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LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Application for Proposed extension to St Mary's Hospital, St Marys Island, Isles of Scilly

For Situ8,

On behalf of Integrated Health and Social Care (IHSC) Facility. St Mary's

REF: M652_IoS_St_Marys_Hospital
Prepared by: Mei Loci Landscape Architects Ltd
For: Situ8
Assessor: Patricia Hawes, Director, CMLI
Date: January 2024

Mei Loci Landscape Architects

Studio G2, Old Bakery Studios, Blewetts Wharf, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 1QH

P: 01872 264899

e.studio@meiloci.co.uk www.meiloci.co.uk

Mei Loci is a registered practice with the Landscape Institute



Proposed extension at St Mary's Hospital, St Marys Island, Isles of Scilly.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Mei Loci Landscape Architects, Studio G2, Old Bakery Studios, Blewetts Wharf, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 1QH - December 2023

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Definitions of terms

Development	= the proposed development
Effect	= change resulting from the development; described using ‘magnitude’
Impact	= specific action/change being undertaken (should not be used to mean combination of several effects)
Landscape receptor	= aspect of landscape that will experience the effect
Magnitude (of effect)	= the nature of the effect: the probability, reversibility and spatial extent
Significance of effect	= level, or scale of change.
Sensitivity (of receptor)	= the nature of the receptor: depends on value, importance, susceptibility and resilience
Application site	= the area to which the application pertains, shown in Figure 1, contained by the red boundary
Visual receptor	= amenity views which will experience the effect

Glossary of acronyms

AGLV	Area of Great Landscape Value
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (rebranded National Landscape in 2023)
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
AWI	Ancient Woodland Inventory
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CGS	County Geology Site
CWS	County Wildlife Site
DCP	Dawlish Country Park
DLCA	Devon Landscape Character Assessment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HLC	Historic Landscape Classification
GLVIA	Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LDU	Landscape Description Unit
LCT	Landscape Character Type
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
NCA	National Character Area
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
OS	Ordnance Survey
PROW	Public Right of Way
RIGS	Regionally Important Geological Site
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SAP	Special Area of Protection
SSSI	Application sites of Special Scientific Interest
SWCP	South West Coast Path
TLCA	Teignbridge Landscape Character Area
TLP	Teignbridge Local Plan
VP	Viewpoint
WHS	World Heritage Site
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

1.0 Introduction

The Commission

- 1.1 This appraisal has been undertaken by Director Patricia Hawes, Director of Mei Loci Landscape Architects, a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute. Mei Loci is a registered practice with the Landscape Institute.
- 1.2 Mei Loci Landscape Architects were originally commissioned by Situ8 on behalf of the Integrated Health and Social Care (IHSC) Facility, St Mary's, in December 2023 to provide a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to assess the impact of the proposed development of a parcel of land directly adjacent to the existing hospital for the proposed extension of the hospital ward, and integrated care home. The site has been previously used for hospital gardens, and semi-agricultural uses. (see Appendix 1: Figure M652_LVIA_01: Application site location).
- 1.3 The proposed development will be constructed within the application site boundary and is referred to throughout this document as the "development".
- 1.4 This report provides an appraisal of the development plans in principle, based on information supplied by Blue Sky | Capra Architects.
- 1.5 The objectives of this document are to assess the likely landscape and visual impact(s) that a proposed hospital extension may have on the landscape character and visual environment of the application site and its surroundings, and to identify measures to mitigate any significant landscape or visual effects resultant from the impact(s).
- 1.6 This LVIA has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition), together with subsequent technical guidance notes.
- 1.7 The primary aims of this report are to:
 - a) provide a landscape impact assessment; a summary of landscape issues; and a landscape character analysis for the area in order to determine the constraints and opportunities for the Application site development within the wider landscape context.
- 1.8 The assessment includes an appraisal of the existing landscape character baseline studies 'The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Assessment 2022, in order to determine its sensitivity to change, the value and quality/condition of the existing landscape and to provide a baseline against which to evaluate the scale (or magnitude) of the change upon the landscape and the overall significance of effect on landscape character resultant from the development.
 - b) provide a photographic visual survey and visual effects analysis of the application site and the landscape context, taking in key viewpoints from all publicly accessible areas; in particular, those set within designated landscapes (where applicable), including public rights of way, public highways, and other public open spaces.
- 1.9 This process seeks to analyse the visual amenity of the area; in particular, views of the proposed development. This is to determine the quality and sensitivity of the view and the nature of the impact that the proposed development would have on the view. Viewpoints are evaluated in the context of the sensitivity of the visual receptors (or viewers) and are analysed for the scale (or

magnitude) of visual effect likely to arise from the proposed development.

Note: where views may exist from private residential or inaccessible areas, a consideration of the likely effect(s) is given.

- c) provide a summary of recommendations for mitigation and conclusions for the development on the application site to ensure that the environmental, visual amenity and landscape character of the application site is maintained and/or enhanced where such opportunities exist and to ensure that the development does not form a detrimental element within the existing landscape.

1.10 This assessment references LVIA and site photography, taken in January 2024.

1.11 The assessment also includes an analysis of the site's capacity to absorb the development sensitively with the landscape setting, both from a character and visual perspective, to which the scheme will be designed from, providing a landscape-led approach to the design development process.

The Application Site

- 1.12 The application site comprises land previously used for agricultural purposes (see Figure 1, below, and also Appendix 1: Figure M652_LVIA_01: Application site location).

The application site entrance is centred at Easting: 090739 Northing: 010310.



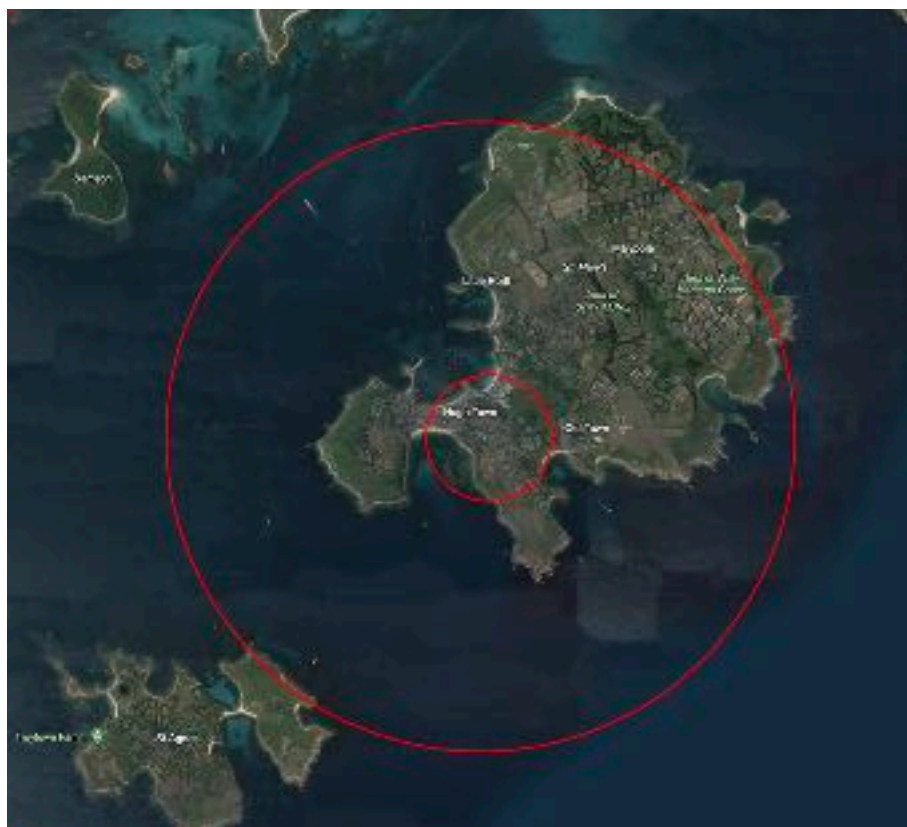
Figure 1: The application site location, aerial view (boundary shown in red). Not to scale.

- 1.13 The application site is located within the existing hospital site, directly south of the
- 1.14 The application site is located on the gently sloping area of inland, rural undulating landscape within a wider agricultural environment, bisected by field boundaries consisting of hedgerows, shrubs and trees, and roads.
- 1.15 The application site slopes gently from north to south. The northern edge bounding the road sits at approximately 30AOD and lowest southern corner is approximately 20AOD.
- 1.16 The adjacent Orchard Road to the north currently provides access from the A379 and links the development to the main Cofton Holiday Park to the north.
- 1.17 The proposed built form will be cited within a landscape led plan in order to respond to the landscape character setting and minimise visual impact, following previous planning application feedback. The built form and site plans will be developed based on the findings and recommendations from this report.
- 1.18 The application site currently contains no formal planted vegetation; it is an open field with some scrubby areas to the northeast which have vegetated soil heaps.

- 1.19 Due to the undulating agricultural landscape and vegetation adjacent to the road, existing views into the site are mainly obscured to the north and east. The landform rises further to the south, however, the built environment of Dawlish and rural narrow lanes with high hedges to the southwest, are likely to obscure views from these directions.
- 1.20 It is generally directly overlooked only in close proximity from the south, with some distant views from the west as the land rises towards Mahmed Woods and the Haldon Hills. Newly introduced tree and shrub planting is proposed for the southern and eastern edges of the site to mitigate the effect on visual amenity across the field from these directions.
- 1.21 Views throughout the wider landscape are more limited along the roads and footpaths due to the immediate flatter topography surrounding the site and taller hedgerows, shrubs and trees.
- 1.22 There are currently no other cumulative development effects to be considered in conjunction with this development.

The Study Area & Scope

- 1.23 The initial study area of search for visibility and presence of national landscape related designations (AONB, Registered Park & Gardens, Heritage Coast, National Trails) and national landscape character areas has been set at a 2.5km radius, a 5km study area, centred at Easting: 090739 Northing: 010310 (see Figure 2, below).
- 1.24 The study area of search for the identification of local landscape and visual receptors (other than those listed above) has also been set at 2.5km radius. *Figure 2: Aerial view of the Study area. (1km and 5km circles shown in red). Not to scale.*



- 1.25 Individual residential properties which may experience views have been identified within areas defined by the ZTV and verified during field observations to determine whether they are deemed to have significant views of the development. These are mainly the close-range properties within a 1km radius.
- 1.26 The 5km study area (see Figure 2) covers most of St Mary's Island, just skirting the north eastern coastal edge of St Agnes.
- 1.27 The application site is located on the in a gently sloping area of coastal landscape set on a Ridgeline just east of Hugh Town, within a wider island environment which is predominantly rural, within close proximity of coastal edge topography.
- 1.28 It is generally directly overlooked only from the immediate proximity from the north and west with some distant views from the west along the coastal edge of the Garrison. The surrounding undulating landform and vegetation to the north, east acts as barrier to views into the site from

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these directions.

- 1.29 The built form within the study area consists of the settlement of Hughtown, with a variety of rural, interspersed residential dwellings, estate farmsteads, small scale Hamlets and tourist accommodation and facilities dotted throughout the wider landscape.
- 1.30 The scope of this study represents a landscape and visual impact assessment, identifying potential landscape and visual receptors to enable an understanding of likely landscape and visual issues and to also inform preparation of design proposals as part of a new planning application to be submitted to Isles of Scilly Council.

