A Masterplan for Selkirk Road, Moffat

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

for Hartfell Homes & Loreburn Housing Association

August 2020

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Revision History	Reason	Date
00	First draft for internal and WYG review	26th August 2019
01	Second draft following above review	5th September 2019
02	File size of images reduced	7th September 2019
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06	Plans updated	15th October 2020

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Accompanying stand-alone drawings

Selkirk Road 3	Constraints and Opportunities
Selkirk Road 5	Illustrative plan of area around the Motte
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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Dumfries and Galloway Council has allocated an area of land on the eastern edge of Moffat for future housing; its allocation reference is MOF.H4, and it is commonly referred to as the "Selkirk Road site".

In order for housing plans to be progressed, the Council requires that a masterplan is prepared, and that this masterplan is informed by a range of technical and environmental studies. Among these studies a landscape and visual appraisal is required. The following document reports on the findings of the landscape appraisal studies and also explains how these studies have informed the masterplan design process in an iterative way.

1.2 The site context

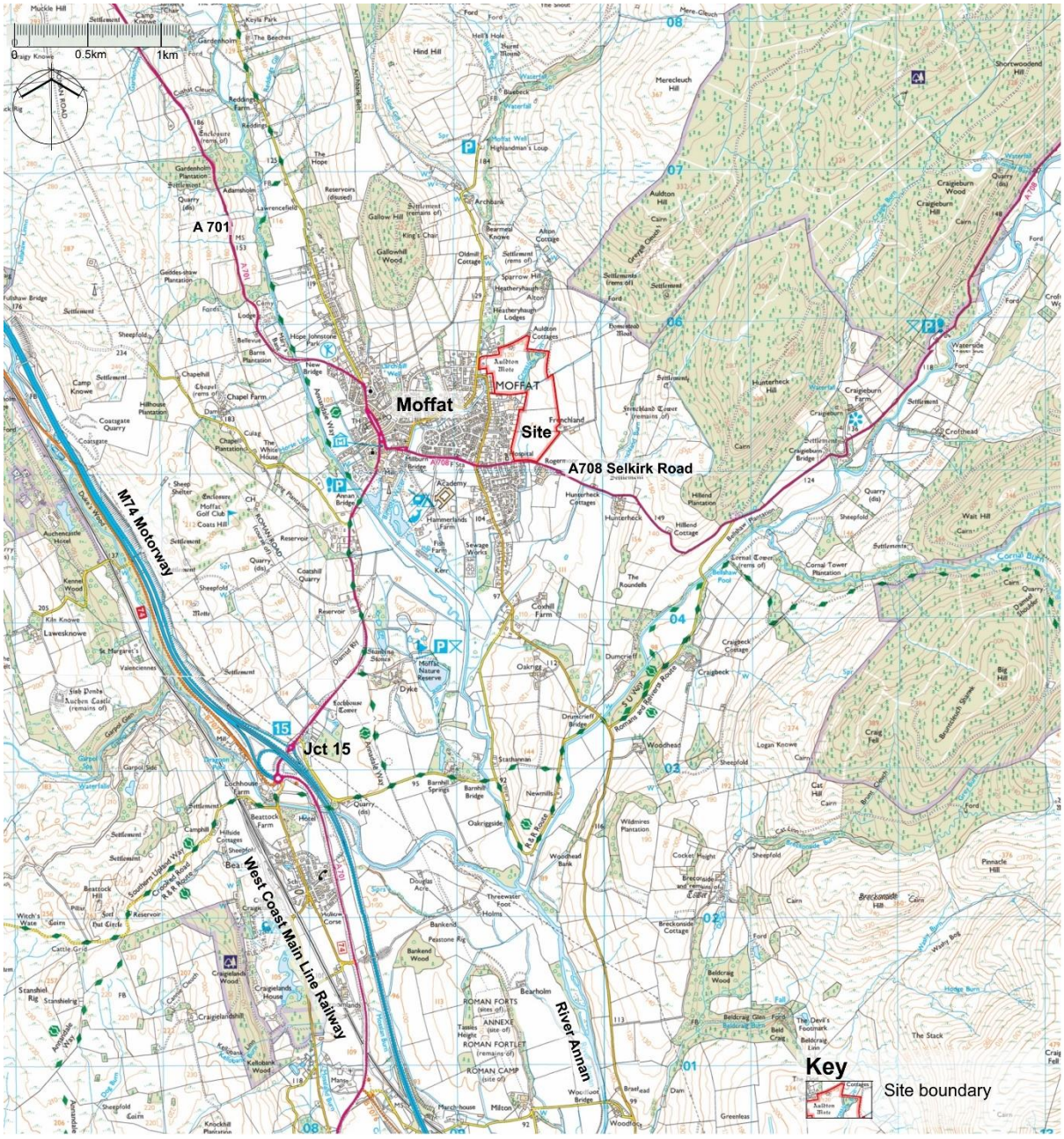


Figure 1 The site location (surrounded by red line boundary) in the wider landscape.

Figure 1, above, shows the masterplan site in relation to Moffat town and the surrounding area. The red line indicates the boundary of the allocated housing site for which the masterplan and landscape appraisal have been prepared.

Figure 2 The site as seen looking north from Selkirk Road. This photograph was taken at the time of archaeological investigation. Because of the bare earth, it usefully shows the extent of the site.

1.3 Purposes of the appraisal

Landscape and visual appraisal is a form of assessment which is most frequently used to assess and report on the landscape and visual effects which a specific development proposal is likely to cause.

It is also used to help "design out" adverse effects. It is like Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), but used for projects which do *not* require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an EIA Report.

For the Selkirk Road site, the appraisal method needs to be in some ways *different* from a typical appraisal, for three reasons:

- the appraisal is being undertaken before detailed design work is done, so there is less certainty about the exact nature of the proposed development, and some key assumptions have to be made in order to make the initial appraisal judgements (see Chapter 3 for those assumptions).

  On the other hand:

- as it is being undertaken before detailed design work is done, so there are more opportunities to influence and guide the masterplan design.

Also:

- master-planning needs to take into account other environmental issues, and placemaking; it cannot be informed by landscape and visual effects alone.

This means that the purposes of the Selkirk Road masterplan landscape and visual appraisal are to:

- support development of a masterplan which has minimal adverse effect on landscape and people's views, and which capitalises on opportunities for beneficial effects;
- assess the residual effects[1] of the scheme on landscape character and visual amenity, insofar as development details are available;
- explain how predicted landscape and visual effects have been taken into account in master-planning;
- explain how other environmental issues, placemaking and landscape and visual issues have been integrated to inform masterplan design decisions;
- provide planning decision-makers with clear information about the predicted landscape and visual effects; and
- provide planning decision-makers with measurable guidelines against which to judge any future planning applications for the site which may follow on.

The following diagram explains in a visual way the process which was undertaken to satisfy these purposes.

[1] *Residual effects* are those that would remain once any mitigation proposals have been included in the scheme.

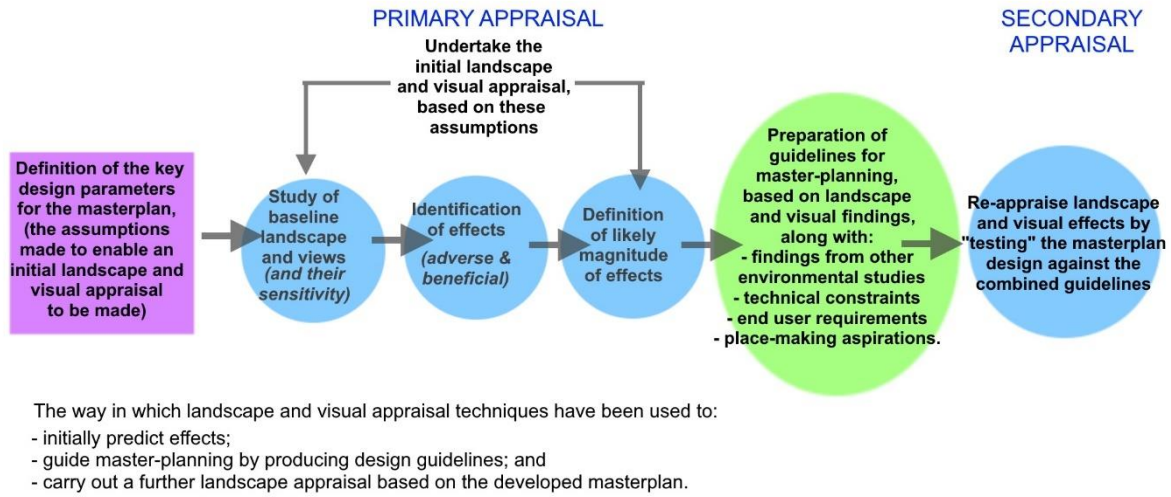


Figure 3 A summary of the way in which landscape and visual appraisal techniques have been used both to guide master-planning and to report effects.

In a nutshell, this landscape and visual appraisal has a dual purpose: first to assess effects in order to support good master-planning (the primary appraisal), and second to consider how the developed masterplan would affect the landscape and people's views (the secondary appraisal). The above diagram is a summary of the overarching principles of this study, but more detail on methods is provided below in section 1.7.

1.4 Structure of this report

The report is organised in this way:

- The remainder of this Chapter 1 provides more introduction and context for the appraisal.
- Chapter 2 provides an overview of the site and its surroundings, including information about people and places.
- Chapter 3 describes the type of development which is envisaged, for the purpose of the *primary* landscape and visual appraisal.
- Chapter 0 reports on predicted landscape character effects.
- Chapter 5 reports on predicted visual effects.
- Chapter 6 summarises the findings of the of the landscape appraisal, and from these, develops guidelines for master-planning. Placemaking guidelines are also discussed here, along with guidelines which emerged from other environmental studies. All these different sources of guidelines need to go hand-in-hand in order to steer master-planning and design decisions, but in this report the focus is on landscape and visual effects.

- In Chapter 7, there is a *secondary* landscape and visual appraisal, undertaken by "testing" the developed masterplan against the above guidelines for landscape and visual amenity.
- Chapter 8 provides summaries and conclusions.

1.5 Environmental screening, scoping and consultation

Dumfries and Galloway undertook the normal forward-planning processes in order to have the Selkirk Road site adopted as an allocated site in its Local Development Plan (LDP).

Subsequently, the site has been carried forward and included in the Council's LDP2, which is due to be in place by September 2019.

The masterplan has been developed following pre-application engagement with Dumfries and Galloway Council, after which the Council produced a Pre-Application Enquiry Advisory Report dated14th November 2018. That report included detailed advice from the Council's landscape architect. The scope for landscape and visual assessment, and landscape design of the masterplan, was further developed and refined during discussions and meetings between the masterplan team (designers, assessors, end-users and the landowner) and the council, as the assessment work and master-planning progressed.

1.6 Legislative and policy context

1.6.1 Statutory designated landscapes

A range of legislation seeks to protect nationally valued landscapes, including National Parks and National Scenic Areas, through statutory designation.

The masterplan site does not fall within any of these statutory designated landscapes so they are not discussed further in this report.

1.6.2 Listed buildings and conservation areas

Legislation also seeks to protect townscapes (for example Conservation Areas) and buildings (Listed Buildings). Although these have been given statutory protection, they are normally considered to be of more local value than the above-mentioned National Parks and National Scenic Areas.

Moffat's Conservation Area is in close proximity to the north-western edge of the masterplan site so effects on it are considered in section 2.2.2.

