

## 16 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL AMENITY

### 16.1 Introduction

This chapter of the EIAR presents the assessment of landscape and visual impact (LVIA) for the proposed development and seeks to determine the following:

**Establish the baseline conditions** - Record and analyse the existing character, quality and sensitivity of the landscape and visual resource. This includes elements of the landscape such as;

- Landform;
- Land cover including the vegetation, the slopes, drainage, etc.;
- Landscape character;
- Current landscape designations and planning policies; and
- Site visibility, comprising short, medium and long-distance views.

**Analyse baseline conditions** - Comment on the scale, character, condition and the importance of the baseline landscape, its sensitivity to change and the enhancement potential where possible. A visual analysis (illustrated by photographic material) describing characteristics which may be of relevance to the impact of the design and to the method of mitigation.

**Describe the development** - Provide a description of the characteristics of the proposed development that are relevant to the landscape & visual impact assessment.

**Identify the impacts of the development on Landscape and Visual Resource** - Identify the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed change to permitted operations at different stages of the project life cycle, including:

- Direct & indirect landscape impacts of the proposed development on the landscape of the site and the surrounding area; and
- Visual impacts including: the extent of potential visibility; the view and viewers affected; the degree of visual intrusion; the distance of views; and resultant impacts upon the character and quality of views.

**Assess the significance of impacts** - Assess the significance of the landscape and visual impacts in terms of the sensitivity of the landscape and visual resource, including the nature and magnitude of the impact.

**Propose mitigation** - Detail measures proposed to mitigate significant residual detrimental landscape and visual impacts and assess their effectiveness.

**Assess acceptability** - Assess the ability of the landscape and visual resource to absorb the proposed development.

This analysis is supported by the development of photomontages prepared for a series of viewpoints for the following scenarios:

- Photos of the baseline visual impact;
- Photomontage of site operations at year 10 the project lifetime;
- Photomontage of site operations at year 20 the project lifetime; and
- Photomontages of the final restoration of the site post closure.

These photomontages are provided in **Appendix K** of **Volume III** of this EIAR.

### 16.2 Methodology

#### 16.2.1 General Approach

The methodology for the LVIA has been derived from Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, 2013) (GLVIA3).

The landscape has been appraised to allow it to be described and classified into landscape character areas that in turn enable the classification of landscape quality. The capacity of the landscape to accept change of the type proposed is assessed by determining the sensitivity of each landscape character area. Overall key landscape components are normally landform, vegetation and historical and cultural components. Landform relates to topography, drainage characteristics and geology. Historical and cultural components include historic landscapes, listed buildings, conservation areas and historic designed landscapes. Vegetation plays an important role in how the landscape and visual resources of an area are viewed and is an integral component of a landscape character.

This assessment has been undertaken through analysis of the following:

- Up to date digital copies of Ordnance Survey Ireland maps;
- Aerial photography;
- Fingal County Council Landscape Character Assessment;
- The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) of the Department of Arts; and
- Detailed description and drawings of the proposed development.

Site visits were undertaken to assess the existing environment, to establish the existing visual resource and to identify sensitive receptors, i.e. residential properties, scenic viewpoints. Site visits were also used to establish the perceived extent of landscape and visual impacts that may be associated with the proposed development.

The proposed development is then applied to this landscape and visual baseline and potential impacts predicted.

### 16.2.2 Identifying Effects

Assessing the significance of an effect is a key component of the assessment and is an evidenced based process combining professional judgments on the nature of a landscape or visual receptor's sensitivity, their susceptibility to change and the value attached to the receptor. It is important to note that judgments in this LVIA are impartial and based on professional experience and opinion informed by best practise guidance.

The effects of the proposed development are of variable duration and are assessed as being either short-term or long-term, and permanent or reversible. Effects are considered to be long-term during the 25 year operational phase of the development, whilst other operations and infrastructure such as temporary construction areas apparent only during the construction phase are considered to be a short-term effect.

### 16.2.3 Assessment Criteria

The objective of the assessment process is to identify and evaluate the predicted significant effects arising from the proposed development. Significance is a function of the:

- Sensitivity of the affected landscape and visual receptors; and
- Scale or magnitude of Impact that each will experience.

These definitions recognise that landscapes vary in their capacity to accommodate different forms of development according to the nature of the receiving landscape and the type of change being proposed.

Significance is not graded in bands, and a degree of informed judgement is required. Even with the application of pre-defined criteria, interpretation may differ between individuals, but this allows the process of reaching these conclusions to be transparent.

### 16.2.4 Landscape Impact Assessment

The assessment firstly assesses how the proposed development would impact directly on any landscape features and resources. This category of effect relates to specific landscape elements and features (e.g. woods, trees, walls, hedgerows, watercourses) within the site that are components of the landscape that may be physically affected by the proposal. Physical effects are restricted to the

area within the site boundary and are the direct effects on the fabric of the site, such as the removal or addition of trees and alteration to ground cover.

The assessment then considers impacts on landscape character at two levels. Firstly, consideration is given to how the landscape character is affected by the removal or alteration of existing features and the introduction of new features. This is considered to be a direct impact on landscape character. Secondly, the indirect impacts of the proposal on the wider landscape are considered. The assessment of impacts on the wider landscape is discussed using the surrounding character areas identified in the relevant regional landscape character assessments. It is acknowledged there is an overlap between perception of change to landscape character and visual amenity, but it should be remembered that landscape character in its own right is generally derived from the combination and pattern of landscape elements within the view.

The significance of effects on landscape features and character is determined by cross referencing the sensitivity of the feature or landscape character with the magnitude of impact.

Consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape resource against the magnitude of impact caused by the proposal is fundamental to landscape and visual assessment and these two criteria are defined in more detail in the following sections.

### 16.2.5 Landscape Sensitivity

The determination of the sensitivity of the landscape resource is based upon an evaluation of each key element or characteristic of the landscape likely to be affected. The evaluation reflects such factors as its quality, value, contribution to landscape character and the degree to which the particular element or characteristic can be replaced or substituted. For the purpose of this assessment, landscape quality is categorised as:

- Very High: Areas of especially high quality acknowledged through designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or other landscape based sensitive areas. These are of landscape significance within the wider region or nationally;
- High Quality: Areas that have a very strong positive character with valued and consistent distinctive features that gives the landscape unity, richness and harmony. These are of landscape significance within the district;
- Medium Quality: Areas that exhibit positive character, but which may have evidence of alteration/degradation or erosion of features resulting in a less distinctive landscape. These may be of some local landscape significance with some positive recognisable structure; and
- Low Quality: Areas that are generally negative in character, degraded and in poor condition. No distinctive positive characteristics and with little or no structure. Scope for positive enhancement.

As previously discussed, landscape sensitivity is influenced by a number of factors including value, condition and the type of change brought about by the proposal. In order to assist with bringing these factors together the following five-point scale has been used. **Table 16-1** defines the criteria that have guided the judgement as to the Sensitivity of the Landscape Resource.

**Table 16-1 Landscape Sensitivity**

Definition		Sensitivity
Landscape resource sensitivity	Landscape resource value	
Exceptional landscape quality, no or limited potential for substitution. Key elements / features well known to the wider public. Little or no tolerance to change.	Nationally / internationally designated/ valued landscape, or key elements or features of national / internationally designated landscapes. Little or no tolerance to change	Very High
Strong / distinctive landscape character; absence of landscape detractors. Low tolerance to change.	Regionally / nationally designated / valued countryside and landscape features. Low tolerance to change.	High
Some distinctive landscape characteristics; few landscape detractors. Medium tolerance to change	Locally / regionally designated / valued countryside and landscape features. Medium tolerance to change	Medium

Definition		Sensitivity
<b>Landscape resource sensitivity</b>	<b>Landscape resource value</b>	
Absence of distinctive landscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors. High tolerance to change	Undesignated countryside and landscape features. High tolerance to change	Low
Absence of positive landscape characteristics. Significant presence of landscape detractors. High tolerance to change	Undesignated countryside and landscape features. High tolerance to change	Negligible

### 16.2.6 Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

Direct resource changes on the landscape character in the study area are brought about by the introduction of the proposed development and its impact on the key landscape characteristics. The categories and criteria used are given in **Table 16-2**.

**Table 16-2 Magnitude of Landscape Impact**

Definition	Magnitude
Total loss or addition or/ very substantial loss or addition of key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and/ or introduction of dominant, uncharacteristic elements with the attributes of the receiving landscape	Large
Partial loss or addition of or moderate alteration to one or more key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and / or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be substantially uncharacteristic with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Medium
Minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.	Small
Very minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / patterns of the baseline, i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape approximating to a 'no-change' situation.	Negligible
No loss, alteration or addition to the receiving landscape resource	No change

### 16.2.7 Visual Impact Assessment

The assessment of effects on views is an assessment of how the introduction of the proposal will affect views throughout the study area. Assessment of visual effects therefore needs to consider:

- Direct impacts of the proposal upon views of the landscape through intrusion or obstruction;
- The reaction of viewers who may be affected, e. g. residents, walkers, road users; and
- The overall impact on visual amenity.