Approach & Methodology

- 1.31 The assessment was carried out during the winter months when deciduous leaf cover was minimal, therefore provides a worst-case scenario of visual impact. Judgements on the likely effects leaf cover change throughout the seasons have been noted in the report where appropriate.
- 1.32 The assessment includes the following:
- An evaluation of the existing landscape character, designation and visual baseline and; based on this, the identification of potential landscape and visual receptors within the study area;
 - An evaluation of the sensitivity of potential landscape and visual receptors;
 - The identification of other developments to be considered in the appraisal of any cumulative effects and key factors with which are to be considered;
 - An evaluation of the magnitude and significance of landscape and visual effect(s) resulting from the proposals;
 - An evaluation of cumulative impacts of existing and proposed infrastructure;
 - Conclusion on the overall significant effects of the proposals on the landscape character and visual amenity within the study area.
- 1.33 Landscape character and visual amenity are closely related but have been assessed separately to avoid confusion and provide clarity between the two elements and as per the Guidelines for Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition).
- 1.34 Effects assessment criteria is detailed in 5.0 Landscape effects assessment and 6.0 Visual effects assessment respectively.
- 1.35 The appraisal is based on desk study and computer-generated visibility mapping which has been verified during application site field work. Field work and initial site photography was carried out on 30th November 2023.
- 1.36 Viewpoint locations have been selected to provide representative data necessary to cover the likely significant effects of the proposal (see Table 1: Viewpoint Schedule). These viewpoints have been selected from within the Study area for visibility and presence of landscape related designations and landscape character areas.
- 1.37 The study area was established considering the scale and location of the proposals in conjunction with wider area topography and visibility and resulting effects. This has been verified to be sufficient during field observations.
- 1.38 A radius of 2km is assumed the extent of visual impact due to vegetative and topographic features limiting views further, as indicated by the ZTV (see Appendix 1: Figure M652_LVIA 03: ZTV Analysis).
- 1.39 A more detailed appraisal was carried out within a 500m radius of the application site, enabling all landscape and visual receptors which may experience noticeable effects as a result of the development to be considered, without resulting in excessive levels of detail that detract from the key points.
- 1.40 The Ordnance Survey (OS) base mapping was analysed to identify landscape and visual receptors

such as designated areas, local residents, users of public rights of way and visitors to open spaces, and areas of countryside.

- 1.41 The historic landscape character has been considered in terms of how it defines contemporary landscape character as described in the Landscape Character Assessment. Individual historic features are discussed in the Heritage Impact Assessment, and will not be discussed in detail.
- 1.42 All distances to or from the application site and Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) values are approximate based on those taken from OS base mapping and assumes that the receptor view from a public right of way (PROW) or public open space is 1.5m in height.
- 1.43 Where multiple categories of visual receptors are identified as present at the same viewpoint, the most sensitive categorisation has been assessed against.

Sources of Information

1.44 This assessment of likely effects in relation to the landscape character and the visual amenity has been undertaken with reference to:

- Natural England National Character Area profile (2014) Isles of Scilly(158);
- Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust - county wildlife application sites;
- Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Assessment (2022)
- National Planning Policy Framework (2023);
- The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017;
- Guidelines for Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition).

The Proposals

1.45 Proposals for the application site are presented as outlined below.

1.46 The proposal plans include:

- New hospital extension with ward beds;
- New Care Home addition to the hospital with aged care beds.
- Remodelling of part of the existing hospital building.
- on-site Bin store, recycling and plant room
- Improved road access improvements to the Hospital Lane entrance for ambulances and deliveries;
- Re-modelling of existing landscape areas to provide sensory courtyards and communal gardens for staff and visitors.
- Enhanced tree and hedgerow planting to field boundaries;
- New planted hedgebank to Hospital Lane, and new entrance planting.

1.47 The site plan is presented in Figure 3, below:



Figure 3: Proposals plan. Not to scale. By Bluesky Capra Architects

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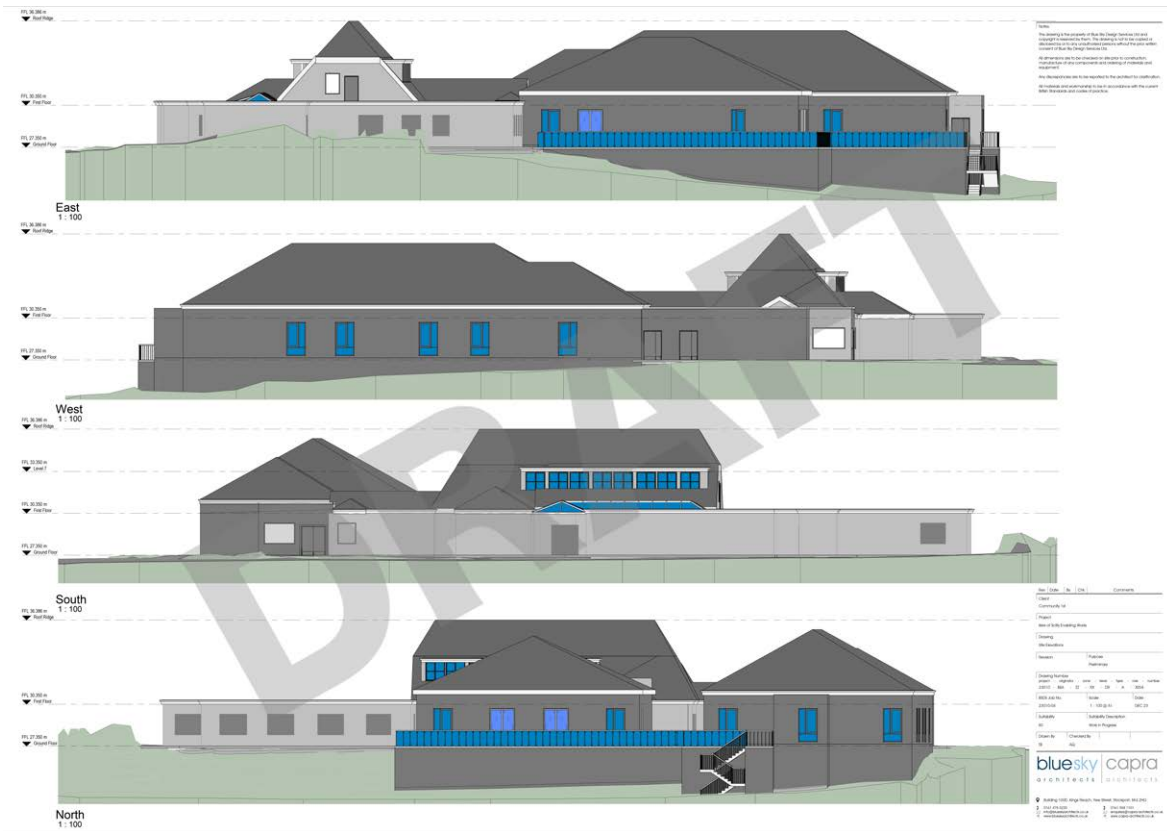


Figure 4: Proposals Sections. Not to scale. By Bluesky Capra Architects



Figure 5: Visualisations of the proposed lower garden By Bluesky Capra Architects

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- 1.48 The landscape plans aims to situate the built form sensitively, minimising landscape character and visual impacts, and provide a pleasant and green environment which residents, and patients can access and enjoy and look out on.
- 1.49 The landscape plans and species selections have been informed through liaison with the ecologist James Faulconbridge, and have in turn informed biodiversity net gain calculations for the site.



Figure 6. Landscape Proposals for the site by Mei Loci

1.50 Likely effects of development are:

- The proposals introduce new built form within the setting of existing hospital context and its surrounding landscape features;
- The impact of landscape and visual effects are likely to be limited to the immediate application site and surrounding environment;
- An increase in traffic during construction is likely to affect the tranquility of the immediate character setting and impact visual amenity;
- Viewpoints directly from the southwest- from Buzza Tower, and The Garrison, will be more sensitive to change, due to the higher elevation and more open views of the receptors from these directions;
- Viewpoints from the residences directly to the north may experience some effects of changes in built form but will not directly overlook the bulk of the development;

1.51 Mitigation measures include:

Primary measures (prevention/avoidance of effects):

- Retention of trees, shrubs and hedgerows where existing boundaries; where possible on the site.
- Landscape enhancements have been planned in to minimise the visual impact of the built form as far as practically possible, including hedge and woodland planting enhancements to the boundaries and additional screening trees to the lower gardens.
- Increasing numbers of trees and planting areas along with the provision of bat, bird boxes, and insect and hedgehog homes within the retained landscape areas, to mitigate against potential loss of biodiversity and habitat.

2.0 Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-makers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.
- 2.2 National planning policy guidance was completely revised with issue of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in 2012 and most recently updated most recently in September 2023. This single document supersedes all previous Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) documents. It is accompanied by a letter to the chief planning officer, a separate document dealing with traveller Application sites and waste, and a technical guidance document dealing with flood risk and minerals policy.
- 2.3 A key focus within the NPPF is sustainable development (achieved through interdependent economic, social and environmental objectives) and environmental net gain.
- 2.4 The following are extracts from the NPPF which may be considered relevant to the LVIA of the proposed development.
- 2.5 “Section 2: Achieving sustainable development:
- Para. 8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
 - a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
 - Para. 11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development:
- 2.6 For plan-making this means that:
- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;

- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

2.7 For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

2.8 Section 4: Decision Making:

- Para. 38. Local Planning Authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way... use the full range of tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle... decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- Para. 47. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.9 Section 8: Making safe and healthy communities:

- Para. 100. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

2.10 Section 11: Making effective use of land:

- Para. 119: Planning policies and decisions should promote the effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'Brownfield' land".

2.11 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places:

- Para. 126: the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and creates better places in

which to live and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- Para. 130: Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
 - a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

2.12 Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change:

- Para. 152. The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
- Para. 154. New development should be planned for in ways that:
 - a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from change;
 - b) can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design

2.13 Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural Environment:

- Para. 174: Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where

appropriate;

- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

2.14 Para. 176: Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

2.15 Para. 177: When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development ⁶⁰ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

2.16 Para. 178: Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 176), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

2.17 ⁶⁰ For the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177, whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

2.18 Section 15: Habitats and biodiversity:

- Para. 179: to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
 - a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of

importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and;

- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

2.19 Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment:

- Para. 189: Heritage assets range from application sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Application sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- Para. 190: Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:
 - a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

2.20 Proposals affecting heritage assets:

- Para. 194: In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
- Para. 195: Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

2.21 Considering potential impacts:

- Para. 202: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use” (©Crown Copyright, 2023)

Isles of Scilly National Landscape (Formerly AONB) Plan (2019-2024)

2.22 Their geographic isolation from mainland UK, the sparse population spread over five separate islands and the exceptional quality of the natural and historic environment, are at the heart of what is special about the Isles of Scilly. This exceptional environment is the mainstay of the islands' economy. The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2015–2020 highlights: ‘The Isles of Scilly are the smallest AONB designation in the UK measuring only 16 km². However, the islands possess a diversity of scenery and designations that belies their small scale. The archipelago combines granite cliffs and headlands, sandy bays, hidden coves, shifting dunes and saline lagoons.’

