

7

Landscape and Visual



The New Community has been designed to reflect and complement the landscape character of the site and the surrounding area, which has the traditional Devon field and hedgerow pattern, with relatively few woodlands, trees mainly being located within hedgerows. A tree survey has been undertaken since the original application was undertaken which has informed the preparation of the revised Development Framework Plan and the proposed predicted loss and retention of hedgerows and tree groups. New landscape and visual assessments have been undertaken on the amended DFP and are reported in the new chapter.

A new Illustrative Landscape Framework Plan has also been prepared explaining how the layout for the New Community has been influenced strongly by the existing pattern of field boundaries and hedgerows. Many existing hedgerows, particularly those with trees, will be preserved within the New Community. They will become part of open spaces or be designed as green spaces running along streets. Existing good quality and parkland trees not within hedgerows will also be preserved wherever possible. Where hedgerows are not to be retained, the street layout within the New Community will follow the line of the field boundaries

and hedgerows, to retain the pattern of field boundaries the landscape character. Many streets within the New Community will feature avenue tree planting, some marking the lines of former field boundaries, helping the New Community to blend into the surrounding landscape. Formal tree planting will take place within the Town Centre and elsewhere, thereby emphasising the importance of such community areas.

The New Community will be well provided with open space, including the substantial country park, as well playing fields, children's play areas, a community orchard and smaller areas of open space, such as squares and circuses, within the development blocks. All of these open spaces will be landscaped and planted with trees. A series of copses will be created around the edge of the New Community to aid the transition to the countryside and, where relevant, to enclose views. Overall, the New Community will result in a significant increase in the number of trees within the site.

The undulating nature of the landscape around the New Community site means that it will be visible from relatively few viewpoints. The revised landscape and visual assessment has considered the affect of the amended DFP during construction, at its completion, and after 20 years, when the tree planting will have taken effect.

The landscape impact 20 years after planting will not be significant as many of the hedgerow patterns and the hedgerow trees will be retained within the scheme and the new planting within the site will have assisted in the integration of the proposals into the surrounding countryside, softening the edges and providing a more wooded local skyline.

The visual impact is reduced after 20 years having taken account of the strategic planting within the site, such as new avenues, hedges, copses, trees and planting within the Country Park. Good management of the retained hedgerows over 20 years will have also broken up new rooflines, softening their appearance. The magnitude and significance of the original visual impacts will thereby be reduced.

The landscape and visual assessment concluded that the development proposals for the New Community are therefore appropriate to the scale and character of the landscape and well situated and the planting and lighting mitigation will successfully reduce the magnitude and significance of impacts.

Predicted Retention / Loss of Hedgerows and Tree Groups Plan (For indicative purposes only)