1.6.3 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Scheduled Ancient Monuments have statutory protection under Scottish law. In the northern part of the site, there is one Scheduled Ancient Monument: Auldton Motte. Effects on this monument are primarily considered as part of the heritage assessment. However, effects on the Motte, *as it contributes to the overall landscape character and people's views*, are also considered in this study.

1.6.4 Other designated, listed or mapped landscape areas

Other landscapes which carry non-statutory designations, definition or listing, or are mapped in local development frameworks, include:

- **Local Landscape Designations.** In the past, piecemeal adoption of locally-designated landscape areas, according to different (or no stated) criteria, has led to guidance discouraging their use. More recently, improved guidance on the selection, evidencing and designating of landscapes valued at local level has emerged, emphasising the requirement for a clear evidence base. SPP states that "locally designated areas and sites should be identified and afforded the appropriate level of protection in development plans. Reasons for local designation should be clearly explained and their function and continuing relevance considered when preparing plans[2].
- **World Heritage Sites.** While these are considered to be of international value, they do not carry statutory designation or protection in the UK.
- **Gardens and Designed Landscapes.** Listed by Historic Scotland.
- **Green Belt.** Mapped in local development frameworks by local authorities and intended to protect open, rural space around large and potentially expanding urban areas.
- **Regional Parks (Scotland).** Designated by local authorities in Scotland.
- **Country Parks.** Designated at a local level, primarily intended for recreational and leisure opportunities close to population centres.
- **Woodland Parks / Forest Parks.** Forest Parks, Forest Nature Reserves and Woodland Parks are identified and managed by Forestry and Land Scotland primarily for recreation purposes. Woodland Parks are similar to Forest Parks but are smaller in scale and located near to centres of population.

While these areas and landscapes do not have statutory protection in their own right, their inclusion in local development framework documents confers a level of statutory protection insofar as they are "material considerations" in both forward planning and development control.

There is a "non-inventory" garden and designed landscape in the south west of Moffat. Because there is no inter-visibility between this and the masterplan site, there would be no effect so it is not considered further in this report.

[2] SNH (2017) Draft Guidance on Local Landscape Areas. Scottish Natural Heritage, Inverness.

1.6.5 The European Landscape Convention

The UK is a signatory to the European Landscape Convention (ELC[3]). This convention promotes the protection, management and planning of all European Landscapes. One key principle of the ELC is that all landscapes matter and are an important resource.

For this appraisal, the implication of this is that all landscapes have a default "medium" value unless there is some specific reason to value the landscape differently.

1.6.6 Government guidance

The primary source of planning guidance for landscape and visual amenity is overarching national policy as set out in the third National Planning Framework (NPF3)[4], adopted in June 2014. Within NPF3, sections on Scotland Today, Scotland Tomorrow and Priorities for Change set out a series of broad policies for landscape and cultural heritage. Higher level guidance is also provided in SPP under the heading "A Natural, Resilient Place".

1.7 Appraisal method

The Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) have produced *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (now in its third edition, and often referred to as *GLVIA3*[5].). This book is accepted as the standard guide for assessment of landscape and visual amenity effects caused by development projects. The guide does not provide one single prescribed method, but it does provide a series of overarching principles.

Large, complex proposals, or those which would be set in sensitive environments, are often subject to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, which means that their planning applications need more detail about predicted environmental effects, which are categorised as "significant" or "not significant". Significant effects need to be taken into account by planning decision makers, but do not necessarily trigger refusal of the application. In these circumstances a full LVIA is often required. Smaller or less complex proposals often do not need the same level of detail and scrutiny. Often in these cases, a less detailed landscape *appraisal* is undertaken. A key difference between full LVIA and landscape appraisal is that appraisal usually does not consider whether effects are "significant" (in EIA terms).

Another key difference between full LVIA and landscape appraisal relates to the way in which mitigation measures are taken into account. In *full LVIA*, there is usually an assessment of effects both before and after mitigation measures are taken into account, the purpose being to "design-out" any significant adverse effects. In *appraisal*, for the sake of simplicity, and because the significance of

[3] The European Landscape Convention, Florence, 2000. Text available at http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm

[4] http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/3539/0, accessed July 2014

[5] The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Edition 3 (GLVIA3). Routledge, Abingdon.

effects is not being considered, mitigation is usually considered to be "part and parcel" of the scheme, with the appraisal taking it into account from the beginning.

As discussed above, this appraisal took part in two phases (the primary appraisal before masterplan design, and a secondary appraisal, afterwards). In each case, the appraisal approach was tailored to the purpose at that stage.

Normally a landscape and visual appraisal or an LVIA considers the effects of a development proposal which has fairly or very detailed plans and specifics. However, in this case, landscape appraisal techniques are being used to help with master-planning. A concept of the type of development is needed to undertake the appraisal, and the appraisal is needed to help with the master-planning. To overcome this "chicken and egg" situation, some broad, but reliable design parameters were established in order to undertake the primary appraisal. This then enabled the masterplan to be developed which in turn enabled a secondary appraisal of masterplan to be undertaken. The key parameters which were used in the primary appraisal are listed in Chapter 3.

In order to keep this appraisal focussed and of a manageable length, it does not include a study of how compliant the scheme would be with landscape and visual amenity policy. Cumulative effects are not considered here either; they are thought to be highly unlikely because there are no other development proposals or allocated housing site in the study are which are comparable to the allocated housing site.

Despite the differences between full LVIA and landscape appraisal, an appraisal should nevertheless follow the overarching principles set out in GLVIA3. The same applies specifically to this dual-purpose study: it needs to follow the principles laid down in GLVIA3. The way in which these principles have been adopted in this appraisal is described below.

1.7.1 Baseline studies

Several visits to the site and its surroundings were made by the qualified and experienced landscape assessors and designers to fully understand the site and surroundings, and the way in which development could affect landscape and people's views. Visits were made at different times of year, with photographic and video records being taken. Documents included in the desk-top study included published landscape character assessments produced by Scottish Natural Heritage and Dumfries & Galloway Council (DGC), aerial photography purchased for the project, Ordnance Survey mapping, and supplementary planning guidance produced by DGC.

The "future baseline" is the environment as it would exist if the proposed scheme was not built, and against which the effects of the scheme are assessed. It takes into account any changes which are planned but which may not yet have taken place, if there is sufficient certainty that those changes will take place. In this instance, no particular changes needed to be taken into account.

1.7.2 Definition of the proposal, for the purpose of appraisal

Paragraphs 1.3 and 1.7 above explain how assumptions about the nature of the development needed to be made in order to carry out the primary appraisal. Assumptions were made on the basis of the land being used mainly for housing (some of which would be for people requiring extra care), with roads, open spaces, infrastructure and planting being part of the development. It was assumed that there

would be no particularly large or tall buildings (compared to typical modern housing), that development would be at a typical density for the area, and that open space and planting would be at a typical proportion relative to the amount of housing. The assumptions are described in more specific terms below in Chapter 3.

1.7.3 Interactions between receptor and project: identification of likely impacts

Impact identification was undertaken following the site visit, using the assumed typical housing as described in Chapter 3 and informed by discussions with the rest of the masterplan team: assessors and designers.

1.7.4 Sensitivity of receptors

The sensitivity of a receptor takes into account its *susceptibility to changes* (likely to be caused by the proposed development) and its *value*. In this appraisal, the following categories and meanings have been used for these criteria. This appraisal describes susceptibility and value, but does not give a judgement on *overall* sensitivity, because this is only needed to help determine effect significance, which is not assessed at this level of appraisal.

Table 1: Categories and meanings for sensitivity criteria

CATEGORY	LANDSCAPE	VISUAL AMENITY
Susceptibility (to the sorts of changes likely to be caused by the proposed scheme)	Categorised as Low, Medium, or High, with specific reasons given in the appraisal.	**Low susceptibility** • People travelling through the area to get somewhere, not on scenic leisure journeys. • People taking part in outdoor activity where scenery is not important: ball games etc. **Medium susceptibility** • People on residential holidays in the study area. • People taking part in outdoor activity where scenery is important. • People on leisure drives where the drive through the landscape is the main purpose. • People working outside in the study area. • People attending school in the study area. **High susceptibility** • People who live in the area.
Value: Low, Medium, High	Non-designated landscapes are categorised as medium value, because "all landscapes matter" according to the European Landscape Convention. Designated landscapes (for example National Parks) are categorised as high value.	Categorised as Low, Medium, or High, with specific reasons given in the appraisal.

1.7.5 Magnitude of change

The magnitude of change (which the proposed development would cause) is classified according to the *scale or size* of the change, its *duration* and its *reversibility*. In this appraisal, the following categories and meanings have been used for the magnitude of change criteria. Unlike a full impact assessment, this appraisal describes scale or size, duration and reversibility, but does not give a judgement on *overall* magnitude of change because this is only needed to help determine effect significance, which is not assessed at this level of appraisal.

Table 2: Categories and meanings for magnitude of change criteria

CATEGORY	LANDSCAPE	VISUAL AMENITY
Size or scale of effect	**No change:** No change to the landscape. **Negligible change (+/-):** a change which is visible only if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the landscape or its key characteristics. **Small change (+/-):** a change which causes a small but perceptible and identifiable alteration to the landscape or its key characteristics, but which does not alter its character. **Medium change (+/-):** a change which causes a partial weakening or strengthening or alteration to the character of the landscape or its key characteristics. **Large change (+/-):** a fundamental change to the character of the landscape or its key characteristics.	**No change:** No change visible in the view. **Negligible change (+/-):** a change which is only visible if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the view, or the extent and depth of the view. **Small change (+/-):** The proposal, or part of it would be perceptible but would not alter the overall balance of features and elements that comprise the existing view, or the extent and depth of the view. **Medium change (+/-):** the proposal, or part of it, would form a noticeable feature or element of the view, or would noticeably alter the extent or depth of the view. **Large change (+/-):** the proposal, or part of it, would become a dominant feature or focal point of the view, or would dramatically open up or constrain the extent or depth of the view.
Duration	**Short term:** the construction period. **Medium term:** while mitigation matures. **Long term/ permanent:** the operational period.	As for landscape (see left). However, for visual amenity, "duration" takes account of both the time span of the development, and the length of the receptor's exposure to the view.
Reversibility	Reversible or not reversible.	As for landscape.

1.7.6 Significance of effects

As discussed above, significance of effect is a concept used in EIA and full LVIA, but is not required for this level of landscape and visual appraisal. This appraisal makes judgements on receptor susceptibility and value, and on the scale, duration and reversibility of change, but it does not make judgements on overall sensitivity or magnitude of change, or, beyond that, significance of effect.

1.7.7 Reporting the findings of the landscape and visual appraisal

At this stage the primary appraisal was undertaken before the masterplan was developed. Effects, based on the consideration of receptor sensitivity and magnitude of change, are recorded in Chapters 0 and 5 for landscape character and visual amenity respectively.

To help navigate this report, all reporting of appraisal judgments is contained within green text boxes such as this one.

These effect findings were then translated into guidelines, and listed in Chapter 6.

1.7.8 Master-planning

Master-planning was undertaken by following the guidelines, and a team of environmental experts, landscape architect, end-users, planners and landowners were involved. During one of several design team meetings (on the 30th April 2019) many issues were co-designed on a large-scale paper plan by the team; this was an effective way for all issues to be considered in the round.