Isles of Scilly Local Plan (2013-2033)

- 2.29 The Local Plan is the statutory development plan for the Isles of Scilly and forms the basis for decisions on land use planning. The Local plan is informed by national and strategic planning policy as well as the National Landscape (AONB) Management Plan 2015-2020 2016; The Local Nature Partnership (LNP), a Partnership of those who are working to maintain the special and unique environment of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Despite their small domestic and rural scale, most of the settlements are referred to as ‘Towns’ (8 out of 13). Most of the population live on St Mary’s and are concentrated in Hugh Town, the administrative centre, and Old Town. The landscape and topography of the islands sets the context for the settlements and buildings, with the exception of Hugh Town where the townscape of streets provides the setting for individual buildings. Inevitably, with a small population across five islands, the size of the settlements is extremely small, and their scale domestic and rural. Other than Hugh Town, Old Town and Porthloo, all on St Mary’s, and New and Old Grimsby on Tresco, most of the islands’ settlements are set back from the coast. Most of the settlements, whilst being grouped at intersections of lanes, are relatively loose-grained, in that there are only short streets with individual houses, or short terraces of no more than three or four houses.
- 2.30 The Local Plan is divided into six sections:
1. Introduction and Spatial Strategy: Provides an overview of the islands’ characteristics, key challenges, and the vision for development by 2030.
 2. Promoting a Sustainable Scilly: Outlines ten development management policies addressing sustainable development principles, renewable energy, and transport.
 3. Our Outstanding Environment: Focuses on protecting the natural and historic environments through seven development management policies, addressing landscape character, biodiversity, and the historic environment.
 4. Our Island Community: Outlines the housing strategy for the plan period with ten development management policies related to housing location, design, and existing stock.
 5. The Islands’ Economy: Addresses economic policies for supporting a working community, with six development management policies facilitating economic development.
 6. Monitoring and Implementation: Describes how the plan will be monitored and outlines triggers for policy review.
- 2.32 Key Policy Headings include:
- Environment: Emphasises preserving the high-quality environment, landscapes, and heritage assets. Addresses threats like climate change, invasive species, and habitat loss.
 - Community: Advocates for a self-sufficient and resilient community through sustainable development, considering environmental impacts, carbon footprint, and flood risks.
 - Infrastructure: Highlights the importance of improving infrastructure capacity and sustainability, addressing challenges in energy, water, and waste management.

- 2.33 The Strategic Vision for 2030 envisions the Isles of Scilly as a highly desirable place with a strong sense of community, identity, and a world-class environment in harmony with nature.
- 2.34 The Local Plan sets out Strategic Aims 1-7 which focus on maintaining the outstanding environment, sustainable infrastructure, balanced housing market, resilient economy, and adapting to climate change.
- 2.35 The following policies are relevant to this LVIA:
- Policy SS1 (Principles of Sustainable Development): Ensures development positively contributes to social, economic, and environmental needs, incorporating conservation, reducing carbon footprint, promoting biodiversity, and sustaining economic activity.
 - Policy SS2 (Sustainable Quality Design and Place-Making): Requires high-quality design, considering landscape, public views, land use efficiency, amenity, and adaptability to climate change.
 - Policy SS4 (Protection of Retailing, Recreation and Community Facilities): Supports new retail and community facilities if appropriately designed, scaled, and located without harming surrounding amenities.
 - Policy SS5 (Physical Infrastructure): Supports development that aligns with existing or planned physical infrastructure or contributes positively to sustainability.
 - Policy SS6 (Water and Wastewater Management): Permits development connected to water systems if it enhances water quality, complies with flood risk policies, and poses no risk to groundwater.
 - Policy OE1 (Protecting and enhancing the landscape and Seascape): Permits development aligned with AONB statutory purposes, conserving landscape, seascape, and scenic beauty.
 - Policy OE2 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity): Emphasises conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, applying a mitigation hierarchy and securing biodiversity net-gain. The policy states:

“Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation for Biodiversity and Geodiversity Impacts: Development should avoid adverse impacts on existing biodiversity and geodiversity interests as a first principle, and enable measurable net gains by designing-in biodiversity features and enhancements and opportunities for geological conservation alongside new development, in accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, it must be demonstrated that the development cannot be reasonably located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to biodiversity or geodiversity interests; and impacts must be adequately and proportionately mitigated. If full mitigation cannot be provided, compensation will be required as a last resort. Clear arrangements for the long-term maintenance or management of the mitigation and compensation need to be provided.”
 - Policy OE4 (Protecting Scilly’s Dark Skies): Permits external lighting only when essential for safety or community reasons, with efforts to minimise light pollution.
- In summary, the Local Plan outlines comprehensive strategies and policies for sustainable development, environmental protection, and community resilience in the Isles of Scilly.

3.0 Baseline: Landscape and Character

Introduction

- 3.1 The baseline quality (condition) represents the existing situation both within the application site and within the locality of its surroundings and context within the study area. The description is confined to those landscape and character features, or elements, that may experience likely effects by the development proposals.
- 3.2 In order to appropriately make informed and responsible decisions on the management and planning of sustainable future landscapes the existing character must be respected. By understanding how places differ we can also ensure that future development is well situated, sensitive to its location, and contributes to environmental, social and economic objectives as promoted in the NPPF (NPPF, 2023).
- 3.3 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a technique used to develop a consistent and comprehensive understanding of what gives England's landscape its character. It uses statistical analysis and application of structured landscape assessment techniques. It may be defined as: "Landscape character assessment (LCA) is the process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. LCA documents identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas. They also show how the landscape is perceived, experienced and valued by people." (Natural England, 2014).
- 3.4 Devon Landscape Character Areas (DLCA), Landscape Character Type (LCT) and Landscape Description Unit (LDU) provide more detailed descriptions and analysis at a local level within the national framework of National Character Areas (NCA).
- 3.5 District landscape character information has been reviewed and updated in the form of the Teignbridge District Landscape Character Assessment (TLCA) 2009 (updated in 2014).
- 3.6 In respect to this LVIA, the relevant NCA, DLCA, LCT, TLCA, Historic Character Areas and landscape Designations are described first, followed by more specific field observations and analysis of the landscape, LDU (where available), physical characteristics, features and elements of the local landscape.
- 3.7 For the sake of clarity, aspects of the following descriptions most relevant to the application site LVIA are highlighted using bold text.

Landscape Character (National)

- 3.8 The application site and Study area are both located with the NCA '158: Isles Of Scilly' (Natural England, 2013).
- 3.9 The INCA descriptions states: "Isles of Scilly comprise over 200 granite islands scattered across 200 km², set out in the Atlantic some 45 km south-west of Land's End. Of these islands only five are currently inhabited, namely the islands of St Mary's, St Agnes, St Martin's, Tresco and Bryher. The occupied islands cover a total area of just over 14 km². Only around 50 of the islands have some form of plant life, often just a few tufts of grass and wind-swept sea pink and lichens. The great majority are low outcrops of granite, sometimes barely breaking the surface at high tide. The islands contain 26 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and one Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for a range of geological and biological features, including maritime heathland and grassland, as well as one Special Protection Area and Ramsar site, highlighting the important seabird colonies of puffins, Manx shearwater and terns. The marine environment between and around the islands is designated as an SAC and a Marine Conservation Zone for the wealth of marine species it supports, from diverse rocky reef to grey seals that breed around the islands."
- 3.10 The geological formation of the islands: These islands are made of granite, formed around 290 million years ago. The rock has a unique texture because it cooled very slowly over thousands of years. During the Devonian and Carboniferous, these islands were under the sea. As the earth's surface changed, between 320 to 280 million years ago, this process lifted the granite rock and created the Isles of Scilly. The islands are like the tops of the granite rock, similar to the tors on the Cornwall Moors and Dartmoor. Other parts of the granite rock have steep slopes and high cliffs. Over time, different layers of sand, mud, and other materials built up around the islands. During the Quaternary period, ice covered the land as far south as the north of Scilly. The ice moved over the rocks, shaping them and leaving behind different kinds of deposits. Some granite tors, were formed by the ice melting and freezing many times. The weathering of the granite also created low cliffs and platforms we can see on the island today.
- 3.11 The key principles of the NCA are:
- 3.12 The Statement of Environmental Opportunity 1: Safeguard and enhance the diverse cultural and natural heritage of the Isles of Scilly. Promote appreciation and knowledge of the islands' biological, geological, and cultural heritage, including their unique sense of place, tranquility, and remoteness. This includes:
- Maintaining appropriate grazing levels to preserve and boost the diversity of open habitats, with a focus on heathland and grassland.
 - Establishing sustainable populations of hardy livestock breeds suited to the landscape conditions and heathland habitat requirements.
 - Conserving, interpreting, and understanding the islands' numerous archaeological features and sub-surface and marine archaeology, acknowledging the potential for undiscovered remains.
 - Carefully managing and enhancing the historical environment, including designated and undesignated assets, to reveal the prehistoric and later archaeology of land use and settlement.
 - Improving the interpretation of historic features, recognising the area's significance as one of the most archaeologically rich in western Europe.

- Offering interpretation and access to the area's geology and geomorphology to facilitate the study and understanding of the islands' development.
- Protecting the diverse marine archaeology around the islands, showcasing maritime history and reflecting climate changes.
- Enhancing understanding of the cultural and biodiversity significance of historical field systems, illustrating their role in connecting habitats and species.
- Identifying and seizing opportunities to conserve and enhance the outstanding natural and scenic beauty of the area in alignment with the goals of the Isles of Scilly AONB Management Plan.

3.13 The Statement of Environmental Opportunity 1: SEO 2: Understand, plan for and manage the impact of climate change on the Isles of Scilly, especially securing sustainable management of biodiversity and the historical, marine and coastal environments. In particular, consider the implications on the islands' water and use.

- Conduct studies to understand how climate change might affect biodiversity (both on land and in the sea), historical sites, tourism, settlements, infrastructure, and farming.
- Take action against identified threats, including engineering projects as outlined in the Shoreline Management Plan, strategic coastal adjustments, and the conservation of natural and cultural resources.
- Implications for Industries- Consider the impact of climate change on fishing and farming. Explore ways to adapt and benefit from changes, such as altering crops and adjusting planting schedules. Collaborate with farmers and the tourism industry to understand how changing practices affect water supply. Encourage the use of rainwater where suitable.
- Recognise the need to plan for changes caused by natural processes like sea-level rise and increased rainfall. While there may be losses, explore opportunities for habitat creation to offset some of these losses.
- Establish a regular monitoring program for species and habitats. This will ensure there's enough information to make informed decisions.
- Explore and promote the sustainable management of 'blue carbon sinks' like seagrass beds. This not only helps conserve a unique aspect of the AONB but also mitigates the impact of carbon emissions.

