M2 Junction 5 Improvements Environmental Statement Volume 2 - Appendix F Landscape and Visual

June 2019

Status: A1 APPROVED - PUBLISHED

Document Ref: HE551521-ATK-ELS-RP-LL-000006

Notice

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely for Highways England's information and use in relation to M2 Junction 5 Improvement. Atkins Limited assumes no responsibility to any other party in respect of or arising out of or in connection with this document and/or its contents.

Document control

The Project Manager is responsible for production of this document, based on the contributions made by his/her team existing at each Stage.

Document Title	Volume 2 - Appendix F Landscape and Visual
Author	LD
Owner	Camelia Lichtl
Distribution	
Document Status	A1

Revision History

Version	Date	Draft for HE ReviewDescription	Originator	Checker	Reviewer	Authoriser
C05	21/05/19	Final for Publication	LD	AR	LS	HC
C04	23/04/19	Draft 4 for Review and Sign Off	AR	AR	LS	HC

Reviewer List

Name	Role
SES Environment Group	SES Environment Group

Table of contents

Chapter Pages

Tables

Appendix F (Landscape and Visual)

Appendix F. Landscape and Visual

F.1 Aspects of the Scheme considered relevant to the assessment of Landscape and Visual effects

F.1.1 The following aspects of the Scheme are considered to be relevant to the LVIA during construction:

- General construction vehicle movement including large-scale earth movements and general disturbance including construction of cuttings and embankments and visual impact of highway material haulage;
- Disruption to the existing network of woodland, hedgerow and other soft landscape features, including loss of vegetation and opening up of views towards the Scheme;
- Equipment associated with larger structures such as the proposed Stockbury Flyover (height of 7.4 m);
- Temporary structures for the construction of the bridge;
- The construction compound located under the M2 viaduct (existing Volkerlaser compound) and the disused part of Maidstone Road for storage and material laydown;
- Temporary lighting for the Scheme with site task lighting provided by solar-powered LEDs;
- Due to spatial constraints underneath the viaduct, it can be assumed that site offices will be double stacked (approximately 5.4 m in height);
- All deliveries will be via the M2/M20/A249;
- All vehicle access will be via the A249 and the slip roads, no haul roads are planned for the Scheme;
- Low level and directional security lighting will be used in compounds and working areas avoiding high masts during hours of darkness; and
- Topsoil is to be stored on site in bunds of a limited size and height (maximum 1.5 m high) within the site limits for re-use. Topsoil storage is to be undertaken in accordance with good practice and with appropriate regard to the latest DEFRA and MAFF standards.

F.1.2 The following aspects of the Scheme are considered to be relevant to the LVIA during operation:

- Replacement and enlargement of the existing Stockbury Roundabout with a new grade-separated junction;
- Earthworks and structures associated with the Scheme;
- A249 flyover over the proposed Stockbury Roundabout, with approaches on embankments, and with two bridges over the proposed roundabout;
- Additional free-flow links provided for the A249 southbound to M2 westbound, and the A249 northbound to M2 eastbound;

- The proposed Maidstone Road Link will be a new road link provided between Stockbury Roundabout and Oad Street – with the proposed Maidstone Road Link connecting into Oad Street near the existing junction of Oad Street and the A249; and
- High-sided vehicles using the new bridge would add a further 4.5 m to the overall visible height.

F.1.3 Year 1 effects assessed 'with committed/design mitigation' include:

- Limited vegetation cover on cutting, verges and embankments locally adjoining the mainline;
- Height of proposed A249 Flyover is to be at a maximum of 7.4 m above ground level;
- Appearance of elevated traffic using the new bridge, particularly high-sided vehicles, which would add a further 4.5 m to the overall visible height;
- Depth of cuttings through and the changes in scale of the earthworks' footprint from existing to new;
- Proposed traffic signs and safety barriers;
- 68 No. lighting columns ranging in height from 5 – 12 metres, 52 of which are 10 metres high and 70 luminaires; and the
- Night-time effects of vehicle headlights and any new lighting / signage forming part of the Scheme.

F.1.4 Year 15 effects assessed 'with committed/design mitigation' include:

- Effects of the new section of motorway once the design intention of the landscape mitigation has become effective;
- Potential ongoing views of signage and safety barriers;
- Visual impacts of the 7.4 m high (maximum height) A249 Flyover;
- Ongoing views of moving traffic; and
- Residual lighting impacts.

Viewpoints

F.1.5 The representative viewpoints listed in Table F.7 of Appendix F, consist of the seven viewpoints that were agreed initially through consultation with the Kent Downs AONB, Swale Borough Council, and Maidstone Borough Council, at the Scheme Option Selection Stage. Following on from this consultation process, the Kent Downs AONB, and Swale Borough Council, requested an additional 10 viewpoints, which were assessed as part of the Option Selection Stage (Stage 2). As part of the Preliminary Design Stage (Stage 3), additional desk-study analysis was undertaken, and a further 9 viewpoints were subsequently identified. Table F.8 (Appendix F), provides a summary of the field work assessment and based on the findings of this field work, identifies whether the viewpoints have been included or excluded from the Stage 3 assessment.

F.1.6 In summary, field work revealed that only 16 of the 26 potential viewpoints would experience views of the Scheme, and therefore, a finalised, revised and renumbered list of representative viewpoints to be assessed within this Stage 3

Report can be found in Table F.8 of Appendix F and identified on Figures 9.7 and 9.14. Some of the representative viewpoints detailed within Table F.8 of Appendix F were determined and identified as a result of fieldwork.

F.2 Landscape Baseline

Table F.1: National Character Areas

National Character Area Profiles	Landscape Character Summary
NCA 113: North Kent Plain	Landform and geology: • An open, low and gently undulating landscape; and • Expansive views characterise the NCA. Vegetation pattern: • Large arable/horticultural fields with regular patterns and rectangular shapes predominating, and a sparse hedgerow pattern; • Orchards and horticultural crops characterise central and eastern areas, and are often enclosed by poplar or alder shelterbelts and scattered small woodlands; and • Dutch elm disease has affected hedgerow structure within the NCA. Land use: • High-quality, fertile, loamy soils dominated by agricultural land uses; and • This NCA is one of the most productive areas in Kent, with arable farming an important feature since the last Iron Age, and fruit growing a major feature since the 13th century. Settlement: • The rural settlement pattern predominantly consists of nucleated villages with low densities of dispersed settlement; • Timber frame and weatherboard with brick and plain tile roofs; and • Oast houses associated with the hop industry found on some farms. Infrastructure: • Large settlements and urban infrastructure (including lines of pylons) are often visually dominant in the landscape, with significant development around Greater London and the Medway Towns, as well as around towns further east and along the coast; • Major rail and road links connect the towns with London; • The North Kent Plain is an important transport corridor, with major rail and road links connecting Kent's coastal towns with London. These (and the area's proximity to London) have resulted in numerous economic, cultural and functional links with the City of London; and

National Character Area Profiles	Landscape Character Summary
	• The built environment exerts a strong influence on the open farmland character, with associated infrastructure such as pylons dominating in expansive vistas. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Where appropriate, planting broadleaved woodland to screen development while simultaneously linking habitats, improving ecological connectivity and resilience; • Restoring hedgerow boundaries, especially where they will help to impede cross-land flows; • Maintain and restore localised ancient woodland blocks and small farm woodlands, conserving the integrity of woodlands and managing them as single units; • Thickening and expanding scattered shelterbelts, expanding around development to enhance their screening function; • Considering small-scale woodland creation where appropriate, for example, where it buffers existing woodlands and/or contributes to habitat networks; and • Manage and enhance the productive agricultural landscape, including the creation of arable field margins and conservation headlands.
NCA 119: North Downs	Landform and geology: • Forms a chain of chalk hills; and • Chalk soils are predominant across the NCA but the upper part of the dip slope is capped by extensive clay-with-flint deposits. Vegetation pattern: • The woodlands, many of which are ancient, are a prominent feature of the landscape, ecological value has suffered in recent years due to a reduction in active management; • Tracts of species-rich chalk grassland and patches of chalk heath are important downland habitats and of international importance; • Woodland is found primarily on the steeper slopes of the scarp valley sides and areas of the dip slope capped with clay-with flints; and • Well-wooded hedgerows and shaws are an important component of the field boundaries, contributing to a strongly wooded character. Land use: • Agriculture is an important component of the landscape, with variations in soils supporting mixed farming practices where arable, livestock and horticulture have co-existed for centuries; and • Arable farmland occupies a large area within the North Downs.

National Character Area Profiles	Landscape Character Summary
	Settlement: • Small, nucleated villages and scattered farmsteads including oast houses and barns form the settlement pattern, with oasts, barns and large houses scattered throughout; and • Local materials used for building include: flint, chalk, ragstone, Wealden bricks and timber. Infrastructure: • Imposing landform of the North Downs has confined major transport links to its edges and along the river valleys, which gives much of the NCA an often remote and tranquil atmosphere, offering dark night skies in places – a rare find in the much-developed southeast of England. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Opportunities to create more robust and resilient ecological networks across the agricultural landscape should be maximised; • Encourage the positive management of open habitats and spaces, such as rides and glades; • Maintaining an appropriate balance of well-structured woodland and transitional and open habitats will produce a mixed structure of tree species and stand age, benefitting biodiversity; • Conserving ancient and veteran trees within the landscape for the benefit of species that depend upon them, and for their heritage value and contribution to sense of place; • Restoring and strengthening the mosaic of connecting landscape and habitat features; and • Targeted planting of woodland and trees surrounding existing and new development and major transport corridors where appropriate within the existing context.

Table Source: Natural England – National Character Area Profiles: 113 North Kent Plain (2012) and 119 North Downs (2013).

Table F.2: Regional Landscape Character Areas

Regional Landscape Character Areas	Landscape Character Summary	Landscape quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs	Landform and geology: • Strong underlying pattern to the landform. Throughout the length of the chalk ridge a series of narrow, steep-sided dry valleys carve their way down the northern dip-slope of the Downs to the flatter land of the North Kent Fruit Belt; • Undeveloped ridges and valleys are considered to be one of the most beautiful features of the AONB; and • Dry valleys are a particular feature of the landform. Vegetation pattern: • A pattern of wide, arable fields contained by dense belts of woodland, which run along the upper slopes of the dry valleys; • Much of the original ancient woodland survives, walling in the arable plateau and enclosing the rounded, valley bottoms; and • Dense belts of woodland are a characteristic feature. They reinforce the pattern of the landform and provide some large-scale enclosure, reducing the potential scale of the arable fields on the plateau. Land use: • Built development is infrequent but is considered to have a moderate impact on the area; and • Arable fields, hops, orchards and historic parkland make up a large portion of the land use. Settlement: • A network of small, often sunken, single-track lanes connects tiny, scattered villages, giving a timeless, 'well-settled' feel to the landscape; • Tile-hung oast houses are a common feature;	The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) categorises the landscape condition of the Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs LCA as **Moderate**, due to: • The LCA being a coherent and sparsely settled area with arable farmland and woodland; • Dry valleys being a particular feature of the landform; • Presence of a few visual detractions, resulting from unsympathetic management of agricultural land, such as dead trees and 'scraps' of hedgerows; • Suburban influences to small settlements and pylons running through open fields also detracts from the view; • Built development is infrequent, but is considered to have a moderate impact on the area; • Dense woodland belts generally follow the upper slopes of the dry valleys and provide clusters of semi-natural habitats; and	The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) categorises the landscape sensitivity of the Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs LCA as **Low**, due to: • Vernacular styles and flint are not strongly represented, although oast houses are common in some areas towards the north; • More recent ridgeline residential development is indistinct in style and form; • Roads follow ridgeline and cross-contour tracks and contribute to the time-depth of the area; • Ancient woodland is a characteristic feature; • Tall hedges and standard trees are indistinct and wooded edges are often pushed back to the horizon; • This LCA has a varied time-depth which ranges from the ancient, relating to the broadleaf woodland, to isolated and indistinctive development with little time-depth.

Regional Landscape Character Areas	Landscape Character Summary	Landscape quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Vernacular styles and flint are not strongly represented, although oast houses are common in some areas towards the north; and • Recent ridgeline residential development is indistinct in style and form. Infrastructure: • Suburban influences to small settlements and pylons through the open fields detract from the view; • Roads follow ridgeline and cross-contour tracks and contribute to the time depth of the area; and • Highways are a characteristic feature. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Replanting where woodland blocks have become fragmented. New woodland edges may also be created to absorb and integrate the edges of the more recent settlements; • Opening up of the arable plateau may be halted by the reintroduction of roadside hedgerows and shaws, commencing at the peripheries of the plateau, leading out from existing woodland; and • Reinforce the ancient characteristics of highways of narrow carriageways and hedged boundaries.	• No corresponding habitat network found through large arable fields.	
Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs	Landform and geology: • The plateau has insignificant landform, but this area includes some of the top of the scarp and steeper sided valleys. The landform is considered to be apparent in the view. Vegetation pattern: • Mosaic of deciduous woodland, large arable plateau and steep, rolling valleys, which support a patchwork of small pastures, neglected grassland and scrub; • A number of mainly derelict orchards dot the slopes;	The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) categorises the landscape condition of the Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs LCA as **Poor**, due to: • The LCA being a large-scale landscape, that despite its coherent pattern has many detracting features which are	The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) categorises the landscape sensitivity of the Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs LCA as **High**, due to: • The sense of place within the landscape being strong; • Key characteristics such as cross-contour and ridgeline

Regional Landscape Character Areas	Landscape Character Summary	Landscape quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Small scrubby shaw; • Many of the hedgerows are in poor condition and the woodlands are scrubby and largely unmanaged; and • Enclosure by woodland is intermittent. Land use: • The arable plateau is intensively farmed; and • Fruit cultivation used to be widespread in this area – orchards are mainly derelict today. Settlement: • Built-form has a negative impact on the view; and • Settlement and built-from do not greatly contribute to local distinctiveness. Infrastructure: • Strong urban-edge influence in this area, characterised by dereliction, fly tipping and high security fences; and • Long views out to the industrial edge. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Restore broadleaf wooded areas – restore woodland links forming a network with the existing woodland cover on the scarp; • Restore hedgerow along selected highways and around settlements; and • Restore a smaller-scale framework to the landscape around settlements.	associated with unsympathetic land uses; • Large blocks of woodland are interspersed with areas of intense arable cultivation – the latter reduces the ecological interest of the landscape area; • There is a strong influence from the urban edge; • The cultural integrity and the condition of heritage features is poor; and • Built-form has a negative impact on the view.	roads, and beech/yew woodland contribute to the strong sense of place and also have a very strong time depth; • Settlement and built-form however, do not contribute greatly to local distinctiveness; • The plateau itself has an insignificant landform, but this area includes some of the top of the scarp and some of the steeper sided valleys, the landform is therefore considered to be apparent in the view; and • Enclosure by woodland is intermittent.
Fruit Belt	Landform and geology: • Rolling landscape with distinct valleys; and • Large scale, open landscape. Vegetation pattern:	The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) categorises the landscape condition of the Fruit Belt LCA as **Very Poor**, due to:	The Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004) categorises the landscape sensitivity of the Fruit Belt Character Area LCA as **Low**, due to:

Regional Landscape Character Areas	Landscape Character Summary	Landscape quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Rural, agricultural landscape characterised by a complex landscape pattern of orchards, shelterbelts, fields of arable, pasture and horticultural crops are divided by small blocks of woodland; • Woodland cover is limited, and where there are shelterbelts, these are often single species; and • The area's hedgerow and mature tree stock has suffered greatly from the demise of the elm. Land use: • Land cover is dominated by a richly varied pattern of agricultural land uses; and • Orchards are the most distinctive feature of the landscape and are still widespread across this area. Settlement: • Apart from the area of Sittingbourne, this LCA contains only small, scattered villages and farm complexes which contribute to its rural character and landscape diversity; and • Apart from occasional flint churches, built form is not thought to be highly distinctive in the locality. Infrastructure: • The M2 and A249 road corridors, and associated ribbon development run through the area and have a localised urbanising effect; and • Isolated shelterbelts typify the incoherent landscape pattern which has many detracting suburban and industrial influences, including the main transport corridors. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Opportunity to enhance the relief of the natural landform and to create a more distinctive land pattern; • Create ecological interest by planting broadleaf woodland on steeper valley sides;	• The inherent richness and complexity of the rolling landscape having developed a new emphasis towards that of a larger-scale, more open landscape; • Some blocks of intensive fruit growing also contribute to the sense of a larger scale; • Isolated shelterbelts typify the incoherent landscape pattern, which has many detracting suburban and industrial influences, and main transport corridors; • Isolated remnants of old orchard can be found within the character area; • The woodland cover is limited, and where there are shelterbelts, these are often single-species; and • The ecological integrity of the area is considered to be weak.	• Overall, this LCA is of varied continuity, influenced by historic settlement and communication routes but with strong influences from the recent past to the current day; • Highways retain historic characteristics such as narrow, hedge-lined roads following ancient routes; • The historic fruit growing patterns are characteristic in some areas, but dwarf root stock and single-species shelterbelts have a more recent form; • The area's hedgerow and mature tree stock has suffered greatly from the demise of the elm; • Settlement has many influences, aside from occasional flint churches, landscape features are not thought to be highly distinctive in the locality; and • Visibility is moderate as the rolling landform is apparent, but views are contained by intermittent tree cover.

Regional Landscape Character Areas	Landscape Character Summary	Landscape quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Create an urban edge, using woodland blocks and the retention of shelterbelts where appropriate; and • Create mature stand tree cover at nodes such as road junctions, in hedgerows and at settlement edges.		

Table Source: The Landscape Assessment of Kent (Kent County Council, 2004).

Summary of Regional Landscape Character Areas

Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs

Quality/condition

F.2.1 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2, the portion of the Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs Character Area lying within the 2 km study area as shown on Figure 9.2, exhibits the following positive characteristics: dry valleys which are a particular feature of the landform; wide arable fields bound by dense belts of woodland, including ancient woodland which walls in the arable plateau and encloses the valley bottoms; and sunken, single-lane tracks connecting to tiny scattered villages. These features combine to create a sense of place and coherency to the landscape. There is a reasonable distribution of trees and shrub cover within the area. However, the proximity of this LCA to the M2 and A249, alongside the intensification of agricultural land and the loss of historic internal field boundaries, has led to a diminishment of the quality/condition of this LCA. Therefore, this is a landscape exhibiting a mixed character and has been assessed as being of **Good** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.2 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9 the value of the section of the Regional Landscape Character Area: Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs which lies within the 2km study area has been assessed as being of **High** value, due to it sitting within the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the presence of a nationally important Scheduled Monument: ringwork and baileys at Church Farm.

Susceptibility

F.2.3 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2km study area is Good. The Kent Downs AONB and the setting to the many listed buildings and the Scheduled Monument are vulnerable to change. The presence of narrow lanes and large arable fields on the plateaus are characteristic features of the Kent Downs AONB LCA 8: Mid Kent Downs. There are a range of harmonious features within this LCA, including: the dry valley landform, the presence of ancient and enclosing belts of woodland to the dry valley bottoms and the listed buildings of the settlement of Stockbury. Discordant features relating to the proximity of the LCA to the existing transport corridors, namely the A249 and the M2 impact upon the setting of this LCA.

F.2.4 Therefore, given the rural context and the presence and siting of the existing A249 that runs parallel to this LCA, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium.**

Sensitivity

F.2.5 The sensitivity of the Regional Landscape Character Area: Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs, was summarised within the Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004), as being of **Low** sensitivity (see Table F.2).

F.2.6 Through combining this landscape receptor's High value with its Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 derived from the

methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010), the setting of this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Moderate** sensitivity to change. This takes into consideration the national and local designations, detracting features and the degree of intervening vegetation and landform between the character area and the site of the Scheme.

Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs

Quality/condition

F.2.7 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2 in Chapter 9, the portion of the Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs Character Area lying within the 2km study area (as shown on Figure 9.2), exhibits the following positive characteristics: a strong sense of place contributed by the time depth retained through narrow and winding rural hedge-lined lanes, and the presence of listed buildings of a local vernacular; a mosaic of habitats, including areas of Ancient Woodland, which contribute to a coherent landscape pattern. There are however noticeable detracting elements within the landscape, including the presence of 20th century mixed style properties and isolated executive homes, which in conjunction with the presence of the M2, the A249 and the intensification of agricultural land, give an overall diminished sense to the quality/condition of this LCA. Therefore, this a landscape exhibiting a mixed character and it has been assessed as being of **Good** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.8 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9, the value of the section of the Regional Landscape Character Area: Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs which lies within the 2km study area, has been assessed as being of **Medium** value due to its setting within the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its limited potential for substitution, resulting from the positive characteristics typical of the Kent Downs, namely the presence of ancient woodland, the ecological value associated with the mosaic of habitats and the historical links retained through narrow rural lanes and listed buildings. Detracting features such as arable intensification, mixed 20th century style development, neglected orchards and the strong presence of the M2 and A249 within this LCA lessen the overall value.

Susceptibility

F.2.9 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2km study area is **Good**. The Kent Downs AONB, the presence of important hedgerows, locally valued rural lanes and the setting to the many listed buildings are vulnerable to change. The presence of steep rolling valleys, ancient woodland and large arable fields on the plateaus are characteristics typical of the Kent Downs AONB LCA 8: Mid Kent Downs. There are a number of harmonious features within this LCA, including the steep rolling valleys, woodland enclosure, listed buildings, important hedgerows, narrow rural lanes and the mosaic of ecological habitats. Discordant features are present in the form of isolated executive homes, homes of a mixed 20th century style, that do not accord with the local vernacular and the presence of the existing transport corridors, namely the A249 and M2 – combined, these factors impact negatively upon the setting of this LCA.

F.2.10 Therefore, given the rural context and the presence and siting of the existing A249 within this LCA, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium**.

Sensitivity

F.2.11 The sensitivity of the Regional Landscape Character Area: Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs, was summarised within the Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004), as being of **High** sensitivity (see Table F.2).

F.2.12 Through combining this landscape receptor's Medium value with its Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 derived from the methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010), the setting of this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Moderate** sensitivity to change. This judgement takes into consideration the presence of national and local designations within the study area, the presence of unremarkable features such as the mixed 20th century properties and isolated executive homes, which detract from the local distinctiveness, as does the presence of the A249 and the M2 which are discordant within the landscape. There is a degree of screening vegetation provided by the landform which foreshortens views, and woodland blocks intervene within the wider character area and the site of the proposed development.

Fruit Belt

Quality/condition

F.2.13 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2, the portion of the Fruit Belt Character Area lying within the 2km study area (as shown on Figure 9.2), has a distinguishable landscape structure dominated by agricultural land uses, including intensive fruit growing. The dominance of the land uses within this LCA has led to a diminishment in the quality/condition of this LCA, leading to a change in character from that of a complex landscape pattern to a larger-scale open landscape. Detracting features include the presence of single-species shelterbelts, limited woodland cover and single-species hedgerows leading to a homogenous feel, and lessens the rural character of the LCA. The hedgerow and mature tree stock within the area have greatly declined due to the loss of elm trees. This is a landscape with few distinctive features worthy of conservation on a local scale, with scope for positive enhancement.

F.2.14 Therefore, this landscape has been judged to be of **Ordinary** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.15 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9, the value of the section of the Regional Landscape Character Area: Fruit Belt which lies within the 2km study area, has been assessed as being of **Low** value due to the decreased conservation interest resulting from the loss of mature trees, hedgerows and increased intensification of agricultural uses, the Ordinary quality/condition attributed to the LCA and the limited woodland cover.

Susceptibility

F.2.16 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2km study area is **Ordinary**. The LCA sits adjacent to the Kent Downs AONB and therefore forms the setting for the AONB, which is vulnerable to change. Agricultural intensification and blocks of intensive fruit growing have led to the demise of the LCA, resulting in a new form of landscape, a larger-scale open landscape. The LCA has been further blighted by Dutch elm disease which has had a significant impact on mature tree cover and hedgerows within the area. This is a landscape that is clearly functional in use due to the dominance of agricultural land use. The presence of single-species hedgerows and shelterbelts also detract from the overall character, as do the M2, A249 transport corridors and associated ribbon developments. Landscape diversity is provided by the presence of small, scattered villages and farm complexes which contribute to the rural character and landscape diversity. Further positive characteristics can be found in the LCA, including strong historical links provided by historic settlements and communication routes, as well as the narrow, hedge-lined roads which often follow ancient routes.

F.2.17 Therefore, given the detracting features within this LCA and the prominence and presence of the A249 and M2, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Low**.

Sensitivity

F.2.18 The sensitivity of the Regional Landscape Character Area: Fruit Belt, was summarised within the Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004), as being of **Low** sensitivity (see Table F.2).

F.2.19 Through combining this landscape receptor's Low / Medium value with its Low / Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 derived from the methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010), this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Low** sensitivity to change. This judgement takes into consideration the proximity of the LCA to the Kent Downs AONB, albeit it is separated by the M2, and therefore, due to the numerous detracting features within the LCA and the degree of intervening vegetation between the wider character area and the site of the proposed development this lessens the overall sensitivity.

Table F.3: Stage 2 Report: Local Landscape Character Areas

Local Landscape Character Areas	Scoped in (✓) / out (✗)		Comment/Justification
	Construction	Operation	
Maidstone Borough Council: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape.
Maidstone Borough Council: Bicknor and Hazel Street Orchards	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character area and no views of the Scheme.
Maidstone Borough Council: Bredhurst Dry Valleys	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape.
Maidstone Borough Council: Friningham Downs	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character area and no views of the Scheme.
Maidstone Borough Council: Hucking Dry Valleys	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape.
Swale Borough Council: Borden Mixed Farmlands	✓	✓	The Scheme would have a localised impact on the setting of this landscape character area, due to its proximity to the proposed Maidstone Road Link.
Swale Borough Council: Newington Arable Farmlands	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the slip roads into the road corridor and loss of roadside vegetation.
Swale Borough Council: Newington Fruit Belt	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character area and no views of the Scheme.
Swale Borough Council: Hartlip Downs	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character area and no views of the Scheme.
Swale Borough Council: Deans Bottom	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape, as well as alterations to the road layout at Oad Street.
Swale Borough Council: Tunstall Farmlands	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the proposed Maidstone Road Link into the landscape.

Table F.4: Stage 3 Report: Local Landscape Character Areas

Local Landscape Character Areas	Scoped in (✓) / out (✗)		Comment/Justification
	Construction	Operation	
Maidstone Borough Council: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape.
Maidstone Borough Council: Bicknor and Hazel Street Orchards	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character areas and no views of the Scheme.
Maidstone Borough Council: Bredhurst Dry Valleys	x	x	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character areas and no views of the Scheme.
Maidstone Borough Council: Friningham Downs	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character areas and no views of the Scheme.
Maidstone Borough Council: Hucking Dry Valleys	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape.
Swale Borough Council: Borden Mixed Farmlands	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the proposed Maidstone Road Link into the landscape.
Swale Borough Council: Newington Arable Farmlands	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the slip roads into the road corridor and loss of roadside vegetation.
Swale Borough Council: Newington Fruit Belt	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character area and no views of the Scheme.
Swale Borough Council: Hartlip Downs	×	×	There would be no impact on characteristic elements of this character areas and no views of the Scheme.
Swale Borough Council: Deans Bottom	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the flyover into the landscape.

Local Landscape Character Areas	Scoped in (✓) / out (✗)		Comment/Justification
	Construction	Operation	
Swale Borough Council: Tunstall Farmlands	✓	✓	The Scheme would have an impact on land form or characteristic elements and introduce an urban element in the form of the new Maidstone Road Link into the landscape.