Some aspects (for example the design of the landscape around the Scheduled Ancient Monument) required detailed negotiations with other organisations in order to progress the design, and this required the input of individual experts.

In some parts of the site, the design solution fell "straight into place" because of constraints and opportunities. For example, some areas where development would be constrained by flood issues could be used as green corridors, supporting biodiversity, recreation and non-vehicle travel. Elsewhere, several different options had to be considered to arrive at the best solution.

The masterplan itself covers the whole of the site, but illustrative proposals for two distinct parts of the site were also prepared, to show in more detail how the guidelines *could* be adopted. The detailed plan for the north of the site illustrates issues such as heritage, farming, existing woodland and open space. The detailed plan for the south of the site illustrates community, travel, play, housing and parking issues. Please note that these two more detailed plans are indicative only; final designs for these areas could be quite different while still meeting the objectives of the guidelines.

More detail about the master-planning process is provided in the Masterplan Report.

1.7.9 Landscape, visual and placemaking review

This was the secondary landscape and visual appraisal. It was undertaken simply by "testing" the developed masterplan against the above guidelines. For simplicity, the results of this review are reported in the form of a discussion, but nevertheless, the principles of GLVIA3 were still followed.

As used earlier in Chapters 0 and 5, green text boxes highlight the reporting of appraisal (review) judgements.

1.7.10 Study area

The study area includes all land within about 5km of the site where views of the site would theoretically be possible. This area forms the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Within the 5km

radius of the site there are many places where views would not be possible, and views of the site would diminish in significance the further away from the site that the viewer was located.

1.7.11 Time frame

The appraisal is based on the effects which could occur once the masterplan site was constructed and occupied, with new planting beginning to mature. To avoid complexity in the reporting, and because of uncertainty at this early stage, effects during construction and (the unlikely scenario of) demolition have not been studied.

1.8 Glossary of key terminology

In this Landscape and Visual Impact appraisal these words and terms have the following meanings, in accordance with GLVIA3:

- *Receptor*: any landscape (or component feature or characteristic of the landscape) which could be affected by the proposed scheme, or any person or group of people living, at work, school or leisure, or passing through the study area, whose views could be changed by the proposed scheme.
- *Impact*: an **action being taken** which may change the landscape or people's views.
- *Effect*: the way in which the **change** affects the landscape or people's views.
- *Guideline*: site-specific guidelines which have been developed to help avoid harm and to capitalise on opportunities for enhancement of landscape and people's views. These have been developed alongside guidelines for other environmental and place-making issues, resulting in an integrated suite of measurable guidelines to be used at detailed design stage.
- The *site* means the area in which development would take place, as defined by Dumfries and Galloway's site boundary for Allocated Housing Site MOF.H4.

1.9 Difficulties, limitations, assumptions and caveats

No particular difficulties or limitations were encountered in this appraisal.

1.10 Maps and images used in the report

All Ordnance Survey mapping and aerial photography is reproduced under OS licence.

Generally, maps are not produced to any particular scale in this report, except where stated, but are sized so as to provide a clear illustration of the points under discussion. For scale drawings please see elsewhere in the masterplan documents.

1.11 Relationship between this report and other masterplan documents

This landscape and visual appraisal should be read in conjunction with:

- The standalone drawings which are listed at the end of the contents page.
- The masterplan report, which provides more detail about the whole master-planning process, in context of Dumfries and Galloway Council's requirements and the planning context.
- Other environmental studies which have been undertaken to support the masterplan development.

1.12 References and Guidelines

The study has been informed by the following documents and websites:

1.12.1 Assessment guidelines

- The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Edition 3* (GLVIA3). Routledge, Abingdon.

1.12.2 Landscape evidence bases

- SNH's *Landscape Character Assessment no 94 for Dumfries and Galloway*, published in 1998.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan Technical Paper on *Regional Scenic Areas*, published in 2014, republished in 2018 in support of LDP2.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's *Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Moffat*, published in 2019.
- Web-based *historic mapping* and *historic aerial photographs* from Historic Environment Scotland.

1.12.3 Dumfries and Galloway Council planning guidance

- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance *Design Quality of New Development.* Published 2015.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance *Housing Development Immediately Outside Settlement Boundaries.* Published 2015.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan Technical Paper *Masterplans: A Guide for Developers.* Published 2014.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance *Open Space and New Development.* Published 2015.
- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan *Open Space Strategy*. Adopted 2014.

- Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan Supplementary Guidance *Trees and Development.* Published 2015.

Dumfries and Galloway Council's Local Development Plan 2 was published in October 2019, shortly after the main work for this Landscape Report was complete. Other supporting documents have also been revised recently, for example *Design Quality and Placemaking* (published February 2020).

2 The Site and its surroundings and people in the area

2.1 Introduction

Moffat is located in Dumfries and Galloway, in the Southern Uplands of Scotland. It sits at the foot of the Moffat Hills to the north and is on the edge of the major transport corridor – a corridor which accommodates the M74 motorway and the West Coast Main Line Railway. Further back in time the Romans followed the same route and have left traces of a Roman Road on the hills to the west of the town. In the more recent past, Moffat was known as a staging post between Edinburgh and London, and as a spa town.

Today the area is characterised by its hilly landscape, with forestry, moorland and wind turbines, and its continuing land use for sheep farming. Growing numbers of people use the area for leisure, staying in Moffat, or walking on local or long-distance routes. In the surrounding area, there are small settlements such Beattock, and scattered farmsteads. The transport corridor is an important component of the general scene.

The following short description of baseline conditions deals with the landscape whose character might change as a result of the scheme, and the people who might be subject to visual impacts from the scheme. More detail on baseline conditions which could be affected is provided within the landscape and visual impact appraisals below (Chapters 0 and 5).

Figure 4 The site (marked by a red line) in the context of the surrounding landscape and townscape.

2.2 The landscape

2.2.1 Landscape

The Selkirk Road masterplan site has a complex shape, defined by the existing settlement boundary to the west and by existing field boundaries to the east, a track to the north and Selkirk Road to the south. It is longer in the north-south axis than it is in the east-west axis.

Existing settlement to the west includes some large, well established villas in mature gardens, bungalows and modern detached houses. This creates a strongly defined western site boundary. To the

east, the dry-stone dyke defines the site boundary but there is more open-ness to the fields and forestry heading up to the hills beyond.

The landform of this glaciated area is gently rolling, and there are few steep slopes except for the sides of the small scheduled ancient monument Auldton Motte, in the north of the site. Across the site, the land generally falls gently from the north-east to the south-west.

The site has a simple land-use; currently the fields are used for sheep grazing, as are adjacent fields. There are two small woodland blocks within the site, so in all, the existing land use is simply fields and woodland.

Figure 5 The site is characterised by its gently rolling topography, sheep-grazing, dry stone dykes, small farm woodlands and the townscape to the west (first photo). The second photo shows the hills which frame the site to the north and east.

2.2.2 Townscape

Moffat is an historic spa town and many buildings are old and built of vernacular materials such as stone that has been used in the area for centuries. Part of the town has Conservation Area status. However, there are many areas with more contemporary building layouts, styles and materials.

Figure 6 The town centre has a variety of old building styles. Newer types of building are found elsewhere in the town.

2.2.3 Historic landscape

Historic mapping and old aerial photographs show that many of the features seen today have been present in the landscape for a long time. In addition to Auldton Motte there are field patterns, tree groups, and buildings which have been part of the landscape scene for many years, as can be seen from the historic map and aerial photograph below.

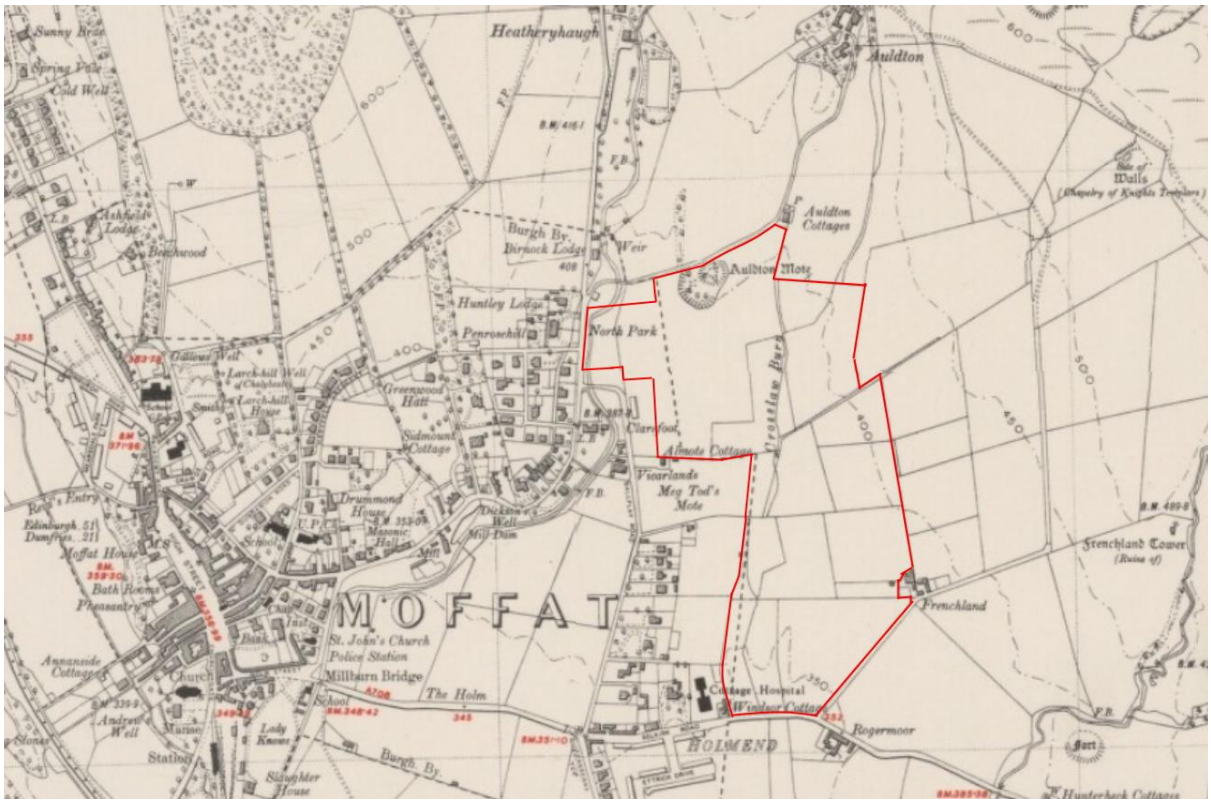


Figure 7 An extract from the 1898 Ordnance Survey map which was updated in 1938, showing the field pattern, Auldton Motte and Crosslaw Burn within the site. The approximate site boundary has been marked by a red line. Since this map was produced there has been much expansion in the town, though many landscape patterns (for example the pattern of trees on and around Gallow Hill) remain the same.