### 16.2.8 Viewpoint Selection

On the basis of a desktop study and site survey, viewpoints were chosen from which the proposed development may, theoretically be visible and which give a representative sample of views of the proposed development within the landscape from different distances and directions.

Viewpoints frequented by members of the public such as public rights of way, car parks and popular viewpoints have been chosen, along with views from nearby transport corridors. In total, ten viewpoints have been selected during site visits and analysis to reflect typical views obtained of the site, using the parameters of distance and direction of view.

Selected viewpoints are considered to meet the following criteria, with locations illustrated on **Figure 16-1**. A balance of viewpoints from where main direction of view is towards the proposed development with consideration of the following;

- A range of views of the proposed development covering the extent of the study area. Selected viewpoints have all been located within the study area associated with the proposed development;
- A proportion representing areas known to be available to the community where people may frequently congregate; and
- Locations of interest, e.g. settlements.

This analysis is supported by the development of photomontages of the operational and restored site from selected viewpoints and these are provided in **Appendix K of Volume III** of this EIAR. These photomontages show the existing views from the viewpoints, the views during the operational phase of the development and the views of the final restored site.

### 16.2.9 Visual Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity is defined with reference to the landscape sensitivity of the viewpoint location and the view. Other factors affecting visual sensitivity include:

- The location and context of the viewpoint;
- The expectations and occupation or activity of the receptor; and
- The importance of the view.

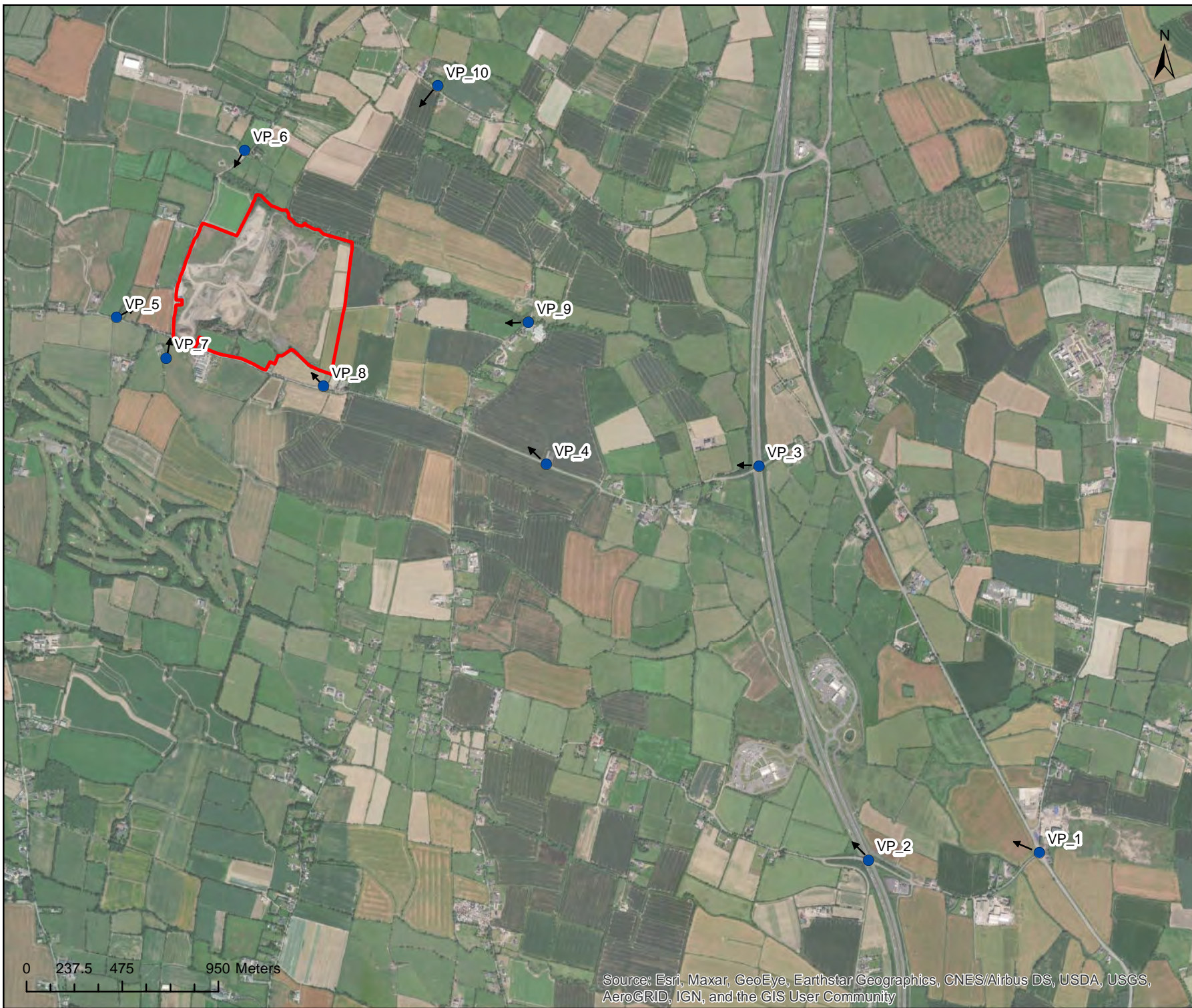
Although the interpretation of viewers' experience can have preferential and subjective components, there is generally clear public agreement that the visual resources of certain landscapes have high visual quality.

Viewer sensitivity, as set out in **Table 16-3**, is a combination of the sensitivity of the human receptor (for example resident, commuter, tourist, walker, recreationist or worker, and the numbers of viewers affected) and viewpoint type or location (for example house, workplace, leisure venue, local beauty spot, scenic viewpoint, commuter route, tourist route or walkers' route).

**Table 16-3 Viewer Sensitivity**

Definition		Sensitivity
Visual resource sensitivity	Visual resource value	
Views of remarkable scenic quality, of and within internationally designated landscapes or key features or elements of nationally designated landscapes that are well known to the wider public. Little or no tolerance to change.	Observers, drawn to a particular view, including those who have travelled from around Ireland or overseas to experience the views. Little or no tolerance to change.	Very High
Views from residential property. Public rights of way, National Trails, Long distance walking routes and nationally designated countryside/ landscape features with public access. Low tolerance to change.	Observers enjoying the countryside from their homes or pursuing quiet outdoor recreation are more sensitive to visual change. Little tolerance to change.	High
Views from local roads and routes crossing designated countryside / landscape features and 'access land' as well as promoted paths. Medium Tolerance to change.	Observers enjoying the countryside from vehicles on quiet/ promoted routes are moderately sensitive to visual change. Medium tolerance to change.	Medium
Views from work places, main roads and undesignated countryside / landscape features. High tolerance to change.	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or infrequent repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change. High tolerance to change.	Low
Views from within and of undesignated landscapes with significant presence of landscape detractors. High tolerance to change.	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or frequently repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change. High tolerance to change.	Negligible

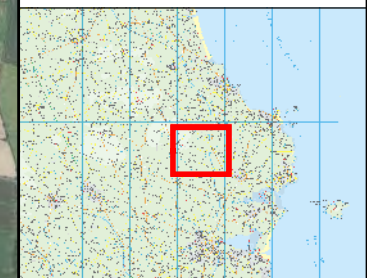




**Legend**

- Site Boundary
- Viewpoint location
- Viewpoint Direction

VP_1	719641.42	755194.02
VP_2	718793.05	755156.05
VP_3	718251.63	757110.02
VP_4	717196.42	757117.77
VP_5	715066.94	757846.43
VP_6	715702.99	758674.48
VP_7	715313.11	757643.39
VP_8	716091.50	757504.67
VP_9	717107.78	757821.70
VP_10	716659.66	758993.83



**Client**  
**Integrated Materials Solutions (IMS) Limited Partnership**  
 IMS Hollywood 2022 Update

**Title**  
**Figure 16-1:  
 Viewpoint Location Plan**

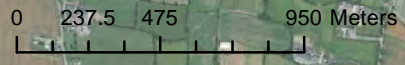
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**Issue Details**

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## 16.2.10 Magnitude of Visual Impacts

The magnitude of impact on the visual resource results from the scale of change in the view, with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in the view composition. Important factors to be considered include the proportion of the view occupied by the proposal, distance and duration of the view. Other vertical features in the landscape and the backdrop to the proposal will all influence resource change. Magnitude of visual impact is defined in **Table 16-4**.

**Table 16-4 Magnitude of Visual Impact**

Definition	Magnitude
Complete or very substantial change in view dominant involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, e.g., through removal of key elements	Large
Moderate change in view: which may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline, i.e., pre-development view through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the view would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant	Medium
Minor change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view - change would be distinguishable from the Small surroundings whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.	Small
Very slight change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view - change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered.	Negligible
No alteration to the existing view	No change

## 16.2.11 Significance of Effects

The purpose of this assessment is to determine, in a transparent way, the likely significant landscape and visual effects of the proposal. It is accepted that, due to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the proposal could potentially give rise to some notable visual and landscape effects.