Table F.5: Local Landscape Character Areas

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
Maidstone Borough Council: Landscape Character Area: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs (Landscape Type: North Downs)	Landform and geology: • Level to gently sloping landform of the North Downs upper plateau; • The underlying geology is the Upper Chalk which is mostly overlain by drifts of predominantly clay-with-flints, as well as some smaller deposits of head drift; and • Within Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs there are views across the fields, but these are limited where there are remnant orchard trees or blocks of woodland. Vegetation pattern: • The landscape comprises a mixture of arable fields, paddocks, remnant orchards and small blocks of woodland and is split in two by the dry wooded valleys just south east of Bredhurst village; • The fields form an irregular pattern but are mostly small-scale with a few exceptions; • Paddocks are often rectangular in shape and split up by boundaries incorporating electric fencing; • Hedgerows are usually in association with lanes and are scarcer in the northern part of the area; • The area includes a few small to medium blocks of woodland;	Maidstone Borough Council have categorised the landscape condition of the Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs LCA as **Poor**, due to: • Villages, farmsteads, recent settlements, industrial estate, County Show Ground and fragmented arable fields, paddocks, remnant orchards and small blocks of woodland creating an incoherent pattern of elements; • The condition of equestrian fields being variable due to features such as barbed wire, scrubby hedges and electric fences; • Remnant orchards make the landscape appear neglected; • There is not a strong network of hedgerows and woodlands within the area and the intensity of land use is variable;	Maidstone Borough Council have categorised the landscape sensitivity of the Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs LCA as **Moderate**, due to: • The fragmented pattern of the landscape, which consists of several distinct features, such as the historic and ancient woodlands, the narrow and winding lanes, the historic settlements and buildings and the tall and detracting electricity pylons, as well as some indistinct features such as the hedgerows, post and wire fences and more recent settlements and buildings; • The overall continuity of the landscape is historic; and • Tree cover in Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs is

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Views are limited along parts of the lanes where hedgerows are taller; and • Remnant orchards make the landscape look neglected. Land use: • The majority of the landscape forms part of the Kent Downs AONB, while the remainder forms part of the setting to the AONB; • There appears to be no dominant land use and the different types of fields are scattered throughout the area, with clusters of cereal fields next to remnant cherry orchards or collections of equestrian fields; and • The villages, farmsteads, recent settlements, industrial estate, County Show Ground and fragmented arable fields, paddocks, remnant orchards and small blocks of woodland create an incoherent pattern of elements within Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs. Settlement: • Mixture of historic and recent buildings within the villages and scattered farmsteads across the area; • Traditional materials include: yellow stock and red brick, Kent peg ties, flint and weatherboarding; and • Behind Stockbury Church, the earthwork of the motte and bailey of Stockbury Castle remain. Infrastructure: • Predominantly very narrow lanes, in addition to the engineered roads within Bredhurst and the M2 Motorway; • The A249 dual carriageway runs along part of the south eastern boundary and the M2 cuts through the area to the north west, both contrasting with the rural road patterns within the area;	• The cultural integrity of the area is variable; • Gaps in field boundaries can be found in places; and • The impacts or recent built development within the area is moderate with very few of the buildings in keeping with the local vernacular tradition, which in combination with the tall electricity pylons slightly weakens the sense of place within the area.	intermittent and while the landform within the area is generally not a distinctive feature, on higher ground there are longer views out of the area.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• While the M2 is visible in parts, it is deeply set as it passes Bredhurst, reducing the impact the road has on the area; and • Long views west of Stockbury, looking towards the Isle of Grain and the Medway Estuary. These views include large industrial features. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Improve the condition of field boundaries, through the introduction of native hedgerows; • Conserve blocks of ancient woodland – restore and improve the woodlands within the area and introduce greater woodland structural diversity; and • Restore and improve the network of hedgerows, filling in gaps where there are no boundaries.		
Maidstone Borough Council: Hucking Dry Valleys	Landform and geology: • Gently undulating landform of a dry valley landscape; • Series of dip slope valleys located to the north east of Maidstone; • Where there are hedgerows or tree belts between fields in the dip slope, the vegetation belts emphasise the undulating nature of the land; • The characteristic dip slope valley is formed by the underlying Upper Chalk which comprises the higher ground of the North Downs. Within the dip slopes the Upper Chalk is overlain by large and distinctly finger-shaped deposits of head drift and the soils are shallow, well drained, calcareous and silty; and • The landform of the dip slope limits views to areas within the valleys. Vegetation pattern:	Maidstone Borough Council have categorised the landscape condition of the Hucking Dry Valleys LCA as **Very Good**, due to: • The combination of the undulating dip slope valleys with pasture, woodlands, hedgerows, winding lanes and small farmsteads forming a unified pattern of elements, which are only slightly interrupted to the north where a few relict orchards, paddocks and arable fields are present; • There are very few detracting features within the area, with the noisy A249 dual carriageway	Maidstone Borough Council have categorised the landscape sensitivity of the Hucking Dry Valleys LCA as **High**, due to: • The many very distinctive and historic features within the Hucking Dry Valleys, including: the coppice, woodlands, chalk pasture, parkland trees, winding lanes and traditional buildings; • The hedgerows and post and wire boundaries are distinctive; • Arable fields, remnant orchards and paddocks are relatively indistinct;

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Large woodland tracts and blocks, much of which is ancient; • Chalk grassland pasture or chalk woodlands typically cover the dry dip slope valleys; • Narrow, winding and often deeply set lanes that are often lined with hedgerows or enclosed by taller vegetation; • Hucking Dry Valleys often feel enclosed due to the extensive amount of tree cover within the area. Views within the woodland blocks are limited, but more open views are present within areas of pasture; and • The many woodland blocks and tracts, tree belts, hedgerows and grasslands create an extensive and strong ecological network within the area. Land use: • Traditional low intensity of land use, mainly coppicing and grazing. • Paddocks and remnant orchards close to Pett Farm. Settlement: • Traditional buildings; • Some recent and sometimes rundown buildings are found along the A249; and • Small farmsteads with metal and concrete sheds present, but these are few and far between. Infrastructure: • The A249 dual carriageway cuts through the north-western fringe. While it is not in keeping with the narrow lanes and rural landscape of the area, the road is well positioned in the bottom of a valley and surrounded by woodland along much of its path. The A249 is therefore not a noticeable feature within most of the area; and	being the main detractor, but due to the screening created by the landform and surrounding vegetation, the effect is only local; • There are a few rundown buildings, as well as metal and concrete farm sheds present, but these are few and far between; • The many woodland blocks and tracts, tree belts, hedgerows and grasslands create a strong ecological network within the area; • Traditional low intensity of land use, mainly coppicing and grazing; and • The cultural integrity is generally strong.	• The sense of place is strong; and • The undulating dip slope landform is an apparent feature which combines with the intermittent tree cover to allow moderate visibility within the area.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• The noisy A249 dual carriageway is the main detractor, but due to the screening created both by the landform and surrounding vegetation, the effect is only local. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Conserve the woodlands and enhance structural diversity, particularly where ancient woodland is present; • Gap up the hedgerows in the few locations where this is needed; • Seek to extend native woodland cover within areas of intensively farmed landscape.		
Swale Borough Council: Borden Mixed Farmlands	Landform and geology: • Rolling topography with mixed geology of chalk head and clay-with-flints; • Mixed geology is typical of the North Downs dip slope, with chalk on the higher ground and head and clay-with-flints on the lower lying slopes; and • Intimate, rolling landscape with two valleys, where views are foreshortened by the topography and vegetation. Vegetation pattern: • Enclosed rural landscape with valleys, fragmented over-mature hedgerows, small pockets of isolated woodland, mature and remnant orchard; • Interesting landscape with an intimate character unlike the surrounding areas; • Land use is mixed with many mature and remnant orchards separated by fields enlarged for cereal production; • Mature hedgerows enclose the narrow, twisting, occasionally sunken lanes; and • Small, isolated broadleaf woodland is scattered across the western slopes.	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape condition of the Borden Mixed Farmlands LCA as **Moderate**, due to: • The undulating topography and mature vegetation helping to screen the landscape; • Visually the area is not unified due to fragmentation and removal of hedgerows and replacement in places with post and wire fencing; • Sittingbourne's urban fringe is particularly noticeable towards Chestnut Street and is partly exacerbated by the scale of the A249 in this area; • Many of the orchards have become over-mature and many are now used for grazing ponies, where this is the case, stable blocks and the occasional	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape sensitivity of the Borden Mixed Farmlands LCA as **Moderate**, due to: • Topography and tree cover restricting views out of the area; • Recent decline in land use has eroded the distinctive character of the area and weakened its sense of place; • Recent building practices of the last century have also weakened the character and sense of place; and • The urban edge of Sittingbourne is locally visible, and the integrity and setting of some rural settlements is sensitive.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	Land use: • Intimate small-scale fields, in places enlarged for cereal crops; • Traditional land uses indicated by now isolated mature shelterbelts and oast houses; • Traditionally this would have been an area almost entirely used for the production of fruit. Working orchards are still a feature, but many have been lost or are in decline, many plots have been subdivided for use as grazing land for horses; • Chestnut wood is used for chestnut paling works; • On the more open ground behind the A249 valley, a large equine establishment with its network of post, rail and white tape edges to paddocks dominates; • Fragmented hedgerows; and • Non-intensively managed orchards provide valuable mixed habitats, as do remnant shelterbelts and grasslands with mixed management regimes. Isolated woodlands and scrub provide other significant areas for biodiversity. Settlement: • Urbanised ribbon development along western boundary; • The A249 has a mix of ribbon and sporadic development, sometimes on the valley side; • The greatest concentration of housing is found at Chestnut Street. A loosely knit ribbon development fronting onto the old Sittingbourne to Maidstone Road; • Development on the opposite side of the road dates from the 19th century, with infilling and rebuilding in recent years; • Elsewhere, small villages and scattered cottages retain a strong rural character;	caravan have been introduced and orchards have been subdivided by post and wire fencing into smaller paddocks. • The ecological integrity is fairly good: non-intensively managed orchards, remnant shelterbelts, grasslands, isolated woodlands and scrub provide significant areas for biodiversity; • Impact of built development has been particularly significant towards the urban edge of Sittingbourne; • Mixed 20th century building styles create urban sprawl along the Maidstone Road south of Chestnut Street; and • Within the more rural parts of the area, traditional character has largely been retained and notable historic buildings remain.	

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Fine examples of vernacular architecture are seen throughout and those of particular interest are within the hamlet of Oad Street; and • Notable examples of modern development have been built using local vernacular building materials of brick and flint. However, during the 20th century mixed building styles created urban sprawl along the Maidstone Road south of Chestnut Street. Infrastructure: • This rural landscape is situated between the M2, south west of Sittingbourne, with the A249 along its western boundary. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Conserve the intimate and rolling landscape character of valleys and hillsides, together with its hedgerows, pockets of isolated woodland, nature and remnant orchard and the area's narrow, enclosed, hedge-lined and banked lanes. Look for opportunities to create such features and to additionally create links between existing hedgerows, windbreaks and woodlands; • Conserve remnant areas of woodland on the hillside valleys along the A249 and create stronger woodland blocks through managing, restoring and extending areas of woodland; • Avoid inappropriate large-scale or obtrusive elements on visually sensitive open areas and valley sides; and • Restoration and extension of the hedgerow network and arable field margins/buffers would provide improved habitat connectivity.		
Swale Borough Council: Newington Arable Farmlands	Landform and geology: • Rolling arable landscape; • Simple geology of Thanet bed deposits; and	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape sensitivity of the Newington

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Views mainly enclosed by topography, roadside screening and built development. Vegetation pattern: • Few isolated remnant woodlands at field margins; • Areas of woodland are rare and where they do exist are small remnant areas found at field margins, or as colonising trees on the A249; • Hedgerow fragmentation is apparent within the area including along the narrow lanes; • Most of the structure traditionally associated with the rural fabric has been removed; and • The few vegetative corridors and limited areas of small isolated remnant woodland have reduced the value of the area in ecological terms. Land use: • Between the Newington Fruit Belt and the A249 lies an area of land that has lost much of its traditional character as it has been opened up for the purpose of agricultural intensification; and • Intensive arable farming practices and small fields for horse grazing. Settlement: • Settlement limited to ribbon development along major roads and isolated farmsteads; • Mixed field pattern, generally medium-scale; • Buildings are generally restricted to the M2 and A249 corridors where residential dwellings have been constructed in mixed style throughout the 20th century; • Area lacks distinctiveness and a sense of place, in part exacerbated by 20th century housing styles; and	condition of the Newington Arable Farmlands LCA as **Poor**, due to: • Most of the structure traditionally associated with the rural fabric having been removed; • Internal field boundaries have been lost, with the enlargement of many fields; • Lanes have an open feeling due to only small sections of hedgerow remaining, supplemented by post and wire fencing; • Mature vegetation of the major road corridors provides important visual screening and maintains the integrity of the landscape character; • Few vegetative corridors and limited areas of small, isolated remnant woodland have reduced the value of the area in ecological terms; and • Intensive arable farming practices have further impacted on the ecological integrity.	Arable Farmlands LCA as **Low**, due to: • Views into and out of the area being restricted by the rolling topography and intermittent vegetation creating an area of moderate visibility; • Traditional landscape character has been lost to modern farming methods and mediocre 20th century housing styles, which has given rise to the area lacking distinctiveness and a sense of place; and • However, isolated farms and traditional residential dwellings are important historic elements.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Isolated farms and traditional residential dwellings are important historic elements. Infrastructure: • 'A' roads, motorway and open narrow winding lanes. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • To the south is the M2 and to the east the A249. Despite this, it has a very rural and tranquil character for the most part. The landscape seems to sit above these networks, which are in cutting or hidden behind residential ribbon development; • The major interchange of the A249 and M2 are well screened by mature vegetation; and • Safeguard remaining remnants of woodland, orchard and hedgerow, especially along lanes and look for opportunities for their re-creation, for example, by the enclosure of existing open areas, the integration of existing and new development with woodland blocks and hedgerows and by linking isolated woodlands and hedgerows.		
Swale Borough Council: Deans Bottom	Landform and geology: • Isolated dry valley with gentle chalk slopes and head deposits on valley floor; • It is an enclosed landscape containing head deposits at its base and gentle rounded chalk slopes to the north; • Wooded shaws along the northern ridge further enclose the valley; and • Occasional panoramic views across valley pastures. Vegetation pattern: • Remnant orchards and pasture; • Narrow enclosed hedge-lined lanes; and	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape condition of the Deans Bottom LCA as **Moderate**, due to: • The area being enclosed and isolated; • The mature hedgerows of the lanes and the woodland shaws growing along the northern chalk ridge, interspersed with remnant orchards, provide some visual coherence; • Post and wire fencing visually interrupts the pastoral landscape;	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape sensitivity of the Deans Bottom LCA as **High**, due to: • Open views along the valley side; • It is a unique landscape that has retained many of its traditional qualities, this is largely due to its isolated nature and low-key method of management; • Buildings and roads are of a good condition; and

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	• Mature hedgerows of the lanes and the woodland shaws growing along the northern chalk ridge, interspersed with remnant orchards, provide some visual coherence. Land use: • Medium to small-scale irregular field pattern; • Evidence of remnant orchards is a feature of the lower slopes; and • On higher slopes land is used for grazing horses and sheep. Settlement: • Scattered isolated farmsteads and cottages. Buildings in mixed styles; • A number of scattered farms and residential properties are sited along the narrow hedge-lined lanes that follow the valley floor; and • Generally, properties are well screened and set back from the road, so have little impact on the rural nature of the area. Infrastructure: • Narrow enclosed hedge-lined lanes; and • It is a quiet and peaceful valley despite the close proximity of the M2 and the A249. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Conserve and restore the distinctive, isolated and tranquil open landscape character of the dry valley pastures, remnant orchards and ridge top trees, together with the area's panoramic views and narrow, enclosed, hedge-lined lanes. Additionally, look for opportunities to restore mature woodland, chalk grassland and hedgerow planting; and • Deans Bottom is a small character area but features significant potential for developing both woodland and chalk	• Building styles are mixed, but those that are visually prominent are traditional buildings that have been restored or are maintained in good condition and help to reinforce the local character; • Mature hedgerows provide strong wildlife corridors, linked to small, mixed, deciduous woodland pockets and fragmented orchards; and • Arable conversion is present on some of the slopes.	• The valley is quiet and peaceful despite the proximity of the M2 and A249.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	grassland habitats on the valley sides. This would help to extend, buffer and link small patches of existing woodland and chalk grassland in this and adjacent areas.		
Swale Borough Council: Tunstall Farmlands	Landform and geology: • Gently rising North Downs dip slope overlain with drift deposits of Thanet and Bagshot beds and clay-with-flints; and • Dry valley to the east with a strong sense of remoteness given the proximity to the urban edge. Vegetation pattern: • Fragmentation of hedgerows along lanes and internal field boundaries lost with enlargement of field sizes; • Woodland is ancient, isolated and rare, consequently, isolated long views to Sheppey in the north and across the M2 motorway corridor are visible from certain strategic points; and • Diverse rural landscape, which includes small patchworks of enclosed orchards and open large-scale fields where hedgerows have been lost. Land use: • Areas of traditional orchard lost to agricultural intensification. Where present, many orchards mature or remnant and grazed. Settlement: • Historic villages and hamlets maintain rural character despite influence of modern development; and • Modern residential development has to a degree diluted the character of the villages and occasional isolated executive homes are an incongruous element in the landscape.	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape condition of the Tunstall Farmlands LCA as **Moderate**, due to: • On the whole, the landscape is visually coherent and many features, including the built-form, help to maintain the strong historic character of the area; • There are however, a number of detracting features that interrupt and downgrade the landscape quality, these include the pylons and the motorway corridor, both of which are prominent features; and • Modern residential development has to a degree diluted the character of the villages and occasional isolated executive homes are an incongruous element in the landscape.	Swale Borough Council have categorised the landscape sensitivity of the Tunstall Farmlands LCA as **High**, due to: • The visual coherence of the landscape as a whole; • The main features, including the built form, help to maintain the strong historic character of the area; • There are a number of detracting features that interrupt and downgrade the landscape quality, including: the pylons and the motorway corridor, which are prominent elements; and • Modern residential development has to a degree diluted the character of the villages and occasional isolated executive homes are an incongruous element in the landscape.

Local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)	Landscape Character Summary: Key Characteristics	Landscape value, quality/condition	Landscape sensitivity
	Infrastructure: • M2 motorway and pylons detract from rural tranquillity; and • Elsewhere, lanes are narrow and winding with many sharp bends. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Conserve the remaining landscape structure of hedgerows and shelterbelts, woodland and mature and remnant orchards. Additionally, look for opportunities to diversify and restore such features to create a more enclosed landscape, whilst additionally creating links between existing features; • Restore fragmented hedgerows; and • Preservation of veteran trees where present would be of benefit in this area.		

Table Source: Key characteristics as defined by the following Local Landscape Character Area Assessments: Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD (Swale Borough Council, 2011); and Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (Maidstone Borough Council, 2012).

Table F.6: Kent Downs AONB Character Area

Kent Downs AONB Character Area	Landscape Character Summary
LCA 8: Mid Kent Downs	Landform and geology: • Series of wide ridges and steep-sided dry valleys. Vegetation pattern: • Extensive coppice woodlands and some large expanses of conifer woodland; • Much surviving ancient woodland; and • Hedgerow trees prominent in parts. Land use: • Large arable fields on the plateaus; • Orchards and shelterbelts around Chatham, Bicknor and Faversham; and • Hop gardens and parkland. Settlement: • Tiny scattered villages linked by narrow lanes. Actions for conserving and enhancing the NCA: • Manage and restore hedgerows, trees and woodlands, especially in the valleys; • Seek to conserve the small scale of the roads and villages and the remote quality of the countryside; • To maintain the existing diversity of orchards, hop gardens, parkland and farmland, and control urban fringe pressures; • Encourage the creation of arable field margins; • Manage coppice woodlands; • Restore hedgerows and shaws along fence lines; • Restore woodland on upper valleys and ridgelines; and • Establish new woodlands, hedgerows and shaws around urban edges.

Table Source: Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 (Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 2014).

Summary of Local Landscape Character Areas

F.2.20 At a local scale, the Scheme lies within the boundaries of two borough councils, namely: Swale Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council, both councils have produced Landscape Character Assessments that have further refined the Regional Landscape Character Areas into Local Landscape Character Areas/Types. The Landscape Character Assessments are listed as follows:

- Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD (Swale Borough Council, 2011); and
- Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (Maidstone Borough Council, 2012).

F.2.21 The Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD (Swale Borough Council, 2011) was carried out by Jacobs in 2009, the appraisal aimed to update the Swale Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines (SBC / Jacobs Babtie, 2005) and to incorporate information relating to biodiversity, highlighting opportunities for habitat creation and restoration. The Swale LCA and Biodiversity Appraisal SPD identifies five broad landscape types and forty-two local character areas. For each landscape character area, their key characteristics were noted, and an analysis was undertaken determining their relative condition and sensitivity. Refer to Table F.5 for descriptions of the Swale Borough Council LCAs of particular relevance to the Scheme, i.e. those likely to be impacted.

F.2.22 The Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (Maidstone Borough Council, 2012) identifies all of the landscape types and landscape character areas that occur in the rural part of the borough. For each landscape character area, the LCA contains: a description of the landscape and its features; an assessment of its condition (i.e. the pattern of the landscape; the presence of detracting features; the state of the habitats and man-made elements within the landscape, and landscape management guidelines (see Table F.5). The Landscape Types identified within the Character Assessment were subdivided into 58 smaller, ‘borough wide’ landscape character areas, which are unique and individual geographical areas.

F.2.23 The Local Landscape Character Areas identified as lying within the Scheme study area at Stage 2 can be found in Table F.3.

F.2.24 As part of the Stage 3 assessment, a field survey was undertaken to determine the impacts upon visual receptors and the identified ‘scoped in / scoped out’ Local Landscape Character Areas, as a result of the site survey, the ‘scoped in / scoped out’ status of the Local Landscape Character Areas’ assessment was updated to reflect the findings of the survey, namely whether those scoped in receptors are likely to be impacted by the Scheme and therefore included within the Stage 3 assessment (see Table F.4).

F.2.25 Therefore, in summary, resulting from the field survey work, the following local Landscape Character Areas have been included as part of the Stage 3 Assessment:

- Maidstone Borough Council Local Landscape Character Areas: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs, Hucking Dry Valleys; and

- Swale Borough Council Local Landscape Character Areas: Borden Mixed Farmlands, Newington Arable Farmlands, Deans Bottom and Tunstall Farmlands.

F.2.26 The Environmental Assessment Report for the Option Identification Stage recommended that further landscape character assessments be undertaken, however, it was decided at Stage 2, that due to the 13 published landscape character assessments within a 2 km radius of the Scheme, that these assessments provide adequate information to describe the study area, and that further landscape character assessment would not be necessary. Paragraph 5.15 of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA 3), 2013, states: *'Completely new supplementary Landscape Character Assessment work covering the whole study area will only be required when there are no existing assessments or when they are available but either have serious limitations that restrict their value or do not provide information at an appropriate level of detail'.*

F.2.27 The 'Scoped in' Local Landscape Character Areas are listed in Table F.5, along with key descriptions of the character areas and their ascribed quality/condition and sensitivity.

Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs

Quality/condition

F.2.28 The Quality/condition of the Local Landscape Character Area: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs was summarised by Maidstone Borough Council as being of **Poor** condition (see Table F.5). For reference VP3 (see Figure 9.7) is adjacent to this LCA.

F.2.29 The Local Landscape Character Area: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs lies within the Kent Downs AONB, and the Scheduled Monument and Church of St Mary Magdalene are also found within this character area. The Scheme does not lie within this Local Landscape Character Area, however, due to its proximity to the Scheme, its setting has been assessed as part of the report.

F.2.30 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2 of Chapter 9, the portion of the Character Area lying within the 2 km study area as shown on Figure 9.3, exhibits a number of positive characteristics, such as: narrow country lanes, the presence of hedgerows (including hedgerow trees), shelterbelts, and historic designations, such as: the Scheduled Monument: ringwork and baileys at Church Farm, the Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene and numerous Grade II listed buildings within the village of Stockbury. There is however, evidence of degradation and erosion of some features, including: the loss of historic interior field boundaries, a remnant orchard appears as a neglected feature within the landscape, there is a fairly high intensity of arable farming, and the presence of the A249 which runs parallel to and in close proximity to the character area, leads to a more mixed character due to these detracting features. Therefore, this section of the character area has been assessed as being of **Good** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.31 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9. The value of the section of the Local Landscape Character Area:

Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs which lies within the 2km study area, has been assessed as being of **High** value due to its siting within the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and due to the presence of a nationally important Scheduled Monument: ringwork and baileys at Church Farm.

Susceptibility

F.2.32 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2km study area is **Good**. The Kent Downs AONB and the setting to the many listed buildings and the Scheduled Monument are vulnerable to change. The presence of narrow lanes and large arable fields on the plateaus are characteristics of the Kent Downs AONB LCA 8: Mid Kent Downs. Vegetation within and around field boundaries requires strengthening, however, partial screening is present particularly along the external boundaries of fields and the narrow rural lanes. The A249 lies outside of the character area and is fairly well-contained within the dry valley landscape. The character area is fairly well-screened from the wider landscape due to intervening vegetation and landform.

F.2.33 Therefore, given the rural context and the presence and siting of the existing A249 that runs parallel to this LCA, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium.**

Sensitivity

F.2.34 The sensitivity of the Local Landscape Character Area: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs was summarised by Maidstone Borough Council as being of **Moderate** sensitivity (see Table F.5).

F.2.35 Through combining this landscape receptor's High value with its Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 in Chapter 9 derived from the methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010) the setting of this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Moderate** sensitivity to change. This takes into consideration the national and local designations, detracting features, and the degree of intervening vegetation and landform between the character area and the site of the Scheme.

Hucking Dry Valleys

Quality/condition

F.2.36 The Quality/condition of the Local Landscape Character Area: Hucking Dry Valleys was summarised by Maidstone Borough Council as being of **Very Good** condition (see Table F.5). For reference, viewpoints 3, 8, 9, 11, 13 ,14, 15 and 16 are within this character area, and viewpoint 6 is on the edge of this LCA.

F.2.37 The Local Landscape Character Area: Hucking Dry Valleys lies within the Kent Downs AONB. The Scheme cuts through the north western fringe of this Local Landscape Character Area, running from the existing M2 viaduct down to the junction at the end of Church Hill, located to the southwest. The existing Stockbury Roundabout and the various M2 slip roads are contained within this Character Area and subsequently the proposed Stockbury Flyover will run directly through this Character Area. Therefore, direct impacts upon this Local Landscape Character Area have been assessed as part of the report.

F.2.38 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2 in Chapter 9, the portion of the Character Area lying within the 2 km study area as shown on Figure 9.3, exhibits a number of positive characteristics, such as: woodland blocks, shelterbelts and grasslands creating a strong ecological network. There is a strong rural feel to the character area with traditional buildings, winding lanes, expansive open fields and small farmsteads forming unifying features. However, there are a number of detracting features present within this section of the Landscape Character area, most prominent being the noisy A249 dual carriageway and the sporadic built development along the A249, featuring more recent and also rundown buildings. Though deemed as local detractors in relation to the wider landscape character area, in the portion of the LCA located within the 2 km study area, these are fairly prominent and perceptible features, albeit situated well within the base of a valley and surrounded by woodland/tree belts along much of their extent. There are some open views within agricultural fields directly adjacent to the A249. Relict orchards appear as neglected features within the landscape and paddocks are present adjacent to Petts Farm. Therefore, this is a landscape exhibiting a mixed character, with detracting features and has been assessed as being in **Good** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.39 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9. The value of the section of the Local Landscape Character Area: Hucking Dry Valleys which lies within the 2km study area has been assessed as being of **High** value of **national importance** due to its siting within the nationally designated Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and therefore its limited potential for substitution. There are also local designations in the form of Roadside Nature Reserves (RNR) within this LCA (see Figure 2.1).

Susceptibility

F.2.40 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2km study area is Good. The Kent Downs AONB is vulnerable to change, and the character area is of a medium-scale in relation to the proposed development. There are a range of landscape features/elements that create a degree of harmony, namely the many woodland blocks, tree belts and grasslands, along with the presence of narrow rural lanes, the characteristic landform of the dip slope valleys and the intervening vegetation. Away from the A249, more traditional buildings of a local vernacular are found, and the presence of farmsteads create unifying features within the landscape. A degree of discord is found within the landscape in the form of the A249, and the presence of recent and run-down buildings adjacent to it.

F.2.41 Therefore, given the rural context and the presence of the existing A249 running through this section of the landscape character area, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium**.

Sensitivity

F.2.42 The sensitivity of the Local Landscape Character Area: Hucking Dry Valleys was summarised by Maidstone Borough Council as being of **High** sensitivity (see Table F.5).