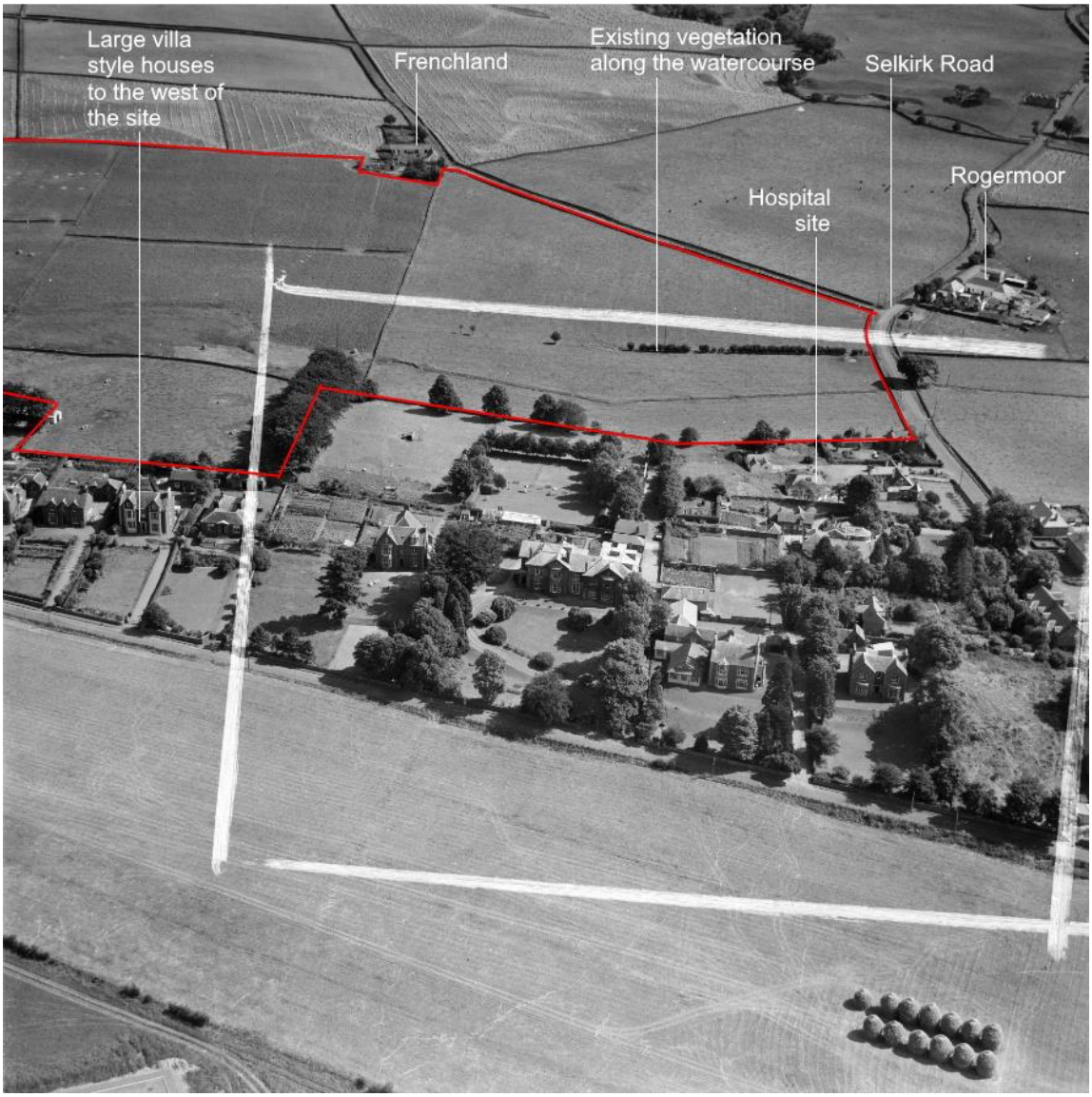


Figure 8 Historic aerial photograph purchased from Historic Environment Scotland, showing the southern end of the site. A red line indicates the southern site boundary. The land use, field pattern and some of the vegetation remain the same today, except that the land in the foreground has been developed since this photo was taken. The white lines were on the original image and the date of this photograph is not known.

2.3 People in the area

2.3.1 People living in the area

Most people in the local area live in settlements such as Moffat and Beattock, but there are also many scattered farmsteads and dwellings. Moffat itself is a fairly compact settlement although there are ribbons of housing along the Old Carlisle Road to the south west and along the road to Ericstane to the north. The town has about 2,500 permanent residents (according to Wikipedia). Most scattered

farmsteads and other houses in the countryside are found along dale bottoms or on the lower slopes of the hills.

Figure 9 There is a diverse range of places to live in Moffat.

2.3.2 People at work and leisure in the area

The town has one school which takes children of all ages. It has a busy town centre where shops, hotels, pubs and the Town Council can be found. People work in retail, hospitality, farming and forestry, and in support services, and they also commute to jobs elsewhere.

People come to the area to visit the town and its facilities, or to go walking in the area. Other leisure activities include cycling, fishing and climbing, though these activities take place some distance from the site.

Figure 10 The top photograph shows an old footpath to the south of Gallow Hill. The bottom photo is a "Moffat Walk" to the east of the site.

2.3.3 People passing through the area

People travel to, from and through Moffat mainly by car. The closest railway station is at Lockerbie. The M74 passes to the west of Moffat and the town is well connected to it by the A701, at a distance of approximately 2km. The A701 continues north, along the River Tweed, ultimately towards Edinburgh, although there are other faster roads for that journey. The A708 (to the immediate south of the masterplan site) takes traffic to and from Selkirk, hence its local name "Selkirk Road". Moffat is found at the intersection of the A701 and A708.

Figure 11: The entrance to Moffat from Selkirk Road to the east of the town. The edge of the site can be seen to the right hand side of the road.

3 The proposal

3.1 Introduction

Normally a landscape and visual appraisal or an LVIA considers the effects of a development proposal which has fairly, or very detailed plans and specifics. However, in this case, landscape appraisal techniques are being used to help with master-planning. A concept of the type of development is needed to undertake the appraisal, and the appraisal is needed to help with the master-planning. To overcome this "chicken and egg" situation, some broad, but reliable design parameters were established in order to undertake the primary appraisal. This then enabled the masterplan to be developed which in turn enabled a secondary appraisal of masterplan to be undertaken. The key parameters which were used in the primary appraisal were as follows.

3.2 Housing

It is assumed that new housing in the masterplan site would:

- generally, be one or two storeys high although occasional taller buildings may break up rooflines and this would tie in with the character of existing large villa-style houses on the eastern edge of Moffat, adjacent to the site;
- generally, match the average density of nearby existing contemporary housing, but with variation (in density) from place to place.

3.3 Open space

Open space would include large scale core spaces and smaller more intimate spaces peppered around the development, and appropriate different typologies (as identified in Dumfries and Galloway Council's Open Space Strategy) would be designed into the scheme. There would be space for both active and passive recreation, green corridors and specific spaces to meet particular end user needs, for example for any extra care residents.

Moffat	25.06		Good range of provision and meets quantity standard overall but lack of accessibility to east of town. Specific priorities: new housing development could contribute to improving existing space and providing additional space where necessary to meet any new accessibility requirements.

Figure 12 extract from Dumfries and Galloway Council's Open Space Strategy, which indicates that the town has a good range of provision but a lack of accessibility to the east of the settlement – which the Selkirk Road masterplan could help to address.

3.4 Infrastructure

Roads would penetrate the whole of the site and there would be a continuous route from the north to the south of the site. There would be a main spine route and secondary roads some of which could be shared surfaces. There would be cycle routes and pedestrian routes within the site and connecting to the existing networks.

3.5 Existing and proposed vegetation

No existing trees would be felled unless there was a specific technical or safety requirement to do so. New planting would be established in all parts of the site except where there was a need for uninterrupted open space.

3.6 Zone of theoretical visibility

The developed masterplan would be more visible than the existing site, because it would have upstanding elements (buildings) in it. The following plan indicates the approximate geographical extent of the area from which the developed masterplan may be seen. This is called the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). The proposed masterplan development could affect landscape character or people's views in these ZTV areas.

Figure 13 the zone of theoretical visibility of the site. Areas shown in blue are where the developed site could potentially and theoretically be seen from. It is likely that in many of these blue-marked areas there would be *no* view, due to intervening vegetation or small-scale landforms; this image shows all *theoretical* visibility to avoid underplaying effects.

4 Effects on landscape character

4.1 Introduction

This chapter considers how the proposed scheme could affect landscape character. The following two figures illustrate and explain the landscape character which was recorded during desk and field work by the landscape assessors.

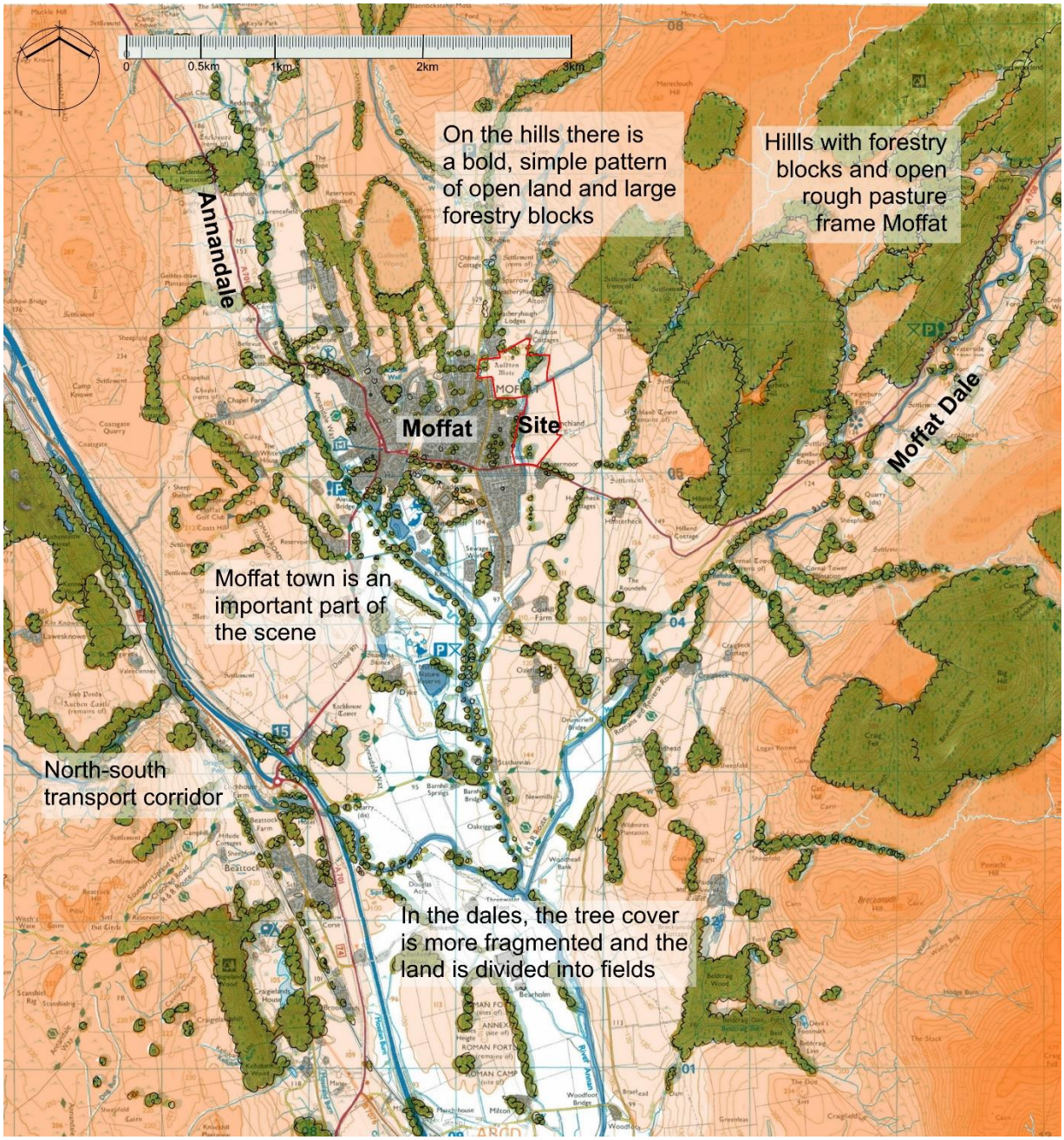


Figure 14 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey mapping with contours tinted, and settlement and tree cover coloured. Landform and watercourses have influenced how settlement and land use have developed. Annotations highlight some of the key characteristics.