GLVIA3 identifies that *‘The Regulations require that a final judgment is made about whether or not each effect is likely to be significant. There are no hard and fast rules about what effects should be deemed ‘significant’ but LVIA’s should always distinguish clearly between what are considered to be significant and non-significant effects’*.

Significance can only be defined in relation to each particular development and its specific location. The relationship between receptors and effects is not typically a linear one. It is for each LVIA to determine how judgements about receptors and effects should be combined to derive significance and to explain how this conclusion has been derived.

As a general guide it is considered that the following are likely to be considered effects of the greatest significance:

- Major loss or irreversible negative effects, over and extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes; or
- Irreversible negative effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in view, on recognised and important viewpoints or scenic routes, large-scale change which introduces non-characteristic, discordant or intrusive elements into the view.

The identification of significant effects would not necessarily mean that the effect is unacceptable in planning terms. What is important is that the likely effects on the landscape and visibility are transparently assessed and understood in order that the determining authority can bring a balanced, well-informed judgement to bear when making the planning decision.

The significance of effects on landscape, views and visual amenity are evaluated according to a six-point scale: Substantial, Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible or None.

For those effects indicated as being Moderate to Major the assessor will exercise professional judgement in determining if the effect is considered significant.

For the purposes of this assessment those effects indicated as being of Substantial and Major to Substantial are considered significant as per **Table 16-5**. Effects of 'Moderate' and lesser significance have been identified in the assessment but are not considered significant upon the character and quality of the landscape and on views although they remain worthy of consideration throughout the decision making process.

A conclusion that an effect is 'significant' should not be taken to imply that the proposal is unacceptable. Significance of effect needs to be considered with regard to the scale over which it is experienced.

**Table 16-5 Significance of Effect Matrix**

Magnitude of Impact	Sensitivity				
	Negligible	Low	Medium	High	Very High
<b>No Change</b>	None	None	None	None	None
<b>Negligible</b>	Negligible	Negligible to Minor	Negligible to Minor	Minor	Minor
<b>Small</b>	Negligible to Minor	Negligible to Minor	Minor	Minor to Moderate	Moderate to Major
<b>Medium</b>	Negligible to Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate to Major	Major to Substantial
<b>Large</b>	Minor	Minor to Moderate	Moderate to Major	Major to Substantial	Substantial

### 16.2.12 Landscape & Visual Assessment Definitions

The following provides a list of landscape and visual definitions for the terms used within this assessment:

- Landscape Capacity: the capacity of a particular type of landscape to absorb change without unacceptable adverse effects on its character;
- Landscape Character Area: distinct types of landscape which are generic in character in that they may occur in different parts of the country, but wherever they are they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation and historical land use and settlement pattern. Landscape character area (LCA) names are generic, for example 'Upland Hills', 'river valley' and 'urban landscape';
- Landscape Fabric: is the physical pattern of elements and features such as vegetation, landform and land use that combine to create landscape character. The effects of a development on landscape fabric are those that alter the physical pattern of elements. These effects are restricted to the landscape within which the proposal is located as it is within this area that the physical pattern will alter, for instance through loss of vegetation, re-contouring or changes to land use;
- Landscape Quality (or condition): is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up the character in any one place;
- Landscape Resource: the combination of elements that contribute to landscape context, character and value;
- Landscape Value: the importance attached to a landscape (often as a basis for designation or recognition) that expresses national or local consensus, because of its quality, cultural associations, scenic or aesthetic characteristics;
- Sensitivity: vulnerability of a sensitive receptor to change;
- Sensitive receptor: physical or natural resource, special interest or viewer group that will experience an impact;
- Magnitude: size, extent and duration of an impact;
- Visual Amenity: the value of a particular area or view in terms of what is seen;
- Visual Character: when a viewer experiences the visual environment, it is not observed as one aspect at a time, but rather as an integrated whole. The viewer's visual understanding of an area is based on the



visual character of visible features and aspects and the relationships between them. The visual character is descriptive and not evaluative;

- Visual Effect: is a change to an existing view as a result of development or the loss of particular landscape elements or features already present in the view;
- Visual Resources: The visual resources of the landscape are the stimuli upon which actual visual experience is based. They are a combination of visual character and visual quality; and
- Visual Quality: Although the interpretation of viewers' experience can have preferential and subjective components, there is generally clear public agreement that the visual resources of certain landscapes have high visual quality. The visual quality of a landscape will reflect the physical state of individual features or elements. Due to the subjective value of the evaluation there is no comprehensive official process for identifying visual quality. The visual quality of this evaluation has been carried out by one Chartered Landscape Architect and verified by another.

## 16.3 Baseline Conditions

### 16.3.1 General Overview

The site of the proposed development is located in Hollywood Great, Nag's Head, Naul, Co. Dublin, approximately 3km west of the M1 and approximately 14km north of Dublin Airport. The site location is shown in **Chapter 5**.

The site of the proposed development was a former quarry which operated until 2007 and is now a licensed inert landfill site that extends to 39.8 hectares.

The site is currently accessed via a local road (LP-1090) which bounds the west of the site. A further local road LP-1080 (also known as Sallowood View and the Nevitt Road) bounds the south of the site and links the R108 with the R132.

The existing site is elevated on low hills that are noticeable from across the surrounding lower lying and generally very gently undulating landscape. Agriculture is the dominant land use with medium to large fields of pastoral and arable use with field boundaries well defined by strong hedgerows and hedgerows with trees that provide a sense of enclosure but due to the elevated nature of the landscape immediately surrounding the proposed site and proximity to low lying ground to the east where hedgerows permit, there are long distance views available.

To immediate east of the proposed development site lies the M1 corridor which forms the main transport link between Dublin, to the south and Drogheda to the north and which runs through the study area in a north-south orientation. Recently completed development at Baldrumman, comprises of two large motorway service areas to the immediate east and west of the M1 corridor that increase the presence of built form within the eastern portion of the study area. Overhead gantry signs, lighting columns and other associated road infrastructure associated with the M1 corridor add verticality to the relatively low-lying landscape.

To the immediate south of the proposed development lies Hollywood Golf Course set out in well maintained grass and parkland landscape but not overly noticeable from the surrounding landscape.

The most recognisable features at the site when viewed from the surrounding landscape are two tall communication masts that are not within the site of the proposed development but adjacent to the site.

### 16.3.2 Landscape Character Assessment Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023

The proposed development site and associated study area are within the Fingal Council area, covered by the Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023. As part of the Development Plan the Council have carried out a Landscape Character Assessment, which identified six Landscape Character Types (LCT). A review of the Landscape Character Assessment has identified that the proposed development site is located within the High Lying Character Type. The Development Plan describes the High Lying Character Type as follows;

*High Lying Character Type This is an area of upland, rising to a high point of 176 metres at Hillfort Mound, to the south east of the Naul. These hills afford panoramic views of the Mourne Mountains to the north, the coastline to the east and the Wicklow Mountains to the south. There are a number of*

*important visual ridges on these uplands, which are visible over a wide area of Fingal and Meath. Almost the whole County can be seen from the more elevated roads. The character of the uplands is very attractive with a mixture of pasture and arable farming combined with strong hedgerows in a rolling landscape.*

*The High Lying Character Type is categorised as having a high value. The elevated area is very scenic, with panoramic views and strong hedgerows. It also has an important ecological value particularly as the 'Bog of the Ring' proposed Natural Heritage Area is situated here. There is little obtrusive or inappropriate development in the area and there is a pronounced absence of any substantial coniferous woodland. The area's importance is highlighted by the High Amenity zoning covering substantial parts of the area.*

The sensitivity of the High Lying Character Type is considered by the Development Plan to be of high sensitivity, stating that the High Lying Character Type have a low capacity to absorb development. Within the Development Plan the following Principles for Development have been identified as appropriate to the site of the proposed development:

- Skylines, horizon and ridgelines should be protected from development;
- Sites with natural boundaries should be chosen, rather than elevated or open parts of fields. The form of new developments should be kept simple and they should be sited within existing shelter planting or within the contours of the land to minimise visual impact;
- Clustering with existing farmhouse and/or farm buildings is generally preferable to standalone locations;
- Field and roadside hedgerows should be retained. Proposals necessitating the removal of extensive field and roadside hedgerows should not be permitted;
- The retention and active management of trees and woodland blocks should be promoted;
- The use of trees and woodlands to contain new development should be encouraged. Strong planting schemes using native species, to integrate development into these sensitive landscapes, will be required. New planting needs to be carefully located and selected; and
- The management of the river margins should be promoted and development along the riverside which will intrude on the character of the river valleys should be restricted.