F.2.43 Through combining this landscape receptor's High value with its Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 derived from the methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010), this landscape character area is assessed as having a **High** sensitivity to change. This judgement takes into consideration the national and local designations attributed to this landscape character area, whilst also considering the prominent and detracting features of the A249. The noise of the A249 is experienced perceptibly throughout this section of the 2 km study area.

Borden Mixed Farmlands

Quality/condition

F.2.44 The Quality/condition of the Local Landscape Character Area: Borden Mixed Farmlands was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **Moderate** condition (see Table F.5). For reference, Viewpoint 1 is adjacent to the edge of this LCA.

F.2.45 The Local Landscape Character Area: Borden Mixed Farmlands lies to the northeast of the Scheme. The northern extent of the Scheme boundary just slightly overlaps into the western portion of this Local LCA. The southwestern extent of the LCA sits in close proximity to the proposed new Maidstone Road Link. Therefore, impacts upon the setting of this Landscape Character Area have been assessed as part of the report.

F.2.46 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2, the portion of the Landscape Character Area lying within the 2 km study area, as show on Figure 9.3, exhibits a number of positive characteristics, including the presence of: shelterbelts, non-intensively managed orchards, grasslands, scrub and woodland which provide valuable ecological habitats. The character area retains a traditional and historic feel through the presence of the small villages and scattered cottages. Oad Street has particularly fine examples of the local vernacular architecture. Traditional land uses are demonstrated by the presence of mature shelterbelts and historic oast houses. These qualities lead to the retention of a rural character. This landscape character is more intimate and enclosed in scale than neighbouring character areas. However, there are a number of detracting features within the character area, including the many fields subdivided by post and wire fencing, so as to create grazing land for horses; hedgerows often appear fragmented within the landscape, and the proximity of the LCA to the M2 and the A249, which runs along the western boundary of the character area and are particularly noisy and perceptible throughout the LCA. Adjacent to the A249 there is a degree of urban sprawl with 20th century mixed building styles that lessen the quality of the built-form within the area. Therefore, this is a landscape exhibiting a mixed character and detracting features, and as a result has been assessed as being of **Good** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.47 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9 The value of the section of the Local Landscape Character Area: Borden Mixed Farmlands which lies within the 2km study area, has been assessed as being of **Medium** value and of **local importance**, due to the

presence of listed buildings within the character area and its proximity to the Kent Downs AONB, demonstrating the importance of this character area from a setting perspective. Properties at Danaway, which run adjacent and parallel to the A249, are of a mixed 20th century style and feature an array of mixed boundaries creating a visually incoherent scene. Fragmented hedgerows and field boundaries of post and wire fencing detract from the value of the landscape. At Oad Street, historic properties and the nature of the sunken, narrow and hedgerow-lined lanes enhance the rural and traditional character of the LCA. Mature treebelts running adjacent to the A249 provide valuable screening to the west of the character area. The area features a variety of habitat types and its enclosed and intimate scale helps to alleviate the presence of the A249.

Susceptibility

F.2.48 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2 km study area is Good. The landscape character area is particularly sensitive adjacent to the existing M2 Viaduct, as this forms the physical boundary with the Kent Downs AONB which is a landscape that is vulnerable to change and therefore the setting of this character area is an important element for consideration. There are a range of landscape features/elements that create a degree of harmony within the character area, these include: historic buildings of a local vernacular, traditional shelterbelts, narrow and winding rural lanes, traditional land uses, shelterbelts, non-intensively managed orchards and grasslands, as well as scrub and woodland and the characteristic landform of the dry valley landscape. Views out of the character area are foreshortened by the topography and vegetation, which creates an intimate and enclosed character. Fragmented hedgerows and post and wire fencing boundaries increase the degree of inter-visibility within the character area, however, overall, given the rural context, the intimate and enclosed character, foreshortening of views due to landform and vegetation, and the presence of the A249 running adjacent to the character area, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium** and it is considered that this character area would be tolerant of some degree of change.

Sensitivity

F.2.49 The sensitivity of the Local Landscape Character Area: Borden Mixed Farmlands was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **Moderate** sensitivity (see Table F.5).

F.2.50 Through combining this landscape receptor's Medium value with its Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5, this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Moderate** sensitivity to change. This judgement takes into consideration the local designations present within this landscape character, its importance in relation to the setting of the Kent Downs AONB, whilst also considering the prominent and detracting features of the A249 and the associated ribbon development of mixed 20th century styles, land use has further been degraded through the presence of non-traditional uses such as a large equine facility and the subdivision of land for grazing horses. The noise of the M2 and the A249 are experienced perceptibly throughout this section of the 2 km study area and this is a particularly detracting quality within the character area.

Newington Arable Farmlands

Quality/condition

F.2.51 The Quality/condition of the Local Landscape Character Area: Newington Arable Farmlands was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **Poor** condition (see Table F.5). For reference, viewpoints 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 are within this character area, and VP 7 is adjacent to the edge of this LCA.

F.2.52 The Local Landscape Character Area: Newington Arable Farmlands lies to the north of the M2 Viaduct and runs adjacent to and partially within the Kent Downs AONB (see Figure 9.3), North of the M2 viaduct the Scheme runs through the landscape character area. Therefore, direct impacts upon this Landscape Character Area have been assessed as part of the report.

F.2.53 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2, the portion of the Character Area lying within the 2 km study area as shown on Figure 9.3, the landscape between the A249 and the rest of the character area has lost much of is rural character due to agricultural intensification and the resulting loss of internal field boundaries; the presence of the Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf course, ribbon development of mixed 20th century styles running adjacent to the A249 and the M2, are all detracting elements within the landscape.

F.2.54 There are few vegetative corridors, limited areas of woodland, and where woodland is present, it is small in scale and often isolated. Hedgerows are frequently fragmented, which appear as prominent features along the rural lanes, and views have been opened up as a result. There is scope for positive enhancement within the area, including the establishment of vegetative corridors and the extension of woodland blocks.

F.2.55 Despite the most southern point of the character area lying within the Kent Downs AONB, this portion of the Kent Downs features land severed by the existing M2 slips roads and associated mature highways vegetation. However, it does include a section of Oad Street, which is an important, local rural lane and consideration is to be given to the setting of this Street.

F.2.56 Taking into consideration the current quality/condition of this landscape character area, on the whole, it features a number of detracting features, a general erosion of the traditional rural character and scope for landscape enhancement, therefore, this landscape character area has been assessed as being of **Ordinary** quality/condition.

Value

F.2.57 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 and as defined by paragraphs 9.5.12 – 9.5.13. The value of the section of the Local Landscape Character Area: Newington Arable Farmlands which lies within the 2 km study area, has been assessed as being of **Medium** value, although it lies partially within the nationally designated Kent Downs AONB and informs part of the setting of the AONB, the reduced quality/condition of the landscape resulting from the A249, ribbon development and non-traditional 20th century housing styles has eroded the sense of place and distinctiveness of the character area. Due care and attention is to be given to the setting of the locally important Oad Street, however, this is a landscape requiring enhancement and it does not

currently possess the valued qualities that are attributed to the Kent Downs AONB.

Susceptibility

F.2.58 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2 km study area is Ordinary. The landscape character area is particularly sensitive adjacent to the existing M2 Viaduct, as the viaduct forms the boundary with the Kent Downs AONB, which is a landscape that is vulnerable to change and therefore the setting of this character area is an important element for consideration.

F.2.59 There is a degree of discord within this portion of the landscape character area resulting from features that detract from the overall character, these features include: agricultural intensification, loss of internal field boundaries, fragmented hedgerows, lack of woodland and vegetative habitat corridors, ribbon development, buildings of a mixed 20th century style and the presence of the existing A249 and M2. The M2 Viaduct and the mature highways vegetation along the A249 and the M2 provide some screening of this character area from adjoining character areas, including those within the Kent Downs AONB. The A249 is within the bottom of a dry valley and views towards the Scheme are frequently interrupted by screening features such as the mature highways vegetation and built-form or variations in the landform foreshortening views. Due to the lack of woodland and the presence of fragmented hedgerows there are areas where views are opened up towards the Scheme and some inter-visibility within the character area.

F.2.60 Therefore, given the need for enhancements to the landscape, the presence of numerous detracting landscape features and the erosion of traditional landscape features, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Low**. It is considered that this character area would be tolerant of a degree of change, with the potential for enhancement and improvement.

Sensitivity

F.2.61 The sensitivity of the Local Landscape Character Area: Newington Arable Farmlands was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **Low** sensitivity (see Table F.5).

F.2.62 Through combining this landscape receptor's Medium value with its Low susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 derived from the methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010), this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Moderate** sensitivity to change.

F.2.63 This judgement is based upon the erosion of the rural character of the landscape character area and the decline of landscape habitat features, including vegetative corridors and woodland. The presence of detracting features within the landscape, such as the A249, ribbon development and 20th century building styles that are not in keeping with the rural/traditional vernacular of the area, lead to a landscape lacking in distinctiveness and sense of place. The southern tip of the character area lying within the Kent Downs AONB lifts the sensitivity to one of a value of Moderate sensitivity, as due regard is to be given to the setting of the AONB and to the preservation of the rural character of Oad Street.

Deans Bottom

Quality/condition

F.2.64 The Quality/condition of the Local Landscape Character Area: Deans Bottom was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **Moderate** condition (see Table F.6 of Appendix F).

F.2.65 The Local Landscape Character Area: Deans Bottom lies to the south of the M2 Viaduct and lies within the Kent Downs AONB (see Figure 9.3).

F.2.66 The proposed widening and reconfiguration of Oad Street occurs along the northern edge of this character area and therefore direct impacts upon this Landscape Character Area have been assessed as part of the report.

F.2.67 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2, the portion of the character area lying within the 2km study area as shown on Figure 9.3, has been assessed as being of **Good** quality, due to the presence of coherent landscape features, such as: mature hedgerows along lanes, woodland shaws along the chalk ridge and remnant orchards – these habitats provide strong wildlife corridors. Despite the proximity to the M2 and the A249, this remains a tranquil and peaceful valley, traditional buildings within the landscape and scattered farmsteads add to the rural character. Properties are generally well screened, and those of a mixed 20th century style tend to be set back from the road and are not visually prominent. Other detracting features include the presence of post and wire fencing within fields, which creates a degree of visual disruption within the surrounding pastoral landscape.

Value

F.2.68 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9. The value of the section of the Local Landscape Character Area: Deans Bottom which lies within the 2 km study area has been assessed as being of **High** value, the character area lies within the designated Kent Downs AONB and exhibits a number of the positive landscape characteristics typical of the Kent Downs, including the dry valley landscape, orchards, pasture, shelterbelts, wooded shaws, a prominence of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, scattered isolated farmsteads and narrow, enclosed lanes. The landscape habitats are of a good quality, and along with the presence of prominent traditional buildings and narrow rural lanes these landscape features add to the scenic quality and peaceful nature of the valley, despite its proximity to the M2 and the A249.

Susceptibility

F.2.69 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2km study area is Good. The landscape character area lies within the Kent Downs AONB, which is a landscape that is vulnerable to change. This particular character area exhibits a number of harmonious features/elements, including: important habitat corridors in the form of remnant orchards, wooded shaws, hedgerows, pasture and grasslands, these features in combination with the presence of narrow, enclosed rural lanes, prominent traditional dwellings and scattered farmsteads and cottages give rise to a positive character, synonymous with the traditional rural landscape. The character area is isolated and enclosed from the surrounding landscapes due to intervening vegetation and the nature of the topography. There are discordant features within the landscape, namely buildings of a mixed 20th century style and the proximity of the A249 and the M2, however, such properties are often well-screened and set back from the road,

and the A249 and M2 are within cutting at the base of the valley, with intervening vegetation and topography foreshortening views to these areas.

F.2.70 Therefore, given the strength of the screening features within the LCA and the fact that the more impactful aspects of the Scheme lie outside of this character area in the already well-screened dry valley, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium**. It is considered that this character area would be tolerant of some degree of change, but great care is to be exacted in the process, so as to retain the integrity of the LCA.

Sensitivity

F.2.71 The sensitivity of the Local Landscape Character Area: Deans Bottom was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **High** sensitivity (see Table F.5).

F.2.72 Through combining this landscape receptor's High value with its Medium / High susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5 derived from the methodology and examples contained in Annex 1, Table 2 of the Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 (Highways Agency, 2010) this landscape character area is assessed as having a **High** sensitivity to change.

F.2.73 This judgement is based upon the many positive landscape elements and features in the form of the numerous habitats of ecological and landscape value, the traditional rural feel resulting from the prominence of traditional buildings, narrow, enclosed rural lanes and the intimate, isolated and enclosed nature of the landscape create a positive character and a distinctive sense of place. The LCA also lies within the nationally designated Kent Downs AONB and exhibits positive characteristics and features that are in line with the qualities of the AONB.

Tunstall Farmlands

Quality/condition

F.2.74 The Quality/condition of the Local Landscape Character Area: Tunstall Farmlands was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **Moderate** condition (see Table F.5).

F.2.75 The Local Landscape Character Area: Tunstall Farms lies south and east of the M2 Viaduct and sits within the Kent Downs AONB (see Figure 9.3). For reference, viewpoints 6 and 10 are located within this character area and viewpoints 4 and 5 are adjacent to the edge of this LCA.

F.2.76 The western extent of the character area is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the Scheme, with the A249 already a prominent feature in the landscape and the proposed Maidstone Road Link abutting the character area to the west-northwest. Therefore, direct impacts upon this Landscape Character Area have been assessed as part of this report.

F.2.77 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape quality/condition as outlined in Table 9.2, the portion of the Character Area lying within the 2 km study area as shown on Figure 9.3 in Volume 3, has been assessed as being of **Good** quality, due to the diverse nature of this rural landscape, which includes: enclosed orchards, ancient and rare woodland, historic villages and hamlets, narrow and winding lanes, which serve to strengthen the rural character and strong historic character. However, there are a number of detracting features within the

character area, most notably, the visually prominent M2 motorway and the A249 dual carriageway, which detract from the peaceful and tranquil nature of the LCA. Pylons and the presence of mixed 20th century style development, including incongruous executive homes provides further erosion of the quality and character of the area.

Value

F.2.78 Using the criteria and descriptors of landscape value as outlined in Table 9.3 in Chapter 9. The value of the section of the Local Landscape Character Area: Tunstall Farmlands which lies within the 2 km study area, has been assessed as being of **Medium** value, and whilst the character area lies within the designated Kent Downs AONB and exhibits a number of the positive landscape characteristics typical of the Kent Downs, including the presence of ancient and rare woodland, orchards, historic villages and hamlets, and narrow, winding lanes. However, the landscape features fragmented hedgerows and a lack of internal field boundaries as a result of agricultural intensification and enlargement of field sizes, which are in direct contrast with the value provided by the more preserved traditional rural character found elsewhere within the LCA. Remnant orchards feature as neglected elements within the landscape, the presence of 20th century buildings of a conflicting local vernacular and the incongruity of the scattered executive homes, have resulted in a decline of the landscape value, not least due to the presence of the A249 and M2 motorway within the character area.

Susceptibility

F.2.79 The quality and condition of the landscape character area within the 2 km study area is Good. The landscape character area lies within the Kent Downs AONB, which is a landscape that is vulnerable to change. This particular character area exhibits a number of harmonious features/elements, including: ancient and rare woodland, patchworks of enclosed orchards, historic villages and hamlets, and, narrow, winding rural lanes. Discordant features within the landscape include: the M2 and A249 which are visible within the LCA, pylons, modern residential development and incongruous executive homes. This is a landscape of a mixed nature with natural influences contrasted against the industrial nature of the county and the presence of dominating transport corridors. There are isolated long views to Sheppey and across the M2 motorway corridor within the LCA.

F.2.80 Therefore, given the mixed nature of the character area and the degree of harmonious and discordant features, overall, susceptibility to change of the type proposed is judged to be **Medium**. It is considered that this character area would be tolerant of some degree of change.

Sensitivity

F.2.81 The sensitivity of the Local Landscape Character Area: Tunstall Farmlands was summarised by Swale Borough Council as being of **High** sensitivity (see Table F.5).

F.2.82 Through combining this landscape receptor's Medium value with its Medium susceptibility to change and with due regard to Table 9.5, this landscape character area is assessed as having a **Moderate** sensitivity to change.

F.2.83 This judgement is based upon the counterbalance between distinctive elements and features within the LCA of a high quality such as the ancient and rare woodland, diverse rural landscape, historic villages and hamlets, winding, rural lanes against features of a discordant nature such as the presence of the M2, A249, pylons, 20th century style properties of a non-local vernacular and executive homes. The landscape is also partially in decline, with fragmented hedgerows, remnant and neglected orchards, and loss of internal field boundaries due to increased agricultural intensification.

F.3 Visual Baseline

Table F.7: Stage 2 Illustrative Viewpoints

Viewpoint	Name	Description	Inclusion within Stage 3 Assessment
Viewpoint 1	Wormdale Hill near Danaway.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of transport receptors using the Wormdale Hill, which connects Danaway with Wormdale and Newington, looking south-southwest towards the M2 Junction 5. Additionally, this viewpoint is illustrative of users of the A249, travelling in a south-westerly direction towards the M2 Junction 5.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work undertaken identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 2	Maidstone Road, Danaway.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of transport receptors using the Maidstone Road travelling in a south-westerly direction towards the M2 Junction 5. In addition, the viewpoint is illustrative of views from nearby residential receptors on the southern edge of Danaway, looking in a south-westerly direction towards the M2 Junction 5.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work undertaken identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 3	Church Lane, Stockbury.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of residential receptors and workers to the south-east of Stockbury, along Church Lane, looking northeast towards the M2 Junction 5. The viewpoint lies within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of views from the Chatham Outskirts and the Mid Kent Downs. The setting of the Listed buildings located at Church Lane will also be taken into consideration as part of the Stage 3 Assessment.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 4	Bull Lane near Nunfield House.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of transport receptors travelling along Bull Lane, connecting Stockbury with Lower Hartlip and Chesley, as they reach the overpass of the M2 looking southeast towards the M2 Junction 5. The viewpoint is located at the southernmost point of the Area of High Landscape Value (as identified on the Swale Borough Council Local Plan).	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to the road visually meeting the top of the viaduct and therefore obscuring any potential views of the Scheme.
Viewpoint 5	Bowl Reed, Oad Street.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of users of Oad Street overpass as it crosses the M2, between Whipstakes Farm to the south and the settlement of Oad Street to the north. The viewpoint is looking west-northwest towards the M2 Junction 5.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.

Viewpoint	Name	Description	Inclusion within Stage 3 Assessment
Viewpoint 6	Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of the residential receptor, Whipstakes Farm on Oad Street, looking northwest towards the M2 Junction 5. The viewpoint sits within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of the Bicknor Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Area (as defined in the Landscape Assessment of Kent).	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 7	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR70 footbridge.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of elevated views experienced by recreational receptors using the PRoW ZR70 footbridge as it ties in with PRoW KH85 to the south of the M2. The viewpoint is adjacent to an area of Ancient Woodland (Church Wood) to the south. The viewpoint is looking northeast towards the A249.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 8 (Swale Borough Council – Additional viewpoint 1)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) R7Z on Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf Course.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views experienced by recreational receptors using footpath ZR72 as it crosses Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf Course and those recreational users of the golf course. The viewpoint is looking southwest towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to the viewpoint being entirely enclosed and the Scheme being hidden by dense, existing vegetation.
Viewpoint 9 (Swale Borough Council – Additional viewpoint 2)	Public Right of Way ZR128 – North Munsgore.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views experienced by residential receptors across open fields and paddocks on the high ground above Stockbury valley, looking south-west towards Woodgate Lane and the M2 Junction 5 beyond.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to the there being no view of the Scheme as a result of the intervening landform/topography of the location.
Viewpoint 10 (Swale Borough Council – Additional viewpoint 3)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR128a.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of the views experienced by receptors using the footpath ZR128a as it crosses open fields towards a cluster of properties on the corner of Woodgate Lane, looking west towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to intervening screening provided by an oast house, the topography/landform of the location and intervening vegetation.
Viewpoint 11 (Swale Borough Council –	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR73.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of the view experienced by road users, walkers and cyclists using Woodgate Lane through the trackside vegetation looking southwest over arable fields and towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to there being no view of the Scheme – higher ground was sought further along the PRoW to determine if a vantage point might exist,

Viewpoint	Name	Description	Inclusion within Stage 3 Assessment
Additional viewpoint 4)			however, even on higher ground, the intervening landform/topography is such that no views of the Scheme were apparent.
Viewpoint 12 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 5)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR135 Deans Bottom.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of elevated views experienced by residential receptors looking northwest along the Deans Bottom dry valley towards Stockbury Roundabout from an elevated viewpoint high on the valley side. The viewpoint sits within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of the Deans Bottom Landscape Character Area (as defined by Swale Borough Council).	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to there being no view of the Scheme – the lie of the land and intervening vegetation is such that the Scheme would not be visible from this location.
Viewpoint 13 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 6)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views from the bottom of Stockbury valley, as experienced by users of the PRoW KH85, looking northeast towards the Scheme, before the footpath climbs up the valley side to Church Wood.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 14 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 7)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR69 and Thrognall Farm.	This viewpoint was selected as it was deemed to be representative of views from residential receptors at Thrognall Farm and Chesley, looking southeast across a field pattern of orchards and shelterbelts towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to there being no view of the Scheme. Intervening features in the form of a deciduous plantation and topographical features means that views of the Scheme are not experienced from this location.
Viewpoint 15 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 8)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR 163, Deans Bottom.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views experienced by users of ZR163 further along the valley, on elevated ground, looking northwest towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to there being no view of the Scheme. Woodland intervenes between this viewpoint location and the Scheme and as such, views would not be possible.
Viewpoint 16 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 1)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views experienced by recreational receptors using the footpath as it crosses a large arable field on the plateau above Borden Hill, looking northwest towards the M2 Junction 5 and Stockbury Roundabout. The viewpoint sits within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.

Viewpoint	Name	Description	Inclusion within Stage 3 Assessment
		the Bicknor Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Areas (as defined in the Landscape Assessment of Kent).	
Viewpoint 17 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 2)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views experienced by recreational receptors using the footpath KH85, looking southeast, as it emerges from Church Wood and descends across an open field towards the A249 and Stockbury Roundabout. The viewpoint lies within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of views from the Chatham Outskirts Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Area (as defined in the Landscape Assessment of Kent).	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 18 (Additional viewpoint 1 determined by the Stage 2 assessment)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH86 and Cowstead.	At Stage 2, the Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH84 was identified as being scoped in, and the residential receptor, Cowstead, located on plateau above Stockbury valley looking east-southeast towards the Scheme, was shown to have potential views from the Stage 2 ZTV. Therefore, this viewpoint was included so as to confirm whether these receptors would require further assessment.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, due to the landform/topography of the site and intervening vegetation.
Viewpoint 19 (Additional viewpoint 2 determined by the Stage 2 assessment)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR71 / ZR72 and Sittingbourne and Milton Regis Golf Course.	At Stage 2, the PRoWs ZR71 and ZR72 were identified as 'scoped in'. This viewpoint was incorporated as a means of assessing ZR71, which was not assessed in any of the pre-existing viewpoint locations. The viewpoint is looking south-southwest towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 20 (Additional viewpoint 3 determined by the Stage 2 assessment)	Cluster of residential receptors: The Coach House / Vale Cottages / Vale House and Threeways.	At Stage 2 the cluster of residential receptors to the southwest of the Scheme were identified as scoped in and therefore this viewpoint has been incorporated so as to better estimate the likely effects of the Scheme on these receptors. The viewpoint is looking north-northeast towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.

Viewpoint	Name	Description	Inclusion within Stage 3 Assessment
Viewpoint 21 (Additional viewpoint 4 informed by the Stage 2 assessment)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR160 (covers ZR161) and Little Pett Farm.	At Stage 2, Little Pett Farm was identified as a scoped in receptor, facing towards the Scheme and therefore with potential views. So as to assess this receptor, Viewpoint 21 was incorporated into the list of potential viewpoints. This viewpoint is looking northwest towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment, at the time of the assessment the road to the viewpoint was closed for three days, however, from surveying the surrounding area it became readily apparent that no views would be anticipated, due to the landform/topography intervening between the viewpoint location and the Scheme.
Viewpoint 22 (Additional viewpoint 5 informed by the Stage 2 assessment)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80 and Norton Green.	At Stage 2, the PRoW KH80 and Norton Green were scoped in as potential receptors with views, therefore this viewpoint has been incorporated. Therefore, this viewpoint was included so as to confirm whether these receptors would require further assessment. This viewpoint is looking north-northeast towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.
Viewpoint 23 (Additional viewpoint 6 informed by the Stage 2 assessment)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR128 and Eyehorn Farm.	At Stage 2, Eyehorn Farm was shown as being scoped in and therefore this viewpoint has been included so as to better assess the impacts of this Scheme upon the receptor. This viewpoint is looking west-southwest towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment due to the nature of the landform/topographic features of the site and intervening vegetation.
Viewpoint 24 (Additional viewpoint 7 informed by the Stage 2 assessment)	Properties on the junction of Oad Street and Woodgate Lane.	At Stage 2, the residential receptors on the junction of Oad Street and Woodgate Lane were identified as being scoped in and with potential views from upper storey windows towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link, therefore this viewpoint was incorporated to better assess the impact of the Scheme upon these receptors. This viewpoint is looking west-southwest towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment due to the nature of the landform/topographic features of the site and intervening vegetation.
Viewpoint 25 (Additional viewpoint 8 informed by	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH82.	At Stage 2, PRoW KH82 was identified as being scoped in, and therefore so as to assess the impact of the Scheme on this receptor, this viewpoint has been included as a potential viewpoint for assessment. This viewpoint is looking east towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **excluded** from the assessment due to the nature of the landform/topographic features of the site and intervening vegetation. Furthermore, the footpath was clearly not well-

Viewpoint	Name	Description	Inclusion within Stage 3 Assessment
the Stage 2 assessment)			trodden and at present, farm crops occupy the route – demonstrating that it is not readily used.
Viewpoint 26 (Additional viewpoint 9 informed by the Stage 2 assessment)	Cluster of residential receptors: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House.	At Stage 2, the cluster of residential properties (Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House) adjacent to the M2 J5 were scoped in and therefore this viewpoint has been incorporated so as to better estimate the likely effects of the Scheme upon these receptors. This viewpoint is looking north-northeast towards the Scheme.	Following site survey work, this viewpoint has been **included** in the Stage 3 Assessment, site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location.

F.3.1 All of the viewpoints were captured using a fixed 35 mm focal length digital SLR camera, which is equivalent to an analogue 50 mm film as recommended in paragraph 4.2 of the 'Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in - Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 (Landscape Institute, 2011). The use of a fixed focal length lens ensures that the image parameters for each photograph are the same, it also best represents the field of view of the human eye and simplifies the construction of accompanying panoramas. The fixed focal length lens allows for the production of printed images of a size and resolution, that, when held at the correct distance, closely represent the field of view, and the detail visible within the view that would be available 'in the field'.

Table F.8: Stage 3 Representative Viewpoints

Number	Name	Distance from the Scheme	Description
Viewpoint 1	Wormdale Hill near Danaway.	0 m (within the red line boundary).	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of transport receptors using Wormdale Hill, which connects Danaway with Wormdale and Newington, looking south-southwest towards the M2 Junction 5. Additionally, this viewpoint is illustrative of users of the A249, travelling in a southwesterly direction towards the M2 Junction 5.
Viewpoint 2	Maidstone Road, Danaway.	98.91 m.	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of transport receptors using the Maidstone Road travelling south-westwards towards the M2 Junction 5. In addition, the viewpoint is illustrative of views from nearby residential receptors on the southern edge of Danaway, looking in a southwesterly direction towards the M2 Junction 5.