Figure 15 The aerial photograph has been annotated to highlight the key characteristics of the masterplan site area.

4.2 Impact appraisal method

The following paragraphs describe the way in which the scheme is likely to affect the character of the landscape. The appraisal follows the procedure recommended in GLVIA3. Therefore, for each receptor:

- The ***baseline*** conditions for each receptor are described in more detail, following on from the description of the landscape in Chapter 2, considering the landscape characteristics in the

published descriptions, and taking into account the way the existing environment would develop in future if the scheme is not built;

- The receptor's ***susceptibility*** to change and its ***value*** are determined.
- The ***size or scale, duration*** and ***reversibility*** of changes which the proposed scheme would cause are then determined, taking mitigation measures into account.

The landscape receptors which have been considered are:

- Published landscape character types within SNH Landscape Character Assessment no 94 for Dumfries and Galloway.
- Non-statutory designated landscapes: Dumfries and Galloway's "*Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area".*

In the following appraisals, tables are used to summarise effects on key characteristics or special qualities. The key characteristics of the whole of each character type or area (as taken from the published descriptions) are listed in the left-hand column of the table. The middle column describes how those characteristics *actually* appear in the study area. If there are any other additional (unpublished) characteristics in the study area, these are also listed in the middle column. The right-hand column briefly summarises how the proposed scheme could affect each characteristic.

4.3 Landscape character types

The whole of Scotland has been mapped into a series of different landscape character types, each of which has its own specific, published description. This characterisation and mapping was undertaken in the 1990s and compared to today's digital techniques, maps were quite crude, with boundary lines between different types being wide and indistinct. Having said that, Dumfries and Galloway Council has recently reproduced the original SNH mapping in a clearer and more distinct way. For this reason, Dumfries and Galloway Council's newer map has been used below rather than that produced originally by SNH.

The proposed Selkirk Road masterplan site lies within landscape character type 7: Middle Dale. To each side of this type lies landscape character type 10: Upland Glens. There is little or no intervisibility between types 7 and 10. The site is "backdropped" by landscape character type 19: Southern Upland Type. The term "backdropped" means that the while no part of the site lies within type 19, its rising land and hills frame and influence the character of the site and study area. So, in this appraisal, effects on character type 7 are considered in detail. The effects on character type 19 are considered in less detail and character type 10 is not considered.

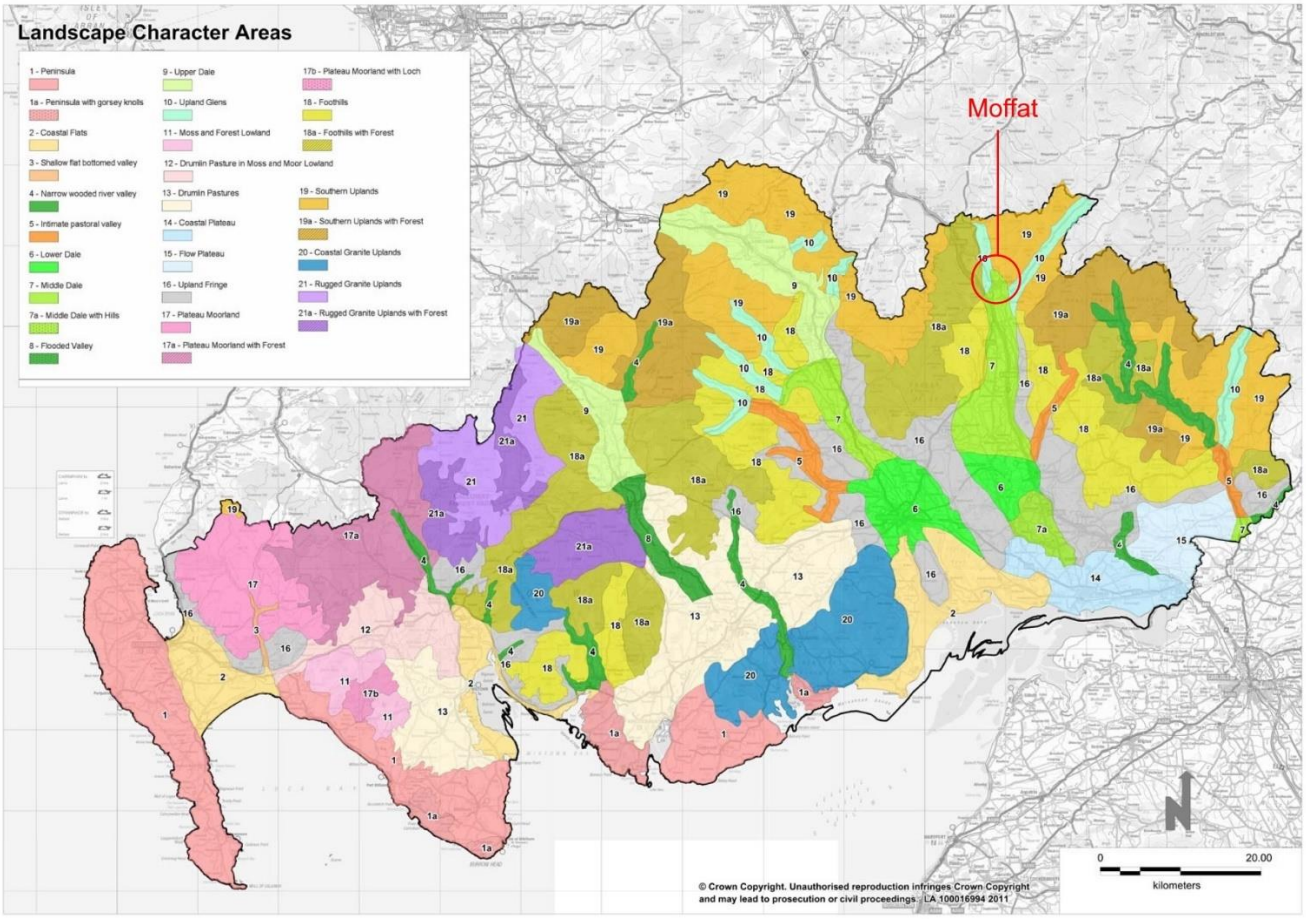


Figure 16 The distribution of different landscape character types across Dumfries and Galloway. Moffat's location can be seen marked by the red circle. (Mapping taken from Dumfries and Galloway Council Regional Scenic Areas Technical Paper, January 2018.)

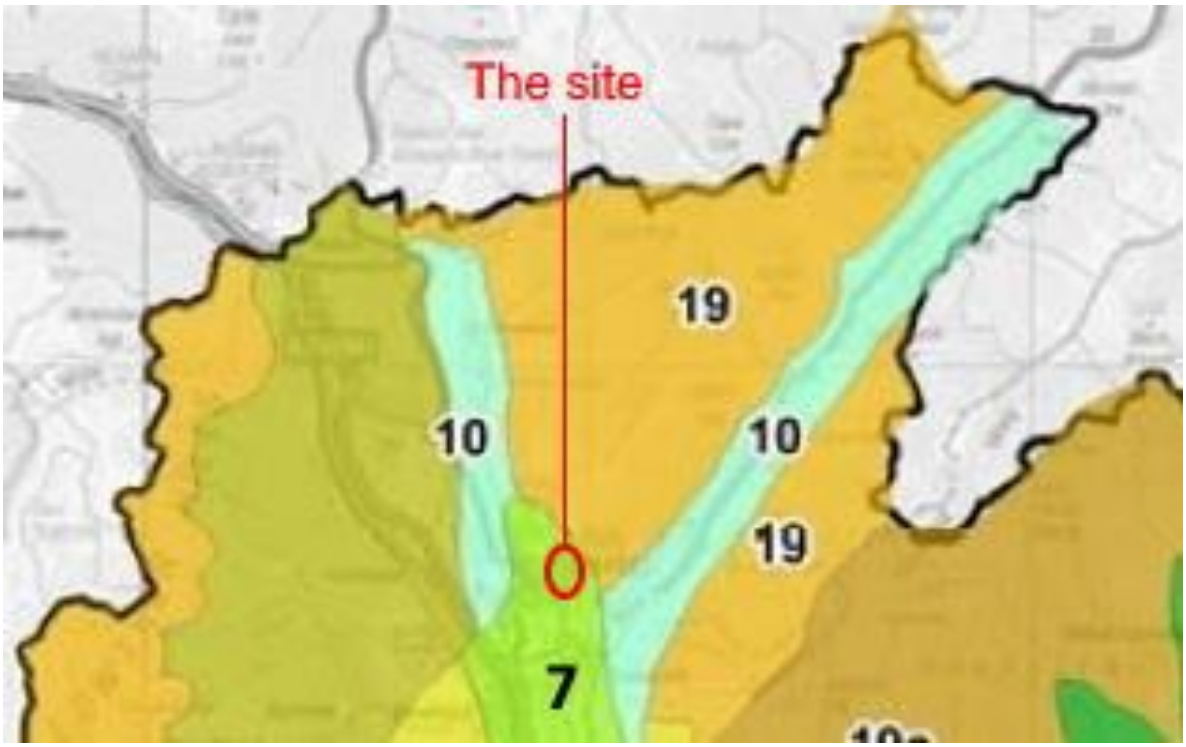


Figure 17 The site's location within type 7, with Type 19 to the north and Type 10 in the dales to each side. (Mapping taken from Dumfries and Galloway Council Regional Scenic Areas Technical Paper, January 2018.)

4.3.1 Landscape character type 7: Middle Dale

This is the type in which the development would sit. This means that the masterplan could cause physical changes to key features of this character type as well as causing changes to the way in which this landscape character type is perceived.

Baseline conditions

The following table summarises landscape character type 7: Middle Dale's key characteristics, how they appear locally (that is, how closely do they resemble the published description) and how the proposed masterplan development could affect them – based on the parameters described in Chapter 3. Photographs are used to illustrate the existing character.

Figure 18 Photographs showing key characteristics of Landscape Character Type 7 as they appear in or around the site. The top photograph shows the broad valley. The middle

photograph shows farm woodland and the grazing land within the site. The bottom photograph shows how the Landscape Character Type (and site) is contained by upland.