It is noted that the Fingal Development Plan for the period 2023 to 2029 is currently being drafted and the site of the proposed development remains part of the High Lying Character Type which is described as follows:

*The High Lying Character Type is categorised as having a high value, its importance highlighted by the High Amenity zoning covering substantial parts of the area. This is an area of upland, rising to a high point of 176 metres at Hillfort Mound, to the southeast of the Naul. These hills afford panoramic views of the Mourne Mountains to the north, the coastline to the east and the Wicklow Mountains to the south. There are a number of important visual ridges on these uplands, that can be seen from wide areas of Fingal and Meath. Almost the whole County can be viewed from the more elevated roads. It also has an important ecological value with strong hedgerows and the presence of the 'Bog of the Ring' proposed Natural Heritage Area here. There is little obtrusive or inappropriate development in the area and there is a pronounced absence of any substantial coniferous woodland.*

### 16.3.3 Landscape Objectives

A review of the current Fingal Development Plan has established that there are a number of landscape objectives relating to the study area:

- Objective NH33: Ensure the preservation of the uniqueness of a landscape character type by having regard to the character, value and sensitivity of a landscape when determining a planning application.
- Objective NH34: Ensure development reflects and, where possible, reinforces the distinctiveness and sense of place of the landscape character types, including the retention of important features or characteristics, taking into account the various elements which contribute to their distinctiveness such as geology and landform, habitats, scenic quality, settlement pattern, historic heritage, local vernacular heritage, land-use and tranquillity.

- Objective NH35: Resist development such as houses, forestry, masts, extractive operations, landfills, caravan parks and large agricultural/horticulture units which would interfere with the character of highly sensitive areas or with a view or prospect of special amenity value, which it is necessary to preserve.
- Objective NH36: Ensure that new development does not impinge in any significant way on the character, integrity and distinctiveness of highly sensitive areas and does not detract from the scenic value of the area. New development in highly sensitive areas shall not be permitted if it:
  - Causes unacceptable visual harm
  - Introduces incongruous landscape elements
  - Causes the disturbance or loss of; (i) landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness, (ii) historic elements that contribute significantly to landscape character and quality such as field or road patterns, (iii) vegetation which is a characteristic of that landscape type; and (iv) the visual condition of landscape elements.
- Objective NH37: Ensure that new development meets high standards of siting and design.
- Objective NH38: Protect skylines and ridgelines from development.
- Objective NH39: Require any necessary assessments, including visual impact assessments, to be prepared prior to approving development in highly sensitive areas.

A review of the draft Fingal Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (February 2022) shows the above objectives are largely retained with minimal changes.

### 16.3.4 Landscape Designations

As mentioned previously the proposed development site lies within the Fingal Council area, covered by the Fingal Development Plan 2017 – 2023. A review of the Development Plan and other relevant statutory documents to establish if there are any relevant landscape related designations that may influence the assessment within the study area.

#### *Highly Sensitive Landscapes*

A review of the Fingal Development Plan 2017 – 2023 has identified that there are three areas identified as Highly Sensitive Landscapes (HSL) within or close to the boundary of the Study Area (refer **Figure 16-2**) as follows:

- Naul Highly Sensitive Landscape, the proposed development site lies within this HSL that covers an extensive area;
- Courtlough Highly Sensitive Landscape, lies approximately 4 km east of the proposed development site; as this site is not directly or indirectly impacted it is scoped out; and
- Coast Highly Sensitive Landscape, lies approximately 7 km south-east of the proposed development site; as this site is not directly or indirectly impacted it is scoped out.

#### *Historic Landscape Characterisation*

The Development Plan states that Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is a process involving two stages, beginning with the identification and description of historic landscape character types followed by an assessments phase which may examine management questions, issues of significance and sensitivity. A HLC can therefore ensure that the landscape evolves in a way in which its richness and diversity are sustained. Thirty eight historic landscape character types have been identified using this approach and all have been verified in the field. Outputs include the GIS based Historic Landscape Characterisation which has been integrated into the Council's GIS system.

A review of the available information has identified that none of the identified historic landscape character types are contained within or in close proximity to the study area associated with the proposed development and as such are considered to experience no significant effects as a result of the proposed development

#### *Views and Prospects*

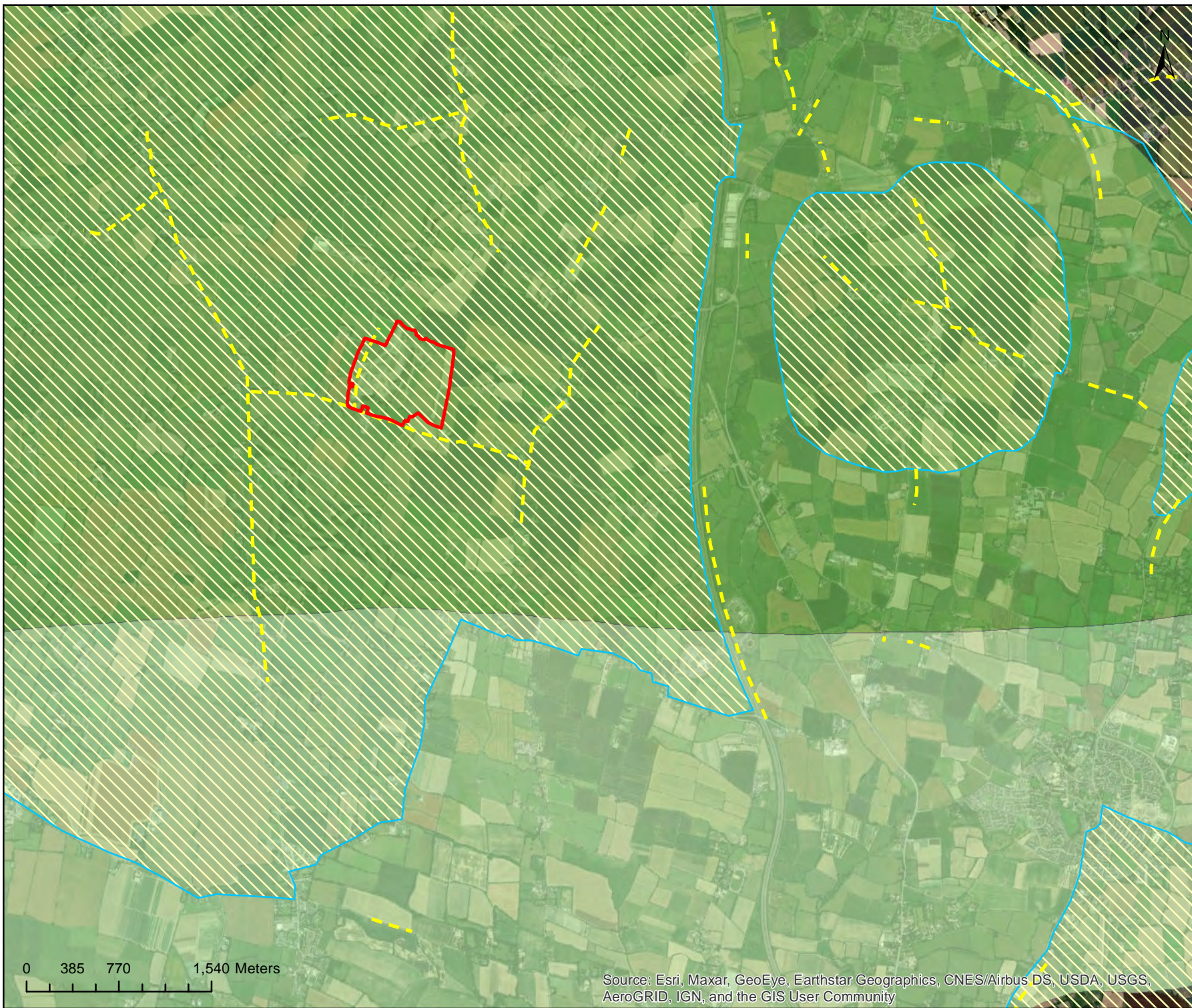
A review of the Development Plan has identified that there are a number of Protected Views within the study area (refer **Figure 16-2**)



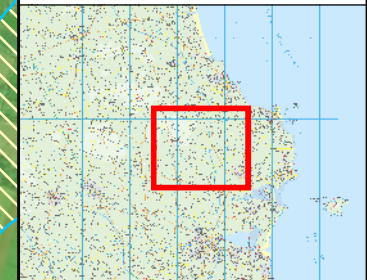
- Protected Views from the M1 between local road overbridge crossings to the north and south, approximately 2.5km south east of the proposed development site;
- Protected View from local road junction at Courtlough, approximately 4.5km east of the proposed development site;
- Protected View from Pennyquick Road, approximately 4.5km south east of the proposed development site;
- Protected View from local road / Pennyquick Road, approximately 4.5km south east of the proposed development site;
- Protected View from R132 and junction of local road, approximately 5km south east of the proposed development site;
- Protected View from LP-1080 south of R108, along the southern boundary of the proposed development site; and
- Protected View located north of proposed site, approximately 1km from the site of the proposed development.