3.14 SEO 3: Safeguarding, Nurturing, and Enhancing Our Unique Farmed Landscape

Preserving the balance of our productive mixed farmland and the variety of habitats and species associated with it is crucial. Here's how we can achieve this:

- Market Development for Sustainable Fishing and Farming:
 - Develop markets for high-quality island-produced food.
 - Support fishing and farming at sustainable levels, employing grazing and cultivation practices that improve soil quality, reduce erosion, and benefit biodiversity.
- Promotion of Local Products:
 - Encourage the use of local products, like locally caught crabs and rare breed beef, in suitable businesses.
 - Ensure strong links between businesses and the landscape are promoted.
- Sustainable Gardening and Horticulture:
 - Preserve the tradition of market gardening and horticultural production, striving for increased sustainability.
- Flower Exports for Biodiversity Promotion:
 - Use flower exports to highlight the islands' significance for biodiversity, landscape, and historical environment, showcasing the industry's role in their protection and enhancement.
- Invasive Species Management:

- Develop strategies for removing existing invasive, non-native species, particularly those affecting unique habitats and species. This includes rat removal to benefit seabird populations.
- Encouraging Sustainable Grazing:
 - Promote sustainable grazing practices on permanent pasture and rough land, especially along coastal fringes and uninhabited islands.
- Maintaining Rat-Free Off Islands:
 - Achieve and maintain rat-free status on the off islands, which serve as ideal nesting sites for many pelagic seabirds.
- Supporting Local Initiatives:
 - Back local initiatives that share information, training, and knowledge, adding value to Isles of Scilly products, as exemplified by the Farmers' and Growers' Initiative.
- Farm Businesses as Stewards:
 - Encourage farm businesses to embrace their role as managers of the islands, promoting essential sustainability messages vital for island living.

3.15 The supporting document to the NCA descriptions includes the following relevant information: *"Recent Changes and Trends in the Isles of Scilly Landscape:"*

Trees and Woodlands:

- Monterey pine and cypress, acting as shelter-belts, are present on Tresco and some parts of St Mary's.
- English elms thrive on the islands, showcasing magnificent examples and elm copses on St Mary's.
- Woodland covers 3% of the NCA, managed over the last decade to enhance biodiversity.

Boundary Features:

- Tall green Hottentot fig boundaries, known as fences, shelter small fields and flower areas.
- Higher Level Stewardship aids in repairing, replacing, and maintaining hedges and walls.

Agriculture:

- Traditional agriculture involves bulbs/flowers, animals (beef and pigs), and vegetables.
- Flower breed development and mechanisation lead to specialisation, impacting land use.
- Cattle reintroduction aids conservation and reduces reliance on chemicals.

Settlement and Development:

- Recent development focuses on infrastructure improvement, school projects, and mixed-use developments.
- No open-market housing exists; new dwellings have occupancy restrictions for key workers.

Semi-Natural Habitat:

- Seabird habitats are designated Ramsar sites and Special Protection Areas.
- Marine Special Area of Conservation and Marine Conservation Zone designation for the seas around Scilly.

Historic Features:

- The Island of Samson is a scheduled landscape for protection.
- Some historic monuments are on the 'at risk register,' requiring attention and protection.

Coast and Rivers:

- Dynamic shoreline changes pose threats to coastal communities.
- Rising sea levels and storm surges impact freshwater supply and coastal habitats.

Drivers of Change: Climate Change:

- Potential sea level rise affects infrastructure and coastal habitats.
- Temperature increase and storm intensity impact ecosystems, marine life, and coastal features.
- Changes in rainfall pattern affect crop types and may lead to landscape changes.

Other Key Drivers:

- Low pressure for development, but enhancements must consider landscape sensitivity.
- Agriculture's role in the islands' economy and management of habitats is crucial.
- The natural environment is vital for the islands' economic prosperity and visitor attraction.
- Appropriate management of off islands is necessary for sea bird populations' nesting sites.

Landscape Character (Local)

- 3.20 The application site is located within 'Isles of Scilly' Character areas as per the countryside Agency report, prepared by Land Use Consultants in 2002. Please note that this information is now over 20 years old, and Isles of Scilly has not been updated as part of the recent 2022 Cornwall Character Area Assessment.
- 3.21 This chapter delves into the diverse landscape of the Isles of Scilly, classified into four broad character types: headlands, coastal edges, interior hills and valleys, and agricultural land. The 1996 landscape assessment identifies 21 historic landscape types, further grouped into 14 individual types, each exhibiting a distinct and relatively homogeneous character. While there are subtle differences within each type contributing to the richness of Scilly's landscape, the descriptions are generalized, and boundaries between types indicate transitions rather than stark changes on the ground.
- 3.22 Broad Character Types:
- Headlands: Prominent coastal features with unique characteristics.
 - Coastal Edge: Areas along the coastline with distinct landscape features.
 - Interior Hills and Valleys: Inland areas characterised by undulating topography.
 - Agricultural Land: Areas used for farming, contributing to the islands' economy.
- 3.23 The Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Area is a diverse and unique environment classified into four broad character types: headlands, coastal edges, interior hills and valleys, and agricultural land. These types encompass 14 individual landscape types, each exhibiting distinct and relatively homogeneous characteristics. The landscape, as described in the 1996 landscape assessment, is rich and diverse, with subtle local differences within each type contributing to the overall uniqueness.
- 3.24 The key distinguishing characteristics of these landscape types create a varied and picturesque setting. Headlands are prominent coastal features, coastal edges showcase distinct coastal landscapes, interior hills and valleys feature undulating inland terrain, and agricultural land supports farming activities. On each island, these landscape types combine in different ways, resulting in a unique character for each island that goes beyond the sum of its individual components.
- 3.25 The descriptions provided are generalised, with boundaries between types indicating transitions rather than abrupt changes on the ground. The overall richness of the Isles of Scilly's landscape lies in the subtle variations within each type. The 1996 landscape assessment offers a comprehensive understanding of these landscape types, contributing to the appreciation of the Isles of Scilly's distinctive and varied scenery.
- 3.26 The key distinguishing characteristics of landscape types are outlined in the 1996 landscape assessment, offering a comprehensive understanding of the Isles of Scilly's distinct and varied scenery:
- 3.27 The Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Area comprises diverse terrains, each with distinctive features and ecological significance. Each landscape type contributes to the overall richness and diversity of the Isles of Scilly's scenery, offering unique habitats, visual appeal, and historical significance. The descriptions provide insights into the environmental and cultural importance of each area within the Isles of Scilly. The key landscape types include:

- Exposed Headland Heaths:
 - Located on exposed, windswept plateaux with rugged cliffs.
 - Thin, skeletal soils support waved heath vegetation on seaward sides.
 - Granite outcrops form distinctive tors.
 - Rich in nature conservation, supporting breeding bird colonies and archaeological sites.
- Low-Lying Southern Headlands:
 - Less exposed unenclosed headlands with granite promontories.
 - Mixed vegetation, susceptible to invasion by gorse and bracken.
 - Notable for rare plants, breeding birds, and archaeological richness.
- Fortified Headlands (The Garrison on St Mary's):
 - Gentle, rounded headland with strategic importance.
 - Varied habitats, including acid grassland and maritime grassland.
 - Impressive fortifications of national importance, attracting visitors.
- Coastal Edge:
 - Low-lying sheltered coastal areas with varied characters.
 - Short turf swards, dune pasture, and accreting dune systems.
 - High nature conservation value, including rare plants, invertebrates, and seabird breeding sites.
- Sandy Coast with Dunes or Grassland:
 - Narrow strip backing a rocky coastline.
 - Unenclosed heathland and bracken with occasional abandoned fields.
 - Rich in archaeological sites, frequently with footpaths for access.
- Maritime Heathland along the Coastal Edge:
 - Northeastern coastal edge on St Mary's with pine shelterbelts.
 - Includes shelterbelts dating from the 19th century and recent plantations.
- Sandy Coastal Strip with Bulb Fields:
 - Flat, low-lying area on blown sand between the coast and rising land.
 - Previously cultivated as bulb fields, with few remaining in use today.

3.28 The undulating agricultural interior of St Mary's boasts a gentle relief, sheltered from the sea.

Anciently enclosed lands, late post-medieval and modern enclosures, and bulb strips form a patchwork of small to medium-sized fields. Stone boundary walls covered with bramble and bracken often resemble lines of vegetation. The landscape, homogeneous with a mix of pasture, bulb fields, and grass ley, features a "wooded" appearance, including pine shelterbelts and elm-lined lanes. Nucleated farmsteads with various outbuildings and barns, particularly in the northern part of the island, face threats of conversion, risking the loss of rural character. Some farmsteads are surrounded by small remnant orchards. The island's network of sunken, winding, elm-lined lanes from medieval times provides a recreational network, connecting farmsteads, settlements, and the coastal edge.

3.29 Hugh Town, the primary settlement in the Islands, serves as the modern commercial and administrative hub. Situated around the natural harbor of St Mary's Pool, it has long been a safe haven for ships navigating the surrounding treacherous seas. The harbor remains the main deep-water anchorage in Scilly, with the quay to Rat Island serving as the focal point for freight ships, small craft arrivals and departures, and off-island launches during the tourist season. Town Beach and Porthcressa border the town to the north and south, separated by a distance of just over 50 meters. Rising sea levels may lead to the eventual inundation of Hugh Town and the separation of

St Mary's into two islands. As the primary concentration of freehold land on Scilly, Hugh Town faces intense development pressure, resulting in closely packed buildings of various styles and designs. The main street features open squares, enclosed areas, and narrow lanes, providing glimpses of the sea on either side.

- 3.30 The landscape of the Isles of Scilly has been shaped by various forces, including historical agricultural practices. Recent challenges, such as declining farm income and increased competition, have led to changes in land use. Farming, once a significant part of the economy, now contributes less than 15%, impacting the landscape. Efforts are being made to reverse these trends and sustain a viable farm economy. Livestock grazing has decreased, affecting heathlands and archaeological sites. Horticulture, particularly flower production, has declined, impacting visual aspects and wildlife.
- 3.31 Traditional farm buildings face pressures for reuse, with some converted for tourism. Tourism is now the dominant economic sector, contributing to the character of the islands but also posing challenges. Development, traffic, housing, and climate change are additional factors influencing the landscape. Managing these forces is crucial to preserving the unique character and environment of the Isles of Scilly. Ongoing efforts involve collaboration between local authorities, wildlife trusts, and the Duchy of Cornwall, with a focus on sustainability and environmental protection. The AONB management plan plays a key role in guiding these efforts.