Number	Name	Distance from the Scheme	Description
Viewpoint 3	Church Lane, Stockbury – Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH81.	56.29 m.	This viewpoint was taken from PRoW KH81 and was selected to be representative of workers to the south-east of Stockbury, along Church Lane, looking east-southeast towards the A249. The viewpoint lies within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of views from the Chatham Outskirts and Mid Kent Downs. The setting of the Listed buildings located at Church Lane and the Scheduled Monument adjacent to Church Hill will also be taken into consideration as part of the Stage 3 Assessment.
Viewpoint 4	Residential receptors: Properties on Oad Street next to the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed.	9.19 m.	Following field work, this viewpoint was selected to be representative of residential receptors on Oad Street next to the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2 and adjacent to the proposed location of the proposed Maidstone Road Link where it forms a junction with Oad Street. This viewpoint is looking north-northwest towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link.
Viewpoint 5	Oad Street overpass.	47.02 m.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of users of Oad Street overpass as it crosses the M2, between Whipstakes Farm to the south and the settlement of Oad Street to the north. The viewpoint is looking west towards the M2 Junction 5.
Viewpoint 6	Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street.	48.3	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of the residential receptor of Farm and road users of the rural lane, Oad Street, looking north-northwest towards the M2 Junction 5. The viewpoint sits within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of the Bicknor Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Area (as defined in the Landscape Assessment of Kent).
Viewpoint 7	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR70 – footbridge).	219.53 m.	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of elevated views experienced by recreational receptors using the PRoW ZR70 footbridge as it ties in with PRoW KH85 to the south of the M2. The viewpoint is adjacent to an area of Ancient Woodland (Church Wood) to the south. This viewpoint is looking east towards the Scheme.
Viewpoint 8 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 6)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85	0 m (within the red line boundary).	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of views from the bottom of Stockbury valley (in close proximity to the existing Stockbury Roundabout), as experienced by users of the PRoW KH85, looking northeast towards the Scheme, before the footpath climbs up the valley side to Church Wood.

Number	Name	Distance from the Scheme	Description
Viewpoint 9	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85	0 m (within the red line boundary).	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of views from the bottom of Stockbury valley, further to the south of VP8, and immediately adjacent to the A249, as experienced by users of the PRoW KH85, looking northeast towards the Scheme.
Viewpoint 10 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 1)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR135.	456.61 m.	This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of views experienced by recreational receptors using the footpath as it crosses a large arable field on the plateau above Borden Hill, looking north towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link. The viewpoint sits within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of the Bicknor Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Areas (as defined in the Landscape Assessment of Kent).
Viewpoint 11 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 2)	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85.	68.83 m.	This viewpoint was selected to be representative of views experienced by recreational receptors using the footpath KH85, looking southeast, as it emerges from Church Wood and descends across an open field towards the A249 and Stockbury Roundabout. The viewpoint lies within the Kent Downs AONB and is illustrative of views from the Chatham Outskirts Mid Kent Downs Landscape Character Area (as defined in the Landscape Assessment of Kent).
Viewpoint 12	Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR71.	0 m (within the red line boundary).	At Stage 2, the PRoWs ZR71 and ZR72 were identified as 'scoped in'. This viewpoint was incorporated as a means of assessing ZR71, which was not assessed in any of the pre-existing viewpoint locations. Site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location. This viewpoint is looking south-southwest towards the M2 Viaduct.
Viewpoint 13	Cluster of residential receptors adjacent to the A249: The Coach House / Vale Cottages / Vale House and Threeways.	0 m (within the red line boundary).	At Stage 2 the cluster of residential receptors to the southwest of the Scheme were identified as scoped in and therefore this viewpoint has been incorporated so as to better estimate the likely effects of the Scheme on these receptors. Site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location. This viewpoint is looking north-northeast towards the Scheme.
Viewpoint 14	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80 and Norton Green.	471.21 m.	At Stage 2, the PRoW KH80 and residential receptors at Norton Green were scoped in as potential receptors with views. Site survey work identified potential views of the Scheme from this location. This viewpoint is looking north-northeast towards the M2 Viaduct.

Number	Name	Distance from the Scheme	Description
Viewpoint 15	Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80 and Hillside Farm.	339.94 m.	As a result of field work, this viewpoint was selected to be representative of users of the Public Right of Way KH80 and the residential receptor, Hillside Farm, looking from elevated ground looking west-northwest towards the Scheme and the farm.
Viewpoint 16	Cluster of residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House.	0.12 m.	At Stage 2, the cluster of residential properties (Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House) adjacent to the M2 J5 were scoped in and therefore this viewpoint has been incorporated so as to better estimate the likely effects of the Scheme upon these receptors. This viewpoint is looking north-northeast towards the Scheme.

F.3.2 Judgements upon visual sensitivity outlined in the following Table F.9, were made in accordance with the criteria and process outlined in Table 9.6 and paragraphs 9.5.22 – 9.5.33.

Table F.9: Baseline assessment of viewpoints

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
Viewpoint 1 Refer to Figure 9.15.	View from Wormdale Hill, near the settlement of Danaway, looking south-southwest towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	The existing view from the Wormdale Hill overpass as it crosses the A249 looking southwest towards the M2 J5 is one that is semi-enclosed in nature. The A249 is in cutting here, at the base of the dry valley and is well contained by the fairly dense highway planting to the cutting slopes. Arable fields are glimpsed in the background. The curvature of the road and the dense vegetative planting belts restrict views towards the M2 J5. The A249 is the dominant	• Transport receptors using Wormdale Hill; and • Transports receptors using the A249 travelling westerly towards the M2 J5.	• The attention of these transport receptors will be focussed upon navigating along the busy A249. The value of these transport receptors is Low and their visual susceptibility is Low. The sensitivity of these visual receptors is judged to be **Low**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		feature in the view and occupies the middle of the frame, it diminishes the sense of place. This is a semi-managed landscape, with evidence of highways maintenance along the verges, however, litter is strewn across the central reservation and to the verge edges. Highways fencing at the base of the cutting slope appears dilapidated and creates a neglected feel to the view.		
Viewpoint 2 Refer to Figure 9.17.	View from Maidstone Road, Danaway looking southwest towards the M2 Junction 5. 98.91 m from the Scheme.	The existing M2 Viaduct can be glimpsed in the background of the view through the tree belts and scrub that line the Maidstone Road. The middle frame of the view is dominated by the Maidstone Road, which is of a mixed character, with road signs, telegraph poles, lighting, and bollards appearing as urbanising elements. The landscape is semi-maintained, with evidence of maintenance to the highways verges, however, the verges of private properties can appear dilapidated, particularly relating to the construction/industrial site, with its unsympathetic boundary treatment and accumulation of weeds and detritus. The residential properties in the view are of a mixed 20th century style,	• Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest towards the M2 J5; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway.	• Transport receptors: The attention of these transport receptors will be focussed upon navigating along the Maidstone Road towards the busy M2 J5. The value of these transport receptors is Low and their visual susceptibility is Low. The sensitivity of these visual receptors is judged to be **Low;** and • Residential receptors: Despite the rural location of these visual receptors, they are impacted upon by the existing infrastructure, most notably the imposing M2 Viaduct and the audible and visually perceptible A249, therefore these receptors are considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and of Medium / High visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptors are of **High** sensitivity as visual amenity is integral

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		not in keeping with the local vernacular of the area, or the historic buildings found along Chestnut Street. Garden boundaries are often defensive and mixed in style which leads to a visually incoherent scene. The view is fairly enclosed due to the dry valley form of the landscape, with residential properties located at the base of the slopes. However, the A249 which runs parallel to Maidstone Road is both audibly and visually perceptible from this location, with the constant sound of traffic creating a chaotic and unsettling sense to the place. The dense woodland belts to the back of properties adjacent to the A249 provide critical screening of the dual carriageway –there are, however, glimpsed views of traffic through the tree belts and during the winter months it is likely that this situation is exacerbated.		to the enjoyment of a residential property.
Viewpoint 3 Refer to Figure 9.19.	View from Public Right of Way KH81 in the vicinity of Church Lane, Stockbury looking east-southeast towards the A249.	A filtered view of the A249 looking east-southeast towards the Scheme from PRoW KH81 at higher ground along the PRoW. The view is open in nature with a degree of expansiveness – with long views across the dry valley slopes to agricultural and grazing land parcels divided by	• Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81; • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249; • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Grade I	• Recreational receptors: PRoW KH81 lies within the Kent Downs AONB and the view is one that is predominantly rural with a high susceptibility to change as recreational users along this route are likely to be focussed upon the landscape or particular views within the AONB. Therefore, the visual susceptibility of these recreational

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
	56.29 m from the Scheme.	fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts. In the foreground of the view is arable land, with no clearly demarcated route for PRoW users, implying that the route is not well-trodden. The middle ground is dominated by the presence of the A249 and associated traffic, fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts provide some degree of screening, however, there are opportunities for enhancement to better situate the road within the landscape and lessen its visual dominance. Other detracting features come in the form of road signs, mixed boundaries, lighting poles and metal farm sheds.	listed Church of St Mary Magdalene; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane.	receptors is High, of High value and a **High** sensitivity, with a limited ability to accommodate change; • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249 are more likely to take in the views of the countryside and the setting of the AONB, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: within proximity of the the PRoW KH81, which are of national importance.and a High value, High visual susceptibility and **High** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 4 Refer to Figure 9.21.	View from Oad Street overpass looking north-northwest towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link. 9.19 m from the Scheme.	A predominantly enclosed view looking towards the site of the proposed Maidstone Road Link. Oad Street is lined by mature trees and shrubs which provide an attractive, enclosed feel to the road, before it opens out across the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2. The M2 is perceptible both audibly and visually and creates a chaotic, unsettling and urbanising feel to the place. Despite this	• Residential receptors: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed along Oad Street, in proximity to the proposed Maidstone Road Link.	• Residential receptors: Despite the rural location of these visual receptors, they are impacted upon by the existing infrastructure, most notably the M2 motorway. Therefore, these receptors are considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and are considered to be of Medium / High visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptors are of **High** sensitivity, as visual amenity is integral to the enjoyment of a residential property.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		detraction, the view is largely rural in character with timber post and rail fencing and a degree of enclosure provided by the existing vegetation. Other detracting features within the view include the overpass bridge and the presence of crash barriers which further detract from the rural setting and act as visual indicators of the motorway.		
Viewpoint 5 Refer to Figure 9.23.	View from Oad Street overpass looking west towards the M2 Junction 5. 47.02 m from the Scheme.	A wide, open view taken from Oad Street overpass looking west towards the M2 Junction 5. The M2 Motorway and slip road dominate the view. The overpass itself is urbanising in nature and the road is well-trafficked, with a constant stream of motorway noise and traffic present, which creates for an unsettling and chaotic environment. Roadside vegetation is mature with dense belts of roadside woodland planting towering up above the motorway and keeping it visually well-contained from the wider landscape.	• Transport receptors using the Oad Street overpass.	• Transport receptors: The attention of these transport receptors will be focussed upon navigating along the Oad Street overpass towards the busy M2 J5. The value of these transport receptors is Low and their visual susceptibility is Low. The sensitivity of these visual receptors is therefore judged to be **Low**.
Viewpoint 6 Refer to Figure 9.25.	View from adjacent to Whipstakes Farm, along Oad Street looking north-northwest towards the existing	A fairly open, upper valley-side view from adjacent to Whipstakes farm, looking north-northwest across grazing land towards the Stockbury Roundabout. The lighting poles	• Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street; and • Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street.	• Residential receptor: Despite the rural location of this visual receptor, Whipstakes Farm is affected by the existing infrastructure, most notably the Stockbury Roundabout and most likely the M2 Viaduct. Therefore, this

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
	Stockbury Roundabout. 48.38 m from the Scheme.	associated with the existing roundabout are visually dominant and tower above the A249, creating a localised urbanising effect. The A249 is audibly perceptible and there are glimpsed views of traffic through tree belts and breaks in vegetation. Despite these urbanising features, the view is rural in nature, with long views across the valley towards arable fields enclosed by woodland shaws. Oad Street is rural in nature, both narrow and winding, and lined by hedgerows. Hedgerows are fragmented adjacent to Whipstakes Farm and gaps infilled by timber post and rail fencing, though rural in character does little to provide visual screening of the existing A249. Whipstakes Farm is set back from the viewpoint and is situated at higher ground, it is likely that the current view from the residential property is exacerbated, with an increased extent of visibility of both the A249 and also potential views of the existing M2 Viaduct and its associated elevated traffic.		receptor is considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and is considered to be of Medium / High visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptor is of **High** sensitivity, as visual amenity is integral to the enjoyment of a residential property; and • Transport receptors: The attention of these transport receptors will be focussed upon navigating along Oad Street. However, this is a locally designated rural lane and is also set within the nationally designated Kent Downs AONB. Therefore, the special characteristics of this rural lane in conjunction with the AONB setting and a Medium value equates to a visual susceptibility of Medium and a judgement of **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 7	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR70 – a	A contained view looking east towards the Scheme and along the existing M2 transport	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70, is located immediately adjacent to the existing M2 motorway corridor and the

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
Refer to Figure 9.27.	local footbridge as it ties in with PRoW KH85 to the south of the M2 looking east towards the Scheme and existing M2 motorway corridor. 219.53 m from the Scheme.	corridor. Ancient woodland to the right of the view and mature highways vegetation to the left create an enclosed and contained visual barrier to the transport corridor – limiting views of the M2 beyond these reaches. The view across the M2 corridor is fairly long ranging and gaps in vegetation where the M2 Viaduct crosses the A249 opens up views of the dominant equestrian facility to the north east of the Scheme. The corridor is heavily trafficked and urban in nature, additional urbanising features found within the view include lighting poles, a substation, the parapets of the viaduct, road signs, crash barriers and bollards.		infrastructure of the heavily trafficked corridor is a dominant feature within the view – leading to a chaotic and unsettling environment. However, ZR70 also traverses the Ancient Woodland – Church Wood and cuts through the Kent Downs AONB. The highly urbanised situation along the footbridge is counterbalanced by experiences along more rural aspects of the route. Therefore, the enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route, and the receptors are considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility, Medium value and a judgement of **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 8 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 6) Refer to Figure 9.29.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85 in proximity to the Stockbury Roundabout, looking northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	A semi-enclosed view of the well-wooded Stockbury Roundabout. The mature trees and vegetation of the roundabout limit views of the A249 and M2 beyond. Lighting poles, signage and associated infrastructure of the A249 in conjunction with the fast-flowing traffic, appear as urbanising features, which create a chaotic and unsettling feel to the place. The view is taken from the bottom of a dry valley and the upper valley slopes are well-	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW KH85, is located immediately adjacent to the existing A249, with views towards the Stockbury Roundabout. The traffic of the A249 is a dominant feature within the view – leading to a chaotic and unsettling environment. However, KH85 also traverses the Ancient Woodland – Church Wood, and cuts through the Kent Downs AONB. The highly urbanised situation adjacent to the A249 is counterbalanced by experiences along more rural aspects of the route. Therefore, the enjoyment

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		wooded. The view opens up across the arable field and up to the woodland shaws at the top of the slopes, which creates a rural setting – there is variance in the age and structure of the woodland shaws and at times shelterbelts appear fragmented, as do the field boundaries to the base of the valley, which leads to glimpsed and open views across the A249 along the route.		of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route, and the receptors are considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility, Medium value and a judgement of **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249 are more likely to take in the views of the countryside and the setting of the AONB, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 9 Refer to Figure 9.31.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85, further along the Public Right of Way, to the south of VP 8 and immediately adjacent to the A249, looking northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	Filtered and direct views across and immediately adjacent to the A249. Stockbury Roundabout is present within the view, as is the well-trafficked dual carriageway, the towering lighting poles, crash barriers and signage. The highways verge is reasonably well maintained, however, there is a proliferation of ruderal weeds and the field boundaries are fragmented in parts which opens up the views towards the A249. To the right of the A249, the dual carriageway is well-screened with mature	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW KH85, is located immediately adjacent to the existing A249, with views across the A249 and filtered, middle ground views of Stockbury Roundabout. The traffic of the A249 is a dominant feature within the view – leading to a chaotic and unsettling environment. However, KH85 also traverses the Ancient Woodland – Church Wood and cuts through the Kent Downs AONB. The highly urbanised situation along the A249 is counterbalanced by experiences along more rural aspects of the route. Therefore, the enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		highways vegetation. The A249 is well-contained within the dry valley landscape and vegetation to the upper slopes and to the base of the dry valley limits views looking into the A249. To the left of the dual carriageway the view opens up across the large arable field and Church Wood is a strong feature in the background, limiting views towards the M2 corridor.		receptors travelling along this route, and the receptors are considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility, Medium value and a judgement of **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249 are more likely to take in the views of the countryside and the setting of the AONB, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 10 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 1) Refer to Figure 9.33.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR135, situated within a large arable field looking north towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link. 456.61 m from the Scheme.	A far-reaching view across a large arable field towards the M2 corridor. The agricultural land dominates the foreground and the middle ground. The background features mature woodland, hedgerows and shelterbelts – these dense belts of woodland and glimpsed rolling topography provide a rural setting, and also help to visually contain the M2 and A249 well within the base of the dry valley. Bowl Reed located adjacent to the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2, is glimpsed in the horizon through tree belts. Looking north from this PRoW, a dense belt of woodland to the left	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR135; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the M2 corridor.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR135, is located in proximity to the M2 motorway corridor, with filtered views of traffic and signage associated with the transport corridor. However, ZR135 lies within the Kent Downs AONB and the nature of the viewpoint, which is predominantly rural in character demonstrates that recreational users along this route are likely to be focussed upon the landscape or particular views within the AONB. Therefore, the enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route and these recreational receptors are deemed to be of a High value, with a High visual susceptibility and **High** sensitivity with

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		of Bowl Reed marks the area where the proposed Maidstone Road Link is to cut through, at present this woodland block is a strong vertical feature along the horizon. Views of the M2 are predominantly screened, however, the motorway is perceptible both audibly and visually, the latter through the presence of tall signage associated with the M2 and filtered views of traffic through tree belts.		a limited ability to accommodate change; and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the M2 are more likely to take in the views of the countryside and the setting of the AONB, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 11 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 2) Refer to Figure 9.35.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85, as the PRoW exits Church Wood at higher ground along the PRoW looking southeast towards the Scheme. 68.83 m from the Scheme.	Filtered views of the A249 can be seen at the base of the arable field through timber post and rail fencing and between tree trunks. The lighting poles associated with the Stockbury Roundabout are detracting features within the middle ground of the view, where they rise up above the trees around the roundabout. Whipstakes Farm appears as a dominant feature in the background, and the rural lane, Oad Street, can be seen cutting through the landscape, bound by mature hedgerows. Far reaching views across distant, well-wooded valley slopes up to Norton Green can be seen to the south of the view. The M2 Viaduct and its associated traffic	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW KH85, is located in close proximity to the existing A249, with views towards the M2 viaduct and the infrastructure of the heavily trafficked corridors. The M2 viaduct and the traffic of the A249 are present with the view. However, KH85 also traverses the Ancient Woodland – Church Wood and cuts through the Kent Downs AONB. The PRoW at this point has long ranging views across the dry valley landscape, to distant woodland belts and across agricultural fields. Therefore, the enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route, and the receptors are considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility, Medium

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		can be seen to the left of the view, further urbanising the viewpoint. In winter, when trees have lost their leaves, it is likely that views of the A249 and the M2 are exacerbated.		value and a judgement of **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249 are more likely to take in the views of the countryside and the setting of the AONB, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 12 Refer to Figure 9.37.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR71 adjacent to the A249, looking south-southwest towards the M2 Viaduct. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	Open and direct views of the A249 and M2 Viaduct are experienced from this viewpoint, due to the lack of boundary vegetation to the arable field and the lack of highways vegetation to the cutting slope. The M2 Viaduct appears as an imposing and dominant feature within the middle ground of the view, towering above the A249. The Volkerlaser construction site is situated underneath the Viaduct. The A249 dominates the foreground to middle ground of the view – it is well-trafficked with associated signage and crash barriers also visible. The strip of land between the A249 and the M2 Viaduct is poorly vegetated and is comprised of scrub and grassland. The upper	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR71; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR71, is located immediately adjacent to the existing A249, with open views towards the A249 and the M2 Viaduct. The traffic of the A249 and M2 is a dominant feature within the view – which leads to a chaotic and unsettling environment. The highly urbanised situation along the PRoW is counterbalanced by rural features of the view, including the dry valley dip slopes, the woodland shaws and open arable fields. Therefore, enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route, and the receptors are considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility, Medium value and a judgement of **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		slopes of the dry valleys are well-wooded and visually contain the M2 Viaduct and the A249 from the wider landscape.		• Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249 and within the arable fields are more likely to take in the views of the countryside, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 13 Refer to Figure 9.39.	View from public highway adjacent to Vale Cottages, The Coach House and Vale House, fronting on to the A249, looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	The view is a fairly open and direct, close range view of the A249. The environment appears visually cluttered with numerous road signs, road markings and crash barriers. In the horizon, the towering lighting poles of the Stockbury Roundabout are a prominent and urbanising feature. The A249 is well-trafficked and creates a chaotic and unsettling setting for the residential properties. Trees and shrubs enclose the A249 from the wider landscape and help to soften the urbanising features associated with the dual carriageway. The view opens out across the arable landscape, which does much to counteract the urbanised setting of the A249 and helps to retain a strong rural feel. Woodland shaws appear	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249; and • Transport receptors travelling along the A249.	• Residential receptors: Despite the rural location of these visual receptors: Vale Cottages, The Coach House and Vale House, they are all affected by the existing infrastructure of the A249. Therefore, these visual receptors are considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and are considered to be of Medium / High visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptors have a **High** sensitivity as visual amenity is integral to the enjoyment of a residential property; and • Transport receptors: The attention of these transport receptors will be focussed upon navigating along the A249 towards the busy M2 J5. The value of these transport receptors is Low and their visual susceptibility is Low. The sensitivity of these visual receptors is therefore judged to be **Low**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		fragmented to the upper slopes of the dry valley landscape.		
Viewpoint 14 Refer to Figure 9.41.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80, from Norton Green looking north-northeast towards the M2 Viaduct. 471.21 m from the Scheme.	Elevated and direct views across the dry valley slopes towards the M2 Viaduct in the middle ground. On the horizon, the industry along the river Medway further urbanises the view, as do the numerous telegraph poles within the adjacent field. Whipstakes Farm appears as a dominant feature in the middle ground, whilst shelterbelts and mature hedgerows serve to contain and screen views of the A249 corridor. In the foreground, the landscape appears slightly neglected in character, with scrap metal, heaps of spoil, mixed and degraded paving, ruderal weeds and post and wire fencing causing visual detraction and lessening the quality of the rural setting.	• Residential receptors at Norton Green; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Norton Green.	• Residential receptors: Despite the rural location of these visual receptors: there are long views across the landscape towards the M2 Viaduct and beyond to the industry of the river Medway. Therefore, these visual receptors are considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and are considered to be of High visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptors have a **High** sensitivity as visual amenity is integral to the enjoyment of a residential property; • Recreational receptors: PRoW KH80, has elevated views across the dry valleyscape towards the M2 Viaduct and to the industry of the river Medway upon the horizon. However, PRoW KH80 lies within the Kent Downs AONB and the nature of the viewpoint, which is fundamentally rural in character, demonstrates that recreational users along this route are likely to be focussed upon the landscape or particular views within the AONB. Therefore, the enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route and these recreational receptors are deemed to be of a High value, with a High visual susceptibility and **High** sensitivity with

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
				limited ability to accommodate change; and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors with views across to industry and the infrastructure of the M2, are more likely to take in the views of the countryside, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus of the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 15 Refer to Figure 9.43.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80, looking west-northwest from elevated ground towards the Scheme and Hillside Farm. 339.94 m from the Scheme.	Elevated, open view, strongly rural in character, with long distance views across the dry valley landscape to large-scale agricultural fields lacking internal field boundaries. Woodland belts line the upper slopes. Views towards the A249 in the middle ground are filtered through the mature highways vegetation, which helps to screen and contain the transport corridor within the base of the dry valley. However, glimpsed views of traffic are experienced through the vegetation and telegraph poles which provides further visual detraction. Land adjacent to Hillside Farm is demarcated with post and wire fencing. To the wider landscape moving away from the A249, field	• Residential receptor at Hillside Farm; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Hillside Farm.	• Residential receptors: Despite the rural location of Hillside Farm, the property fronts onto the A249. Therefore, this visual receptor is considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and is considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptors have a **High** sensitivity as visual amenity is integral to the enjoyment of a residential property, despite the compromised setting of this property; • Recreational receptors: PRoW KH80, has elevated views across the dry valleyscape towards the A249 and Hillside Farm. PRoW KH80 lies within the Kent Downs AONB and the nature of the viewpoint, despite the proximity to the A249, is fundamentally rural in character, demonstrating that the

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
		boundaries are more robust and vegetation cover provides a well-wooded slope and a strong sense of place.		recreational users along this route are likely to be focussed upon the landscape or particular views within the AONB. Therefore, the enjoyment of the landscape and views are integral to the experience of recreational receptors travelling along this route and these recreational receptors are deemed to be of a High value, with a High visual susceptibility and **High** sensitivity, with limited ability to accommodate change; and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors within this rural location are more likely to take in the views of the countryside, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view, and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.
Viewpoint 16 Refer to Figure 9.45.	View from the public highway, adjacent to the junction of South Green Lane where it meets the A249 and in proximity to the cluster of residential properties adjacent to the A249, looking north-northeast towards the Scheme.	A semi-enclosed view looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. Direct views of the A249 are experienced at the junction with South Green Lane. The residential properties are set back from the A249 and are separated by a mature belt of dense tree and shrub vegetation and a private road, which creates a degree of physical and visual separation from the A249. It is likely that there are glimpsed	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House; • Transport receptors travelling along the A249; and • Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249.	• Residential receptors: Despite the rural location, the properties fronting onto the A249, are well-screened by mature highways vegetation for the most part, but the setting of their properties is compromised by the presence and proximity of the A249. Therefore, these visual receptors are considered to be moderately able to accommodate change and are considered to be of Medium visual susceptibility to change. The residential receptors have a **High** sensitivity as

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented	Sensitivity
	0.12 m from the Scheme.	views of the A249 through breaks in vegetation along this stretch. The traffic island to the junction between South Green Lane and the A249 is dilapidated and appears to have been the site of an historic collision/collisions. Bollards, crash barriers and the traffic of the A249 are further urbanising features in the view. Highways vegetation serves to enclose the A249 within the base of the dry valley landscape, limiting views towards the A249 from the wider landscape.		visual amenity is integral to the enjoyment of a residential property; • Transport receptors: The attention of these transport receptors will be focussed upon navigating along the A249 towards the busy M2 J5. The value of these transport receptors is Low and their visual susceptibility is Low. The sensitivity of these visual receptors is therefore judged to be **Low;** and • Outdoor employment receptors: Outdoor employment receptors within this rural location are more likely to take in the views of the countryside, and therefore the value of their visual amenity is Medium, with a Medium visual susceptibility, due to the primary focus on the receptors being upon their work, rather than their view and as a result, these employment receptors have a **Moderate** visual sensitivity.

F.4 Design, mitigation and enhancement measures

Kent Downs AONB

F.4.1 In the Kent Downs AONB the design principles were:

- To situate the Scheme sensitively within the existing landscape;
- Retain veteran and ancient trees adjacent to or within the red line boundary of the Scheme;
- Retain the qualities and distinctive features of the Kent Downs AONB, such as secluded dry valleys, ancient woodlands, network of tiny lanes, delicate chalk grassland and retain its remote and tranquil nature;
- Creation of functional ecological networks;
- Use of locally derived building materials for paving and selection of sensitive cladding options responding to the character of the place;
- Robust and resilient planting palette that responds to the pressures of climate change;
- Use of new lighting technologies such as LEDs to thwart impacts upon the dark skies at night and to limit light pollution from the Scheme;
- Have due regard to the UK list of priority habitats targeted in Biodiversity 2020, these include: chalk grassland, species-rich hedgerows and road verges;
- Conserve historic and ecologically important hedge/woodland banks and road verges;
- Make restrained use of coloured surfacing and road markings, seeking to mark changes with setts/changes in surfacing;
- Prioritise the extension of existing woodland and reconnect fragmented or isolated woods;
- Conserve, enhance or restore the hedgerow network to reinforce existing field patterns and the character and unity of the landscape;
- Establish and maintain standard trees in hedgerows;
- Establish new hedgerows and fill gaps in fragmented cores, ensuring mixes of native tree and shrub species;
- Encourage the conservation of ponds, restoring where possible neglected ponds on farmland;
- Increase areas of chalk grassland habitat;
- Identify potential archaeological sites before any alterations are made to the landscape, to avoid damage to unknown sites;
- Use of native species which are of local provenance stock or at least of British origin to safeguard the integrity and biodiversity of the landscape;
- Extend and connect existing priority protected sites and habitats as well as the creation of new habitat types;

- Design with regard to known national and local biosecurity issues, with particular reference to Dutch Elm disease, Ash dieback and diseases impacting upon Sweet Chestnut;
- Use of a diverse range of appropriate species of local provenance ensuring the resilience of woodlands and trees;
- Consider the impact of development on the Public Rights of Way network;
- Design with due regard to the historic setting of listed buildings and Scheduled monuments within the vicinity of the Scheme;
- Conserve and protect the historic environment, both above and below ground;
- Enhance the ground flora of woodland within the vicinity of the Ancient Woodland – Church Wood; and
- Due regard to the important local rural lane, Oad Street, improving the safety of the road through widening, whilst also retaining the rural characteristics through ensuring no lighting is added to this.