Again, a review of the draft Fingal Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (February 2022) shows the above designations are largely retained with minimal changes.





- Legend**
- Site Boundary
  - Highly Sensitive Landscape
  - Preserve Views
- Landscape Character Type
- High Lying Agricultural
  - Low Lying Agricultural



**Client**  
**Integrated Materials Solutions (IMS) Limited Partnership**

IMS Hollywood 2022 Update

**Title**

**Figure 16-2:  
 Landscape  
 Character and Designations**

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**Issue Details**

<b>File Identifier:</b> MDR1492A-RPS-00-XX-DR-Z-AG-0023		
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<b>Drawn:</b> MV	<b>Date:</b> 16/09/2022	
<b>Checked:</b> SA	<b>Scale:</b> 1:42,000 @A4	
<b>Approved:</b> PC	<b>Projection:</b> ITM	

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## 16.4 Impact Assessment

### 16.4.1 'Do-Nothing' Impact

The 'Do-Nothing' scenario will retain the site as an operating inert landfill engaged in the infilling of inert soil and stone until final restoration under the terms of the EPA licence. In addition, the existing end of waste activity and other waste processing will be retained on site.

This operation will result in the continued baseline landscape and visual impact of the existing operation for a period of circa 15 years while the quarry is being restored. Following this period, the quarry will be fully restored to natural ground levels improving the visual amenity in the area.

### 16.4.2 Construction Phase

There are limited construction works associated with the proposed development with these restricted to development of the attenuation pond and leachate area and the installation of the washing plant and associated infrastructure on the yard at the centre of the site. Given the short term nature of this work and the natural screening of the area to the surrounding landscape there are no significant impacts predicted during this phase.

### 16.4.3 Operational Phase

During the operational phase, potential impacts include:

- Cell construction, infilling and capping;
- Aggregate processing and concrete crushing/screening
- IBA maturation enclosure and operations; and
- Access for traffic.

**Chapter 5** of the EIAR describes the methods proposed during the operational stage of the proposed development in detail and the timing of proposed works. Works activities will be potentially visible from within surrounding areas during various phases to a varied extent that will be related to the individual works activity at any given time.

Ground level views of the site from surrounding areas are restricted by the location of the majority of activities within the quarry void and due to intervening strong topography to the north, west and south of the site. However, due to the existing topographical characteristics of the site being located on a hill, the operations (particularly when the capping works reach original surface levels) will have potential to be visible to the wider surrounding landscape to the east, south east and north east. The location of the majority of works within a quarry pit also significantly offsets the visibility of activities on site during the lifetime of the filling and other operations until finished levels have been achieved.

#### 16.4.3.1 High Lying Character Type

An assessment of the significance of the impact of the proposed development during operations on the landscape character area described previously has been completed and is summarised in the following paragraphs.

The proposed development and associated infrastructure works are wholly located within the High Lying Character Type (HLCT) albeit within which the former quarry and permitted landfill is located.

Although the proposed development is located within this highly sensitive landscape the site is with the former quarry that is a feature of the local landscape at Naul.

The proposed development will not noticeably alter the local topography in views from the south and east until the final restoration stage as the activities associated with the landfill facility will be located within the quarry. There are no views from the west and views from the north are limited to a narrow area.

The operational stage activities will be locally prominent with frequent traffic movements and machinery on site. However, such activities are similar to those found locally currently due to the presence of the former



quarry and the existing infill and other operations at the site of the proposed development. This landscape due to its undulating nature with strong hedgerows has potential at a local level to quickly absorb any slight changes in landscape resource particularly in the parts to the west, east and south of this landscape. This extensive landscape therefore will overall have small changes at short to medium distances from the proposed site as it is located within a former quarry site that is part of the existing landscape character and already operating as a landfill.

This landscape character area has a high sensitivity to change. The predicted magnitude of landscape impact will be small at a local level.

The predicted significance of landscape effect during the operational phase at a local scale will be Minor to Moderate adverse in the long term (25 years).

Remaining portions of the HLCT beyond the site boundary and its local environs are predicted to experience negligible impacts during the operational phase. The significance of effect will be Minor, indirect in the long term (25 years) during the operational phase of the proposed development, for the wider remaining parts of the HLCT.

### 16.4.3.2 Landscape Designation Impacts

Operational stage impacts on relevant landscape designations contained within the Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023 are discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### *Highly Sensitive Landscapes*

As previously identified, the proposed development site is located directly on land identified as Naul HSL. For the purposes of this assessment all land designated as being a HSL is considered to be of high sensitivity.

Although the proposed development is located within this highly sensitive landscape the site is within the former quarry that is a feature of the local landscape at Naul and subject to landfill operations and the proposed development activities are the same to those found locally currently due to the presence of the existing quarries and the existing landfill operations at the site of the proposed development. This landscape due to its undulating nature with strong hedgerows has potential at a local level to quickly absorb any slight changes in landscape resource at the existing site particularly in the parts to the west, east and south of this landscape. The predicted magnitude of landscape impact will be small for Naul HSL.

The predicted significance of landscape effect on Naul HSL during the operational phase at a local level there will be Minor to Moderate adverse and long term (25 years).

Remaining portions of the Naul HSL beyond the site boundary and its local environs are predicted to experience negligible magnitude of impact during the operational phase. Minor, indirect, medium term landscape effects are predicted to be experienced during the operational phase of the proposed development, for the wider remaining parts of the Naul HSL.

#### *Historic Landscape Characterisation*

As previously identified, the proposed development site is not located on land identified as a Historic Landscape Characterisation and as such there are predicted to be no direct or indirect effects upon land identified in the Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023.

#### *Views and Prospects*

A review of the Development Plan has identified that there are a number of Protected Views within the study area (refer **Figure 16-2**):

- Protected Views from the M1 between local road overbridge crossings to the north and south, approximately 2.5km south east of the proposed development site; this view from the M1 includes views of large man-made structures at the Applegreen Motorway Service Areas and tall electricity pylons along the roadside. Views are also broken by roadside vegetation. Glimpse views will be available towards the proposed development but at a distance of more than 2km and it is extremely difficult to discern the existing site activities in views currently. The magnitude of visual impact will be none.
- Protected View from local road near Oberstown, approximately 4.5km east of the proposed development site; this view is elevated and directed away from the proposed site towards the southwest. Strong hedgerows and ribbon development prevent views towards the proposed

development for the majority of the road. Hole in the hedge glimpse views are possible but extremely distant with no noticeable change in the view from the proposed development.

- Protected View from Pennyquick Road, approximately 4.5km south east of the proposed development site; this local road is slightly elevated and looks over the R132 towards the proposed development. Due to the distance of the view and screening from topography the proposed development will not be noticeable.
- Protected View from local road / Pennyquick Road, approximately 4.5km south east of the proposed development site; this local road is slightly elevated and looks over the R132 towards the proposed development. Due to the distance of the view and screening from topography the proposed development will not be noticeable.
- Protected View from R132 and junction of local road, approximately 5km south east of the proposed development site; this busy road looks northwest towards the proposed development (see also Viewpoint 1). Due to the distance of the view and screening from topography the proposed development will not be noticeable.
- Protected View from LP-1080, along the northern and southern boundary of the proposed development site; the former quarry and landfilling activity is directly visible from this protected view currently at its immediate northern and southern boundaries with two local roads. The continued landfilling will simply extend this existing situation. The magnitude of visual impact will be small. The predicted significance of visual effect will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.
- Protected View located north of proposed site, approximately 1km from the site of the proposed development; the former quarry and landfilling activity is directly visible from this protected view currently. The continued landfilling will simply extend this existing situation. The magnitude of visual impact will be small. The predicted significance of visual effect will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.

A summary of the operational phase landscape and designation impacts is presented in **Table 16-6**.

**Table 16-6 Summary of Operational Phase Landscape and Designation Impacts**

Landscape Character / Designation	Predicted Effect (without Mitigation)
High Lying Character Type	Localised Minor and Moderate, direct, effects are predicted to be experienced during the operational phase of the proposed development.
Highly Sensitive Landscapes	The predicted significance of landscape effect on Naul HSL during the operational phase at a local level there will be Minor to Moderate adverse and long term.
Protected Views	Six protected views in the study area and five will have no change and two views will have a Minor to Moderate visual effect.

### 16.4.3.3 Visual Impact Assessment

A series of ten representative viewpoints have been selected to illustrate the existing visual context for the proposed development and as an aid to the visual impact assessment (refer **Table 16-2**). All of the viewpoints have been located on publicly accessible roads, footways and verges and available views. A summary of the following viewpoint assessments in the absence of mitigation is presented in **Table 16-7**.