Table 3: Summary of key characteristics, how they appear in the study area, and how the scheme could affect them

The (relevant) key characteristic as described in the published evidence base.	How does this characteristic appear in the study area?	How would the proposed scheme affect this characteristic?
Broad valley with complex undulating topography and locally narrow sections.	This characteristic is quite strongly expressed within the study area, although the sense of "narrowness" tends to lie just beyond, as one goes over the brow to the east on Selkirk Road and in other directions.	The presence of new housing would slightly mask the feeling of being in a broad valley, but this effect would likely only be felt while in, or close to, the new housing. Elsewhere the feeling of being in a broad valley would remain. Any type of built development in this area would inevitably have this effect.
River meanders eroding bluffs in the valley moraines.	While there are large rivers meandering in the wider study area, there is none in the immediate study area.	The proposed masterplan scheme would not affect this characteristic.
Landcover predominantly improved pastures, lush green, sheep and cattle grazed.	This characteristic is strongly expressed in the study area; in fact, Moffat and its surrounding farmland is known for its sheep farming heritage, which continues to this day. The fields which make up the masterplan site, and those beyond, are currently grazed by sheep.	The masterplan scheme would cause a loss in sheep farming land, small in relation to the expansive tracts of grazing land found here. As described above, this type of localised loss would be inevitable with any type of built development.
Medium scale field enclosures, a mix of hedgerows and dry-stone dykes.	This characteristic is strongly expressed here. Fields are medium scale. There are many dry-stone dykes and fewer hedgerows.	Depending on the detail, the proposed masterplan site has the potential to affect this characteristic, both in terms of spatial layout (of fields) and in terms of boundary types.
Extensive pattern of shelterbelts and farm woodlands with semi-natural woodlands on bluff slopes.	There is a strong pattern of shelterbelts and farm woodlands in the study area, and this gives the landscape a "mosaic" appearance. There are two small farm woodlands in the masterplan site itself, and these have a strong influence on the site's character, as well as contributing to the overall scene.	Again, depending on the detail, the proposed masterplan could affect this characteristic, within the site only.
Dale contained by uplands with forests and rough grazing on horizons.	This characteristic is strong here: the hills (which lie in adjacent landscape character type 19) do contain the site and study area. There is rough grazing and forestry visible on these hills.	Because this "framing" hilly landscape is beyond the site, and because of its large scale, the proposed masterplan could not affect this characteristic.
Country houses and designed landscapes.	Country houses in this area tend to be nestled among groups of mature trees so they do not play a big part in the local landscape character.	There would be no effect on this characteristic.

Settlement of high townscape quality.	Immediately adjacent to the site, this characteristic is strongly felt because of the presence of grand houses in mature tree-filled gardens. Elsewhere there many different building styles and qualities; it is a vibrant and diverse mix.	The masterplan could not physically affect the existing townscape but (depending on detail), it could affect its setting, and how it is perceived.
Communication routes.	Selkirk Road is a modest communication route, compared to the motorway and rail corridor which lie further afield. Nevertheless, its presence influences the local character, especially because of the activity and movement on it.	Proposed roads within the site would have a "local" appearance and purpose; they would not resemble communication routes, so would not intensify the influence of this characteristic, meaning that it would not be affected. That is, the masterplan development would not cause communication routes to have an increased influence on the scene.
"Red-earth" qualities to underlying red sandstones.	The underlying sandstones are used as a local building material, but because fields are mostly grazed and only seasonally ploughed, this characteristic is mostly expressed in the built form, and less so in the farm landscape.	Depending on detail, red-earth (expressed as a colour in the built environment) could increase or remain the same. Because fields are rarely "bare earth" this characteristic is unlikely to change in the wider farm landscape.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE 7: MIDDLE DALE

Sensitivity

A landscape's sensitivity takes into account its **susceptibility** to the type of change predicted to be caused by the proposed scheme, and the landscape's **value**.

Within the study area, the landscape character type 7 has a **medium susceptibility** to the type of changes which the proposed masterplan development would cause. This is because this landscape type's key characteristics relate mainly to robust, large scale physical characteristics and features such as woodland cover, field patterns and landform.

This landscape is of **high value**, because it lies within a designated (albeit non-statutory) landscape.

Magnitude of change

The magnitude of change takes into account the **size of the change**, its **duration** and whether it is **reversible**.

The published key characteristics of this landscape type relate to landform and river morphology, backdrop scenery, field pattern and boundary materials, tree cover (shelterbelts and farm woodlands) and land use (mainly grazing or settlement).

Some of these characteristics would not be affected at all by the proposed masterplan development: meandering river courses, the dale being contained by hills beyond, country houses, communication routes, and the physical townscape on land to the west of the site fall into this category.

The masterplan proposal would inevitably change the character of the fields in which it sits; the same would be true of any development on any open land. Characteristics which would be affected in this way are the sense of a broad valley and the landcover and land use. However, these changes would be small in the scale of the tracts of land which make up this landscape character type.

The way in which the remaining characteristics would be affected depends on the detail of the masterplan, but any changes would always be small and localised. Despite the fact that the magnitude of change would be small, the guidelines would seek to avoid harm to this range of characteristics. For example, as a worst-case scenario, if all dry-stone dykes within the site were lost, the remaining areas of type 7 Middle Dale would be affected only in a small and localised way, and not at all beyond the study area. Nevertheless, guidelines would still be developed to try and prevent this small adverse effect.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, overall, this would be a **small change**: "*a change which causes a small but perceptible and identifiable alteration to the landscape or its key characteristics, but which does not alter its character*".

The duration of these changes would be **permanent**, and would **not be regarded as reversible**.

Summary

In **summary**, within the study area, the masterplan development could result in a **medium-susceptibility** landscape, of **high value,** being affected in a **small** but **permanent** way, and only within the parts of the study area which are in or close to the site. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.** Many of the landscape type's key characteristics would not be affected at all. Guidelines would be developed to reduce all adverse effects even if they would be small and localised.

4.3.2 Landscape character type 19: Southern Uplands Type

This is the type which "backdrops" the masterplan site. This means that the masterplan could *not* cause physical changes to key features of this character type but could cause changes to the way in which it is perceived.

The key characteristics of this landscape character type are:

- Large, smooth dome / conical hills, predominantly grass covered.
- Open and exposed character except within incised valleys.
- Distinctive dark brown / purple colour of heather on some of the higher areas.
- Pockets of woodland in incised valleys.
- Stone dykes occasionally define the lower limit.
- The legacy of lead and other mining activity.

Figure 19 Photographs showing key characteristics of Landscape Character Type 19 which is found to the north of the site. The site is in the foreground and Landscape Character Type 19 is on the horizon; its characteristics are smooth, dome shaped hills covered in grass and heather, pockets of woodland, open-ness.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE 19: SOUTHERN UPLANDS TPE

Summary

The proposed masterplan development would not have an effect, physical or perceptual on any of these key characteristics; they are all too large, too distant and too robust to be affected.

4.4 Designated landscapes

4.4.1 Statutory designated landscapes

Apart from the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) Auldton Motte, there are no statutory designated landscapes in the study area. Effects on Auldton Motte SAM are considered in the heritage assessment.

4.4.2 Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area

Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area has been designated by Dumfries and Galloway Council; it is one of several areas which the Council has given this status to, as can be seen on Figure 20. The Council has produced a Technical Paper to explain why these areas have been given this specially valued status. Figure 21 shows the masterplan site within the Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area.

Baseline conditions

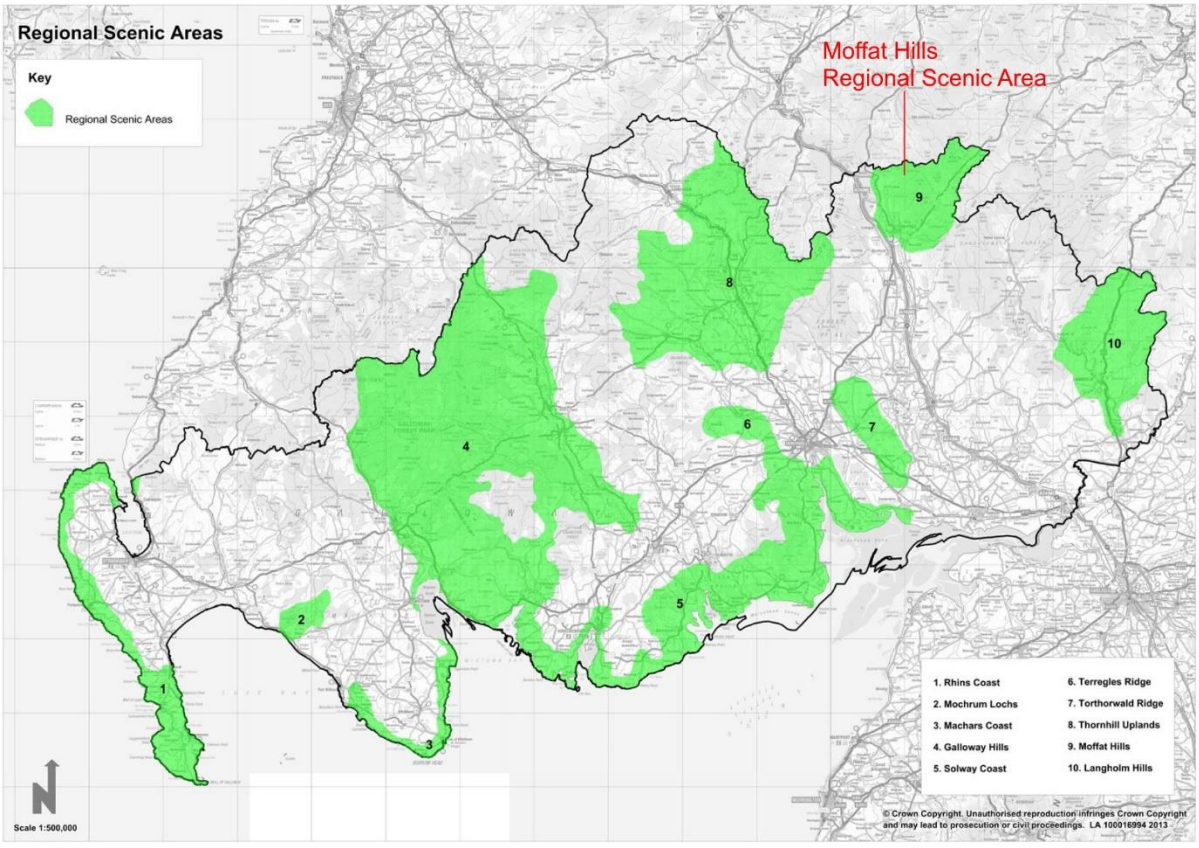


Figure 20 All of Dumfries and Galloway's Regional Scenic Areas (RSAs) are shown on the above map. Moffat Hills RSA is indicated by the red note. RSAs appear to occupy about a third of the whole local authority area. (Mapping taken from Dumfries and Galloway Council Regional Scenic Areas Technical Paper, January 2018.)