Landscape Character

F.4.2 Throughout the Scheme due regard was given to the design principles, opportunities for enhancement identified within regional and local landscape character assessments, these were:

- Create ecological interest by planting broadleaf woodland on steeper valley sides;
- Improve the condition of field boundaries, through the introduction of native hedgerows;
- Conserve blocks of ancient woodland, and restore and improve the woodlands within the area and introduce greater woodland structural diversity, particularly where ancient woodland is present;
- Restore and improve the network of hedgerows, filling in gaps where there are no boundaries;
- Seek to extend native woodland cover within areas of intensively farmed landscape;
- Create links between existing hedgerows, windbreaks and woodlands;
- Conserve remnant areas of woodland on the hillside valleys along the A249 and create stronger woodland blocks through managing, restoring and extending areas of woodland;
- Restoration and extension of arable field margins/buffers would provide improved habitat connectivity;
- Safeguard remaining remnants of woodland, orchard and hedgerow, especially along lanes and look for opportunities for their re-creation, for example, by the enclosure of existing open areas, the integration of existing and new development with woodland blocks and hedgerows and by linking isolated woodlands and hedgerows;

- Conserve and restore the distinctive, isolated and tranquil open landscape character of the dry valley pastures, remnant orchards and ridge top trees, together with the area's panoramic views and narrow, enclosed, hedge-lined lanes;
- Restore chalk grassland; and
- Preservation of veteran trees where present would be of benefit in this area.

Environmental Functions (EF)

F.4.3 Furthermore, the design process for the landscape and ecological mitigation design was based upon DMRB's HA 87/01 Volume 10: Environmental Design and Management Environmental Objectives. This document lays out a range of Environmental Function (EF) codes related to the design and management of highways e.g. EFB – Landscape Integration – integrating the highway into the surrounding landscape. The preliminary environmental design drawings (see Figure 2.3), illustrate these Environmental Function (EF) codes. The codes of relevance to this Scheme are as follows:

- EFA – Visual Screening (providing mitigation against adverse visual impacts by screening views of the Highway and associated infrastructure from properties and public viewpoints, including rights of way);
- EFB – Landscape Integration (integrate the highway with the character of the surrounding landscape by maintaining the matrix of local vegetation patterns, blending with local landform and softening views of the highway, its infrastructure and its traffic);
- EFC – Enhancing the Built Environment (enhance the landscape and built elements of the highway with surrounding features, to reflect the scale, character and materials of the local townscape or community through which the highway passes);
- EFD – Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (protect, manage and enhance the nature conservation value of the highway estate and integrate with and protect adjacent habitats and locations containing protected species, or other locally-important species or habitats);
- EFE – Visual Amenity (Maintain interest, variety and an acceptable visual appearance for both road users and adjacent public viewers by creating/maintaining views to the wider landscape, providing seasonal variation and creating a 'sense of place' via landmark features, either plant species, landform/geology, the design and materials used for structures and furniture, and the spatial arrangements); and
- EFF – Heritage (Conserve and enhance the physical nature and appearance and setting of existing features within and adjacent to the highway, where they are afforded statutory protection, or make a material contribution to the quality and character of the local area).

F.4.4 The following landscape design objectives have informed the preliminary environmental design:

- Avoid, then minimise and mitigate adverse effects of the Scheme upon designated sites and features;

- Where practicable, conserve and enhance the environment through which the Scheme passes;
- Reflect the landscape character through which the Scheme passes, including: land use, topography, heritage and landscape pattern;
- Respect the landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage resource within and adjacent to the Scheme, with particular reference to the Kent Downs AONB and nationally important heritage assets;
- Increase areas of Biodiversity Action Plan habitats;
- Maintain the connectivity of existing networks for Non-Motorised Users (NMUs);
- Maximise the positive aspects of the Scheme and its surroundings; through creative design and use of local materials, including native planting and locally sourced flint as the cladding for the Stockbury Flyover. So as to enhance the local sense of place, geological and historic character, with emphasis on environmental quality and sustainability;
- Reflect existing landscape character and retain existing features. Creating opportunities to improve landscape character through an integrated approach to mitigation providing adequate land for woodland planting;
- Give careful consideration to the location and design of lighting to minimise impacts at both day and night;
- Give careful consideration to the design and integration of new structures into a sensitive landscape throughout the design process, with careful selection of materials and planting treatments; and
- Where possible, create essential features to support the proposed new section of motorway in areas where they have least impact on designated landscapes and minimise physical intrusion on the landscape.

Landscape Design Principles

F.4.5 The environmental design principles for the Scheme reflect the context and key requirements of the environmental drivers for integration and include the following:

- Provide appropriate visual, landscape, ecological and environmental mitigation, whilst minimising land take and impact upon the Kent Downs AONB and adjoining agricultural land;
- Retain as much existing mature vegetation as is possible;
- Establish new planting to screen and integrate the Scheme into the surrounding landscape, whilst retaining visual cohesion with existing landscape features;
- Maintain the quality of views to and from surrounding receptors;
- Introduce innovative landscape planting to conserve and enhance areas with specific landscape / ecological importance, providing a sustainable and future-focussed solution;
- Use new planting to integrate the scale, layout, form and massing of the Scheme, to reduce the scale of earthworks and structures and filter views of the Scheme, and to reinforce existing planting;

- Use locally indigenous native plants and species-rich grassland on cutting slopes and in landscape areas to reflect the distinct local character, and to link the Scheme with the existing features – providing physical and visual continuity;
- Use habitat creation to offset habitat loss and nature conservation value – integrating the Scheme into the distinct landscape, enhancing the appearance and ecology of new drainage ditches, swales, soakaway trenches and infiltration ponds with marginal planting; and
- Use lighting with low spillage and designed with due regard to the dark skies of the Kent Downs AONB.

F.5 Landscape Assessment – Construction

F.5.1 In accordance with paragraph 4.2.1 of the GLVIA 3rd Edition, 2013, embedded construction mitigation measures have been developed as part of the iterative design process. These mitigation measures are described in the Landscape Chapter, section 9.9 Design, Mitigation and enhancement measures of the Environmental Statement (ES). The Construction Phase is assessed using professional judgement to determine the impacts of this phase during winter, when existing vegetation is not in leaf, and therefore demonstrates a worst-case assessment scenario. The Construction Phase is considered to be short-term and temporary in nature and as a result, it is not considered feasible to include any additional secondary mitigation measures. Judgements on the magnitude of construction impacts were determined in accordance with Table 9.7 of Chapter 9 within the ES, and the significance of effect of the Construction Phase determined in accordance with Table 9.9 of Chapter 9 within the ES. Descriptions of the significance of effect categories can be found in Table 9.10 of Chapter 9 the ES.

Table F.10: Landscape Assessment Table – Construction

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impact	Effect at Winter during construction Year
Regional Landscape Character Areas:			
The Landscape Assessment of Kent (LAK): Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs	**Moderate**	The northernmost point of this Regional LCA would be impacted by the Construction Phase. There would be a loss of mature highways vegetation associated with the original design of the A249, so as to incorporate the widening along the north-western extent of the LCA, and the construction of the Stockbury Flyover, which would appear as a new urbanising feature, including the associated earthworks, the reconfigured Stockbury Roundabout and the widening of Oad Street. Due to the intervening nature of the topography and the well-wooded dry valley slopes, the A249 is well-contained within the base of a dry valley and views towards the Scheme are limited from the wider LCA. Therefore, significant impacts are localised and the wider LCA would be largely unimpacted by the works. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, however, this would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. Construction activity associated with the Scheme would be temporary and partially mitigable. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Moderate Adverse**.	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.
The Landscape Assessment of Kent (LAK): Chatham Outskirts: Mid Kent Downs	**Moderate**	Construction activity associated with the Construction Phase of the Scheme would be concentrated to the easternmost extent of this Regional LCA. Within this LCA there would be widening associated with the Scheme and the loss of mature highways field boundaries, as well as the construction of earthworks. The nature of the topography and the intervening existing vegetation in the form of woodland blocks, hedgerows and woodland shaw, would limit views towards this portion of the LCA and the effects would be localised, with the wider LCA largely unimpacted by the works. The setting of the LCA would be impacted upon by the construction activities associated with the creation of the Stockbury Flyover and Stockbury Roundabout reconfiguration. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, however, this would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Moderate Adverse**.	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impact	Effect at Winter during construction Year
The Landscape Assessment of Kent (LAK): Fruit Belt	Low	Construction activities would be present along a portion of the southern extent of this Regional LCA. These construction activities would include the loss of mature highways vegetation so as to accommodate the proposed widening, the loss of grazing land and mature woodland to accommodate the proposed Maidstone Road Link and associated earthworks. The effects of the Construction Phase would be localised and would lead to the appearance of a new feature within the landscape, namely the proposed Maidstone Road Link and the increased extent of roadway. The construction of the Stockbury Flyover would also be perceptible immediately adjacent to the Scheme. Due to the A249 being situated within the base of a dry valley and the intervening topography and vegetation of the surrounding landscape, there are no impacts upon the wider landscape and construction effects are localised. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme however, this would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Moderate Adverse**.	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.
Local Landscape Character Areas:			
MBC: Bredhurst and Stockbury Downs	**Moderate**	Impacts from the Construction Phase would be barely perceptible from this Local LCA, due to the distance from the Scheme and the LCA. There may be some filtered views through field boundary vegetation along the eastern extent of the LCA towards the Scheme, including the widened A249 and the construction of the Stockbury Flyover, however, the wider LCA would remain unimpacted by the works due to the intervening topography and existing vegetation. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, however, this would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Negligible Adverse**.	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.
MBC: Hucking Dry Valleys	**High**	The northernmost extent of this Local LCA would be impacted by the Construction Phase. The construction of the Stockbury Flyover, widening of the A249, associated earthworks and vegetation clearance would be perceptible features, leading to an exacerbation of the current urbanising impacts resulting from the presence of the A249 and M2 motorway corridor. However, the A249 is well-contained within the base of a dry valley and the intervening topography and vegetation of the wider LCA	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impact	Effect at Winter during construction Year
		limits views towards the Scheme. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, however, this would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. Therefore, impacts resulting from the Construction Phase would be localised in nature, temporary and in part mitigable. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Moderate Adverse**.	
SBC: Borden Mixed Farmlands	**Moderate**	Impact from the Construction Phase would be largely imperceptible from this Local LCA. With some degree of visibility present to the west of the Scheme, with views along the A249 towards the M2, construction activity associated with the widening would feature as a loss of mature vegetation and the presence of construction works. The wider LCA would remain unimpacted by the Scheme due to the presence of intervening vegetation, topography and buildings limiting views towards the Scheme. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would likely be counteracted by other permanent intervening features, such as the topography and the presence of built-form, which would provide enough visual separation to offset this leaf loss. Construction impacts would be largely short-term and mitigable. Therefore, the magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Negligible Adverse.**	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.
SBC: Newington Arable Farmlands	**Moderate**	Impacts resulting from the Construction Phase are present and perceptible along the southern and south eastern extent of this Local LCA. Impacts would be as a result of construction activities associated with the widening of the A249 and the creation of the proposed Maidstone Road Link, including vegetation clearance and the creation of earthworks. The construction of the Stockbury Flyover would also be perceptible from this LCA. Effects are localised and the wider LCA would remain unimpacted by the Scheme, due to the nature of the A249 being situated within the base of a dry valley slope and the intervening topography and vegetation surrounding it. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, yet counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Moderate Adverse.**	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.
SBC: Deans Bottom	**High**	The northern most point of the LCA would be partially impacted by the construction works, as it is in the vicinity of the Oad Street widening, therefore, construction	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impact	Effect at Winter during construction Year
		activity may be perceptible and visible within this localised section. The rest of the LCA is well-wooded and enclosed in nature and construction activity associated with the Scheme would not be perceptible. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts, however, given the density of the woodland, it is unlikely that these impacts would be significant even with the loss of leaf vegetation. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Negligible Adverse**.	
SBC: Tunstall Farmlands	**Moderate**	The setting of the westernmost point of the Local LCA would be impacted by the Construction works, with visibility of the construction of the proposed Maidstone Road Link perceptible from this point of the LCA and potential visibility adjacent to Whipstakes Farm, where there are elevated views towards the A249 and the construction activities associated with the A249 widening, the creation of the Stockbury Flyover and Stockbury Roundabout reconfiguration. These localised effects would not be experienced within the wider LCA due to the intervening topography and mature vegetation screening views towards the Scheme. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, yet counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Moderate adverse**.	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

F.6 Visual Assessment - Construction

F.6.1 In accordance with paragraph 4.2.1 of the GLVIA 3rd Edition, 2013, embedded construction mitigation measures have been developed as part of the iterative design process. These mitigation measures are described in the Landscape Chapter, section 9.9 Design, mitigation and enhancement measures of the Environmental Statement (ES). The first of the three assessment stages is the construction phase, which includes for consideration, the location of construction equipment, access and haul routes, machinery, temporary lighting and the position and scale of working areas as part of the assessment. The construction phase is assessed in winter, when existing vegetation is not in leaf and therefore demonstrates a worst-case assessment scenario. The Construction Phase is considered to be short-term and temporary in nature and as a result, it is not considered feasible to include any additional secondary mitigation measures. The length of the Construction Phase is 18 months (as outlined in section 9.10 of Chapter 9 and Chapter 2 of the Environmental Statement). Judgements on the magnitude of construction impacts were determined

in accordance with Table 9.8 of the ES, and the significance of effect of the Construction Phase determined in accordance with Table 9.9 of the ES. Descriptions of the significance of effect categories can be found in Table 9.11 of the ES.

Table F.11: Visual Assessment Table - Construction

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
Viewpoint 1 Figure 9.15.	View from Wormdale Hill, near the settlement of Danaway, looking south-southwest towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	The existing view from the Wormdale Hill overpass as it crosses the A249 looking southwest towards the M2 J5 is one that is semi-enclosed in nature. The A249 is in cutting here, at the base of the dry valley and is well contained by the fairly dense highway planting to the cutting slopes. Arable fields are glimpsed in the background. The curvature of the road and the dense vegetative planting belts restrict views towards the M2 J5. The A249 is the dominant feature in the view and occupies the middle of the frame, it diminishes the sense of place. This is a semi-managed landscape, with evidence of highways maintenance along the verges, however, litter is strewn across the central reservation and to the verge edges. Highways fencing at the base of the cutting slope appears dilapidated and creates a neglected feel to the view.	• Transport receptors using Wormdale Hill: **Low** sensitivity; and • Transports receptors using the A249 travelling westerly towards the M2 J5: **Low** sensitivity.	Construction activities including vegetation clearance and earthworks would be visible immediately adjacent to the A249, with the greatest degree of vegetation clearance occurring to the right of the view. Construction activities and the resulting loss of highways vegetation would appear as dominant features within the view. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the changes would be temporary, short-term and to an extent, mitigable. • The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	• Transport receptors using Wormdale Hill: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Transports receptors using the A249 travelling westerly towards the M2 J5: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.
Viewpoint 2 Figure 9.17.	View from Maidstone Road, Danaway looking	The existing M2 Viaduct can be glimpsed in the background of the view through the tree belts and scrub that line the Maidstone Road. The middle frame of the view is dominated by the	• Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest	Construction activities including vegetation clearance, would be particularly visible to the right and in the middle ground of the view. Maidstone Road is in	• Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest towards the M2 J5:

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	southwest towards the M2 Junction 5. 98.91 m from the Scheme.	Maidstone Road, which is of a mixed character, with road signs, telegraph poles, lighting, and bollards appearing as urbanising elements. The landscape is semi-maintained, with evidence of maintenance to the highways verges, however, the verges of private properties can appear dilapidated, particularly relating to the construction/industrial site, with its unsympathetic boundary treatment and accumulation of weeds and detritus. The residential properties in the view are of a mixed 20th century style, not in keeping with the local vernacular of the area, or the historic buildings found along Chestnut Street. Garden boundaries are often defensive and mixed in style which leads to a visually incoherent scene. The view is fairly enclosed due to the dry valley form of the landscape, with residential properties located at the base of the slopes. However, the A249 which runs parallel to Maidstone Road is both audibly and visually perceptible from this location, with the constant sound of traffic creating a chaotic and unsettling sense to the place. The dense woodland belts to the back of properties adjacent to the A249 provide critical screening of the dual carriageway –there are, however, glimpsed views of traffic through the tree belts and during the	towards the M2 J5: **Low** sensitivity; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway: **High** sensitivity.	close proximity to the proposed construction compound and it is likely that construction noise and the presence of machinery/vehicles associated with the Scheme will be readily apparent features. However, existing vegetation along the Maidstone Road would serve to partially screen the majority of the construction activity, although in winter months this screening would be limited and the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would likely exacerbate this situation. In order to accommodate the widening of the A249, there will be a loss of vegetation adjacent to the A249 running parallel to the properties along Maidstone Road, which may open up further views towards the traffic of the A249, the widening will lead to the A249 moving closer in proximity to the gardens of some of these residential properties. Furthermore, the changes would be largely temporary, short-term and to an extent mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these	**Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
		winter months it is likely that this situation is exacerbated.		receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	
Viewpoint 3 Figure 9.19.	View from Public Right of Way KH81 in the vicinity of Church Lane, Stockbury looking east-southeast towards the A249. 56.29 m from the Scheme.	A filtered view of the A249 looking east-southeast towards the Scheme from PRoW KH81 at higher ground along the PRoW. The view is open in nature with a degree of expansiveness – with long views across the dry valley slopes to agricultural and grazing land parcels divided by fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts. In the foreground of the view is arable land, with no clearly demarcated route for PRoW users, implying that the route is not well-trodden. The middle ground is dominated by the presence of the A249 and associated traffic, fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts provide some degree of screening, however, there are opportunities for enhancement to better situate the road within the landscape and lessen its visual dominance. Other detracting features come in the form of road signs, mixed boundaries, lighting poles and metal farm sheds.	• Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **High** sensitivity; • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** sensitivity; • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene: is judged to be of a **High** sensitivity; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane: is	Construction activities including vegetation clearance and earthworks would be particularly visible within the middle ground of the view. Widening of the A249 will lead to the extent of the A249 moving physically closer to the viewpoint location, with vegetation clearance and earthworks along the slopes of the dry valley, leading to the opening up of views of the existing A249 and the associated construction activities. These activities would be prominent features within the view. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period, these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the changes would be temporary, short-term and partially mitigable. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction is as follows: • Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **Moderate**;	• Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **Large** Adverse and significant; • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene: **Neutral**; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
			judged to be of a **High** sensitivity.	• Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate**; • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene: The receptor is located to the west of the PRoW, towards Stockbury, intervening vegetation and the topography of the dry valley slope limit views towards the Scheme and therefore the magnitude of visual impact upon the visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of this heritage receptor is considered to be **No change**. • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane: The receptor is located to the west of the PRoW, towards Stockbury, intervening vegetation and the topography of the dry valley slope limit views towards the Scheme and therefore the magnitude of visual impact upon the visual amenity of people enjoying the	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				setting of this heritage receptor is considered to be **No change**.	
Viewpoint 4 Figure 9.21.	View from Oad Street overpass looking north-northwest towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link. 9.19 m from the Scheme.	A predominantly enclosed view looking towards the site of the proposed Maidstone Road Link. Oad Street is lined by mature trees and shrubs which provide an attractive, enclosed feel to the road, before it opens out across the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2. The M2 is perceptible both audibly and visually and creates a chaotic, unsettling and urbanising feel to the place. Despite this detraction, the view is largely rural in character with timber post and rail fencing and a degree of enclosure provided by the existing vegetation. Other detracting features within the view include the overpass bridge and the presence of crash barriers, which further detract from the rural setting and act as visual indicators of the motorway.	• Residential receptors: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed along Oad Street, in proximity to the proposed Maidstone Road Link: **High** sensitivity.	There would be a fairly significant loss of mature vegetation to the left of the view in order to accommodate the junction between Oad Street and the proposed Maidstone Road Link. Construction activities and the vegetation clearance associated with the proposed Maidstone Road Link would be dominant features in the view, as would the associated construction traffic. The residential properties adjacent to the proposed Maidstone Road Link would have filtered and direct views towards the Scheme. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would likely exacerbate these impacts. The presence of construction activity and machinery would be temporary and short-term in nature, however, the proposed Maidstone Road Link and the loss of vegetation in order to accommodate it, would be permanent features.	• Residential receptors: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed along Oad Street, in proximity to the proposed Maidstone Road Link: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	
Viewpoint 5 Figure 9.23.	View from Oad Street overpass looking west towards the M2 Junction 5. 47.02 m from the Scheme.	A wide, open view taken from Oad Street overpass looking west towards the M2 Junction 5. The M2 Motorway and slip road dominate the view. The overpass itself is urbanising in nature and the road is well-trafficked, with a constant stream of motorway noise and traffic present, which creates for an unsettling and chaotic environment. Roadside vegetation is mature with dense belts of roadside woodland planting towering up above the motorway and keeping it visually well-contained from the wider landscape.	• Transport receptors using the Oad Street overpass: **Low** sensitivity.	Potential loss of vegetation adjacent to the existing M2 Viaduct so as to accommodate the works – this would appear as a slightly thinned section of tree planting within the middle ground of the view. Most significant to this viewpoint location would be construction activities and vegetation clearance associated with the proposed Maidstone Road Link to the right side of the panoramic view. These would appear as fairly dominant features within the view, however the M2 and its associated traffic would remain the primary focal point. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the changes would generally be temporary, short-term and partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these	• Transport receptors using the Oad Street overpass: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	
Viewpoint 6 Figure 9.25.	View from adjacent to Whipstakes Farm, along Oad Street, looking north-northwest towards the existing Stockbury Roundabout. 48.38 m from the Scheme.	A fairly open, upper valley-side view from adjacent to Whipstakes farm, looking north-northwest across grazing land towards the Stockbury Roundabout. The lighting poles associated with the existing roundabout are visually dominant and tower above the A249, creating a localised urbanising effect. The A249 is audibly perceptible and there are glimpsed views of traffic through tree belts and breaks in vegetation. Despite these urbanising features, the view is rural in nature, with long views across the valley towards arable fields enclosed by woodland shaws. Oad Street is rural in nature, both narrow and winding, and lined by hedgerows. Hedgerows are fragmented adjacent to Whipstakes Farm and gaps infilled by timber post and rail fencing, though rural in character, these do little to provide visual screening of the existing A249. Whipstakes Farm is set back from the viewpoint and is situated at higher ground, it is likely that the current view from the residential property is exacerbated, with an increased extent of visibility of both the A249 and also potential views of the existing M2 Viaduct and its associated elevated traffic.	• Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: **High** sensitivity; and • Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: **Moderate** sensitivity.	Construction activities including: vegetation clearance, earthworks, construction of drainage channels and the Stockbury Flyover, would appear as filtered views through retained, mature vegetation, where vegetation is to be cleared, direct views of the construction activity would be possible. Whipstakes Farm is located at a higher point than the viewpoint location and it is likely that the visibility of these elements would be even greater. Construction activities associated with the widening of Oad Street would also be apparent in the foreground, as would the presence of construction works and traffic. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable.	• Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: **Moderate** **A**dverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				Given the existing context of the view from Whipstakes Farm e.g. an elevated view overlooking the existing A249 with glimpsed and direct views of: traffic, the existing roadway, lighting poles, the M2 Viaduct and its associated elevated traffic, the magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of the Residential receptors and Transport receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	
Viewpoint 7 Figure 9.27.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR70 – a local footbridge as it ties in with PRoW KH85 to the south of the M2 looking east towards the Scheme and existing M2 motorway corridor.	A contained view looking east towards the Scheme and along the existing M2 transport corridor. Ancient woodland to the right of the view and mature highways vegetation to the left create an enclosed and contained visual barrier to the transport corridor – limiting views of the M2 beyond these reaches. The view across the M2 corridor is fairly long ranging and gaps in vegetation where the M2 Viaduct crosses the A249 opens up views of the dominant equestrian facility to the north east of the Scheme. The corridor is heavily trafficked and urban in nature, additional urbanising features found within the view include lighting poles, a substation, the parapets of the viaduct, road signs, crash barriers and bollards.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70: **Moderate** sensitivity.	Construction activities including vegetation clearance, earthworks and the creation of the proposed Maidstone Road Link would appear centre-left of the middle to background of the view. Direct views of construction activity would be possible along the valley slope. Retained vegetation adjacent to the M2 Viaduct would serve to limit some of the views towards this area, limiting the full extent of visibility, however, during winter months these screening benefits would be lessened. Trees along the horizon will also be lost to accommodate the proposed junction between Oad Street and the proposed Maidstone Road Link.	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	219.53 m from the Scheme.			The view is primarily dominated by the M2 motorway and the traffic and infrastructure associated with it. The construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	
Viewpoint 8 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 6) Figure 9.29.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85 in proximity to the Stockbury Roundabout, looking northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the	A semi-enclosed view of the well-wooded Stockbury Roundabout. The mature trees and vegetation of the roundabout limit views of the A249 and M2 beyond. Lighting poles, signage and associated infrastructure of the A249 in conjunction with the fast-flowing traffic, appear as urbanising features, which create a chaotic and unsettling feel to the place. The view is taken from the bottom of a dry valley and the upper valley slopes are well-wooded. The view opens up across the arable field and up to the woodland shaws at the top of the slopes, which creates a rural setting – there is variance in the age and structure of the woodland shaws and at times, shelterbelts appear fragmented,	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Moderate** sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** sensitivity.	Construction activities including vegetation clearance, earthworks and the creation of the new Stockbury Flyover and Stockbury Roundabout redesign, would appear as dominant, focal features within the foreground of the view. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	red line boundary).	as do the field boundaries to the base of the valley, which leads to glimpsed and open views across the A249 along the route.		activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Major**.	
Viewpoint 9 Figure 9.31.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85, further along the Public Right of Way, to the south of VP 8 and immediately adjacent to the A249, looking northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	Filtered and direct views across and immediately adjacent to the A249. Stockbury Roundabout is present within the view, as is the well-trafficked dual carriageway, the towering lighting poles, crash barriers and signage. The highways verge is reasonably well maintained, however, there is a proliferation of ruderal weeds and the field boundaries are fragmented in parts, which opens up the views towards the A249. To the right of the A249, the dual carriageway is well-screened with mature highways vegetation. The A249 is well-contained within the dry valley landscape and vegetation to the upper slopes and to the base of the dry valley limits views looking into the A249. To the left of the dual carriageway the view opens up across the large arable field and Church Wood is a strong feature in the background, limiting views towards the M2 corridor.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Moderate** sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** sensitivity.	Construction activities including: vegetation clearance, earthworks and the creation of the new Stockbury Flyover and Stockbury Roundabout redesign, would appear as dominant, focal features within the foreground and middle ground of the view. The footpath will be rerouted due to the A249 widening, leading to land uptake in the vicinity of the existing PRoW. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Major**.	
Viewpoint 10 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 1) Figure 9.33.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR135, situated within a large arable field looking north towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link. 456.61 m from the Scheme.	A far-reaching view across a large arable field towards the M2 corridor. The agricultural land dominates the foreground and the middle ground. The background features mature woodland, hedgerows and shelterbelts – these dense belts of woodland and glimpsed rolling topography provide a rural setting, and also help to screen the M2, and visually contain the A249 within the base of the dry valley. Bowl Reed located adjacent to the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2, is glimpsed in the horizon through tree belts. Looking north from this PRoW, a dense belt of woodland to the left of Bowl Reed marks the area where the proposed Maidstone Road Link is to cut through, at present, this woodland block is a strong vertical feature along the horizon. Views of the M2 are predominantly screened, however, the motorway is perceptible both audibly and visually, the latter through the presence of tall signage associated with the M2 and filtered views of traffic through tree belts.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR135: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the M2 corridor: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	Partial vegetation clearance of the mature tree belt to the left of centre and to the background of the view would be apparent as a result of construction works, in order to accommodate the proposed Maidstone Road Link. This would lead to a slightly decreased sense of vegetation and a partial opening up of the skyline. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, it was deemed that themagnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Negligible**, due to very limited nature of the impacts upon the view.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR135: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the M2 corridor: **Neutral**.
Viewpoint 11	View from Public Right	Filtered views of the A249 can be seen at the base of the arable field through	• Recreational receptor: PRoW	Construction activities including earthworks and the creation of	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85:

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
(Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 2) Figure 9.35.	of Way (PRoW) KH85, as the PRoW exits Church Wood at higher ground along the PRoW looking southeast towards the Scheme. 68.83 m from the Scheme.	timber post and rail fencing and between tree trunks. The lighting poles associated with the Stockbury Roundabout are detracting features within the middle ground of the view, where they rise up above the trees around the roundabout. Whipstakes Farm appears as a dominant feature in the background, and the rural lane, Oad Street, can be seen cutting through the landscape, bound by mature hedgerows. Far reaching views across distant, well-wooded valley slopes up to Norton Green can be seen to the south of the view. The M2 Viaduct and its associated traffic can be seen to the left of the view, further urbanising the viewpoint. In winter, when trees have lost their leaves, it is likely that views of the A249 and the M2 are exacerbated.	KH85: **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	the new Stockbury Flyover and the Stockbury Roundabout redesign would appear as dominant, focal features within the middle ground of the view. The vegetation within the middle ground of the view would be cleared and direct and open views towards the A249 and the construction works would be prominent features and fully visible, leading to a much more urbanised environment. Furthermore, due to the Scheme widening, the A249 would now be physically closer to the viewpoint location as a result of land uptake to accommodate the widening. Construction activity and widening works will also be present nearer the background of the view, due to the widening of Oad Street. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, the construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes	**Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Major**.	
Viewpoint 12 Figure 9.37.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR71 adjacent to the A249, looking south-southwest towards the M2 Viaduct. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	Open and direct views of the A249 and M2 Viaduct are experienced from this viewpoint, due to the lack of boundary vegetation to the arable field and the lack of highways vegetation to the cutting slope. The M2 Viaduct appears as an imposing and prominent feature within the middle ground of the view, towering above the A249. The Volkerlaser construction site is situated underneath the Viaduct. The A249 dominates the foreground to middle ground of the view – it is well-trafficked with associated signage and crash barriers also visible. The strip of land between the A249 and the M2 Viaduct is poorly vegetated and is comprised of scrub and grassland. The upper slopes of the dry valleys are well-wooded and visually contain the M2 Viaduct and the A249 from the wider landscape.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR71: **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** visual sensitivity. •	Construction activities including earthworks and the creation of the new Stockbury Flyover and the proposed Maidstone Road Link would appear as dominant, focal features within the entirety of the view. Furthermore, due to the Scheme widening, the A249 would now be physically closer to the viewpoint location as a result of land uptake to accommodate the widening. Vegetation clearance would lead to direct and opened up views of the A249 and the construction works which would lead to further urbanisation of this viewpoint location. In conjunction with these elements, the construction compound would also be present under the M2 Viaduct, which is in keeping with the	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR71: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				current situation, whereby the Volkerlaser construction compound is presently situated there. Furthermore, the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period, would likely exacerbate these impacts, further opening up views towards the urbanising road corridor and the M2 Viaduct. The construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Major**.	
Viewpoint 13 Figure 9.39.	View from public highway adjacent to Vale Cottages, The Coach House and Vale House, fronting on to the A249, looking	The view is a fairly open and direct, close range view of the A249. The environment appears visually cluttered with numerous road signs, road markings and crash barriers. In the horizon, the towering lighting poles of the Stockbury Roundabout are a prominent and urbanising feature. The A249 is well-trafficked and creates a chaotic and unsettling setting for the residential properties. Trees and shrubs enclose the A249 from the wider	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Low** visual sensitivity.	Construction activities including earthworks, road widening, vegetation clearance and the creation of the new Stockbury Flyover would appear as prominent, focal features within the entirety of the view. There would be a loss of the vegetative field boundary to the middle ground of the view,	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	north-northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	landscape and help to soften the urbanising features associated with the dual carriageway. The view opens out across the arable landscape, which does much to counteract the urbanised setting of the A249 and helps to retain a strong rural feel. Woodland shaws appear fragmented to the upper slopes of the dry valley landscape.		opening up views to the agricultural field beyond. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated. The construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Major**.	
Viewpoint 14 Figure 9.41.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80, from Norton Green looking north-northeast towards the M2 Viaduct.	Elevated and direct views across the dry valley slopes towards the M2 Viaduct in the middle ground. On the horizon, the industry along the river Medway further urbanises the view, as do the numerous telegraph poles within the adjacent field. Whipstakes Farm appears as a dominant feature in the middle ground, whilst shelterbelts and mature hedgerows serve to contain and screen views of the A249 corridor. In the foreground, the landscape appears slightly neglected in character, with scrap metal, heaps of spoil, mixed and degraded paving, ruderal weeds and post and wire fencing causing visual	• Residential receptors at Norton Green: **High** visual sensitivity; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Norton Green: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	Potential for the visibility of construction activity within the middle ground and background of the view, particularly in relation to vegetation clearance associated with the works and the loss of some mature trees and shrubs about this vicinity, as well as the works to the widening of Oad Street adjacent to Whipstakes Farm which is visible centre right of the middle ground of the view.	• Residential receptors at Norton Green: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Norton Green: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	471.21 m from the Scheme.	detraction and lessening the quality of the rural setting.		Furthermore, there is potential visibility of the Stockbury Flyover as it crosses under the visually prominent M2 Viaduct in the background of the view. Leading to a further urbanised view. Winter leaf loss is likely to exacerbate and open up views towards the construction works. The construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Minor**.	
Viewpoint 15 Figure 9.43.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80, looking west-northwest from elevated ground towards the	Elevated, open view, strongly rural in character, with long distance views across the dry valley landscape to large-scale agricultural fields lacking internal field boundaries. Woodland belts line the upper slopes. Views towards the A249 in the middle ground are filtered through the mature highways vegetation, which helps to screen and contain the transport corridor within the base of the dry valley. However, glimpsed views of	• Residential receptor at Hillside Farm: **High** visual sensitivity; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Hillside	Construction activities including earthworks, road widening and vegetation clearance to the middle ground of the view, would appear as fairly noticeable, focal features within the view. Loss of mature treebelts along the property boundary of Hillside Farm would lead to the opening	• Residential receptor at Hillside Farm: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Hillside Farm: **Moderate**

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	Scheme and Hillside Farm. 339.94 m from the Scheme.	traffic are experienced through the vegetation and telegraph poles which provides further visual detraction. Land adjacent to Hillside Farm is demarcated with post and wire fencing. To the wider landscape moving away from the A249, field boundaries are more robust and vegetation cover provides a well-wooded slope and a strong sense of place.	Farm: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	up of additional, oblique views towards these works. There would be a loss of the vegetative field boundary to the middle ground of the view, opening up views to the agricultural field beyond and an increased extent of roadway, as well as the construction of cutting slopes. Due to the loss of vegetation associated with the winter period these impacts would likely be exacerbated, however, the construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be **Moderate**.	Adverse and significant.
Viewpoint 16 Figure 9.45.	View from the public highway, adjacent to the junction of South Green Lane where it meets the	A semi-enclosed view looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. Direct views of the A249 are experienced at the junction with South Green Lane. The residential properties are set back from the A249 and are separated by a mature belt of dense tree and shrub vegetation and a private road, which creates a degree of physical and visual separation	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **High** visual sensitivity;	Construction activities including the stopping up of the junction between South Green Lane and the A249 will be prominent features within the vicinity of these receptors, as will the earthworks and vegetation clearance associated with the road widening and the creation	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **Moderate** Adverse and significant;

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
	A249 and in proximity to the cluster of residential properties adjacent to the A249, looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. 0.13 m from the Scheme.	from the A249. It is likely that there are glimpsed views of the A249 through breaks in vegetation along this stretch. The traffic island to the junction between South Green Lane and the A249 is dilapidated and appears to have been the site of an historic collision/collisions. Bollards, crash barriers and the traffic of the A249 are further urbanising features in the view. Highways vegetation serves to enclose the A249 within the base of the dry valley landscape, limiting views towards the A249 from the wider landscape.	• Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Low** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	of a central reservation between the new local road that would connect to South Green Lane. Mature tree belts visually and physically separate the residential receptors from the A249, this sense of separation will be further increased due to the new slip road and central reservation. There however, may be glimpsed views through tree belts towards the construction activities, particularly during the winter months when these views will be exacerbated due to leaf loss. The construction activities would be temporary and short-term in nature and the changes resulting from these activities would be partially mitigable. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during construction would be as follows: • Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **Moderate**;	• Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Construction Impacts	Effect at Winter during Construction Year 0
				• Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Moderate**; and • Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Moderate**.	

F.7 Landscape Assessment – Operation

F.7.1 Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design of the Scheme as part of an iterative process and dynamically in response to the assessment, these mitigation measures are described in the Landscape Chapter, section 9.9 Design, Mitigation and enhancement measures of the Environmental Statement (ES). The Operation Phase is considered to be medium-term (Years 1) and long-term in nature (Year 15 and beyond). The Year 1 Operational Phase assessment assumes that the Scheme planting is not established and is therefore low in height and of minimal screening value. The Year 1 Operational Phase assessment is also assessed as being undertaken during the winter, so as to represent a 'worst-case' assessment scenario. The final of the three assessment stages relates to the 15th year of the Operational Phase of the Scheme (Year 15), and is based upon the proposed Scheme's impact in the summer of the fifteenth year. The Year 15 assessment assumes that the planting has sufficiently established and that by this stage, the Scheme may be less visible due to the softening/screening effect of mitigation planting and existing vegetation. The Year 15 assessment is therefore representative of a 'best-case' assessment scenario.

F.7.2 Judgements on the magnitude of operational impacts were determined in accordance with Table 9.7 of the ES, and the significance of effect of the Operation Phase determined in accordance with Table 9.9 of the ES. Descriptions of the significance of effect categories can be found in Table 9.10 of the ES.

Table F.12: Landscape Assessment Table – Operation

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
Regional Landscape Character Areas:					
The Landscape Assessment of Kent (LAK): Bicknor: Mid Kent Downs	**Moderate**	The northernmost point of this Regional LCA would be impacted by the Scheme. The Scheme would introduce new features within the landscape, including the 7.4 m high (maximum height) Stockbury Flyover, reconfigured Stockbury Roundabout and associated infrastructure, A249 widening, associated earthworks and the widening of Oad Street. However, due to the setting of the A249 within the base of a dry valley, the A249 is well-contained, and topography and existing vegetation limits views from the wider Regional LCA towards the Scheme. Therefore, effects would be located and restricted to the northern and north western perimeter of the LCA. There would be an increase in lighting poles associated with the reconfigured Stockbury Roundabout, however, the use of LEDs and modern lighting methods would serve to limit the impacts of this lighting. Due to the Stockbury Flyover, there would be the presence of elevated traffic travelling along it, which would further exacerbate the impacts upon the darkness of this location, with the appearance of elevated traffic and associated lighting now an additional feature. In this area, field boundary vegetation, although fragmented in part would be disrupted, as too would mature vegetation lost to the grazing field adjacent to Whipstakes Farm, leading to opened up views towards the new Stockbury Roundabout and flyover. Important hedgerows along Oad Street will be impacted by the Scheme and will require translocation so as to accommodate the Oad Street	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, limiting views towards the Stockbury Flyover, the works associated with the widening of the A249 and the reconfiguration of the Stockbury Roundabout. However, filtered views of the Stockbury Flyover would be possible within the northernmost extent of the LCA through the established vegetation, and elevated traffic travelling along the Flyover and the increased extent of lighting poles would further exacerbate the urbanisation of the northernmost point of this Regional LCA. Field boundaries to the top of cutting slopes would be strengthened and reinforced through the established woodland and hedgerow vegetation. The translocated hedgerow along Oad Street will have been physically reconnected to adjacent habitats and hedgerow trees added to bolster the biodiversity and screening value. Impacts would remain localised to the northernmost point of this Regional LCA and the screening value provided by the now established vegetation will have lessened some of the impacts resulting from the Scheme at the outset. Due to the nature of the appearance of elevated traffic and the increased extent of lighting poles, these impacts would continue	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		widening. These hedgerows will be enhanced with additional tree planting and wildflower understoreys, as well as reconnected to existing vegetation along Oad Street. Topography adjacent to the A249 will be altered, with the addition of cutting slopes so as to accommodate the Scheme widening and also to aid in visually containing the dual carriageway from the wider landscape. All of these effects would be contained to the northern periphery of the LCA. As a whole, the direct effect on the wider LCA is limited due to the setting of the A249 within the base of a dry valley slope and the intervening topography and vegetation that serve to contain the dual carriageway from the wider landscape. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, yet would be counteracted by the permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape operational impact on this localised region of the LCA is **Moderate Adverse**.		to be present, and the implemented mitigation would not be substantial enough to offset effects completely, however, the scheme would by year 15, appear more integrated into the local landscape setting. The magnitude of impact would be reduced down to **Minor Adverse.**	
The Landscape Assessment of Kent (LAK): Chatham Outskirts:	**Moderate**	The A249 will have widened and occupy part of the easternmost edge of this LCA, with cutting slopes introduced adjacent to the A249. Due to the intervening vegetation and topography, the wider LCA would not be impacted as a result of the Scheme. However, due to the juvenile nature of the proposed woodland and tree belt planting to the tops of cutting slopes, views towards the Stockbury	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, limiting views towards the Stockbury Flyover, the works associated with the widening of the A249 and the reconfiguration of the Stockbury Roundabout. However, filtered views of the Stockbury Flyover would be	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
Mid Kent Downs		Flyover and reconfigured Roundabout would be prominent localised features on the edge of this LCA. There would be an increased extent of lighting poles visible from the edge of this LCA and the addition of elevated traffic which would exacerbate the lighting situation in this localised area. There would be a loss of vegetation including field boundaries, agricultural land and hedgerows, so as to accommodate the works, which would increase the extent of visibility towards the Scheme along the eastern periphery of this LCA. Cutting slopes would appear as new topographic features, however, these would serve to screen and limit views towards the Scheme and would be tied in sympathetically with the adjoining landscape. PRoW immediately adjacent to the Scheme would be realigned and rerouted away from the A249, so that there is an increased degree of separation. Field patterns would be kept largely the same, however, there would be a reduction in their extent, so as to accommodate the Scheme Widening, however, their character would be largely retained despite the loss of boundary vegetation adjacent to the A249. An increase in the capacity of the A249 would see the potential for an increase in vehicular movements which would result in an increase in disturbance and loss of tranquillity in areas immediately adjacent to the Scheme. The Scheme will have introduced a large-scale feature into the landscape, as well as increased the extent of roadway within the base of the dry valley,		possible within the very easternmost point of the LCA through the established vegetation, and elevated traffic travelling along the Flyover and the increased extent of lighting poles would further exacerbate the urbanisation of this area. Field boundaries to the top of cutting slopes along the eastern extent of the LCA would be strengthened and reinforced through the establishment of the proposed woodland and hedgerow vegetation, which in conjunction with the cutting slopes, would significantly limit views towards the A249 and would restore and strengthen the character of the agricultural field boundaries adjacent to the A249. These mitigation measures would serve to successfully integrate the Scheme into the landscape and would minimise a large extent of the adverse impacts from the Scheme, including a reduction of the visibility of the Flyover. The magnitude of impact would be reduced down to **Minor Adverse.**	

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		leading to the loss of adjoining land and habitats, and would visually open up views towards the A249. Mitigation planting will be in a juvenile form and will provide little visual amenity or screening value at this stage – therefore, the Scheme will not yet be integrated into landscape. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, yet counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on the localised region of this LCA resulting from operation is **Moderate Adverse**.			
The Landscape Assessment of Kent (LAK): Fruit Belt	**Low**	The Scheme would run through the southern portion of this LCA. This portion of the LCA features a number of noticeable urbanising features, including the existing A249 and the M2 Viaduct with elevated traffic. The Scheme would be largely in keeping with the topographic patterns of the LCA, with new cutting slopes introduced to replace the existing cutting slopes adjacent to the A249. Impacts are limited and localised to the immediate vicinity of the transport corridor – with intervening vegetation and topography limiting views from the wider LCA. Field boundary vegetation and mature highways vegetation would be lost to accommodate the proposed widening of the A249, there would also be a loss of equestrian land and mature woodland vegetation, so as to accommodate the proposed Maidstone Road Link on the adjacent dry valley	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, screening views towards the widened A249. However, the proposed Maidstone Road Link would appear as a new urbanising feature ascending the dry valley slopes up towards Oad Street. The woodland and scrub planting adjacent to the proposed Maidstone Road Link will have softened the impacts and aided in the integration of the road with the landscape, but it will remain as a permanent and urbanising feature/addition within the landscape. Bunded hedgerows along the cutting slopes adjacent to the Scheme will limit views towards the Scheme, whilst protecting the	• **Neutral**.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		slope. A particularly distinctive block of woodland vegetation would be lost to accommodate the junction between Oad Street and the proposed Maidstone Road Link. PRoW adjacent to field boundaries would be realigned as a result of the Scheme and situated behind the proposed vegetation, so as to provide a physical and visual barrier from the Scheme. An increase in the capacity of the route and the introduction of the proposed Maidstone Road Link would lead to an increase in disturbance and to a loss of tranquillity in areas immediately adjacent to the Scheme. There would also be localised visibility of the Stockbury Flyover, which would further exacerbate this increasingly urbanised corridor. Due to the loss of mature highways vegetation and the opening up of views towards the A249, the Scheme would not be well integrated into the landscape at this stage, as mitigation planting will be in a juvenile form. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on the localised region of this LCA resulting from operation is **Moderate Adverse**.		underlying archaeological works through preventing the intrusion of tree and shrub roots. This planting will also serve as a physical and visual barrier to the rerouted PRoW and strengthen the field boundary. These mitigation measures will have partly integrated the Scheme into the landscape and slightly reduced the adverse impacts resulting from the introduction of additional urbanising elements. The magnitude of impact upon this localised portion of the LCA would be reduced down to **Minor Adverse**.	
Local Landscape Character Areas:					
MBC: Bredhurst and	**Moderate**	Impacts from the Operational Phase would be barely perceptible from this Local LCA. Due to the distance of the LCA from the Scheme. There may be some	• Neutral.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established to the tops of cutting slopes within the	• **Neutral**.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
Stockbury Downs		filtered views through field boundary vegetation along the eastern extent of the LCA towards the Scheme, including the widened A249 and the Stockbury Flyover, however, the wider LCA would remain unimpacted by the works due to the intervening topography and existing vegetation. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, yet these impacts would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. Therefore, the magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised portion of the LCA resulting from the Operation Phase is **Negligible Adverse**.		adjacent LCA which will further serve to limit any potential views of the Scheme. These mitigation measures will make the Scheme very difficult to discern from this LCA, due to the newly established planting bolstering the screening provided by the existing field boundary vegetation along the edge of this LCA, further limiting the potential for visibility. The magnitude of impact would be **Negligible Adverse**.	
MBC: Hucking Dry Valleys	**High**	The northernmost extent of this Local LCA would be significantly impacted by the Operational Phase, with the Stockbury Flyover, the widened A249, and the reconfigured Stockbury Roundabout featuring as prominent features in this northern portion of the LCA. The northern corridor is already impacted by the A249, proximity to the M2, the prominent vertical feature of the M2 Viaduct and the elevated traffic travelling along it. These additional features would further exacerbate the situation, leading to an increased sense of urbanisation. The lighting around the Stockbury Roundabout will have increased in extent – however, modern methods of lighting, such as LEDs will serve to limit and reduce the degree of light pollution. Furthermore, there will be an increased presence of elevated traffic, with vehicles travelling along the new Stockbury Flyover, which would also lead to a further extent of elevated lighting	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established to the tops of cutting slopes adjacent to the A249. This planting will have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, effectively screening views towards the dual carriageway. Field boundary vegetation adjacent to the rerouted PRoW will provide a fairly dense physical and robust visual barrier, improving the degree of separation between users of this PRoW and the Scheme. However, due to the height of the Stockbury Flyover, there will be some filtered views above tree canopies of the Flyover and the elevated traffic travelling along it. Vegetation within the Roundabout would have established and will provide a degree of	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		during hours of darkness. These factors combined would lead to an adverse impact on tranquillity and darkness within this area. Due to the setting of the A249 within the base of a dry valley – the wider LCA is largely unimpacted by the Scheme, as intervening topography and existing vegetation along the dry valley slopes largely limit views towards the Scheme. However, those localised impacts immediately adjacent to the Scheme are significant. Cutting slopes adjacent to the widened A249 would appear as new topographic features that would tie into the existing topography. Vegetation would be cleared within the existing Stockbury Roundabout and along agricultural field boundaries so as to accommodate the works. PRoW immediately adjacent to the Scheme will be re-routed and mitigation planting will provide a greater degree of physical separation between the PRoW and the dual carriageway. Due to the increase in capacity of the A249, it is likely that there would be an increase in vehicular movements and therefore an increase in disturbance and a loss of tranquillity in areas immediately adjacent to the Scheme. Due to the loss of mature highways vegetation adjacent to the A249 at Operation Year 1, views towards the A249 and the new infrastructure features would be opened up and the quality/condition of the landscape will have deteriorated as a result. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would		screening / softening of the Flyover façade, better integrating the structure into the wider landscape. Impacts will be localised to the northern most edge of this LCA, and the Flyover and the increased extent of lighting poles around the Roundabout, and the increased extent of roadway will have led to a localised deterioration in the character of this portion of the LCA. However, by Year 15, the Scheme will be better integrated into the landscape as a result of the planting establishment, re-creation of robust field boundaries and well managed highways landscape elements, thus the extent of additional urbanising features added into the landscape would be partly mitigated, enough to reclassify the magnitude of impact to **Minor Adverse**.	

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		further exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude and nature of the localised landscape impact on this LCA resulting from the Operation Phase is **Moderate Adverse**.			
SBC: Borden Mixed Farmlands	**Moderate**	Impacts from the Operational Phase would be largely imperceptible from this Local LCA. With some degree of visibility present to the west of the Scheme, with views along the A249 towards the M2, vegetation loss adjacent to the A249 would lead to a degree of loss of enclosure provided by the existing vegetation and an opening up of the landscape. The wider LCA would remain unimpacted by the Scheme due to the presence of intervening vegetation, topography and buildings limiting views towards the Scheme. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, however, these would largely be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as the topography. Therefore, the magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this LCA resulting from the Operational Phase is **Minor Adverse**.	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established along and to the tops of cutting slopes adjacent to the A249. This planting will have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively. The mitigation planting will have restored some of the loss of highways vegetation associated with the construction of the Scheme. However, the range of landscape elements and degree of openness will have been adapted in accordance with the site conditions (such as the need to plant on bunds at the top of cutting slopes adjacent to the A249, so as to protect underlying archaeological sites). Overall, the degree of enclosure will have been restored to an acceptable level. The Scheme will have been more successfully integrated into the landscape as a result of the planting establishment and as a result, the magnitude of impact would be reduced to **Negligible Adverse.**	• **Neutral**.
SBC: Newington	**Moderate**	Localised impacts resulting from the Operational Phase are present and perceptible along the southern and south eastern extent of this Local LCA. Impacts would be as a result of the widening of the	• **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows would have established along and to the tops of cutting slopes adjacent to the A249. This planting will have	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
Arable Farmlands		A249, cutting slopes and the creation of the proposed Maidstone Road Link, including associated earthworks. The Stockbury Flyover would also be perceptible from this LCA. Effects are localised and the wider LCA remains unimpacted by the Scheme, due to the nature of the A249 being situated within the base of a dry valley slope and the intervening topography and vegetation surrounding it. The appearance of the proposed Maidstone Road Link ascending the dry valley slope in conjunction with the existing urbanising elements adjacent to the A249, including the M2 Viaduct, would further urbanise and degrade this localised portion of the LCA. The proposed Maidstone Road Link would also lead to a disturbance in tranquillity and an increased extent of lighting visible ascending the dry valley. Cutting slopes would tie in sensitively with the adjoining land and bunds provided to the top of the slopes of the agricultural field boundaries would be planted with hedgerow species for screening purposes. Bunding is provided so as to provide visual and physical screening/separation of the A249, as well as to protect the underlying archaeological works below. Woodland belts adjacent to the M2 Viaduct, hedgerow field boundaries, and scrub and grassland, would be removed as a result of the Scheme. PRoW adjacent to the A249 would be re-routed slightly further away from the edge of the agricultural field, with bunding and hedgerow planting acting as a physical and visual barrier.		established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively. The mitigation planting will have restored some of the loss of highways vegetation associated with the construction of the Scheme. However, the range of habitats and degree of openness will have been adapted in accordance with the site conditions (such as the need to plant on bunds at the top of cutting slopes adjacent to the A249, so as to protect underlying archaeological sites). Overall, the degree of enclosure will have been restored to an acceptable level. Planting adjacent to the proposed Maidstone Road Link will also have established, with the belt of woodland adjacent to the M2 Viaduct partially restored. Hedgerow and scrub planting adjacent to the proposed Maidstone Road Link will have softened the impacts of the feature and would serve to better integrate the road into the adjoining landscape. The magnitude of impact by year 15, would be **Minor** Adverse.	