Landscape Designations

- 3.32 **Isles of Scilly National landscape (previously AONB)** covers the Study area.
- 3.33 The Isles of Scilly, England's only archipelago, offer a stunning National Landscape with rugged granite headlands, sandy bays, coastal heaths, and bulbfields. Among the 200 islands, only five are inhabited, shared by locals and visitors alongside diverse wildlife and archaeology. The crystal-clear waters teem with marine life, and the islands host internationally significant seabird colonies. Scilly's unique heathland supports exclusive plant species, and the area has avoided Dutch elm disease. Rich in history, Scilly showcases Bronze Age farming influences, abundant archaeology, and a heritage tied to flower-farming and fishing, now surpassed by heritage-driven tourism as the primary economic focus. Local traditions, like gig rowing, continue to play a vital role in island life.
- 3.34 The Isles of Scilly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2021-2025 sets out the following:
- 3.35 The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty; Subsequent legislation has emphasised that in pursuing this primary purpose, account should be taken for the needs of agriculture, forestry and rural industries as well as the economic and social needs of local communities. Due regard should be paid to endorsing sustainable forms of social and economic development that enhances the natural and historic environment; Though recreation is not an objective of the designation, the demand for recreation should be met insofar as it is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty.
- 3.36 The Isles of Scilly were designated an AONB in 1975 and are the smallest AONB designation in the UK measuring 16km². There is a resident population of 2,200 people across this remote archipelago of five inhabited islands comprising of 1,700 on St Mary's, 175 on Tresco, 135 on St Martin's, 90 on Bryher and 80 on St Agnes.
- 3.37 In total the AONB encompasses over 200 low-lying granite islands, stretching from the Western Rocks in the far south-west to the large, rocky outcrops of the Norrad (Northern) Rocks, through to the scattered low-lying uninhabited Eastern Isles.
- 3.38 The majority of the Isles of Scilly's Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is privately owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, with some freeholds on St Mary's. The Isles are unique in having the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust as the largest tenant, leasing over 50% of the archipelago, including coastal headlands and uninhabited islands. The Tresco Estate, leased by the Dorrien-Smith family, covers the entire island of Tresco. The Local Authority holds legal responsibility for development control and AONB management.
- 3.39 The AONB Management Plan, developed collaboratively, is coordinated by the AONB partnership, involving various entities such as the Council of the Isles of Scilly, Duchy of Cornwall, Wildlife Trust, Tresco Estate, RSPB, Natural England, and others. Funding from DEFRA supports the delivery of the Management Plan. The Management Plan's vision for the Isles of Scilly AONB emphasises conservation, thriving island communities, education opportunities, and the recognition of landscapes as vital to the tourism economy.

- 3.40 The Ecosystem Approach for the Isles of Scilly AONB is guided by three core principles:
- **Inclusive Decision-Making:** People involved in managing natural capital and those benefiting from ecosystem services should have a central role in decision-making. This involves developing partnerships and engaging with stakeholders beyond the AONB boundaries to gather diverse views and implement collaborative actions.
 - **Resilience of Natural Capital:** To ensure the resilience of natural capital, the intricate functions and processes supporting ecosystem services must be fully integrated into decision-making processes in both terrestrial and marine environments. It is crucial to protect and maintain these vital processes rather than taking them for granted.
 - **Recognising the Value of Ecosystem Services:** The services provided by natural capital underlie health, wealth, and well-being for residents, workers, and visitors in the Isles of Scilly AONB. Each service has a value, whether monetary or non-monetary, and diverse perspectives on this value must be acknowledged and considered in decision-making processes.
- 3.40 The Statement of Significance states: The Isles of Scilly, located approximately 45 kilometers southwest of Land’s End, Cornwall, constitute a unique and remote archipelago with diverse landscapes and rich biodiversity. The islands, primarily consisting of acidic granite and siliceous beaches, offer a variety of small-scale landscapes shaped by their position, topography, and exposure to the elements. Agriculture dominates inhabited islands, while exposed headlands feature maritime heath, creating distinct characters for each island.
- 3.41 The uninhabited islands serve as vital wildlife refuges with designated SSSIs, supporting rare vascular plants and internationally significant breeding seabird populations. The delicate balance between nature and tourism is crucial to ensure wildlife conservation. The surrounding rocky reef habitats and extensive seagrass beds contribute to a rich marine environment with diverse species, including nationally rare ones.
- 3.42 Despite its small size, the Isles of Scilly AONB is marked by significant natural capital, encompassing 18 priority habitats crucial for ecosystem services like coastal protection and carbon storage. The AONB hosts 293 priority species, including those listed as Critically Endangered. The marine environment features a wide range of species, making the archipelago a refuge for unique biodiversity not found on the mainland.
- 3.43 The Isles of Scilly boast numerous nature conservation designations, including a Ramsar site, SSSIs, a Special Protection Area, and a Marine Special Area of Conservation. The concentration of mutually dependent species within a limited area creates a delicate ecological network that requires careful management for resilience, adaptation to climate change, and enhancement of ecosystem services.
- 3.44 The islands also have a rich historic and built environment, with over 900 archaeological sites, scheduled monuments, and protected wrecks reflecting human activity spanning over 4,000 years. The unique culture and sense of place are intertwined with maritime history, myths, and traditions. The islands, known for their exceptionally dark night skies, attract event-based tourism centred around culture, sense of place, and the environment, contributing to the islands’ charm and appeal.
- 3.45 **Key Threats and Opportunities:**
- 3.45 **Political Landscape: Brexit Impact:** Following the UK’s departure from the EU, the Isles of Scilly face

Proposed extension at St Mary’s Hospital, St Marys Island, Isles of Scilly.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

potential consequences, including changes in environmental legislation and international trade agreements. The new Environment Bill is expected to replace EU policies, and the outcome of trade deals could impact rural management, especially in the context of the Common Agricultural Policy replacement.

3.46 National Environmental Policy: The government's "A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment" outlines ambitious goals for nature's recovery. The Isles of Scilly AONB welcomes the plan, emphasising its alignment with The Colchester Declaration. Key focuses include supporting natural capital, enhancing landscapes, promoting environmental awareness, and addressing water quality and sea health. Sustainable land use, pollution reduction, and resource efficiency are integral to the plan's objectives.

3.47 Demographic Shifts: Aging Population and Lifestyle Changes Aging Population:

3.48 The Isles of Scilly experience a seasonal population surge, driven by tourism. However, the departure of the younger generation for education and limited career prospects contributes to an aging population, projected to reach 30% by 2030. This demographic shift poses challenges to local services, particularly health and social care. Access to natural landscapes plays a crucial role in promoting health and well-being among older residents, emphasising the need for community engagement, such as volunteering with the local Wildlife Trust.

3.49 Lifestyle Changes and Behavioral Patterns:

3.50 The COVID-19 pandemic has altered human behavior, leading to reduced travel and increased remote work. This shift has heightened awareness of green and blue spaces, with a newfound appreciation for local resources and heritage assets. Opportunities arise to leverage this environmental awareness, building on initiatives like Plastic Free Scilly and promoting locally grown food. As climate change impacts become more evident, there is potential for fostering connections between lifestyle choices and their environmental consequences.ChatGPT

3.51 Key Environmental Threats: Climate Emergency, Water Quality, and Biodiversity Loss

Climate Emergency:

- Global Warming: Human activities have driven 1.2°C of global warming, with temperatures expected to reach 1.5°C to 3.2°C by 2100.
- Local Vulnerabilities: Low-lying islands face threats of sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and extreme storms, impacting land, transportation, and infrastructure.
- Ecosystem Changes: Rising temperatures may alter island ecosystems, influencing species distribution and introducing new challenges.

3.52 Water Quality and Quantity:

- Freshwater Scarcity: The islands face local threats of freshwater scarcity, heightened during the summer due to increased demand from the growing seasonal population.
- Sea Level Rise Impact: Rising sea levels increase the risk of saline intrusion, affecting freshwater supplies' quantity and quality.
- Infrastructure Risks: Storm events and inadequate infrastructure pose risks to key water storage areas, affecting water quality and seawater.

3.53 Biodiversity Declines:

- Climate Change Impact: Climatic changes, intensified storms, and sea level rise pose threats to critical habitats and unique species, such as the Gilt-edged lichen and Dwarf pansy.
- Agricultural Intensification: Modern farming practices contribute to biodiversity loss, impacting wildflower meadows and reducing arable weed populations.
- Hydrological Change: Human interventions have led to the loss of ponds, canalisation, and pollution, resulting in ecological degradation and declining freshwater quality.
- Invasive Non-native Species (INNS): Over 3,200 non-native species, including ornamental escapees, negatively impact native flora and fauna, with climate change potentially exacerbating the threat.

3.54 Mitigation Strategies:

- Integrated Management: Commitment to integrated management approaches is crucial for addressing threats and pressures on biodiversity.
- Key Approaches: Utilising key approaches outlined in Chapter 2 to mitigate climate change impacts, enhance water conservation, and combat biodiversity loss.

3.55 Policy Framework:

- Community Collaboration: The Isles of Scilly AONB Partnership and community will work together to implement policies and mitigation methods to safeguard the environment.

3.56 The following policies are set out in the AONB management Plan relevant to this site and Landscape Assessment:

3.57 Policy A: The value of the natural capital and the goods and services it provides to Scilly's economy is communicated and widely understood.

3.58 Policy D: Land is managed in a way that recovers and enhances natural capital & ecosystem services and protects ecological functioning & the historic environment.

3.59 Policy F: Good planning, sustainable development and destination management conserves and enhances the AONB.

3.60 **Heritage Coast**

3.61 Heritage coast designation also covers the entirety of the Isles of Scilly. They are ‘defined’ rather than designated, so there isn’t a statutory designation process like that associated with national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). They were established to conserve the best stretches of undeveloped coast in England. A heritage coast is defined by agreement between the relevant maritime local authorities and Natural England.

3.62 The national policy framework and objectives for heritage coasts were developed by the Countryside Commission, a predecessor of Natural England, and ratified by government.

Landscape features outside the site:

3.63 SSSI : Peninnis Head (St. Mary’s) lies along the southern edge of St Mary’s. It is a significant headland with prominent granite cliffs and tors scattered amongst maritime heathland and grassland supporting a number of rare plant and lichen species.

3.64 SSSI : Lower Moors. Situated just to the east of Hugh Town, Lower Moors is one of the first really wild places you encounter on St Mary’s after leaving the town. Lying between Telegraph Road and Trench Lane (between Hugh Town and Old Town), the area is a patchwork of mire, reed bed, wet woodland and open pools and wetland.

3.65 The site proposals will not directly effect the SSSI’s, although it does lie within the designated impact risk zones.



Figure 7: SSSI impact zones. Peninnis Head (south) and Lower Moors (north)

Principle application site features/elements

3.81 The specific application site landscape consists of, or is directly adjacent to/in the immediate proximity of the following:

Landform

3.82 The application site is located on the in a gently sloping area of inland, rural undulating landscape within a wider agricultural environment, within the proximity of coastal estuarine topography.

3.83 The wider, undulating environment is bisected by field boundaries consisting of hedgerows, shrubs, trees and roads.

Settlements and built form

3.84 The application site lies on the outskirts of the built form context of Hugh Town, east of Porthcressa Beach.

3.85 The built form around the site consists of housing to the north and west and the Heath centre to the east.

3.86 The small housing development St Mary's Cottages is located to the east of the A379, at the entrance to Orchard Lane, within 500m of the application site.

3.87 Marysfield Nursery greenhouses and ancillary growing infrastructure located to the west of the entrance to Orchard Lane.

3.88 The existing hospital built form is located contained within the site boundary itself.

Adjacent roads

3.89 The application site lies to the south of Hospital Lane, where the proposed development will be accessed from.

3.89 Local roads were observed to be very quiet (visited during the winter out of tourist season), and was mainly being used by local residential/light traffic.

