12 (Distance 1km looking east towards site over golf course)

Baseline Description	View looking east from College Road overlooking Portsmouth Golf Course. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and is at sufficient distance to be scarcely appreciated in the wider scene
Magnitude of change	The existing building can be seen where there is a gap in the existing tree screen along the western boundary of the site. The existing trees to the front and rear help soften the view. The proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building and will be largely screened by existing boundary trees
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views of the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

7.0 Photographs

VP 13

The site - ridge of existing building visible
nestling among the existing trees



Viewpoint 13 (Distance 900m looking south towards site from public footpath)

Baseline Description	View looking south from PRow linking College Road to Scratchface Lane in the east close to Havant and South Downs College. This view is representative of potential occasional views seen by pedestrians walking along the footpath
Sensitivity	HIGH - Viewers using PRow
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and is at sufficient distance to be scarcely appreciated in the wider scene
Magnitude of change	The existing building 'nestles' within the landscape among the existing trees. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it is likely to be largely screened by existing boundary trees. There may be a very slight increase in views during winter months when trees drop their leaves
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views of the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION

VP 14

The site - ridge of existing building visible
nestling among the existing trees



Viewpoint 14 (Distance 700m looking south towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south from PRow linking College Road to Scratchface Lane in the east. This view is representative of potential occasional views seen by pedestrians walking along the footpath
Sensitivity	HIGH - Viewers using PRow
Magnitude of effects	NEGLIGIBLE - Only a very small part of the proposal is likely to be viewable and is at sufficient distance to be scarcely appreciated in the wider scene
Magnitude of change	The existing building 'nestles' within the landscape and sits below the horizon. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it is likely to be largely screened by existing boundary trees (see zoom view on next page). There may be a slight increase in views during winter months when trees drop their leaves
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views of the site
Significance of Impact	NEGLIGIBLE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION



VP 14 zoom view

This zoom view is included to demonstrate the limited impact of the existing building, but also to highlight the intrusiveness in the scene of the exposed neighbouring dwellings (Nos. 22 & 24 Portsdown Hill Road). The existing building on site recedes in views because of the darker colour of the brick. Since the extension will be built in similar coloured materials this should also merge into the surrounding vegetation. Although a part of the existing building is seen in this view, the extension is set at a lower level which will reduce any impact to a minimum. There will be some increase in potential glimpses of the site in winter months when the trees are not in leaf

VP 15



Viewpoint 15 (Distance 500m looking south towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south towards site from the pedestrian footbridge over the A3M along Scratchface Lane. This view is representative of views looking up the length of the site seen by pedestrians walking along the footpath
Sensitivity	HIGH - Viewers using PRoW
Magnitude of effects	LOW - The proposals would form only a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer
Magnitude of change	The existing building ‘nestles’ among the existing trees and the mature Beech trees along Portsdwon Hill Road provide a backdrop to the site. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it’s impact will be reduced (see zoom view on next page). There may be a slight increase in views during winter months when trees drop their leaves
Recommended Mitigation	The Landscape Strategy Plan shows the retention of the existing mature trees that effectively soften views of the site
Significance of Impact	MODERATE ON COMPLETION OF CONSTRUCTION



VP 15 zoom view

This zoom view is included to demonstrate the extent of the existing building that is seen in this view. The importance of the line of mature Beech trees along the frontage to Portsdown Hill Road is seen in this photograph as this creates a leafy backdrop to the site and ensures the existing building does not extend beyond the horizon. The existing building on site recedes in views because of the darker colour of the brick. Since the extension will be built in similar coloured materials this should also merge into the surrounding vegetation. Since the proposed extension is being set at a lower level to the existing building it's impact will be reduced. The retention of existing trees will help soften views of the new extension. There will be some increase in potential glimpses of the site in winter months when the trees are not in leaf.

VP 16



Viewpoint 16 (Distance - 450m looking south west towards site)

Baseline Description	View looking south west from the junction of Scratchface Lane with Hillmead Gardens. This view is representative of potential views seen by drivers on the road and pedestrians walking along roadside footpaths
Sensitivity	MEDIUM - Viewers in vehicles on local roads
Magnitude of effects	NONE - No part of the proposed development would be discernible in this view because existing development block views of the site
Magnitude of change	NONE
Recommended Mitigation	NONE
Significance of Impact	NONE

8.0 Conclusions of Study

- 8.1 A combination of existing development, topography and existing vegetation **significantly limit views of the site** from publicly accessible viewpoints.
- 8.2 The most significant viewpoints are mid-distance **views from the north and east of the site**. The majority of these views are from public roads and the proposed extension will have negligible visual impact on all but one of the viewpoints. The most open view of the site will be Viewpoint 15 where a footpath crosses over a footbridge over the A3M, however this is still only ranked as having a Moderate significance of impact.
- 8.3 Most viewpoints are from **local or national roads**. Since drivers attention should be focussed on the road glimpses of the proposed extension may well be missed.
- 8.4 There are also **two narrow views into the site** as Portsdown Hill Road passes along the frontage. The proposed extension will be to the rear of the existing building and at a lower level so any visual impact here is negligible.
- 8.5 Although the site occupies an elevated position, in all views **the existing building ‘nestles’ into the landscape** with the existing mature trees wrapping around the site. The line of mature Beech trees along the frontage are particularly important in views as these create a leafy backdrop to the site.
- 8.6 The busy A3M motorway runs close to the east of the site and the B2177 passes the frontage. As a result road noise is intrusive and **detracts from the potential tranquillity of the site**.
- 8.7 The setting of the site is **not an unspoilt landscape** of high value with existing housing is already a component in wider views. The development on this site will not represent a new element in the overall scene.
- 8.8 The existing brick built Belmont Castle **recedes in views** due to the dark coloured brick used in construction. In contrast, the neighbouring dwelling of 22 & 24 Portsdown Hill Road is intrusive in most views due to the colour of the white render and the lack of screening trees.
- 8.9 The vast majority of the **mature boundary trees will be retained** to ensure that the existing screening of the site is maintained in the long-term.
- 8.10 The fieldwork demonstrates that the **visual impact of the proposed development on the quality and character of the immediate and wider landscape will be negligible** and for most casual observers the proposed extension will scarcely be appreciated.
- 8.11 Overall, the fieldwork demonstrates that **the visual impact of the proposed extension will be negligible**.