### Viewpoint 1: View north west from R132



#### *Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located on the grassed verge of the R132 at its junction with a local road, approximately 5 km south-east of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of oblique views available to road users traveling north on the R132, residential properties within the vicinity and representative of the protected view identified in the Fingal Development Plan at this location. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

#### *Existing View*

The existing view available from this location is generally panoramic and expansive in nature due a slightly elevated position over lower lying grounds to the east and hills beyond and is comprised primarily of mixed agricultural land within a strong framework of mixed hedgerow and trees. More elevated land associated with the Naul Highly Sensitive Landscape Designation forms the horizon to the rear of the view and forms the main visual draw within the view. Communication masts are visible above the horizon line, though they form a minor element in the view. The existing activities, while located within this view direction, are barely noticeable. Existing built form associated with the M1 service stations are visible at mid-distance in the view, though are set well below the horizon line and are partially screened by intervening vegetation. Large pylons carrying high power lines punctuate the horizon line and form minor points of interest. The M1 transport corridor is visible in the view at mid-distance, due to movement of vehicles along its length and large overhead gantry signs, though does not form a prominent feature as it is set well below distant horizons and is partially screened by intervening vegetation.

#### *Visual Effects:*

While the proposed waste operations will be located within this view direction the operations will not be readily discernible due to the distance of the view and screening topography close to the site. Any existing features which are barely visible will remain so and any limited portion of the operations will be read with these existing features resulting in a no change situation.

#### *Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

#### *Significance of Effect:*

Minor, long-term and not significant effect during the operational phase of the proposed development.



**Viewpoint 2: View north west from bridge over M1 at Baldrumman**



*Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located on the footpath forming the pedestrian circulation on the flyover bridge associated as the local road crosses the M1 corridor. The viewpoint is located approximately 4.5 km south east of the proposed development site and the available view is considered to be representative of views experienced by local road users and pedestrians on the bridge. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high for pedestrians.

*Existing View*

The elevated view from this location is primarily expansive and panoramic in nature, with distant horizons formed by elevated land at Naul associated with the Highly Sensitive Landscapes as defined in the Fingal Development Plan. Whilst the view is primarily characterised by mixed agricultural land use set within a strong framework of vegetation the M1 corridor, large scale pylons, security fencing and service station facilities strongly influence the character within the central and right portions of the representative view. Distant horizons are perceived to be elevated and punctuated by the large scale pylons and communication masts. The facilities at the existing site are located within this view direction but very difficult to discern due to the distance of the view; screening from topography at the site and the small proportion of the facilities potentially visible. The existing blue fabricated building and berms at the existing site can just be partially discerned through trees.

*Visual Effects:*

While the proposed waste operations will be located within this view direction, the operations will not be readily discernible due to the distance of the view and screening topography close to the site. Further any minor part of the proposed development that became visible during the operation of the facility would be read with the existing features which are barely visible themselves resulting in a no change situation.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

*Significance of Effect:*

Minor, long-term assessed as not significant effect during the operational phase of the proposed development.

**Viewpoint 3: View west from LP-1080 Local Road bridge over M1 at Nevitt**



*Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located on the footpath forming the pedestrian circulation on the flyover bridge associated as the LP-1080 local road crosses the M1 corridor at Nevitt. The viewpoint is located approximately 2.5km east of the proposed development site and the available view is representative of views experienced by local road users and pedestrians on the bridge. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high for pedestrians.

*Existing View*

The elevated view from this location is primarily expansive and panoramic in nature, with distant horizons formed by elevated land at Naul associated with the Highly Sensitive Landscapes as defined in the Fingal Development Plan. Whilst the view is primarily characterised by mixed agricultural land use set within a strong framework of vegetation the M1 corridor, large scale pylons, security fencing and service station facilities strongly influence the character within the central and right portions of the representative view. Distant horizons are perceived to be elevated and punctuated by the large scale pylons and communication masts. The facilities at the existing site are located within this view direction but very difficult to discern due to the distance of the view; screening from topography at the site and the small proportion of the facilities potentially visible. The existing blue fabricated building and berms at the existing site can just be discerned on the skyline beside the communication masts.

*Visual Effects:*

While the proposed waste operations will be located within this view direction, the operations will not be readily discernible due to the distance of the view and screening topography close to the site. Further any minor part of the proposed development that becomes visible during the operation of the facility would be read with the existing features which are barely visible themselves resulting in a no change situation.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

*Significance of Effect:*

Minor, long-term assessed as not significant effect during the operational phase of the proposed development.

#### Viewpoint 4: View west from Local Road LP-1080



##### *Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located at the local road LP-1080, approximately 2km east of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of direct views available to road users traveling west only on the local road and residential properties within the immediate vicinity. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

##### *Existing View*

The view from this location is rural and pastoral in character. The rising topography of Naul Hill restricts views to the west. It is acknowledged that to the rear of the view the view (south east and eastwards) is extensive and panoramic. The skyline is broken by trees and scattered dwellings and buildings with overhead electricity lines locally prominent. A single communications mast adjacent to the existing site is just visible on the skyline to the left of the view. Due to screening from topography and trees it is not possible to view any aspect of the existing landfill operations at the site of the proposed development.

##### *Visual Effects:*

As with the existing site operations, the proposed operations at the site will not be visible from this viewpoint. Intervening topography, vegetation and residential development along the local road all combine to prevent views in both winter and summer. HGVs will be noticeable along this road but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road.

##### *Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

##### *Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be none.



### Viewpoint 5: View east from Local Road LP-1080



#### *Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located at the local road LP-1080, approximately 0.3km west of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of direct views available to road users traveling east only on the local road and residential properties within the immediate vicinity. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

#### *Existing View*

The view from this location is principally rural but with significant man-made urban influences in character. The rising topography of Naul Hill restricts views to the east. A break in road side vegetation permits a direct view in the direction of the site of the proposed development. Existing trees and hedgerows and buildings combine with rising topography to prevent views of the existing landfill operations. The local road is currently used by HGVs that will be noticeable during the working day. Two tall communications masts that are adjacent to the existing site are visible on the skyline.

#### *Visual Effects:*

The proposed operations at the site will not be visible from this viewpoint in line with the non-visibility of the existing facilities. Intervening topography, vegetation and residential development along the local road all combine to prevent views in both winter and summer. HGVs will be noticeable along this road but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road. This analysis is supported by the development of photomontages prepared for a series of viewpoints for the following operational scenarios:

- Photomontage of the Year 10 Operational Year; and
- Photomontage of the Year 20 Operational Year;

These photomontages are provided in **Appendix K of Volume III** of this EIAR.

#### *Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

#### *Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be none.

### Viewpoint 6: View south from Local Road to north of proposed development



#### *Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located a local road approximately 0.5km north of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by residential receptors in the immediate vicinity, local road users at this location. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

#### *Existing View*

The existing view from this location is where a gap in roadside vegetation permits a direct view towards the existing landfill operation when travelling south along this local road. The existing site facilities are visible including the existing blue fabricated building, site access, berms and site machinery and traffic. The excavated sides of the quarry are visible. The view is enclosed and directed towards the existing site at this bend in the local road. The existing communication masts (four in total) are the tallest features in the view.

#### *Visual Effects:*

There will be direct views of the proposed operations from this viewpoint when travelling south along this local road. The gradual infilling will be visible and the view will change as infilling progresses towards previous topographic levels at the site. Such operations are currently visible at the site and have been visible in the past during the quarry activity at the site. The noticeable difference will be the infilling and alteration of levels. As infilling progresses on the sites northern side there will be less visibility of the rest of the site from this viewpoint. Visibility of the majority of the site visible in the photograph above will decrease during the lifetime of the landfill operations. This analysis is supported by the development of photomontages prepared for a series of viewpoints which are provided in **Appendix K** of **Volume III** of this EIAR.

#### *Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be medium as although directly visible the development is read with the existing site.

#### *Significance of Effect:*

Moderate to Major and not significant long-term effect during the operational phase of the proposed development as the proposed development will be read as part of the existing site that has the same visual characteristics.

**Viewpoint 7: View from Graveyard accessed of Local Road LP-1080**



*Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located from within the graveyard maintained by Fingal County Council and accessed off the LP-1080, approximately 0.3km south west of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by visitors to the graveyard. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

*Existing View*

The existing view to the north from this graveyard is completely enclosed by rising topography and vegetation. The main view from this graveyard and the view that defines its setting is in the opposite direction towards the south where there are panoramic views towards Dublin Bay and Mountains. The existing operations are completely screened from view from this viewpoint. One of the communication masts on Naul Hill is prominent in the view.

*Visual Effects:*

The proposed operations at the site will not be visible from this viewpoint in line with the non-visibility of the existing facilities. Intervening topography and vegetation combine to prevent views in both winter and summer. HGVs will be noticeable at the entrance to graveyard on LP-1080 but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be none.