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		An increase in the capacity of the transport route would lead to an increase in vehicular movements, which in conjunction with the proposed Maidstone Road Link, would lead to an increase in disturbance and loss of tranquillity in areas adjacent to the Scheme. Due to the loss of mature highways and field boundary vegetation associated with the Scheme, at Operation Year 1, the cohesiveness and condition of the landscape would be negatively impacted upon. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this LCA resulting from the Operation Phase is **Moderate Adverse**.			
SBC: Deans Bottom	**High**	The northernmost point of the LCA would be partially impacted by the Operational Phase as it is in the vicinity of the Oad Street widening. The rest of the LCA is well-wooded and enclosed in nature and operational impacts associated with the Scheme would not be perceptible. There is however, potential for filtered views through existing vegetation towards the Stockbury Flyover from the northern periphery of this LCA. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, this would be counteracted by the density of woodland belts, limiting views through from the wider LCA. The magnitude and nature of the	• **Slight A**dverse and not significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows will have established along the cutting slopes and adjacent to the A249. This planting will have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively. The mitigation planting will have restored some of the loss of highways vegetation associated with the construction of the Scheme. Hedgerows along Oad Street will have been translocated and bolstered with additional hedgerow and tree planting to infill fragmented sections, providing a greater degree of screening value in proximity to the	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		landscape impact on the localised portion of this LCA resulting from the Construction Phase is **Minor Adverse**.		northernmost point of the LCA. The mitigation planting will further serve to screen filtered views from the periphery of this LCA. The Scheme will have been more successfully integrated into the landscape as a result of the planting establishment and as a result, the adverse magnitude of impact would be reduced to **Negligible Adverse**.	
SBC: Tunstall Farmlands	**Moderate**	The setting of the westernmost point of the Local LCA would be impacted by the Operational Phase, with visibility of the proposed Maidstone Road Link perceptible from this localised point of the LCA and potential visibility adjacent to Whipstakes Farm, where there are elevated views towards the widened A249, the Stockbury Flyover, reconfigured Stockbury Roundabout and associated infrastructure. These localised effects would not be experienced within the wider LCA, due to the intervening topography and mature vegetation screening views towards the Scheme. Widening of Oad Street adjacent to Whipstakes Farm and the proposed Maidstone Road Link may lead to an increase in traffic and thus disturbance and loss of tranquillity in this area. Views of the existing M2 Viaduct and the A249 from elevated points adjacent to Whipstakes Farm would be further exacerbated with the addition of further urbanising features, including the Stockbury Flyover, increased extent of roadway and lighting. The loss of mature highways vegetation adjacent to the A249 would open up views towards the Scheme	• **Moderate A**dverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerows will have established along the cutting slopes and adjacent to the A249. This planting will have established to a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively. The mitigation planting will have restored some of the loss of highways vegetation associated with the construction of the Scheme. Hedgerows along Oad Street will have been translocated and bolstered with additional hedgerow planting to infill fragmented sections, as well as hedgerow trees – providing a greater degree of screening value in proximity to the localised, western extent of the LCA. The establishment of planting will have better integrated the Scheme into the landscape. However, there will be filtered views of the Stockbury Flyover, as well as the presence of elevated traffic travelling along the Flyover, and infrastructure associated with Stockbury Roundabout, including lighting poles, these urbanising	• **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Landscape receptor	Receptor Sensitivity	Operational Impact	Operational effects at winter Year 1	Mitigation	Significance of residual effects at Operation Year 15
		and lead to a degradation of the quality of the landscape in localised areas of the LCA. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate these localised impacts upon the LCA – further opening up views towards the Scheme, however, these would be counteracted by permanent intervening features, such as topography. The magnitude and nature of the landscape impact on this localised region of the LCA resulting from the Operation Phase is **Minor Adverse**.		features will be apparent in very localised sections of the LCA. The Scheme will have been more successfully integrated into the landscape as a result of the planting establishment and as a result, the adverse magnitude of impact would be reduced slightly to **Minor Adverse**.	

F.8 Visual Assessment – Operation

F.8.1 Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design of the Scheme as part of an iterative process and dynamically in response to the assessment, these mitigation measures are described in the Landscape Chapter, Section 9.9 Design, Mitigation and enhancement measures of the Environmental Statement (ES). The Operation Phase is considered to be medium-term (Year 1) and long-term in nature (Year 15 and beyond). The Year 1 Operational Phase assessment assumes that the Scheme planting is not established and is therefore low in height and of minimal screening value. The Year 1 Operational Phase assessment is also assessed as being undertaken during the winter, so as to represent a 'worst-case' assessment scenario. The final of the three assessment stages relates to the 15th year of the Operational Phase of the Scheme (Year 15), and is based upon the proposed Scheme's impact in the summer of the fifteenth year. The Year 15 assessment assumes that the planting has sufficiently established and that by this stage, the Scheme may be less visible due to the softening/screening effect of mitigation planting and existing vegetation. The Year 15 assessment is therefore representative of a 'best-case' assessment scenario.

F.8.2 Judgements on the magnitude of operational impacts were determined in accordance with Table 9.8 of the ES, and the significance of effect of the Operation Phase determined in accordance with Table 9.9 of the ES. Descriptions of the significance of effect categories can be found in Table 9.11 of the ES.

Table F.23: Visual Assessment Table – Operation

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
Viewpoint 1 Figure 9.15.	View from Wormdale Hill, near the settlement of Danaway, looking south-southwest towards the Scheme. • 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	The existing view from the Wormdale Hill overpass as it crosses the A249 looking southwest towards the M2 J5 is one that is semi-enclosed in nature. The A249 is in cutting here, at the base of the dry valley and is well contained by the fairly dense highway planting to the cutting slopes. Arable fields are glimpsed in the background. The curvature of the road and the dense vegetative planting belts restrict views towards the M2 J5. The A249 is the dominant feature in the view and occupies the middle of the frame, it diminishes the sense of place. This is a semi-managed landscape, with	• Transport receptors using Wormdale Hill: **Low**; and • Transports receptors using the A249 travelling westerly towards the M2 J5: **Low**.	From this viewpoint location the widened A249 will have tied in with the existing road configuration and the dual carriageway will appear in essence, largely the same as the existing view. However, cutting slopes to the right of the view will appear sparsely vegetated, due to the loss of mature highways vegetation resulting from the earthworks. Views will be opened up of the adjoining farmland and the location will appear slightly less enclosed. Replacement planting will be juvenile in nature and will provide little in terms of screening or amenity value. A drainage ditch to the top of the cutting slope will reduce the extent of proposed	• Transport receptors using Wormdale Hill: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Transports receptors using the A249 travelling westerly towards the M2 J5: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	Proposed woodland planting adjacent to the road will have reached an approximate height of 5-6 m, providing enclosure and enhanced visual amenity value for these receptors. The distribution of planting will have altered from the existing situation, with more densely planted slopes to the middle ground of the view and closer to the carriageway, tapering off to the background of the view, where existing scrub and mature tree vegetation will be replaced by wildflower planting and embankment hedgerows, so as to preserve the important archaeological sites below. Drainage ditches at the top of the cutting slope will limit the overall density of the proposed woodland planting but will provide other habitat benefits in	• Transport receptors using Wormdale Hill: **Neutral**; and • Transport receptors using the A249 travelling westerly towards the M2 J5: **Neutral.**

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		evidence of highways maintenance along the verges, however, litter is strewn across the central reservation and to the verge edges. Highways fencing at the base of the cutting slope appears dilapidated and creates a neglected feel to the view.		vegetative cover, however, the existing slopes are at points sparsely vegetated and a more even spread of replacement planting will be reinstated. To the left of the view, adjacent to the settlement of Danaway, mature highways vegetation will have been removed to accommodate A249 widening, this will lead to a more urbanised edge to the carriageway. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.		the form of marginal planting and improved site drainage. To the left of the view, the extent of mature highways vegetation will have been reduced and the presence of a noise barrier will appear as an urbanising feature. Overall, this mitigation would serve to restore the loss of habitats, whilst also improving the site drainage, protecting known archaeological sites and diversifying the range of habitats adjacent to the highway. These mitigation measures would lead to a slight decrease in the level of adverse visual effect on these receptors to **Minor**.	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
Viewpoint 2 Figure 9.17.	View from Maidstone Road, Danaway looking southwest towards the M2 Junction 5. 98.91 m from the Scheme.	The existing M2 Viaduct can be glimpsed in the background of the view through the tree belts and scrub that line the Maidstone Road. The middle frame of the view is dominated by the Maidstone Road, which is of a mixed character, with road signs, telegraph poles, lighting, and bollards appearing as urbanising elements. The landscape is semi-maintained, with evidence of maintenance to the highways verges, however, the verges of private properties can appear dilapidated, particularly relating to the construction/industrial site, with its unsympathetic boundary treatment and accumulation of	• Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest towards the M2 J5: **Low**; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway: **High**.	In order to accommodate the proposed Maidstone Road Link there will be a localised loss of vegetation to the right and to the middle ground of the view, with the existing Maidstone Road Link reconfigured to the southwest of the viewpoint and predominantly out of range from this viewpoint location. Views towards the A249 will be opened up slightly, as a result of the A249 widening, which will lead to the A249 being closer in proximity to some of the residential properties along the Maidstone Road. Mitigation planting will be in a juvenile stage and as such, filtered views through retained vegetation may show glimpsed	• Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest towards the M2 J5: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Proposed scrub and grassland to the right and middle ground of the view would have established and restored the visual link that was provided by the existing vegetation along Maidstone Road. However, the proposed vegetation would appear as a more open expanse of land, and it is possible that views of the already visible M2 Viaduct may be further opened up, as well as filtered views of the Stockbury Flyover and the elevated traffic travelling along it, further urbanising the view. Proposed woodland planting to the cutting slope adjacent to the A249 widening will have reached an approximate height of 5-6 m, providing additional screening of the traffic of the A249. Overall, this mitigation would serve to restore the important highways	• Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest towards the M2 J5: **Neutral**; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		weeds and detritus. The residential properties in the view are of a mixed 20th century style, not in keeping with the local vernacular of the area, or the historic buildings found along Chestnut Street. Garden boundaries are often defensive and mixed in style which leads to a visually incoherent scene. The view is fairly enclosed due to the dry valley form of the landscape, with residential properties located at the base of the slopes. However, the A249 which runs parallel to Maidstone Road is both audibly and visually perceptible from this location, with the constant sound of traffic creating a chaotic and unsettling sense to the place. The dense woodland		views of the traffic associated with the A249. Winter leaf loss would exacerbate these filtered views and increase visibility through the tree canopies. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.		screening vegetation between properties and the A249, and to restore the loss of habitats to the southwest of the viewpoint location. These mitigation measures would lead to a decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors as follows: • Transport receptors using Maidstone Road travelling southwest towards the M2 J5: **Minor**; and • Residential receptors along the Maidstone Road at Danaway: **Minor**.	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		belts to the back of properties adjacent to the A249 provide critical screening of the dual carriageway –there are, however, glimpsed views of traffic through the tree belts and during the winter months it is likely that this situation is exacerbated.					
Viewpoint 3 Figure 9.19.	View from Public Right of Way KH81 in the vicinity of Church Lane, Stockbury looking east-southeast towards the A249. 56.29 m from the Scheme.	A filtered view of the A249 looking east-southeast towards the Scheme from PRoW KH81 at higher ground along the PRoW. The view is open in nature with a degree of expansiveness – with long views across the dry valley slopes to agricultural and grazing land parcels divided by fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts. In the foreground of the view is arable land, with no clearly	• Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **High** sensitivity; • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** sensitivity; • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary	Widening of the A249, will have moved the road physically closer to the viewpoint location and its visual extent will have increased within the view. The boundary of the agricultural field will appear open in nature, resulting from the loss of boundary vegetation along the slopes of the dry valley, leading to potential views of the A249. The A249 will be in cutting at this point and these	• Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **Moderate** adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** adverse and significant. • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage	Despite the A249 now being more proximal to the viewpoint location, the proposed planting will have matured and will be at a height of approximately 5-6 m, providing a fairly dense belt of vegetation, which would serve to limit views from the viewpoint towards the A249. It is likely that these screening measures, in conjunction with the earthwork cutting slopes, may effectively obscure views of the A249, and thus enhance the visual amenity of the viewpoint location.	• Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Neutral**. • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		demarcated route for PRoW users, implying that the route is not well-trodden. The middle ground is dominated by the presence of the A249 and associated traffic, fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts provide some degree of screening, however, there are opportunities for enhancement to better situate the road within the landscape and lessen its visual dominance. Other detracting features come in the form of road signs, mixed boundaries, lighting poles and metal farm sheds.	Magdalene: is judged to be of a **High** sensitivity; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane: is judged to be of a **High** sensitivity.	earthworks, despite the lack of mature vegetation may serve to contain the A249 at the base of the dry valley slope. It is likely, however, given the vantage point of the viewpoint location, that the A249 and its associated traffic would be present within the middle ground of the view. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors during operation is as follows: • Recreational receptors using the PRoW KH81: **Moderate**;	receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene: is considered to be of **No change**; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane: is considered to be of **No change**.	Therefore, these mitigation measures would lead to a decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors, leading to a judgement of **Negligible**.	heritage receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene: is deemed to be **Neutral**; and • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Scheduled Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane: is deemed to be **Neutral**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				• Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate**; • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the heritage receptors: Grade I listed Church of St Mary Magdalene, which is located to the west of the PRoW, towards Stockbury, the presence of intervening vegetation and the topography of the dry valley slope limit views towards the Scheme, and therefore the magnitude of visual impact upon the visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of this heritage resource is considered to be that of **No change**. • The visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of the Scheduled			

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				Monument – ringwork and baileys adjacent to Church Lane, which is located to the west of the PRoW, towards Stockbury, the presence of intervening vegetation and the topography of the dry valley slope limit views towards the Scheme and therefore the magnitude of visual impact upon the visual amenity of people enjoying the setting of this heritage resource is considered to be that of **No change**.			
Viewpoint 4 Figure 9.21.	View from Oad Street overpass looking north-northwest towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link. 9.19 m from the Scheme.	A predominantly enclosed view looking towards the site of the proposed Maidstone Road Link. Oad Street is lined by mature trees and shrubs which provide an attractive, enclosed feel to the road, before it opens	• Residential receptors: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed along Oad Street, in proximity to the proposed Maidstone Road Link: **High** sensitivity.	In order to accommodate the proposed Maidstone Road Link, a significant extent of mature vegetation will have been lost, opening up views towards the A249 and impacting upon the visual amenity of	• Residential receptors: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed along Oad Street, in proximity to the proposed Maidstone Road Link: **Moderate**	The junction between Oad Street and the proposed Maidstone Road Link will remain as an apparent and fairly noticeable feature in the view. Mitigation planting in the form of hedgerows, scrub and grassland will serve to better situate the	• Residential receptors: Milton Bungalow and Bowl Reed along Oad Street, in proximity to the proposed Maidstone

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		out across the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2. The M2 is perceptible both audibly and visually and creates a chaotic, unsettling and urbanising feel to the place. Despite this detraction, the view is largely rural in character with timber post and rail fencing and a degree of enclosure provided by the existing vegetation. Other detracting features within the view include the overpass bridge and the presence of crash barriers which further detract from the rural setting and act as visual indicators of the motorway.		this viewpoint location. The setting of the residential properties adjacent to the proposed Maidstone Road Link will be impacted upon and it is likely that there will be a disruption to the visual amenity of these receptors, both in terms of the loss of vegetation and the potential presence of increased traffic resulting from the proposed road. However, both properties are adjacent to the existing M2 motorway, and Milton Bungalow likely has direct views overlooking the A249 and the infrastructure of the M2. Furthermore, both properties feature screening measures that will be retained e.g. mature tree belts	Adverse and significant.	proposed Maidstone Road Link within the landscape. The maturation of mitigation planting, combined with the existing screening provided by mature tree belts and ancillary buildings associated with the residential properties, as well as the nature of the views, e.g. oblique and partial / glimpsed, will lead to a reduction in visual impact resulting in a change of category to **Minor** and a reduction of the visual effects.	Road Link: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				and ancillary buildings that will provide partial screening of the proposed Maidstone Road Link. However, the proposed Maidstone Road Link will feature as a further urbanising element in the view. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.			
Viewpoint 5 Figure 9.23.	View from Oad Street overpass looking west towards the M2 Junction 5.	A wide, open view taken from Oad Street overpass looking west towards the M2 Junction 5. The M2 Motorway	• Transport receptors using the Oad Street overpass: **Low** sensitivity.	The Scheme would lead to an increased sense of urbanisation adjacent to the Oad Street overpass, with the junction formed	• Transport receptors using the Oad Street overpass: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	The junction between Oad Street and the proposed Maidstone Road Link will remain as an apparent feature in the view. Mitigation	• Transport receptors using the Oad Street overpass: **Slight**

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
	47.02 m from the Scheme.	and slip road dominate the view. The overpass itself is urbanising in nature and the road is well-trafficked, with a constant stream of motorway noise and traffic present, which creates for an unsettling and chaotic environment. Roadside vegetation is mature with dense belts of roadside woodland planting towering up above the motorway and keeping it visually well-contained from the wider landscape.		between Oad Street and the proposed Maidstone Road Link featuring in the view. There would be a significant loss of vegetation in this vicinity – opening up this portion of the view and further potentially increasing the frequency and extent of traffic travelling along Oad Street. There is a potential loss of vegetation adjacent to the land beneath the M2 Viaduct off-centre of the view, however, it is unlikely that this would be very perceptible. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the		planting in the form of hedgerows, scrub and grassland will serve to better situate the proposed Maidstone Road Link within the landscape. Planting adjacent to the M2 Viaduct may serve to restore any vegetation lost at the Construction Phase – however, it is likely that the vegetation will not yet have reached maturity and maximum height. These mitigation measures would not reduce effects enough to alter the category of impact.	Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.			
Viewpoint 6 Figure 9.25.	View from adjacent to Whipstakes Farm, along Oad Street looking north-northwest towards the existing Stockbury Roundabout. 48.38 m from the Scheme.	A fairly open, upper valley-side view from adjacent to Whipstakes farm, looking north-northwest across grazing land towards the Stockbury Roundabout. The lighting poles associated with the existing roundabout are visually dominant and tower above the A249, creating a localised urbanising effect. The A249 is audibly perceptible and there are glimpsed views of traffic through tree belts and breaks in vegetation. Despite these urbanising features, the view is rural in nature, with long views across the valley towards arable fields enclosed by woodland shaws.	• Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: **High** sensitivity; and • Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: **Moderate** sensitivity.	The vegetation clearance associated with the Scheme will have opened up direct views through the grazing field towards the new 7.4 m high (maximum height) Stockbury Flyover. There will be an increased extent of lighting poles around the reconfigured roundabout, leading to an intensified presence of lighting in this vicinity, coupled with the presence of the elevated lighting which will be experienced as a result of vehicles travelling over the Stockbury Flyover. The field in the middle ground of the view would feature new woodland planting belts, a	• Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts to the boundary of the grazing field and within the Stockbury Roundabout will have reached approximately 5-6 m in height and would serve to provide some screening value, filtering views towards the Roundabout and the Stockbury Flyover. Vehicles travelling over the Stockbury Flyover are likely to be fully visible, and the increased extent of lighting poles around Stockbury Roundabout will appear as urbanising features within the view. Proposed hedgerows and hedgerow trees will be at 2-3 m and 5-6 m in height respectively, and as such, will provide further screening in the foreground, limiting views towards the	• Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		Oad Street is rural in nature, both narrow and winding, and lined by hedgerows. Hedgerows are fragmented adjacent to Whipstakes Farm and gaps infilled by timber post and rail fencing, though rural in character does little to provide visual screening of the existing A249. Whipstakes Farm is set back from the viewpoint and is situated at higher ground, it is likely that the current view from the residential property is exacerbated, with an increased extent of visibility of both the A249 and also potential views of the existing M2 Viaduct and its associated elevated traffic.		vegetated aquatic pond and drainage channels. Furthermore, the existing hedgerow along Oad Street will have been translocated and additional extents of hedgerow provided to infill gaps – these hedgerows would be further enhanced through the planting of hedgerow trees offset behind. Proposed planting will be in a juvenile state and as such will provide little in terms of visual amenity or screening value. Oad Street will appear as a widened rural road, with a strengthened vegetative boundary. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further		Scheme. Wildflowers under the hedgerows will have established and provide seasonal interest enhancing the rural feel of the road. These mitigation measures would lead to a variable decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors, namely: Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: would be altered to **Moderate**; and Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: would remain as **Minor**.	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be as follows: Residential receptor: Whipstakes Farm, Oad Street: **Moderate**; and Transport receptors travelling along Oad Street: **Minor**.			
Viewpoint 7 Figure 9.27.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR70 – a local footbridge as it ties in with PRoW KH85 to the south of the M2 looking east towards the Scheme and existing M2 motorway corridor. 219.53 m from the Scheme.	A contained view looking east towards the Scheme and along the existing M2 transport corridor. Ancient woodland to the right of the view and mature highways vegetation to the left create an enclosed and contained visual barrier to the transport corridor – limiting views of the M2 beyond these reaches. The view across the M2 corridor is fairly long	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70: **Moderate** sensitivity.	The Scheme would lead to a loss of vegetation to the left of the view, adjacent to the M2 Viaduct. It is likely that there would be direct visibility of the proposed Maidstone Road Link ascending the dry valley slope up towards Oad Street, diminishing the rural feel of the adjoining landscape. The proposed Maidstone Road Link would appear as a	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts adjacent to the M2 Viaduct would have reached a height of approximately 5-6 m, which would serve to provide some screening of the proposed Maidstone Road Link in the distance. Hedgerows running almost parallel to the proposed Maidstone Road Link will have reached a height of 2-3 m, and the surrounding scrub and grassland will	• Recreational receptors: PRoW ZR70: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		ranging and gaps in vegetation where the M2 Viaduct crosses the A249 opens up views of the dominant equestrian facility to the north east of the Scheme. The corridor is heavily trafficked and urban in nature, additional urbanising features found within the view include lighting poles, a substation, the parapets of the viaduct, road signs, crash barriers and bollards.		fairly prominent feature within a localised section of the middle to background of the view. However, the existing M2 motorway would remain the dominant feature from this viewpoint location. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Minor**.		also have reached a degree of maturity that will aid in softening the impacts of the proposed Maidstone Road Link, better situating the road within the landscape. In the long-term these mitigation measures would alter the category of impact to **Negligible**.	
Viewpoint 8 (Swale Borough Council – Additional Viewpoint 6)	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85 in proximity to the Stockbury Roundabout, looking	A semi-enclosed view of the well-wooded Stockbury Roundabout. The mature trees and vegetation of the roundabout limit	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Moderate** sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment	The Scheme would lead to the A249 moving physically closer towards the viewpoint location, leading to a loss of agricultural land and	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerow planting at the top of the cutting slopes adjacent to the widened A249, would have reached a height	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Slight** Adverse and not

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
Figure 9.29.	northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	views of the A249 and M2 beyond. Lighting poles, signage and associated infrastructure of the A249 in conjunction with the fast-flowing traffic, appear as urbanising features, which create a chaotic and unsettling feel to the place. The view is taken from the bottom of a dry valley and the upper valley slopes are well-wooded. The view opens up across the arable field and up to the woodland shaws at the top of the slopes, which creates a rural setting – there is variance in the age and structure of the woodland shaws and at times shelterbelts appear fragmented, as do the field boundaries to the base of the valley, which leads to	receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** sensitivity.	boundary vegetation, and to an increased extent of roadway within the view, due to the widening. Furthermore, a 7.4 m high (maximum height) Flyover would be visible from this location and would feature as a significant, urbanising and dominant focal point within the view. The increased extent of lighting poles within the view would also further urbanise the viewpoint location and disrupt the visual amenity. The Public Right of Way would have been re-routed and located at an increased distance away from the dual carriageway, cutting slopes will also serve to limit some of the views towards the Scheme, however,	receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant.	of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, as such, these measures will have led to a dense physical barrier between the receptors and the A249, as well as providing a robust visual screen. Filtered views towards the Scheme will remain, most significantly views of the Stockbury Flyover and elevated traffic. The immediate environment for the receptors will have improved in terms of betterment of the field boundary planting and an increased separation from the A249, in the existing situation, these receptors run in close proximity to the A249 and there are direct views across the dual carriageway. Therefore, by year 15 these mitigation measures would lead to a substantial decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these	significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		glimpsed and open views across the A249 along the route.		proposed planting adjacent to the A249 will be in a juvenile form and as such would provide little in the form of visual amenity or screening value. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Major**.		receptors, leading to a judgement of **Minor**.	
Viewpoint 9 Figure 9.31.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85, further along the Public Right of Way, to the south of VP 8 and immediately adjacent to the A249, looking northeast towards the Scheme.	Filtered and direct views across and immediately adjacent to the A249. Stockbury Roundabout is present within the view, as is the well-trafficked dual carriageway, the towering lighting	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Moderate** sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** sensitivity.	The Scheme would lead to uptake of land about the vicinity of the existing viewpoint location, causing the PRoW to be rerouted. The rerouted PRoW will be a betterment to the existing situation, in terms of its	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large**	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerow planting at the top of the cutting slopes adjacent to the widened A249, would have reached a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, as such, these measures will have led to a dense	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
	0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	poles, crash barriers and signage. The highways verge is reasonably well maintained, however, there is a proliferation of ruderal weeds and the field boundaries are fragmented in parts which opens up the views towards the A249. To the right of the A249, the dual carriageway is well-screened with mature highways vegetation. The A249 is well-contained within the dry valley landscape and vegetation to the upper slopes and to the base of the dry valley limits views looking into the A249. To the left of the dual carriageway the view opens up across the large arable field and Church Wood is a strong feature in the background, limiting		location being further away from the dual carriageway and with proposed planting providing a physical barrier between the PRoW and the A249. Planting will however be in a juvenile form and will provide little in terms of visual amenity or screening value. There will be direct, open views across the A249 towards the Flyover and these elements will form dominant and urbanising features within the view. The increased extent of lighting poles within the view would also further urbanise the viewpoint location and disrupt visual amenity. Cutting slopes about this vicinity will provide some degree of screening value, however, due to the	Adverse and significant.	physical barrier between the receptors and the A249, as well as providing a robust visual screen. Filtered views towards the Scheme will remain, mostly views of the Stockbury Flyover and elevated traffic. The immediate environment for the receptors will have improved in terms of betterment of the field boundary planting and an increased separation from the A249, in the existing situation, these receptors run in close proximity to the A249 and there are direct views across the dual carriageway. Therefore, these mitigation measures would lead to a significant decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors, leading to a judgement of **Minor**.	adjacent to the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		views towards the M2 corridor.		height of the proposed Flyover, and the infrastructure associated with Stockbury Roundabout, such as lighting poles, these earthworks will do little to mitigate the overall visual impact. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Major**.			
Viewpoint 10 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 1)	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR135, situated within a large arable field looking north towards the proposed	A far-reaching view across a large arable field towards the M2 corridor. The agricultural land dominates the foreground and the middle ground. The	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR135: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors	To accommodate the construction of the proposed Maidstone Road Link, the Scheme would have led to the partial loss of a distinctive belt of mature trees which	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR135: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors	Mitigation planting adjacent to the proposed Maidstone Road Link will be in the form of scrub and grassland respectively, with hedgerows running parallel to the proposed	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR135: **Slight** Adverse and not