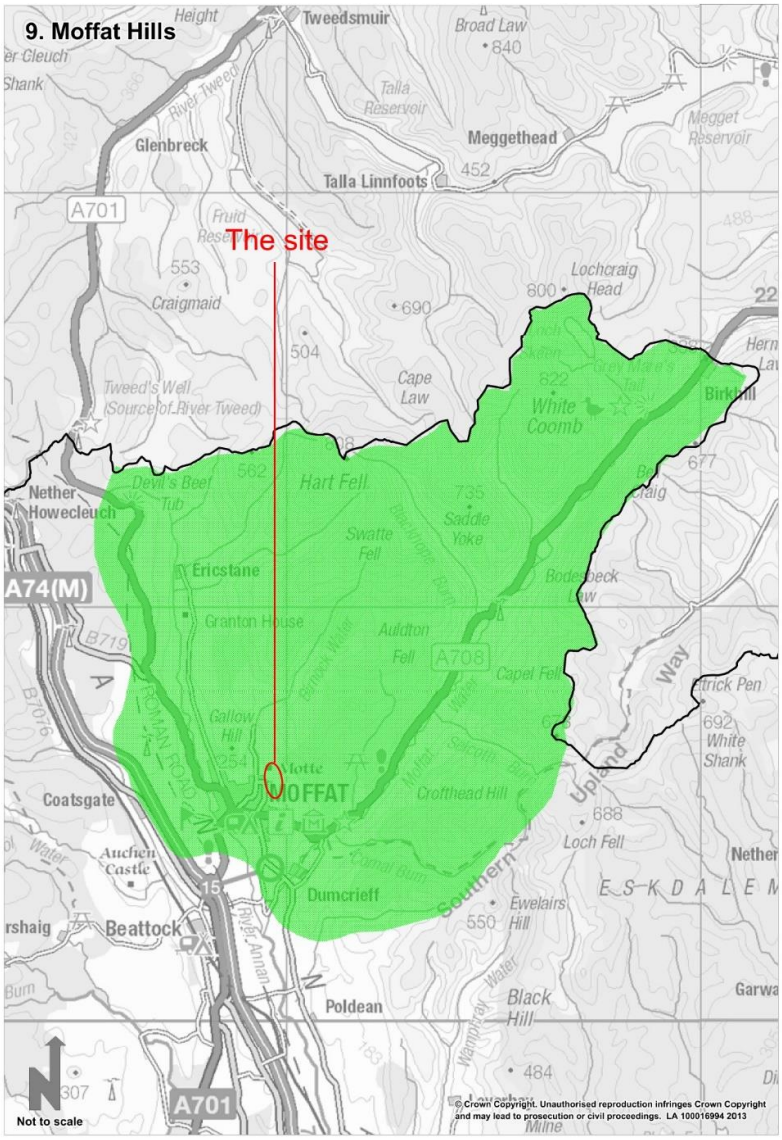


Figure 21 The site's location within Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area. (Mapping taken from Dumfries and Galloway Council Regional Scenic Areas Technical Paper, January 2018.)

The following table summarises Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area's (RSA's) key characteristics, how they appear locally (that is, how closely do they resemble the published description) and how the proposed masterplan development could affect them – based on the parameters described in Chapter 3.

These characteristics are extracted verbatim from the description in the Technical Paper. This description focuses mainly on the upland hills, and the two dales: Annandale and Moffat Dale. Little is said about the area in which the masterplan site is located: the lower land at the foot of the hills and between the two dales. This means that, as can be seen in Table 4, there are few characteristics which are relevant to the masterplan site.

Photographs are used to illustrate the existing character.

Figure 22 Key characteristics of Moffat Hills RSA are the high, steep sided rounded hills, conifer plantations and the presence of Moffat town in the scene. These characteristics are found outwith the site.

Table 4: Summary of Moffat Hills RSA's key characteristics, how they appear in the study area, and how the scheme could affect them.

The (relevant) key characteristic as described in the published evidence base.	How does this characteristic appear in the study area?	How would the proposed scheme affect this characteristic?
Uplands with characteristic smooth, high, steep sided rounded hills, dissected by steep clefts and patterned with a mosaic of rough grassland, heather, scree, and montane vegetation on the high summits.	This characteristic is strongly expressed in the Regional Scenic Area, although not within the study area, where the topography is more lowland and gentler. Areas with this character can be seen in the distance, on the uplands, but is not characteristic within the study area.	The proposed masterplan development would not affect this characteristic.
Conifer plantations on the lower slopes combine with small scale valley woods to give an intermittently wooded character to the archetype long, straight U shaped, glaciated Moffat Upland Glen.	This characteristic relates to an area which is out of sight to the east of Moffat, therefore this is not a relevant characteristic.	The proposed masterplan development would not affect this characteristic.
Plantations are also starting to encroach on the contrasting open character of upper Annandale, and the fine views from the A701.	This characteristic relates to an area which is out of sight to the north of Moffat, therefore this is not a relevant characteristic.	The proposed masterplan development would not affect this characteristic.
Both valleys have scattered farms with improved pastures enclosed by stone walls.	The town of Moffat, and the proposed site, are close to the junction of Moffat Dale and Annandale, and would be located on farmland enclosed by stone walls, with scattered farms nearby.	Depending on the detail, the proposed masterplan site has the potential to affect this characteristic, both in terms of spatial layout (of fields) and in terms of boundary types.
Major roads run along both glens linking Moffat to the M74 to the east [west], making the area readily accessible from other parts of the country.	This fact is correct and there is a relatively major road running past the site. This road does indeed help to make the area accessible.	The proposed masterplan development would not affect the way in which major roads make the area accessible.
Moffat forms an important tourist centre.	This fact is correct. The proposed masterplan site is on the edge of Moffat.	The proposed development would not affect the way in which Moffat works as an important tourist centre.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON MOFFAT HILLS REGIONAL SCENIC AREA

Sensitivity

A landscape's sensitivity takes into account its **susceptibility** to the type of change predicted to be caused by the proposed scheme, and the landscape's **value**.

Within the study area, Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area has a **medium susceptibility** to the type of changes which the proposed masterplan development would cause. This is because most of the characteristics relate to large-scale immutable features such as glaciated landforms and the vegetation found there, or tree cover which can change over time without losing its key character.

This landscape is of **high value**, because it is part of the Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area, a designated (albeit non-statutory) landscape.

Magnitude of change

Table 4 shows that the key characteristics (for which the area was designated as a Regional Scenic Area) would not be affected by the masterplan development. This is not to say that the masterplan development would not change the area at all, but rather, the way in which the area is perceived, and its key characteristics are unlikely to be affected. Following the criteria established in Table 2, this would be a **negligible change**: "*a change which is visible only if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the landscape or its key characteristics"*. This negligible change would only affect a small part of the whole RSA, in a place where its key characteristics are in any case, not strongly expressed.

Having said that, the Technical Paper mentions that key pressures on this RSA include forestry, tourism and residential expansion of the town. While the site has been allocated by the Council for housing (meaning that housing is acceptable in principle to the Council in this location), the guidelines should still seek to ensure that new development would sit well in the landscape and avoid harm to the RSA.

The duration of these changes would be **permanent**, and would **not be regarded as reversible**.

Summary

In **summary**, within the study area, the masterplan development could result in a **medium-susceptibility** landscape, of **high value** being affected in a **negligible** but **permanent** way, and only within the parts of the study area which are close to the site, and with no key characteristics being affected. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.**

4.5 Townscape

4.5.1 Introduction

This section of the appraisal is a study of how the proposed masterplan development could affect the townscape of Moffat, focussing specifically on the town's eastern settlement edge which lies adjacent to the masterplan site boundary.

4.5.2 The general character of townscape adjacent to the masterplan site

Moffat has a diverse range of building styles and layouts: imposing sandstone buildings in the town centre, Victorian villas, pretty pastel-painted streets, modern estates and bungalows; narrow roads and

a wide town centre, circuses, straight streets and curving avenues. Immediately adjacent to the western edge of the masterplan site there are three predominant townscape styles:

- At the north, large, old, imposing villas constructed of whinstone and red sandstone (both are colours which tend to blend into the landscape), set in mature gardens full of statuesque ornamental and native trees, with characteristic laurel and beech hedges, and stone walls.
- Along the middle of the boundary, a line of small, low-lying bungalows, usually pale rendered and with hipped roofs, set in small gardens with relatively few trees.
- At the south, large, modern imposing "executive" style detached houses, which in comparison to the other two types, are quite prominent in the landscape, because of their size and height, their elevated location, their pale colour and the relative absence of vegetation within the gardens.

Figure 23 In Moffat there are many different building styles.

Figure 24 Near to the site there are Victorian villas (top), single story dwellings (middle) and modern executive homes (bottom).

4.5.3 Moffat Conservation Area

Moffat's Conservation Area is quite extensive as can be seen on the following figure. Only the first of the above-mentioned types of housing (the old villas in mature gardens) lies within the conservation area.

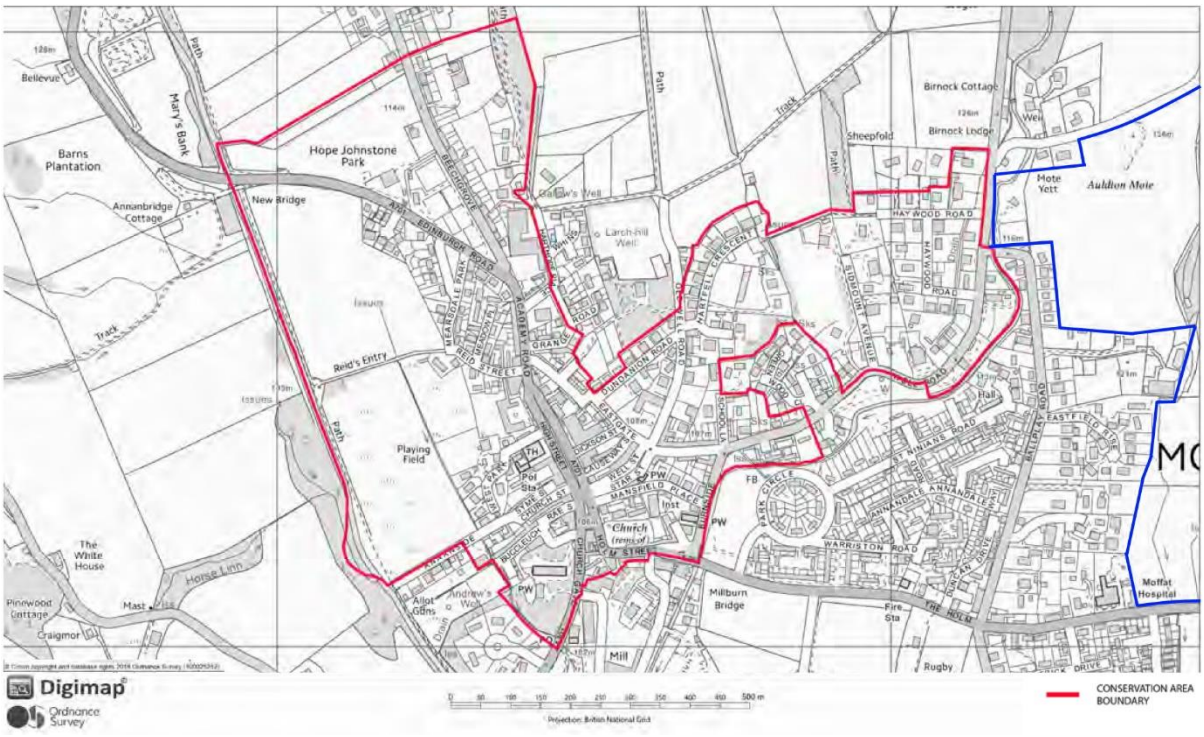


Figure 25 the boundary of Moffat's conservation area (red line), taken from Moffat Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan. The masterplan boundary is shown with a blue line.

4.5.4 Predicted effects

It is likely that new housing in the masterplan site would further increase the diversity of Moffat's townscapes. Adverse effects on the conservation area could be avoided by avoiding high density, discordant building styles, with no vegetation to frame them, close to the designated area.

4.6 Summary

Many of the key characteristics of the townscape in the study area would not be affected, especially those relating to the large-scale landforms. Other key characteristics such as field boundaries, and tree cover could be affected in a small way. The character of the Regional Scenic Area would be affected only in a negligible way, and none of its key characteristics would be affected.