**Viewpoint 8: View northwest from Local Road LP-1080**



*Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located at the local road LP-1080, approximately 0.5km east of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of direct views available to road users traveling west only on the local road and residential properties within the immediate vicinity and from a Protected View designated in Fingal Development Plan. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

*Existing View*

The view from this location is rural and pastoral in character but with increased urban influences. The viewpoint is located at entrance to commercial premises that include a large building located to the rear of the viewpoint. Overhead electricity lines are prominent in the foreground of the view. Direct views of stockpiles and berms within the existing site are partially visible between trees that include evergreen conifers. It is not possible to view the main quarry area despite the close proximity of the view. It is also not possible to view existing site facilities including the existing blue fabricated building. Existing tall communication masts break the skyline to the rear of the view.

*Visual Effects:*

The proposed operations at the site will be partially visible from this viewpoint. Works at the location of the stockpiles and berms will be visible. As the infilling with landfill will raise levels to previously existing ground levels the works will not be visible from this viewpoint as they will be screened by vegetation and topography. In addition, the proposed processing area will be fully screened from this viewpoint by the quarry wall directly south of the building. This analysis is supported by the development of photomontages prepared for a series of viewpoints and these photomontages are provided in **Appendix K of Volume III** of this EIAR. Intervening topography, vegetation and residential development along the local road all combine to prevent views in both winter and summer. HGVs will be noticeable along this road but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be small.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.



**Viewpoint 9: View west from Local Road located north of LP-1080**



*Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located at the local road that extends north from the LP-1080, approximately 1.0 km east of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of direct views available to road users traveling both north and south on the local road and residential properties within the immediate vicinity and from a Protected View designated in Fingal Development Plan along this road. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

*Existing View*

The view from this location is rural and pastoral in character with very isolated urban influences. The view is available towards the west over a low roadside hedgerow and agricultural grasslands towards Naul Hill with the characteristic communication masts breaking the skyline. The existing operations are located in this view direction and only partly visible in the form of low mounds and stockpiles of excavated materials. The existing operation is not visible being screened by topography.

*Visual Effects:*

The proposed operations at the site will be partially visible from this viewpoint. Works at the location of the stockpiles and berms will be visible. Vehicles moving stockpiles will be noticeable during operations but not prominent. The infilling and processing will be screened by topography in the foreground and the extended landfill operations will be largely screened for the life time of the operations.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be small.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.

### Viewpoint 10: View south from Local Road



#### *Viewpoint Description and Sensitivity*

This viewpoint is located a local road approximately 1.0km north of the proposed development site. The view is considered to be representative of views experienced by residential receptors in the immediate vicinity, local road users at this location and of a Protected View in the Fingal Development Plan. The viewer sensitivity is considered to be high.

#### *Existing View*

The existing view from this location is where a gap in roadside vegetation at a field access permits a direct view towards the existing operation when travelling east and west along this local road. The existing site facilities are visible including the existing blue fabricated building and adjacent white sheds, site access, berms and site machinery and traffic. The excavated sides of the quarry are visible. The view is enclosed and directed towards the existing site from this local road. The existing communication masts (four in total) are the tallest features in the view.

#### *Visual Effects:*

There will be distant but direct views of the proposed operations from this viewpoint when travelling in both directions along this local road. The gradual infilling will be visible and the view will change as infilling progresses towards previous topographic levels at the site. Such operations are currently visible at the site and have been visible in the past during the quarry activity at the site. The noticeable difference will be the infilling and alteration of levels. As infilling progresses on the sites northern side there will be less visibility of the rest of the site from this viewpoint and therefore visibility of the majority of the site visible in the photograph above will decrease during the lifetime of the operations.

#### *Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the operational phase of the proposed development is considered to be small as although directly visible the development is read with the existing site and distant.

#### *Significance of Effect:*

Minor to Moderate and not significant long-term effect during the operational phase of the proposed development as the proposed development will be read as part of the existing site that has the same visual characteristics in a distant view.

**Table 16-7 Summary of Visual Impact Assessment at Operational Phase (without mitigation)**

Nr.	Viewpoint Name	Predicted Effect Operational Phase (without mitigation)
1	View north west from R132	Minor, long-term and not significant effect during the operational phase of the proposed development.
2	View north west from bridge over M1 at Baldrumman	Minor, long-term assessed as not significant effect during the operational phase of the proposed development.
3	View west from LP-1080 local road bridge over M1 at Nevitt	Minor, long-term assessed as not significant effect during the operational phase of the proposed development.
4	View west from Local Road LP-1080	None.
5	View east from Local Road LP-1080	None.
6	View south from Local Road to north of proposed development	Moderate to Major and not significant long-term effect during the operational phase of the proposed development as the proposed development will be read as part of the existing site that has the same visual characteristics.
7	View from Graveyard accessed of Local Road LP-1080	None.
8	View northwest from Local Road LP-1080	The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.
9	View west from Local Road located north of LP-1080	The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.
10	View south from Local Road	Minor to Moderate and not significant long-term effect during the operational phase of the proposed development as the proposed development will be read as part of the existing site that has the same visual characteristics in a distant view.

#### 16.4.4 Restoration Phase Impacts

As set out in detail in **Chapter 5** of this EIAR the overall purpose of the proposed development is to allow for the infill of the former quarry to facilitate the full restoration of the site to natural levels. This restoration will be sympathetic to the surrounding land uses and the designation of the area as ‘High Amenity’ and the protected views along the local road network.

All infrastructure (access road, administration building, car parks, etc.) will be removed from the site upon the cessation of the final cell capping.

Furthermore, as the licensee to the EPA, IMS is obliged to prepare and maintain a fully detailed and costed plan for the closure, restoration and aftercare of the site or part thereof, including details of the final profile.

##### 16.4.4.1 High Lying Character Type

The proposed development and associated restoration phase works are wholly located within the High Lying Character Type (HLCT) within the former quarry and permitted landfill. Although the proposed development is located within this highly sensitive landscape and the proposals will result in a site that will consist of locally altered topography on the hillside the site will be green with established vegetation reflecting adjacent agricultural uses. The restoration stage activities will not be locally prominent, restore existing disturbed landscapes and will blend with existing agricultural lands albeit as a modified landscape shape. This landscape due to its nature has potential to quickly absorb any changes locally and while visible in longer distance views within this landscape such restoration works will be negligible. During the restoration works the surface level activities will have negligible impact at a local level as the remediated site and be very hard to discern from within the wider landscape.

This landscape character area has a high sensitivity to change. The predicted magnitude of landscape impact will be small at a local level.



The predicted significance of landscape effect during the operational phase at a local will be Minor to Moderate adverse and temporary.

Remaining portions of the HLCT beyond the site boundary and its local environs are predicted to experience negligible during the restoration phase works. The significance of effect will be Minor for the wider remaining parts of the HLCT.

#### 16.4.4.2 Landscape Designation Impacts

Restoration Phase impacts on relevant landscape designations contained within the Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023 are discussed below.

##### *Highly Sensitive Landscapes*

As previously identified, the proposed development site is located directly on land identified as Naul HSL. For the purposes of this assessment all land designated as being a HSL is considered to be of high sensitivity.

Although the proposed development is located within this highly sensitive landscape the site at the restoration phase will have reached topographic levels that mirror adjacent field levels and restore landform. Activities at the site will be present and visible but not prominent in this landscape locally or wider. The predicted magnitude of landscape impact will be small for Naul HSL.

The predicted significance of landscape effect on Naul HSL during the restoration phase at a local level will be Minor to Moderate adverse and temporary.

Remaining portions of the Naul HSL beyond the site boundary and its local environs are predicted to experience negligible magnitude of impact during the restoration phase. Minor, indirect and temporary landscape effects are predicted to be experienced during the restoration phase of the proposed development, for the wider remaining parts of the Naul HSL.

##### *Historic Landscape Characterisation*

As previously identified, the proposed development site is not located on land identified as a Historic Landscape Characterisation and as such there are predicted to be no direct or indirect effects upon land identified in the Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2013.

##### *Views and Prospects*

A review of the Development Plan has identified that there are a number of Protected Views within the study area (refer **Figure 16-2**):

- Protected Views from the M1 between local road overbridge crossings to the north and south, approximately 2.5km south east of the proposed development site; Glimpse views will be available towards the proposed development but at a distance of more than 2 km and it will be extremely difficult to discern the site activities during the restoration phase in views. The magnitude of visual impact will be none.
- Protected View from local road near Oberstown, approximately 4.5km east of the proposed development site; this view is elevated and directed away from the proposed site towards the southwest. Glimpse views are possible in the direction of the restoration phase works but extremely distant with no noticeable change in the view from the proposed development.
- Protected View from Pennyquick Road, approximately 4.5km south east of the proposed development site; this local road is slightly elevated and looks over the R132 towards the proposed development. Due to the distance of the view and screening from topography the restoration works at the proposed development will not be noticeable.
- Protected View from local road / Pennyquick Road, approximately 4.5km south east of the proposed development site; this local road is slightly elevated and looks over the R132 towards the proposed development. Due to the distance of the view and screening from topography the restoration phase works at the proposed development will not be noticeable.
- Protected View from R132 and junction of local road, approximately 5km south east of the proposed development site; this busy road looks northwest towards the proposed development (see also Viewpoint 1 below). Due to the distance of the view and screening from topography the restoration works at the proposed development will not be noticeable.