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
Figure 9.33.	Maidstone Road Link. 456.61 m from the Scheme.	background features mature woodland, hedgerows and shelterbelts – these dense belts of woodland and glimpsed rolling topography provide a rural setting, and also help to visually contain the M2 and A249 well within the base of the dry valley. Bowl Reed located adjacent to the Oad Street overpass where it crosses the M2, is glimpsed in the horizon through tree belts. Looking north from this PRoW, a dense belt of woodland to the left of Bowl Reed marks the area where the proposed Maidstone Road Link is to cut through, at present this woodland block is a strong vertical feature along the horizon.	adjacent to the M2 corridor: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	are a vertical screening feature in the background of the view. The rural essence of the viewpoint will largely be retained, but the partial loss of the localised tree belt will be apparent within the view, potentially leading to glimpsed views of taller vehicles using the proposed Maidstone Road Link. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Minor**.	adjacent to the M2 corridor: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	road and the retained narrowed tree belt between the proposed Maidstone Road Link and existing M2 corridor. The hedgerows will have reached a height of 2-3 m, however, by this stage, the mitigation planting would not have reached a height to be fully visible upon the horizon and the lost trees will continue to remain as a long-term feature. The continued establishment of these mitigation measures, combined with the partially retained existing tree belt would reduce effects by year 15, enough to alter the category of impact to **Negligible**.	significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the M2 corridor: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
Viewpoint 11 (Kent Downs AONB – Additional viewpoint 2) Figure 9.35.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH85, as the PRoW exits Church Wood at higher ground along the PRoW looking southeast towards the Scheme. 68.83 m from the Scheme.	Filtered views of the A249 can be seen at the base of the arable field through timber post and rail fencing and between tree trunks. The lighting poles associated with the Stockbury Roundabout are detracting features within the middle ground of the view, where they rise up above the trees around the roundabout. Whipstakes Farm appears as a prominent built feature in the background, and the rural lane, Oad Street, can be seen cutting through the landscape, bound by mature hedgerows. Far reaching views across distant, well-wooded valley slopes up to Norton Green can be seen to the south of the view.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	The Scheme will lead to land uptake in the agricultural field where the viewpoint is located, causing the A249 to be slightly closer in proximity to the receptors. The Scheme will be in cutting of various depths, which would serve to screen some of the views towards the A249. The proposed mitigation planting will be in a juvenile form and will provide little in terms of visual amenity or screening value. Therefore, the proposed Stockbury Flyover and reconfiguration of the Stockbury Roundabout and its associated infrastructure will be visible, and will appear as prominent	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Large** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Large** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts and hedgerow planting at the top of the cutting slopes adjacent to the widened A249, would have reached a height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively, as such, these measures will have led to a dense physical barrier between the receptors and the A249, as well as providing a robust visual screening feature. From the localised vantage point of the viewpoint location at elevated ground, it is likely that there will be direct views over the canopies of the proposed trees of the elevated traffic travelling across the Stockbury Flyover. However, as users of the PROW pass down the field along the PROW, the extent of view will be screened by the intervening woodland mitigation planting. The	• Recreational receptor: PRoW KH85: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		The M2 Viaduct and its associated traffic can be seen to the left of the view, further urbanising the viewpoint. In winter, when trees have lost their leaves, it is likely that views of the A249 and the M2 are exacerbated.		focal points within the middle of the view. Nearer to the background of the view, Oad Street will appear largely as the existing situation, due to the translocation of the existing hedgerow, minimising the impacts to the vegetation along this road and minimising impacts to the visual amenity of this portion of the view. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of		vegetated cutting slopes are likely to filter views of the traffic around the roundabout and partially screen the flyover, however, the lighting poles which have increased in extent from the existing situation around the roundabout, will be partly visible above the trees and in conjunction with the flyover and the elevated traffic, will appear as urbanising features in this locality. There will be a greater degree of separation between the receptors and the A249, due to the increased extent of vegetation and the cutting slopes in comparison to the existing situation, however, these mitigation measures will have only partially reduced the level of adverse visual effects to a judgement of **Minor**.	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				these receptors would be **Major**.			
Viewpoint 12 Figure 9.37.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) ZR71 adjacent to the A249, looking south-southwest towards the M2 Viaduct. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	Open and direct views of the A249 and M2 Viaduct are experienced from this viewpoint, due to the lack of boundary vegetation to the arable field and the lack of highways vegetation to the cutting slope. The M2 Viaduct appears as an imposing and dominant feature within the middle ground of the view, towering above the A249. The Volkerlaser construction site is situated underneath the Viaduct. The A249 dominates the foreground to middle ground of the view – it is well-trafficked with associated signage and crash barriers also visible. The strip of land between the A249 and the M2 Viaduct	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR71: **Moderate** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	The Scheme will have led to land uptake in the agricultural field where the viewpoint is located, causing the A249 to be closer in proximity to the receptors. The Scheme will be in cutting and planted bunds will have been created adjacent to the top of the cutting slopes, so as to provide screening vegetation, whilst dually serving to protect the important archaeological sites below, preventing root encroachment/disturbance. Bunds will be gently graded over a wider distance so as to not appear too incongruous within the landscape, these bunds will have been	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR71: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation hedgerow planting on the bunds will have reached a height of 2-3 m, this in conjunction with the cutting slopes will help to screen views towards the Scheme. It is likely that there will be glimpsed views through the vegetation and direct views over the hedgerows towards the proposed Maidstone Road Link, as well as potential for glimpsed / filtered views of the Stockbury Flyover and the elevated traffic travelling along it. These mitigation measures would lead to a decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors, leading to a judgement of **Minor**.	• Recreational receptor: PRoW ZR71: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors adjacent to the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		is poorly vegetated and is comprised of scrub and grassland. The upper slopes of the dry valleys are well-wooded and visually contain the M2 Viaduct and the A249 from the wider landscape.		planted with hedgerow species, however, due to the juvenile nature of the planting, these plants will provide little in terms of amenity or screening value. The bunds as vertical features in themselves will provide some screening value. The cutting slopes themselves will also provide some visual containment of the widened A249, however, it is likely that there would still be views of the proposed Maidstone Road Link to the valley slopes in the middle to background of the view and of the Stockbury Flyover. These features in conjunction with the already highly urbanised view of the A249 and M2			

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				Viaduct will further exacerbate the situation. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of visual impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.			
Viewpoint 13 Figure 9.39.	View from public highway adjacent to Vale Cottages, The Coach House and Vale House, fronting on to the A249, looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. 0 m from the Scheme (within the red line boundary).	The view is a fairly open and direct, close range view of the A249. The environment appears visually cluttered with numerous road signs, road markings and crash barriers. In the horizon, the lighting poles of the Stockbury Roundabout are a prominent and urbanising feature. The A249 is well-	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Low** visual sensitivity.	The Scheme will have led to the creation of a local road in front of the properties and physical separation from the A249 through a vegetated reservation of a variable width. The planted reservation will be in a juvenile form and the planting will offer little in terms of amenity or screening value at	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation woodland planting to the central reservation (now separating the new local road in front of the residential properties from the A249), would have reached a degree of maturity and is expected to be at a height of between 5-6 m, which would serve to provide a greater degree of visual and physical separation between the A249 and the now local	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		trafficked and creates a chaotic and unsettling setting for the residential properties. Trees and shrubs enclose the A249 from the wider landscape and help to soften the urbanising features associated with the dual carriageway. The view opens out across the arable landscape, which does much to counteract the urbanised setting of the A249 and helps to retain a strong rural feel. Woodland shaws appear fragmented to the upper slopes of the dry valley landscape.		this stage, therefore, direct views across to additional lanes of traffic will be experienced by the receptors as a result of the dual carriageway widening, as well as the presence of the Stockbury Flyover and a reduction to the visual extent of agricultural land to the middle ground of the view and the presence of cutting slopes. These features in conjunction with the appearance of elevated traffic and increased extent of roadway within the view, will lead to a heightened sense of urbanisation and visual detraction. However, given the existing context of the view from the residential properties adjacent to the A249,		road adjacent to the properties. However, at Year 15, it is likely that there would be some visibility of the Stockbury Flyover as it rises up to reach its highest point of 7.4 m, which would feature in the view above the intervening woodland mitigation vegetation, as too would the elevated traffic travelling along it. Hedgerows to the top of the cutting slopes and woodland belts beyond will have matured to heights of 2-3 m and 5-6 m respectively, providing some restoration of the boundary vegetation to the agricultural fields. The species-rich grassland will have fully established on the cutting slopes and appear as a recognised feature, further	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				the existing view is a direct view across the A249, with no visual screening of the busy dual carriageway, and despite the increase of roadway as a result of the widening, the creation of a physical and visual barrier in the form of woodland planting between the widened A249 and the new more local roadway immediately in front of the properties, provides some benefit to these properties, however, these benefits are counteracted somewhat by the presence of the Stockbury Flyover emerging within the view and the increased extent of roadway in proximity to the properties. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would		integrating the road corridor within the view. These mitigation measures would lead to a decrease in the level of adverse visual impact upon these receptors, leading to a judgement of **Minor** and a reduction in the effect category.	

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. Therefore, the magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.			
Viewpoint 14 Figure 9.41.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80, from Norton Green looking north-northeast towards the M2 Viaduct. 471.21 m from the Scheme.	Elevated and direct views across the dry valley slopes towards the M2 Viaduct in the middle ground. On the horizon, the industry along the river Medway further urbanises the view, as do the numerous telegraph poles within the adjacent field. Whipstakes Farm appears as a dominant feature in the middle ground, whilst shelterbelts and mature hedgerows serve to contain and screen views of the A249 corridor. In the	• Residential receptors at Norton Green: **High** visual sensitivity; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Norton Green: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	The Scheme will have led to a slight loss of vegetation in the view about the vicinity of the M2 Viaduct. There are likely to be partial views of the Stockbury Flyover above existing vegetation, as it crosses under the M2 Viaduct and therefore, there will be views of the elevated traffic travelling along it. Proposed mitigation planting will provide little in terms of	• Residential receptors at Norton Green: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Norton Green: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.	Mitigation planting about the vicinity of the Stockbury Flyover and the grazing field at Whipstakes Hill will have matured to a height of 5-6 m relating to woodland and 2-3 m relating to hedgerows. This will serve to restore and strengthen the degree of tree cover within the view, however, these measures would partially screen the views of the Stockbury Flyover and the traffic travelling along it. In the long-term, these mitigation measures would partially reduce	• Residential receptors at Norton Green: **Slight** Adverse and significant; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Norton Green **Neutral**.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		foreground, the landscape appears slightly neglected in character, with scrap metal, heaps of spoil, mixed and degraded paving, ruderal weeds and post and wire fencing causing visual detraction and lessening the quality of the rural setting.		amenity and screening value at this stage due to its juvenile form. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. • The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Minor**.		the magnitude of impact to **Negligible**.	
Viewpoint 15 Figure 9.43.	View from Public Right of Way (PRoW) KH80, looking west-northwest from elevated ground towards the Scheme and Hillside Farm. 339.94 m from the Scheme.	Elevated, open view, strongly rural in character, with long distance views across the dry valley landscape to large-scale agricultural fields lacking internal field boundaries. Woodland belts line the upper slopes. Views towards the A249 in the middle ground are filtered through the mature	• Residential receptor at Hillside Farm: **High** visual sensitivity; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **High** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors at Hillside Farm:	The Scheme will have led to the loss of field boundary vegetation in the middle ground of the view, the introduction of cutting slopes and mitigation planting, this planting will be in a juvenile form and as such will provide little restorative or screening benefits at this stage. The A249 will have widened,	• Residential receptor at Hillside Farm: **Moderate** adverse and significant; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **Moderate** adverse and significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors at	Mitigation planting to the cutting slopes adjoining the agricultural field within the middle ground of the view will have reached 5-6 m for woodland planting and 2-3 m for the hedgerow planting, grassland will be fully established and would lead to the appearance of a denser extent of vegetation than the existing scenario. The A249 would appear	• Residential receptor at Hillside Farm: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; • Recreational receptor: PRoW KH80: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		highways vegetation, which helps to screen and contain the transport corridor within the base of the dry valley. However, glimpsed views of traffic are experienced through the vegetation and telegraph poles which provides further visual detraction. Land adjacent to Hillside Farm is demarcated with post and wire fencing. To the wider landscape moving away from the A249, field boundaries are more robust and vegetation cover provides a well-wooded slope and a strong sense of place.	**Moderate** visual sensitivity.	which will have led to an increased extent of roadway present within the view. The location of the existing bus stop will have been relocated closer in proximity to Hillside Farm, which will have led to a partial loss of property boundary vegetation – opening up oblique views towards the A249. An additional bus lane will also be present to the other side of the A249 and would be located further right within the view, impacting on the rural character/visual amenity of the view. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further	Hillside Farm: **Moderate**. adverse and significant.	as a more visible feature within the view due to its expansion, however, it would be a slight increase to the current situation. The boundary vegetation adjacent to Hillside Farm will be restored, but will not be comparable in size and extent to the existing mature vegetation and will not fully mitigate against this loss. These mitigation measures would lead to a slight decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors, leading to a judgement of **Minor**.	• Outdoor employment receptors at Hillside Farm: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be **Moderate**.			
Viewpoint 16 Figure 9.45.	View from the public highway, adjacent to the junction of South Green Lane where it meets the A249 and in proximity to the cluster of residential properties adjacent to the A249, looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. 0.12 m from the Scheme.	A semi-enclosed view looking north-northeast towards the Scheme. Direct views of the A249 are experienced at the junction with South Green Lane. The residential properties are set back from the A249 and are separated by a mature belt of dense tree and shrub vegetation and a private road, which creates a degree of physical and visual separation from the A249. It is likely that there are glimpsed views of the A249 through breaks in vegetation along this stretch. The traffic	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **High** visual sensitivity; • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Low** visual sensitivity; and • Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Moderate** visual sensitivity.	The Scheme will have led to the stopping up of South Green Lane and the creation of a varying width of central reservation between the A249 and the new slip road that forms more of a local road feel. It will also have provided a greater sense of physical separation between the residential receptors and the dual carriageway. Mitigation planting in the form of woodland belts, hedgerows and scrub will be in a juvenile state and as such will be yet to provide any form of	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **Moderate** Adverse and significant; • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	Mitigation planting in the form of woodland, scrub and hedgerows would have established to an approximate height of 5-6 m and 2-3 m respectively – providing visual screening within the central reservation between the stopped up South Green Lane and the A249 dual carriageway, this will have led to a degree of improved physical and visual separation between the residential receptors and the adjacent A249. However, the presence of additional lanes of traffic and roadway somewhat offsets some of these design benefits.	• Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; • Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant; and • Outdoor employment

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
		island to the junction between South Green Lane and the A249 is dilapidated and appears to have been the site of an historic collision/collisions. Bollards, crash barriers and the traffic of the A249 are further urbanising features in the view. Highways vegetation serves to enclose the A249 within the base of the dry valley landscape, limiting views towards the A249 from the wider landscape.		visual amenity or screening value. The curvature of the road within this viewpoint location and the extensive vegetative boundary adjacent to the residential properties limit views towards the Stockbury Flyover and reconfigured Stockbury Roundabout. The extent of road within the view will have increased with additional lanes to the left of the view. Winter leaf loss will lead to some degree of increased visibility, but there are unlikely to be significant views towards the flyover and roundabout from this location. Views towards the agricultural land will have been opened up, as the proposed		Planting to the cutting slopes will have established and restored the field boundary vegetation and will provide visual containment of the A249, the cutting slopes will also serve to reduce views towards the A249 from outdoor employment receptors. These mitigation measures would lead to a decrease in the level of adverse visual effects on these receptors as follows: Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **Negligible**; Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Minor**; and Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Minor**.	receptors fronting onto the A249: **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

Viewpoint	Description and location	Existing view	Receptors represented / Receptor Sensitivity	Operational impact at winter Year 1	Operational effect Year 1	Mitigation and Magnitude of Impact at summer Year 15	Residual Effect
				vegetation to the cutting slopes will not yet be established. The loss of vegetation associated with the winter period would exacerbate impacts upon the visual receptors – further opening up views towards the Scheme. The magnitude of impact to the visual amenity of these receptors would be as follows: Residential receptors adjacent to the A249: Hinecom, Sandina, Valley View Farm and White House: **Moderate**; Transport receptors travelling along the A249: **Moderate**; and Outdoor employment receptors fronting onto the A249: **Moderate**.			

F.9 Cumulative Effects

Table F.14: Summary of Cumulative Effects

Proposed Development	Description	Cumulative Operational Impact	Additional significant cumulative Construction effects	Additional significant cumulative Operational effects
Land at Woodgate Lane (Application ref: 15/507804/FULL - permitted but not yet implemented') Located approximately 0.1 km from the red line boundary.	• Removal of existing builder's yard and construction of 11 new dwellings including access road, garaging and car ports.	• The Scheme is not visible from the proposed development location adjacent to Woodgate Lane, due to the existing dense belts of highways vegetation between the development and the A249. The proposed development has led to the loss of additional land but is essentially infill housing to what is already an urbanised ribbon development running adjacent to the A249. Further exacerbating the situation, but not out of character with the nature of the housing along this road, which is of a mixed 20th century style. The proposed development would not be impacted by the Scheme as there would be no additional inter-visibility of the two projects from the viewpoint locations or from impacted receptors. However, the development will have led to further erosion of the rural qualities of the surrounding landscape. The proposed development is well contained within the dry valley slopes and intervening vegetation and topography limit wider views towards this development, meaning the impacts from the development are localised.	• The development is already being constructed and construction is likely to have ended by the time the Scheme Construction Phase commences, therefore there would be **No change** to the construction effects resulting from the Scheme**.**	• There is no degree of inter-visibility between the Scheme and the proposed development, however, the development will have led to further exacerbation of the ribbon development adjacent to the A249, further urbanising the local environment and the landscape character. The significance of cumulative effects resulting from the proposed development and the Scheme is **Slight** Adverse and not significant.
Builders Yard (Application ref: 18/505147/PNP - permitted but not yet implemented') Located approximately 0.23	• Change of use of 3 No. buildings and land within their curtilage from Class B8 (storage or distribution) to 3 No. Class C3 dwelling houses.	• There would be no cumulative effects resulting from the proposed development and the Scheme. There is no degree of inter-visibility between the two proposals. As yet, there are no accompanying architectural drawings demonstrating the visual effects of the development, however, the change of use also includes an extension of the building curtilage of the existing storage units and it is possible that the proposal would lead to an improvement of the current situation. Providing the	• Depending upon the commencement of the works, it is possible that there may be some minor impacts resulting from construction traffic travelling along the Maidstone Road, however, due to the	• There would be no degree of inter-visibility between the Scheme and the proposed development and no cumulative landscape and visual operational effects resulting from the two proposals. Therefore, the significance of cumulative effects resulting from the

Proposed Development	Description	Cumulative Operational Impact	Additional significant cumulative Construction effects	Additional significant cumulative Operational effects
km from the red line boundary.		design of the dwelling houses is in keeping with those in proximity to it, there is unlikely to be any adverse effects on neighbouring receptors. Furthermore, the Scheme does not impact upon this section of the character area and there are no cumulative landscape and visual effects predicted.	size of the proposed development, it is unlikely that there would be a significant additional number of construction vehicles using this route as part of the development. Given the sensitivity of the local character area, there would be **Slight** Adverse and not significant cumulative effects resulting from the development.	proposed development and the Scheme is **Neutral**.
Land at Wises Lane (Application ref: 17/505711/HYBRID - submitted but not yet determined') Located approximately 2.7 km from the red line boundary.	• A hybrid planning application with outline planning permission sought for up to 595 dwellings including: affordable housing, a two-form entry primary school with associated outdoor space and vehicular parking; local facilities comprising a Class A1 retail store, a rugby clubhouse / community building, standard RFU sports pitches and associated vehicular parking, a link road between Borden Lane and Chestnut	• There would be no degree of inter-visibility between the proposed development and the Scheme. However, the proposed development would lead to the loss of a fairly significant extent of agricultural land and lead to further erosion of the local landscape character, extending the urban edge of Sittingbourne and further eroding the rural landscape. This in conjunction with the introduction of urbanising features resulting from the Scheme, would lead to significant cumulative effects, particularly on a regional scale.	• If the Construction Phases were to overlap, there is a potential for cumulative effects relating to the presence of construction vehicles travelling along the A249 and the local roads. These effects combined would lead to a loss of tranquillity and visual disturbance. Potential cumulative effects resulting from the Construction Phase (providing they overlap) would be	• The proposed development appears to have been sensitively designed, with a strong emphasis on landscape and ecological design, sensitively siting the development within the adjoining surroundings. There would be no degree of inter-visibility between the Scheme and the proposed development. By Year 15, significant cumulative effects will have reduced, due to the establishment of mitigation planting associated with the development, such as the maturation of trees and shrubs, which will provide visual screening benefits and will

Proposed Development	Description	Cumulative Operational Impact	Additional significant cumulative Construction effects	Additional significant cumulative Operational effects
	Street, allotments and informal / formal open space incorporating SuDS, new planting / landscaping and ecological enhancement works.		**Moderate** Adverse and significant.	better integrate the proposal into the rural landscape. Therefore, the significance of cumulative effects resulting from the proposed development and the Scheme is **Slight** Adverse and not significant.
Manor Farm (Application ref: 17/500727/OUT - submitted but not yet determined') Located approximately 2.9 km from the red line boundary.	• Outline application for residential development for up to 50 dwellings with access off Chestnut Street.	• There would be no degree of inter-visibility between the proposed development and the Scheme. However, the proposed development would lead to an extension of the urban edge of Sittingbourne into adjoining rural land adjacent to the A249; and • The adjoining land in question is located within an already visually very urbanised section of the A249 and the loss of additional rural land would lead to an increase in the sense of urbanisation and loss of the rural edge. The Scheme would lead to significant cumulative effects on a regional scale.	• If the Construction Phases were to overlap, there is a potential for cumulative effects relating to the presence of construction vehicles travelling along the A249 and the local roads. These effects combined would lead to a loss of tranquillity and visual disturbance. Potential cumulative effects resulting from the Construction Phase (providing they overlap) would be **Moderate** Adverse and significant.	• There would no degree of inter-visibility between the Scheme and the proposed development, however, cumulative effects would arise from the combined impacts of further urbanising features within the local/regional landscape. The scale of the proposed development is moderate in extent and the impacts would not be as marked as the degree of loss of rural land associated with the development at Land at Wises Lane. Therefore, the significance of cumulative landscape effects resulting from the proposed development and the Scheme is **Slight** Adverse and not significant.

F.10 Communications

F.10.1 Communications between Atkins and Natural England regarding the cladding of the Stockbury Flyover are captured in the emails below.

Rieger, Alice

From: Hanna, Sean <Sean.Hanna@naturalengland.org.uk>
Sent: 28 January 2019 14:52
To: Rieger, Alice; Katie Miller
Cc: Rescia, Pietro; Brand, Ellen; Dickie, Liz
Subject: RE: M2 J5 Flyover Cladding Discussions Meeting Notes and next steps

Thanks Alice for organising the call and your follow-up note, I am happy that your summary and actions are a fair reflection of our conversation.

Kind regards
Sean

Sean Hanna
Lead Adviser
Natural England Sussex and Kent Team, 9th Floor, International House, Dover Place, Kent TN23 1HU
Direct dial 0208 0266 064 Email sean.hanna@naturalengland.org.uk

Please note: I work compressed hours and am not generally in the office on a Friday.

www.gov.uk/natural-england

We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio, video or web conferencing.

From: Rieger, Alice [mailto:Alice.Rieger@atkinsglobal.com]
Sent: 28 January 2019 14:45
To: Hanna, Sean <Sean.Hanna@naturalengland.org.uk>; Katie Miller <Katie.Miller@kentdowns.org.uk>
Cc: Rescia, Pietro <Pietro.Rescia@atkinsglobal.com>; Brand, Ellen <Ellen.Brand@highwaysengland.co.uk>; Dickie, Liz <Liz.Dickie@atkinsglobal.com>
Subject: M2 J5 Flyover Cladding Discussions Meeting Notes and next steps

Hi All,

Thank you all for joining the call this afternoon. I have noted down the points we discussed and agreed and the actions moving forward.

Katie and Sean - can you please confirm you are happy with what I have noted down below.

Meeting: Discussion on M2 J5 Flyover cladding: 2pm, 28/01/2019
Attendees: Katie Miller (Kent AONB), Sean Hanna (Natural England), Alice Rieger/Pietro Rescia (Atkins), Ellen Brand (Highways England)

Health & Safety:

- Important to take the time to de-ice your car before starting your journey especially as temperatures are nearing zero overnight at the moment

Feedback on Cladding options:

- Katie would prefer the random rubble flint cladding as this stone fits in with the underlying geology of the area (clay overlay with flint geology) and from a visual point of view the texture and variations of colour in the flint stones are more natural looking
- Sean shares the same view as Katie and prefers the flint cladding
- It was agreed that the flyover wall will have a flint stone cladding finish (example below).

Feedback on parapet:

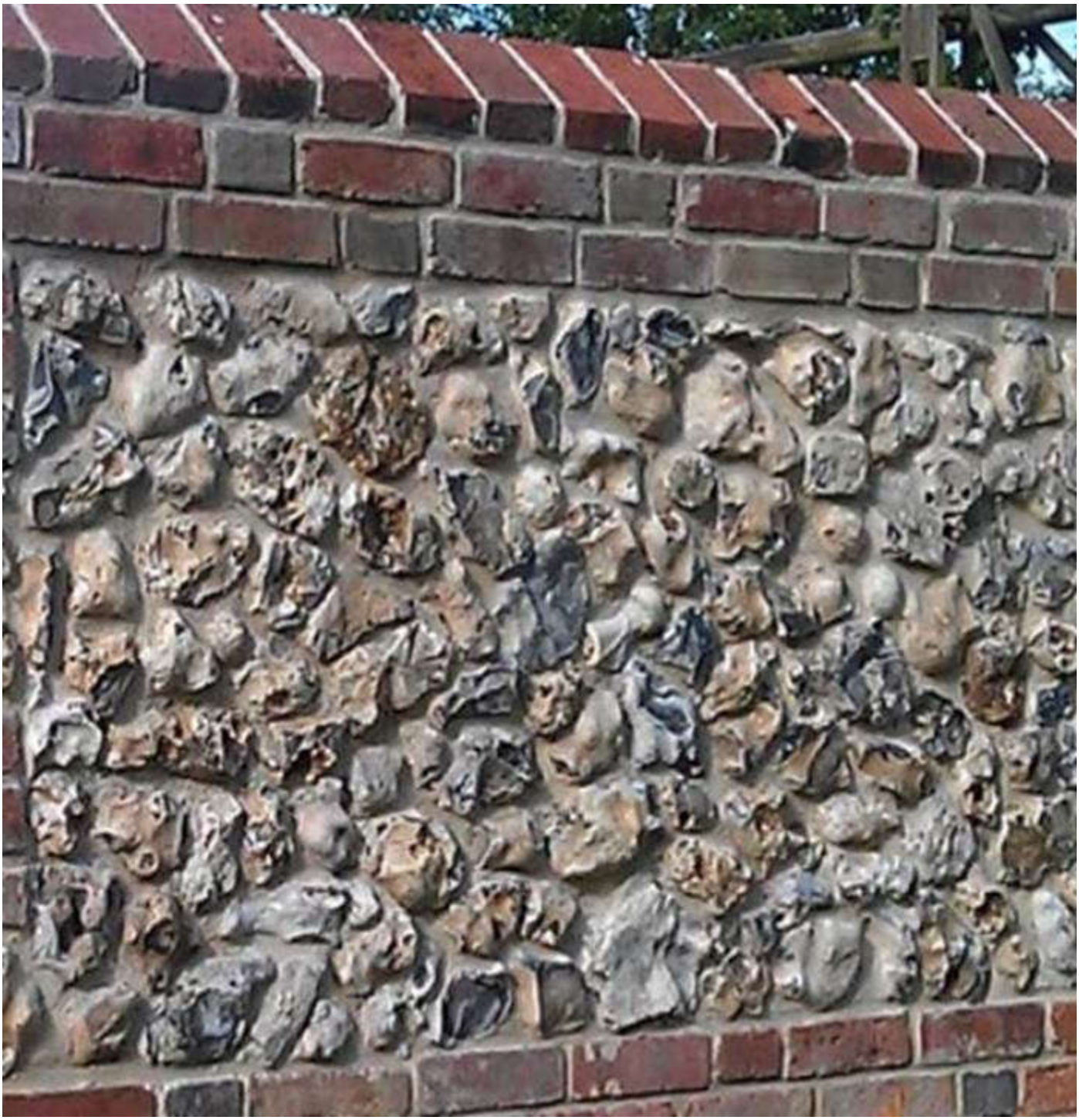
- Katie thinks this looks clunky and utilitarian and would like to see further investigation in other options including different colours, stone cladding or weathered steel finish

Actions:

- Atkins to prepare visualisation with flint stone cladding included in the detail
- Atkins to investigate further options for the parapet finish

If you have any further comments or suggestions for the above, please let me know.

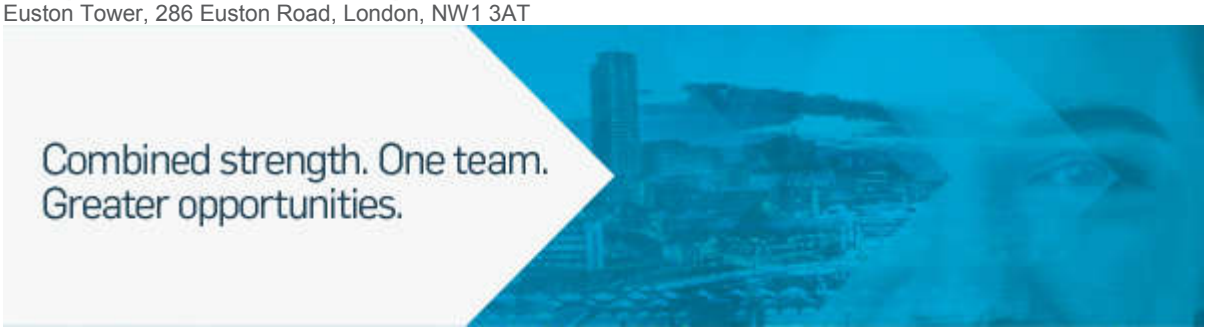
Many thanks
Alice



Alice Rieger *PGDipAppSci, BAppSci*
Environmental Consultant, Infrastructure

+44 (0)20 7121 2613

Atkins, member of the SNC-Lavalin Group
Euston Tower, 286 Euston Road, London, NW1 3AT



SNC·LAVALIN

ATKINS
Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

Company

Printed on paper from well-managed forests and other controlled sources.

Registered office Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford GU1 4LZ.
Highways England Company Limited registered in England and Wales number 09346363