Neighbouring fields and boundaries

3.90 The neighbouring fields display character attributes in keeping with the local character types of hedged boundaries and open grassland.

3.91 The site land is currently a mix of agricultural land and ornamental gardens.

3.92 Site boundaries to the wider environment consist mainly of mixed exotic and native hedges.

Vegetation

3.93 The application site currently contains a mix of formal planted vegetation; with a semi- open grass field to the south..

3.94 The wider natural environment is covered with a mixture of grass fields lined with native hedgerows, shrubs consistent with the character descriptions. There are very few larger trees in the area.

PROW

3.98 There are no PROW over or adjacent to the application site, however adjacent to Buzza Tower is a

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pedestrian track leading to Porthcressa Beach. This is accessed by members of the public and is a locally valued park with trails and tracks overlooking the application site in places.

3.99 It was noted that most of the walked tracks appeared well used and well maintained/managed.

Landscape character

3.100 The application site itself displays a good sense of character as defined by the National, and local character descriptions; it is located within a semi-rural location which is semi-tranquil and in keeping with these character descriptions. The site boundaries provide a strong sense of enclosure particularly from the southern end of the site where new development will be located.

3.101 The proximity to the main road and subsequent vehicle makes this an accessible location for the proposed care home and extended hospital use, but the roads are not so busy so as to detract from a sense of tranquility.

Key landscape Views

3.102 In general, the character of the area is that of a semi-tranquil, semi-rural environment within a network of fields on the edge of the Islands main settlement, Key open views exist from within the site, across the to the sea to the south, and toward the Garrison to the south east.

Likely Landscape Effects

3.103 From the baseline analysis, the following have been identified as likely landscape and character effects:

- The scale of the proposal represents an increase in built form within the setting of existing landscape and built features of the Hospital site;
- The impact of effects are likely to be limited to the immediate site and surrounding environment and landscape character, with some views from prominent 'battery' locations along the Garrison, and from the higher ground at the Rec ground above the Garrison to the east.
- The site lies within a National Landscape (AONB). The scale and scope of the development, including the way it is sited on the topography and, within the existing site vegetation boundaries are likely have an effect on the Designation and its coastal landscape elements and views;
- Changes on the application site are likely to be prominent and perceptible from the neighbouring Island Coastline along the Garrison;
- Due to the size and scale of development it is likely to have an effect on the overall landscape Character, due to the nature of introduction of newly built form;
- No direct effect is anticipated on the nearby SSSIs.
- The site lies adjacent to some housing and existing development, however, it is seen in the context of the existing hospital development.
- If the development adopts the landscape plans, it is anticipated that the development effects can be reduced, and the experience of the development within the immediate setting and wider views can be lessened.
- During construction, the development is likely to affect the tranquility of the landscape locally and the experience of the site, due to the movement of construction vehicles and associated activities;
- Disruption to the immediate highway infrastructure is also likely during the construction stages;
- A negligible increase in traffic is likely to be experienced during operational stages;
- The tranquility of the landscape setting overlooking the application site is likely to be affected during operational stages;
- There is no anticipated potential cumulative effect in conjunction with other planned developments.

4.0 Baseline: visual amenity

Viewpoints

- 4.1 In order to inform the selection of viewpoints and fieldwork a ZTV model was generated defining the area of search (see M652_LVIA_03: ZTV Analysis). This was based on a target point set at ground level for the development, with maximum heights to represent the ridge levels of the proposed buildings to present a 'worst case scenario' in terms of theoretical visibility, in order to inform the design of building height and respective differences of effect.
- 4.2 Due to sloping topography of the application site within the surrounding undulating landscape, the development effects will be most visible from key viewpoints along The Garrison to the south-east and the Recreation Ground, and from the land adjacent to Buzza Tower, immediately east of the site. In all of these views the existing hospital is visible within the context of its surrounding built context and landscape. It is not an isolated or stand alone development.
- 4.3 Views into the site will also exist also from Hospital Lane to the north, where the existing building will be remodelled however, these are not large scale changes to the views of the site or landscape.
- 4.4 Whilst the proposed new trees and hedge bank are intended to mitigate the effect on visual amenity across the field from these directions, this will take some time as vegetation matures in the short to medium term.
- 4.4 Views from throughout the wider landscape are more limited along the roads and footpaths due to the wider undulating topography surrounding the site and taller hedgerows.
- 4.5 Viewpoints were chosen to provide representative and illustrative viewpoints of the application site, illustrated in Figure 8 (below).

Figure 8: Viewpoint locations



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Table 1: Viewpoint Schedule - details of the viewpoint photography and descriptions.

Number	Viewpoint title	Description	Easti ng	Nort hing	Direc tion	Receptor	Receptor sensitivity
Site panorama 01	Panoramic view from the application site, looking South	A view taken from within the application site, from the fire escape stair attached to the existing hospital building, looking south. From this raised vantage point, wide sweeping views across the garrison, and Porth Cressa to St Agnes Island. The site ornamental gardens and field are visible in the foreground, with the tall evergreen shelter hedges to the boundaries.	-	-	S	-	N/A
Site panorama 02	Site Photos	A view taken looking south from ground level within the application site.	-	-	S	-	N/A
Site context 03	Site Photos	A view taken looking south from ground level within the application site.	-	-	S	-	N/A
Site context 04	Site Photos	A view taken looking south from ground level within the application site.	-	-	S	-	N/A
01	View 01 from Buzza Tower	View from the historic tower to the west of the site. The top roofline of the existing hospital is visible with the cone roof of the Health centre just visible beyond the hedge-line.	90630	10370	E	SAM Local residents of PROW users	Medium
02	View 02 from Main Road	View from the main road to the north east of the site looking over the top of the field known as the 'Circus Field'. The top of the existing hospital and health centre buildings are visible from the view. No change to the view is anticipated.	90841	10328	SW	PROW users	Medium
03	View 03 from Circus Field	View from the Circus field- Site of Scheduled Ancient Monument (buried archaeology) Again, the existing health centre and hospital rooflines are visible. There is no change anticipated to this view.	90818	10297	SW		Medium
04	View 04 from Higher Battery	View from the Higher Battery on the Garrison. The view looks over the rooflines of houses across Hugh Town to the site. The existing built form of the hospital is visible on the Ridgeline.	221666	105756	E	Worst case scenario for residents of E Bude	Medium

Table 1: Viewpoint Schedule - details of the viewpoint photography and descriptions.

Number	Viewpoint title	Description	Easti ng	Nort hing	Direc tion	Receptor	Receptor sensitivity
05	View 05 from Garden Battery	View from the Garden Battery on the Garrison. The view looks over the rooflines of houses across Porthcressa beach to the site. The existing built form of the hospital is visible on the Ridgeline.	90095	10620	E	Walkers on Garrison walls Walk	Medium
06	View 06 from Upper Benham Battery	View from the Upper Denham Battery on the Garrison. The view looks over the rooflines of houses across Porthcressa beach to the site. The existing built form of the hospital is visible on the Ridgeline. (Note- Photomontage included of this view)	90095	10620	E	Walkers on Garrison walls Walk	Medium
07	View 07 from Upper Broome Platform	View from the Upper Broome Platform on the Garrison. The view looks over the rooflines of houses across Porthcressa beach to the site. The existing built form of the hospital is visible on the Ridgeline.	90095	10620	E	Walkers on Garrison walls Walk	Medium
08	View 08 from Mornig Point Battery	View from the Morning Point Battery on the Garrison. The view looks over the rooflines of houses across Porthcressa beach to the site. The existing built form of the hospital is visible on the Ridgeline.	90095	10620	NE	Walkers on Garrison walls Walk	Medium
09	View 09 from Porthcressa Beach	View from across Porthcressa beach, taken from the tide line. The existing built form of the health centre roof is just visible on the Ridgeline, adjacent to the Buzza Tower.	90280	10411	E	Users of Porthcressa Beach.	Medium
10	View 010 from The Recreation Ground	View from across the higher point of he Recreation Ground beyond the Garrison to the west. (Note- Photomontage included of this view)	90280	10411	E	Users of the Recreation Ground	Medium

Likely Visual Effects

- 4.23 From the baseline analysis, the following have been identified as likely visual effects:
- 4.24 Due to sloping topography of the application site within the surrounding undulating landscape, the development effects will be most visible from the mid- distant landscape on the Garrison and beyond in the west.
- From the Buzza tower, in the westerly direction, glimpsed views of the new built form will be seen above and through existing vegetation from the will be partly obscured by existing vegetation.
 - Views from the Character Area, AONB and the island coast are mainly from Battery points and walking paths on the Garrison, and from the Recreation Ground, where receptors will generally be from transient and static Receptors of a medium to high sensitivity;
 - In these views from the south west, the new built form will be experienced as a large extension to the existing hospital built form, and will be seen in the context of this existing built context, along with the surrounding housing and health-centre located on the Ridgeline.
 - Views from the north may be experienced by users of Hospital Lane and other areas to the north. These will be of minor alterations to the existing Hospital, and not of major impact.
 - As the wider landscape is varied and undulating, views of the application site from beyond the immediate site surroundings to the north and east are likely to be obscured by landform and vegetation.
- 4.25 The introduction of the proposed buildings will represent a increase to vertical form and a change to existing conditions. This effect will be most prominent from the south from local area and from the coastal and island landscape. Where there is existing boundary vegetation, this will be retained and will largely screen the lower floor (basement). The main ward / bedroom levels will be visible with the roofline above.
- 4.27 Any views overlooking the site from residential properties are likely to experience a minor effects of change.
- 4.28 Landscaping enhancement is planned through the installation of additional hedges, tree and shrub planting. Due to the slightly sloping site topography, mitigation of effects using landscape enhancement at the road boundaries of the site will be limited in the short term but more effective in the longer term once vegetation matures.
- 4.29 The footpaths and roads will not experience direct change to their immediate character or setting as result of proposals, as they are transient receptors of medium sensitivity only.
- 4.30 There may be a minor perceived change to the visual amenity due to the introduction of built form nearby, but this will not affect the public rights of way, or their users.
- 4.31 Users on the Garrison will likely experience an effect from certain viewpoints where directly looking toward the development site.
- 4.31 Following fieldwork, it was apparent that there are a number of landscape elements which provide a significant restriction to total or partial inter-visibility of the application site and the proposed development, from certain viewpoints. These include surrounding boundary vegetation, undulating

farmland and woodlands located to the north and the built environment to the south. These include the following visual receptors: existing residential property; road users and users of the local PROW.

- 4.32 Further distant may exist from the further Island of St Agnes. This was not photographed due to weather conditions, however the views from Morning Point and the Lower Garrison are representative of these. The level of acuity at these distances means the visual impact is anticipated to be minor/negligible. It is expected these will be shielded from effects by the distance, and the in-between vegetative and topographic barriers as previously outlined.
- 4.33 There are currently no other cumulative development effects to be considered in conjunction with this development.
- 4.34 Increased volumes of vehicular traffic and plant are expected during construction, with the construction works being visible from the affected viewpoints.
- 4.35 Increased traffic will be experienced during the operational stage from users and employees of the facility, with an increased number of vehicles potentially visible from affected viewpoints.
- 4.36 The following images demonstrate before and after photomontages of viewpoint photography taken from Upper Benham Battery, on the Garrison, and The Recreation Ground.