- Protected View from LP-1080, along the northern and southern boundary of the proposed development site; the former quarry and landfilling activity is directly visible from this protected view currently at its immediate northern and southern boundaries with two local roads. The restoration phase works will see HGVs and site traffic accessing the site albeit at much lower levels than during the previous phase at the site. The restoration phase works are well screened from these roads. The magnitude of visual impact will be small. The predicted significance of visual effect will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.
- Protected View located north of proposed site, approximately 1km from the site of the proposed development; the former quarry and landfilling activity is directly visible from this protected view currently. The restored levels of landform will be apparent from this viewpoint but activities on site hard to discern due to distance. The magnitude of visual impact will be small. The predicted significance of visual effect will be Minor to Moderate and not significant.

A summary of the restoration phase landscape and designation impacts is presented in **Table 16-8**.

**Table 16-8 Summary of Restoration Phase Landscape and Designation Impacts**

Landscape Character / Designation	Predicted Effect (without mitigation)
High Lying Character Type	Localised Minor and Moderate, direct, effects are predicted to be experienced during the restoration phase of the proposed development.
Highly Sensitive Landscapes	The predicted significance of landscape effect on Naul HSL during the restoration phase at a local level there will be Minor to Moderate adverse and long term.
Protected Views	Six protected views in the study area and five will have no change and two views will have a Minor to Moderate visual effect.

### 16.4.4.3 Visual Impacts

A summary of the following viewpoint assessments at the restoration phase in the absence of mitigation is presented in **Table 16-9**.

**Viewpoint 1: View north west from R132**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed restoration phase operations will be located within this view direction but will not be readily discernible due to the distance of the view and screening topography and vegetation close to the site. Vehicles moving across the site at this distance will be very difficult to discern. The removal of existing sheds and site infrastructure will be beneficial but also difficult to notice at this distance.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

*Significance of Effect:*

Predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be none.

**Viewpoint 2: View north west from bridge over M1 at Baldrumman**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed restoration phase operations will be located within this view direction but will not be readily discernible due to the distance of the view and screening topography and vegetation close to the site. Vehicles moving across the site at this distance will be very difficult to discern. The removal of existing sheds and site infrastructure will be beneficial but also difficult to notice at this distance.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

*Significance of Effect:*

Predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be none.



**Viewpoint 3: View west from LP-1080 local road bridge over M1 at Nevitt**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed restoration phase operations will be located within this view direction but will not be readily discernible due to the distance of the view and screening topography and vegetation close to the site. Vehicles moving across the site at this distance will be just about discernible. The removal of existing sheds and site infrastructure will be beneficial but also difficult to notice at this distance.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

*Significance of Effect:*

Predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be Minor adverse and temporary.

**Viewpoint 4: View west from Local Road LP-1080**



*Visual Effects:*

As with proposed extension of the landfill operations at the site the restoration phase activities will not be visible from this viewpoint. Intervening topography, vegetation and residential development along the local road all combine to prevent views in both winter and summer. HGVs and site traffic will be noticeable along this road but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be none.

**Viewpoint 5: View east from Local Road LP-1080**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed restoration phase activities at the site will not be visible from this viewpoint in line with the non-visibility of the existing facilities or the proposed extended landfill operations. Intervening topography, vegetation and residential development along the local road all combine to prevent views in both winter and summer. HGVs will be noticeable along this road but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road. A photomontage showing the fully restored site from this viewpoint is included in **Appendix K of Volume III** of this EIAR.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be none.



**Viewpoint 6: View south from Local Road to north of proposed development**



*Visual Effects:*

There will be direct views of the restoration phase activities from this location. The removal of site buildings will have a beneficial visual impact but read in the context of on-going site works. The reformed landform will have created a new skyline reflective of the post quarry situation. Site traffic and works will be noticeable but not prominent in the view. A photomontage showing the fully restored site from this viewpoint is included in **Appendix K of Volume III** of this EIAR.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be small as the activities will occupy a limited proportion of the view.

*Significance of Effect:*

Minor to Moderate and not significant temporary effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development.

**Viewpoint 7: View from Graveyard accessed of Local Road LP-1080**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed extension of the landfill operations at the site will not be visible from this viewpoint in line with the non-visibility of the existing facilities and proposed extended landfill operations due to intervening topography and vegetation

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be no change.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be none.

**Viewpoint 8: View northwest from Local Road LP-1080**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed restoration phase operations at the site will be well screened from this viewpoint as the stockpiles now visible will be reduced to ground level. Glimpse views of site vehicles are possible in winter months. HGVs will be noticeable along this road but such vehicles are already a feature of the view on this road. A photomontage showing the fully restored site from this viewpoint is included in **Appendix K of Volume III** of this EIA.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be Minor and not significant.



**Viewpoint 9: View west from Local Road located north of LP-1080**



*Visual Effects:*

The proposed restoration phase operations at the site will be partially visible from this viewpoint. Vehicles moving across the site will be noticeable but not prominent. The activities at the main part of the site will be screened by topography in the foreground for the period of the operations.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

*Significance of Effect:*

The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be Minor and not significant.

**Viewpoint 10: View south from Local Road**



*Visual Effects:*

There will be distant but direct views of the restoration phase operations from this viewpoint when travelling in both directions along this local road. The infilled quarry site will be visible and the view will change as restoration progresses including the removal of existing site buildings on the skyline. Site vehicles will be located within the view but not prominent.

*Magnitude of Impact:*

The magnitude of visual impact during the restoration phase of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

*Significance of Effect:*

Minor and not significant temporary effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development.

**Table 16-9 Summary of Visual Impact Assessment at Restoration Phase (without mitigation)**

Nr.	Viewpoint Name	Predicted Effect Restoration Phase (without mitigation)
1	View north west from R132	None.
2	View north west from bridge over M1 at Baldrumman	None.
3	View west from LP-1080 local road bridge over M1 at Nevitt	Predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be Minor adverse and temporary.
4	View west from Local Road LP-1080	None.
5	View east from Local Road LP-1080	None.
6	View south from Local Road to north of proposed development	Minor to Moderate and not significant temporary effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development.
7	View from Graveyard accessed of Local Road LP-1080	None.
8	View northwest from Local Road LP-1080	The predicted significance of effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development will be Minor and not significant.
9	View west from Local Road located north of LP-1080	The predicted significance of effect during the operational phase of the proposed development will be Minor and not significant.
10	View south from Local Road	Minor and not significant temporary effect during the restoration phase of the proposed development.

## 16.5 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are those taken to help reduce the impacts arising from any visually intrusive or insensitive elements within the proposed development. These can be undertaken as part of the scheme design or as remedial works undertaken following completion of the proposed development.

### 16.5.1 Construction Phase

No mitigation proposed.

### 16.5.2 Operational Phase

A list of objectives in terms of mitigation for visual quality and landscape character shall include the following for the operation stage;

- Temporary storage heaps associated with infill materials and capping not to exceed 2m height;
- Storage compound areas will be reinstated to former land use upon completion of the works;
- Vehicles exiting compound areas will be subject to wheel wash facilities in order to maintain clean roads; and
- Ensuring existing landscape framework remains dominant by cleaning up of debris, protecting or reinforcing existing boundary vegetation.

### 16.5.3 Restoration Phase

The impact of the proposed development should be ameliorated through a landscape restoration plan, prepared in conjunction with the engineering design which would, in time ensure integration of the proposed development into the broader environment. Given the nature of the proposals, particular mitigation measures shall be incorporated as part of the proposed development. A list of objectives in terms of mitigation for visual quality and landscape character shall include the following for the restoration phase;



- Proposed hedgerow planting with trees to reinforce and amalgamate existing hedgerows to the northern part of the proposed development site. Proposed tree and hedgerow species shall be comprised of locally appropriate species;
- New hedgerow and tree planting to proposed new field boundaries, proposed to be defined by post and wire fencing;
- New hedgerow and tree planting to western roadside boundary;
- The restoration and reinstatement of the levels and topography at the site to a max height of 149m AOD; and
- Removal of all site infrastructure and equipment.

## 16.6 Residual Impact

Within the wider landscape the proposal will continue to blend with the existing agricultural landscape around the site with a Moderate to Major beneficial permanent residual landscape character impact. The creation of new hedgerows and pastoral fields on the site will restore the site to its former appearance in this highly sensitive landscape.

With regards to visual impact on sensitive receptors beneficial impact on existing views will occur and the site will appear as a new feature being a restored site for those viewpoints with views in close proximity to the south, west and north and overall the visibility of the site will be limited as the restored site blends within the local visual context.

## 16.7 Monitoring

No monitoring is proposed for landscape and visual impact.

## 16.8 References

1. Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, (2013).
2. Fingal County Development Plan 2017 – 2023, Fingal County Council (2017).
3. Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023 – 2029, Fingal County Council (2022).