Figure 10/11- Upper Benham Battery, Before and After (Viewpoint 06 in the photosheets)



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Figure 12/13- View from the Recreation Ground, Before and After (Viewpoint 10 in the photosheets)



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5.0 Landscape Effects Assessment

Landscape value

- 5.1 The value of a landscape receptor is determined by a combination of the character attributes, baseline quality/condition, elements and features (and rarity thereof), and perceptual qualities belonging to the landscape receptor.

Landscape receptors

- 5.2 Landscape features, character areas or designations can be considered as potential receptors to change resulting from proposed development through alteration or loss of key elements integral to their value or condition.

Landscape receptor Sensitivity

- 5.3 The sensitivity of each landscape receptor is assessed by its susceptibility to change and the value related to the receptor. Overall sensitivity varies with land use, degree of openness, scope for mitigation, settlements patterns and value attached to it. Sensitivity is categorised as High, Medium or Low (see Table 2: Sensitivity of landscape receptor).
- 5.4 Susceptibility of a landscape receptor is defined as its ability to accommodate change without undue effects on its baseline condition.

Table 2: Sensitivity of landscape receptor

Sensitivity	Description
High	Landscape displays high degree of feature, character, condition or quality attribute(s). It is recognised nationally for characteristics or designations.
Medium	Landscape displays moderate degree of feature, character, condition or quality attribute(s). It may be recognised for local characteristics of designations.
Low	Landscape displays low degree of feature, character, condition or quality attribute(s). It is not recognised for characteristics or designations.

Landscape effects

- 5.5 The effect of change to the landscape receptor may have a duration of temporary, short or long term, or permanent, and are categorised as:
- Directly created from the development itself.
 - Indirect/secondary, as a consequential result of the development.
 - Cumulative, where considered in conjunction with other proposed developments.

Magnitude of effect on landscape receptor

- 5.6 The magnitude of change to the landscape receptor is assessed by the size and/or scale, the geographical extent and the duration and/or reversibility of the change.
- 5.7 Magnitude is categorised as Major, Moderate/None or Minor (see Table 3: Magnitude of effect on landscape receptor).

- Size and/or scale is determined as the extent of landscape baseline which is lost or affected by the change. It is categorised as Major, Moderate or Minor/None.
- Geographical extent affected is categorised as Application site (localised area), Immediate (within the setting of the Application site), or Larger (affecting the larger Landscape Area/ Character type).
- Duration is categorised as Short (0-5 years), Medium (5-10 years) or Long (10-25 years) term. Reversibility is defined as Temporary or Permanent. These are separate but related considerations, which will be applicable in different scenarios.

Table 3: Magnitude of effect on landscape receptor

Magnitude	Description
Major	Loss or extensive alteration to Larger or Immediate landscape feature, character, condition or quality attribute(s).
Moderate	Moderate loss or alteration to Application site feature, character, condition or quality attribute(s).
Minor/ Negligible	Minor or negligible alteration to Application site or Immediate landscape feature, character, condition or quality attribute(s).

Significance effects

- 5.8 Sensitivity and Magnitude are combined to determine the Significance of effect. With reference to Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (2017), ‘significant’ effects are those evaluated as Major, Moderate or Minor (see Table 4: Significance of effect matrix).
- 5.9 For the purposes of this LVIA, and any subsequent Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Major effects may be deemed severe, and Moderate effects material.

Table 4: Significance of effect matrix

Magnitude	Sensitivity		
	Low	Medium	High
Minor/Negligible	Minor/Negligible	Minor	Moderate/Minor
Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Major
Major	Moderate/Minor	Major	Major

Likely significant effects

- 5.10 Likely significant landscape and visual effects are judged together to be Adverse, Neutral, or Beneficial in overall influence.
- 5.11 Of those Receptors identified within the Application site surroundings through the baseline study, the following are likely to experience effects resulting from the development being assessed (see Table 5: Landscape Effects Assessment).

Table 5: Landscape Effects Assessment

Receptor (Site feature/element)	Quality (condition) Low/Medium/Good	Aesthetic/perceptual qualities Low/Ordinary/Good	Value Low/Medium/High	Receptor sensitivity Low/Medium/High	Likely Effects Direct/Indirect Permanent/temporary	Magnitude of Effect	Significance & Influence of Effect
Existing Site landscape. Lower field and boundaries and ornamental gardens. (hedges and woodland).	Medium Some features of value (hedges, sunken lanes, wooded and scrub patches) but majority of site is hard surfaced (tarmac/ concrete) with amenity grass margins.	Ordinary Exsting development at whalesborough occupies much of immediate setting, with development at Bude filling much of medium to long distance views	Medium <i>Amenity landscaped area with development, but also with features of landscape value and views across the wider landscape</i>	Medium On account of existing development on site. Some of the ornamental gardens and fields will be lost replaced with quite large scale built form.	Direct & Permanent All adjacent boundary features of value (e.g. hedges) to remain intact but with a change to the ornamental gardens. Loss of some hedges and planted areas replaced with new built form.	Minor to moderate	Minor to medium
Site character	Medium Some features beneficial to character, as defined by the NCA and LCA descriptions, but with others detrimental (built scale/ existing fencing)	Ordinary Semi-rural setting with urban influence of Bude and development at Whalesborough	Medium <i>Undesignated landscape containing development, but with some features of value</i>	Low Low susceptibility to change, on account of existing development and built mass, resulting in medium sensitivity	Direct & Permanent Minor increase in built mass but with some landscape enhancements	Minor to moderate	Minor to medium
Local Character Areas- Isles of Scilly	Medium The character and quality within the study area is generally in keeping with the LCA; with a coastline of low cliffs and sandy beaches gently undulating topography and medium sized fields, but with some negative influences development	Ordinary Attractive coastal landscape but with some expansive development and reduced tranquility on account of visitor pressure and the busy A39.	Medium Majority of LCA within study area falls outside of the AONB, with varying elements of both higher and lower value	Low On account of the design/ siting, set within the existing holiday complex	None The proposals would result in no change to key characteristics and are physically separated from the LCA	Minor to moderate	Minor to medium

Receptor (Site feature/element)	Quality (condition) Low/Medium/Good	Aesthetic/perceptual qualities Low/Ordinary/Good	Value Low/Medium/High	Receptor sensitivity Low/Medium/High	Likely Effects Direct/Indirect Permanent/temporary	Magnitude of Effect	Significance & Influence of Effect
Isles of Scilly National Landscape (AONB)	Good Strong and functioning landscape with intact features of value.	Good High levels of tranquility and scenic value	High Nationally designated for landscape quality	Medium Low susceptibility on account of lack of views and distance, but the high landscape value keeps the sensitivity medium	None Some views within the study area and the proposals would result in changes to special quality landscapes in the AONB. The proposals represent large scale development for the Iland, but are in the context of existing hospital built form and surrounding urban context of Hugh Town.	Moderate	Medium
Buzza Tower to	Medium Tranquil coastal edge and historic feature characterised by open wide sweeping views to the sea	Ordinary Higher scenic and heritage qualities.	Medium Locally designated	Medium Some visual connection directly to the site at Buzza Tower, but interrupted by boundary vegetation.	None Scale and scope of development within topography is expected to impact on any of these Receptors, or their setting.	Moderate	Medium
Porthcressa Beach	Medium Tranquil coastal character- (note- assessed in the winter months.)	Ordinary Coastal scenic qualities, with intrusion of lower tranquility toward the built form and townscape.	Medium Locally designated	Medium Some visual connection directly to the site at Buzza Tower.	None No change anticipated	None	Negligible
PROW- The Garrison Walls Walk.	Medium Tranquil and treelined character to west of the site. Visibility to the site possible from the 'Batteries' along th Garrison.	Ordinary Open portions holds higher scenic qualities , with intrusion and lower tranquility due to the presence of housing in the views taking in the townscape of Hughtown.	Medium Locally designated route	Low No visual or physical separation with lodge site, access track is already concrete surface vehicle track	None Scale and scope of development within topography is not expected to impact on any of these Receptors, or their setting.	Moderate	Slight & Neutral

6.0 Visual Effects Assessment

Introduction

- 6.1 This section examines the influence of the landscape on the visual amenity in the area, focusing on landform, vegetation and visual key features and characteristics, linked back to the previous landscape character descriptions as appropriate.
- 6.2 This is followed by a description of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility of the proposals and the key views photographed for the assessment, taken from the previous LVIA undertaken by Claire Foxford (2019), presented below.
- 6.3 Existing theoretical visibility of the Application site is illustrated in M652_LVIA 03: ZTV Analysis, along with the key viewpoints selected for the LVIA which are detailed in Table 1: Viewpoint Schedule.
- 6.4 The ZTV map illustrates areas from which the development may be theoretically visible. This ZTV has been based on a 'bare earth' scenario. This ZTV does not take into consideration any of the existing vegetation, built form or hedgerows. Viewpoints have then been determined based on field observations to determine actual visibility led by the initial ZTV when influenced by the current situation. The areas shown in light blue represent the theoretical zone of visibility of the application site.
- 6.5 The extent of the views into the application site are currently limited by the surrounding boundary vegetation and wider topography. The proposed entrance will allow views predominately from the south at close proximity into the site and views may also exist through the vegetation from the west. Views from the wider landscape are shielded by built environment, vegetation and topography. The landform including the built environment has been taken into account.

Visual Effects Assessment

- 6.6 Of those Receptors identified within the application site surroundings through the baseline study, the following are likely to experience effects resulting from the development (see also Table 1: Viewpoint Schedule):
- (1) View 01 from Buzza Tower
 - (2) View 02 from Main Road
 - (3) View 03 from Circus Field
 - (4) View 04 from Higher Battery
 - (5) View 05 from Garden Battery
 - (6) View 06 from Upper Benham Battery
 - (7) View 07 from Upper Broome Platform
 - (8) View 08 from Morning Point Battery
 - (9) View 09 from Porthcressa Beach
 - (10) View 10 from The Recreation Ground

- 6.7 Viewpoint photography
- 6.8 Further viewpoint photographs will be captured at a later date and assessed on Photosheets in a separate Appendix, using the below criteria.
- 6.9 The photographs will be taken using a Full Sensor SLR Nikon D60 digital camera using a fixed 50mm focal length (35mm format equivalent) lens. The camera will be set at a typical eye height of 1.5m above ground level.

The photographs used to illustrate the assessment will be ‘stitched’ together using Photoshop digital imaging software to provide a ‘panoramic image’, thus providing a visual context to the focus of the centre photograph.

Visual value

- 6.10 The value of a visual receptor is determined by a combination of the character attributes attached to the view, for example through Designation or the presence of heritage assets, references to the landscape in literature and perceptual qualities belonging to the visual receptor.

Visual receptors

- 6.11 Anyone viewing the application site is considered a potential receptor to change resulting from proposed development through alteration or loss of key elements integral to their visual amenity value or appearance.

Visual receptor Sensitivity

- 6.12 The sensitivity of each visual receptor is assessed by the extent to which the viewpoint will experience the effect of development. This is affected by the location of the receptor, the activity the receptor is engaged in and the interaction experienced with the landscape, and sometimes the quantity of users present at the receptor. Sensitivity is categorised as High, Medium or Low (see Table 6: Sensitivity of visual receptor).

The PROW’s are local designations (national in the case of a SWCP), considered to be of medium sensitivity.

Table 6: Sensitivity of visual receptor

Sensitivity	Description
High	Users with primary or static interaction with landscape, including for example residents, communities involved in activities within the landscape, or users of a PROW.
Medium	Users who engage in a secondary or transient interaction with the landscape, including those travelling in vehicles, users of a PROW or any other incidental temporary landscape use.
Low	Users with no interaction or contact with the landscape, such as people at work.

Visual effects

- 6.13 The effect of change to the landscape receptor may have a duration of temporary, short or long term, or permanent, and are categorised as:
- Directly created from the development itself.
 - Indirect/secondary, as a consequential result of the development.
 - Cumulative, where considered in conjunction with other proposed developments.

Magnitude of effect on visual receptor

- 6.14 The magnitude of change to the visual receptor is also assessed by the size and/or scale, degree of contrast with features, the nature of the proposed view, the geographical extent and the duration and/or reversibility of the change.
- 6.15 Magnitude is categorised as Major, Moderate/None or Minor (see Table 7: Magnitude of effect on visual receptor).
- Size and/or scale is determined as the extent of visual baseline which is lost or affected by the change. It is categorised as Major, Moderate or Minor/None.
 - Geographical extent affected is categorised as the angle of the view in relation to the receptor, the distance from the receptor and the extent over which the changes would be visible.
 - Duration is categorised as Short (0-5 years), Medium (5-10 years) or Long (10-25 years) term. Reversibility is defined as Temporary or Permanent. These are separate but related considerations, which will be applicable in different scenarios.

Table 7: Magnitude of effect on visual receptor

Magnitude	Description
Major	Extensive loss or alteration to existing view, or quality/character of view.
Moderate	Moderate loss or alteration to existing view, or quality/character of view.
Minor/ Negligible	Minor or negligible loss or alteration to existing view, or quality/character of view.

Significance of effects

- 6.16 Sensitivity and Magnitude are combined to determine the significance of effect. With reference to Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (2017), ‘significant’ effects are those evaluated as Major, Moderate or Minor (see Table 4: Significance of effects matrix, repeated below).

For the purposes of this LVIA, and any subsequent Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Major effects may be deemed severe, and Moderate effects material.

Table 4: Significance of effect matrix

Magnitude	Sensitivity		
	Low	Medium	High
Minor/Negligible	Minor	Minor	Moderate/Minor
Moderate	Minor	Moderate	Major
Major	Moderate/Minor	Major	Major

Judgements on influence of likely significant effects

- 6.17 Likely significant landscape and visual effects are judged together to be Adverse, Neutral, or Beneficial in overall influence.

7.0 Summary of Likely Effects

Landscape and Visual Effects

- 7.1 The proposals represent a direct, permanent change to the application site, resulting from a fairly large scale extension to the existing hospital building to add a care home wing, and new bed ward for the hospital. The proposals will extend the hospital built form further south across the site, toward the coast, replacing an area of ornamental gardens and an open grass field with built form.
- 7.2 The application site character is currently of good quality character as defined by the character areas and National Landscape (AONB) descriptors however the site is currently developed, and proposals are viewed in the context of the existing. Built form on and surrounding the site. The site offers wide sweeping views across the coast ledge to the south, and there is also some inter-visibility between this coastal Island landscape, and the site.
- 7.3 Key views are experienced from the Garrison, to the west and south west, and from the higher elevation land at the Recreation Ground.
- 7.4 Therefore the magnitude of effect of the proposed development on the site character is deemed as moderate with a medium level of receptor sensitivity; the significance of effect is deemed moderate, with an adverse influence of effect overall.
- 7.5 The adjacent road and housing is predicted to experience a direct, temporary increase in traffic during the construction stage and a direct, permanent, increase in vehicular movement during the operational stage with the significance of effect deemed as moderate. The receptor sensitivity is medium; the significance of effect deemed moderate, with a minor adverse influence of effect overall.
- 7.6 The proposals are located within a generally southern sloping field. Viewpoint locations towards the application site from the wider landscape character area are limited to those in the immediate surroundings; effects reduce over more distant views across from and are limited to the wider environment from all directions due to the topography and vegetation. As such, changes on the application site are not likely to be prominent or perceptible from within the wider Character area and National Landscape (AONB), therefore the predicted change to Landscape Character is direct and permanent, but of a minor/negligible magnitude of effect, a minor/negligible significance of effect which is neutral in influence overall.
- 7.5 Receptors using local walking tracks and PROW's are transient users, susceptible to changes in perceptual and experiential qualities as a consequence of the development. The PROW are not expected to experience some direct change to their immediate character or setting as result of proposals. Some views to the site and proposals will be visible however, from the battery points along the Garrison, however, these are experienced from the mid- distance and may be mitigated in areas where there are greater vegetative barriers. Appreciation of the wider views from the PROW's are unlikely to be affected in the longer term. The predicted changes to the PROW are therefore both indirect, and permanent, but with a minor/negligible magnitude of effect, the significance of effect deemed minor with a neutral influence overall.

- 7.13 Both road and PROW users are considered medium receptors of a transient nature. Users of the nearby roads are considered receptors of a low sensitivity.
- 7.14 From VPo1 at Buzza tower, the visual effects of built form may be visible above the hedge line in the short term whilst site vegetation continues to mature, but will be set back from the tower, so will be less prominent due to perspective and will be largely shielded by the in between existing hedge bank. Therefore from this viewpoint, the effects represent a direct and permanent change of a minor/negligible magnitude and minor significance, with an neutral overall influence of effect.
- 7.15 From VPo2/o3, views of the development will likely be visible above the new hedge line with the application site by transient and static receptors, whilst the vegetation matures. The development from this side will be minimal changes to the existing building, therefore from these viewpoints, the effects represent a direct and permanent change of a minor magnitude and significance, with an low adverse effect of change.
- 7.16 From VPo4 to VPo8, along the Garrison, the elevated viewpoints will allow visibility into the application site, although this is in the context of the linear built form along the Ridgeline, and the townscape of Hugh Town below. The extent of mitigation through vegetative screening will be limited in the short term and during the winter months when leaf cover is reduced. Therefore from this viewpoint, the effects represent a direct and permanent change of a moderate magnitude and significance, with an adverse overall influence of effect.
- 7.17 From VPo9 from Porthcressa Beach, the effects of development are unlikely to be perceivable. Therefore from this viewpoint, the effects are none. i.e. no change to the view.
- 7.18 From VP10, from the recreation Ground, the effects of development are likely to be perceivable, however at this distance and visual acuity, effects will be diminished, and the proposals are viewed in the context of exiting built form and the urban townscape context of Hugh Town in between in the view. Therefore from this viewpoint, the effects represent a direct and permanent change of a minor magnitude and minor significance, with a minor overall influence of effect. Fieldwork investigated into more distant views from the west and south verified these are obscured by topographic and/or vegetative barriers between the views and application site.
- 7.19 The visual impact effects reduce from the viewpoints outside of the immediate application site surroundings; the topography and vegetative barriers limit views into the site from the general wider environment.

Cumulative effects

- 7.20 There are no anticipated potential cumulative effects to be considered in conjunction with other local developments.

8.0 Mitigation and Enhancement

8.1 The mitigation strategies for the development include:

- Primary measures (prevention/avoidance of effects);
- Standard measures (reduction of effects).

8.3 The general design has been informed by the need to create a modular building on the site, to maximise the efficiency of the construction.

The effects of change in the local landscape will result in an increase in vertical and horizontal scale; and mass of the existing hospital, which will be visually intrusive into the 'green' space currently on the site, and visible from areas of the wider landscape discussed above, however, there are mitigation methods may be implemented to help reduce effects:

- The retention of all planted site boundaries,
- introduction of new and enhanced landscaping to boundaries aims to act as screening to both the local valued non-statutory designations and wider environment.
- The built form has been designed using an agricultural style and material palette in keeping with the locality, enabling the development to recede into the landscape as far as practically possible and reinforcing the local architectural vernacular. (i.e. slate roof, and stone cladding)
- Increasing the biodiversity and habitat on site in line with ecological recommendations.
- Containing the development within the application site boundary, retaining field boundaries.
- A construction management plan should be implemented for working hours to be limited in accordance with the agreed construction management plan as appropriate in order to affect the tranquility of the landscape due to the movement of construction vehicles and associated activities.
- Mitigation of landscape and visual effect are anticipated to be achieved in the medium to long term.

10.0 Conclusions

- 10.1 The proposed development seeks to respond to local health and wellbeing infrastructure improvement, in line with local and national policies.
- 10.3 The proposed development has been designed to respond to the need to improve and expand local health and wellbeing infrastructure on the Island, in line with the local plan and national planning policies. There has been with a strong consideration for a sustainable development, using local materials in keeping with the local vernacular.
- 10.3 The design is also mindful of minimising landscape and visual impacts, using local materials in keeping with the local vernacular and incorporating vegetative screening to boundaries, creating habitats for biodiversity.
- 10.4 Due to its sloping topography towards the south, effects are likely to be limited to the immediate vicinity of the development, and some mid- distant views from the west and south-west. Were views into the application site do exist from south from wider landscape character area and National Landscape, these are of receptors both medium and high sensitivity.
- 10.5 Changes on the application site are unlikely to be prominent or perceptible from within the wider Character Area and the National Landscape.
- 10.8 Proposals will result in the loss of this historic field character, however, this may be mitigated to a degree by containing to the existing application site hedge boundaries and retaining and enhancing boundaries within the site landscapes.
- 10.10 There will be no direct effect on any other Landscape Designations within the Study area.
- 110.12 Some local footpaths and PRow are unlikely to experience direct change to their setting during the construction stages, there may be some appreciation of the changes on site in the longer term, particularly from Buzza Tower, in the close range. Longer view from vantage points along the Garrison and the Recreation Ground may also be effected longer term, however proposals will be viewed with the context of the existing built form.
- 10.13 An increase in traffic during construction and operation is likely to reduce the semi-tranquility of the immediate character setting and impact visual amenity. However, standard mitigation strategies for construction can be adopted and both construction and operational traffic restricted and limited to areas as agreed by a subsequent management plans. A slight increase in traffic during operational phase is expected.
- 10.14 This LVIA concludes that although the proposed development will result in an increase of built form compared to the existing condition, this does not present a overall negative effect of change to the landscape or visual amenity in the long term, due to the context of the townscape setting of Hugh Town, and once mitigation and enhancement measures are in place.

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Proposed extension at St Mary's Hospital, St Marys Island, Isles of Scilly.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Mei Loci Landscape Architects, Studio G2, Old Bakery Studios, Blewetts Wharf, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 1QH - December 2023