Despite the predicted effects being small, guidelines should be developed to minimise adverse effects, and if possible, to capitalise on opportunities for improvement.

5 Effects on visual amenity

5.1 Introduction

This chapter considers how the proposed scheme could affect people's views. Effects on people living, working and at leisure in the area, and on people passing through it, have been taken into account.

The study area consists of the zone of theoretical visibility within about 5km of the proposed scheme. Because of the small scale of the scheme components, and the low lying nature of the proposed scheme, the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was prepared by carrying out a viewshed analysis on site (looking outwards from the development area, and noting the limits of the view), and by looking towards the site from a range of different places. Please refer to above Figure 13 which illustrates the ZTV and below Figure 26 which shows where the visual receptors who have been considered in this appraisal are located.

5.2 Impact appraisal method

The following paragraphs describe the way in which the scheme is likely to affect people's views. The appraisal follows the procedure recommended in GLVIA3. Therefore, for each receptor:

- The ***baseline*** views for each receptor are described in more detail, following on from the descriptions in Chapter 2, taking into account the way the surrounding area would develop in future if the scheme is not built;
- The receptor's ***susceptibility*** to change and the ***value*** of their views are determined.
- The ***size or scale, duration*** and ***reversibility*** of changes which the proposed scheme would cause to their views are then determined, taking mitigation measures into account.

This method is the same as that for the appraisal of landscape character, except for two small differences: First, in the visual amenity appraisal the ***duration*** of the effect takes into account not only the length of time over which there would be a change in view, but also the duration of a receptor's exposure to an effect; so, for example, the duration of exposure of a person walking past a development may be measured in minutes, whereas someone looking at the view from a living room window would have longer and repeated exposure to the change in view. Second, GLVIA3 specifies that the ***value*** of a view should be determined taking account of whether it is formally recognised, for example in relation to heritage assets or planning designations, or informally recognised by the presence of other indicators of value such as appearance in guide books or tourist maps, provision of facilities for enjoyment of the view, or reference to the view in literature or art.

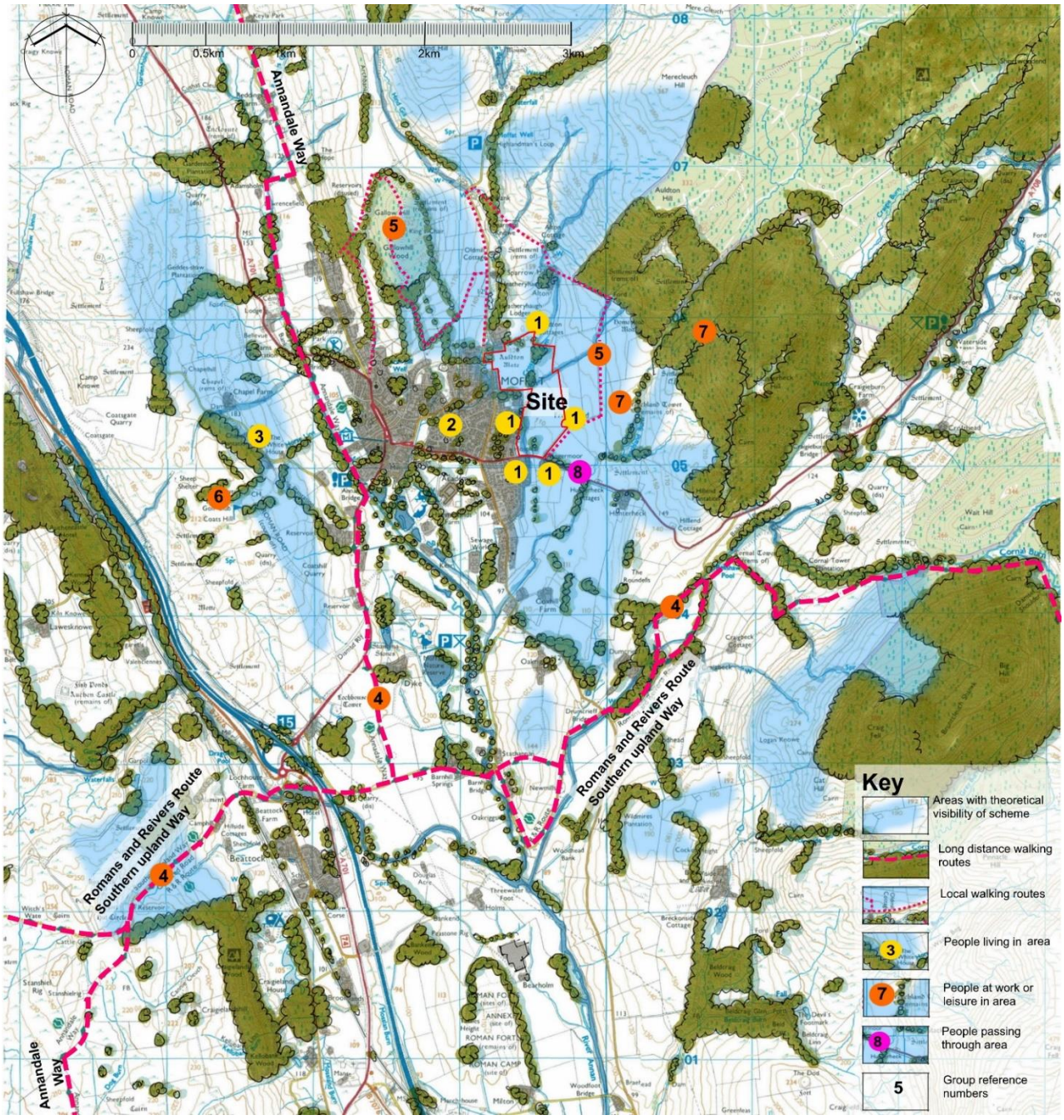


Figure 26 the location of people living, at work and leisure, and passing through the area. The numbers refer to receptor groups in the following appraisal.

5.3 People living in the area

5.3.1 Baseline conditions

Sensitivity

A person's sensitivity to a change in view takes into account their **susceptibility** to the type of change in view which is predicted to be caused by the proposed scheme, and, according to GLVIA3, the **value** of the landscape in the view.

All people living in the area are considered to have a **high susceptibility** to changes in their view. This is because they are highly familiar with the views from their own homes, and therefore any changes would be very noticeable to them.

According to GLVIA3, because their views are of a designated landscape, they are considered to be **high value views**.

Magnitude of change

The magnitude of change takes into account the **size of the change**, its **duration** and whether it is **reversible**. In visual amenity appraisal, duration relates to the time frame in which the change lasts (e.g. how long will the development be in the scene for), and the length of exposure to that change in view (e.g. is the person seeing that view for long periods every day, or fleetingly on one single day while in the area).

5.3.2 Group 1: people living in dwellings which are immediately adjacent to the masterplan site

These are people who live in houses which are around the edge of the masterplan site, with no other houses or structures intervening between their homes and the site other than garden hedges and the like. They are, working from the north of the site in a clockwise direction:

- Auldton Cottages
- Frenchland
- Rogermoor
- Some of the houses on the opposite side of Selkirk Road and a few on Frenchland Drive
- Some of the houses along the western edge of the site, at Eastfield Rise and Ballplay Road.
- A small number of properties to the west of Auldton Cottages.

People living in these dwellings currently have views of other properties, gardens, roads and pavements, sheep-grazed fields bounded by dry stone dykes, small woodland blocks and the Moffat hills beyond. Most houses are likely to have at least some living room windows facing towards the masterplan site.

Figure 27 The top photograph shows houses to the west of the site. The middle photograph shows houses to the west of the site on the left, and to the north of the site (on each side of Auldton Motte) in the distance. The bottom photograph shows Frenchland to the east of the site.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 1: PEOPLE LIVING IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO THE SITE

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people living in the area: **high susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**.

Magnitude of change

For people living in these properties, at least part of the view would change from rural grazed fields with hills beyond to a view of new housing, open spaces and trees. Because of the close proximity to the site, it is likely that new housing would occupy quite a large part of these people's views. For some people the new housing may partially filter views of the Moffat hills beyond. This change in view would be permanent, and frequently seen (from their own homes).

Following the criteria established in Table 2, overall, this would be a **large change**: "*the proposal, or part of it, would become a dominant feature or focal point in the view, or would dramatically open up, or constrain the extent or depth of the view*".

The duration of these changes would be **permanent and frequently seen**, and would **not be regarded as reversible**.

Summary

In **summary**, for these **high-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a **permanent, frequently seen, large** change in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.** Most people in this group would experience a change in view.

5.3.3 Group 2: people living in Moffat, but not immediately adjacent to the masterplan site

These are the people who live in Moffat but have at least one row of existing houses between them and the masterplan site. For the most part, this large group of people currently have views of a residential scene, made up of roads, paths, other houses and garages, garden vegetation, and the coming and going of their neighbours.

Figure 28 Most people living in Moffat would not see the site or the development from their homes because there are already other houses and vegetation blocking that view.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 2: PEOPLE LIVING ELSEWHERE IN MOFFAT

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people living in the area: **high susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**. (Although the Moffat Hills RSA designated area - the designation which confers the "high value" on these views - covers the whole of the town, it is worth mentioning that none of the key characteristics of the RSA describes any part of the urban environment. It may therefore be argued that the values of views within the town should not be considered to be of high value merely because of their inclusion in the mapped area.)

Magnitude of change

Some people living in these properties may see new houses and trees glimpsed between other closer, existing houses. They are unlikely to experience any change which would affect the balance, extent, breadth or nature of their view. Most people in this group would not experience a change of view.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, overall, this would be a **negligible change**: "*a change which is only visible if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the view, or the extent or depth of the view*".

The duration of any changes in view would be **permanent and frequently seen**, and would **not be regarded as reversible**

Summary

In **summary**, for these **high-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a **permanent, frequently seen but negligible** change in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.** Most people in this group would not be affected.

5.3.4 Group 3: people living on higher ground surrounding Moffat

These are people living on the flanks of hills surrounding Moffat, for example people living near to Moffat Golf Course. There are not many people in this category. Some of these people may have limited views because their houses are surrounded by dense mature vegetation. Other people have expansive and panoramic views of Moffat, nestled at the confluence of two rivers, surrounded by farmland and woodlands, with the Moffat hills framing the whole scene.

Figure 29 If visible, the masterplan development would be a small part of the expansive scene from houses on higher land surrounding Moffat.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 3: PEOPLE LIVING ON HIGHER GROUND SURROUNDING MOFFAT

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people living in the area: **high susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**.

Magnitude of change

Some people, those with views towards the site, would see the proposed development. In the panoramic scene the extent of settlement at Moffat would increase slightly, but the overall balance of the expansive scene would remain the same, and changes may be difficult to spot.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, overall, this would be a **negligible change**: "*a change which is only visible if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the view, or the extent or depth of the view*".

The duration of these changes would be **permanent and frequently seen**, and would **not be regarded as reversible**

Summary

In **summary**, for these **high-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a **permanent, frequently seen but negligible** change in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.** Only some of the people in this group would have a change in view.

5.4 People at work and leisure in the area

5.4.1 Baseline conditions

Sensitivity

A person's sensitivity to a change in view takes into account their **susceptibility** to the type of change in view which is predicted to be caused by the proposed scheme, and, according to GLVIA3, the **value** of the landscape in the view.

All people at work and at leisure in the area are considered to have a **medium susceptibility** to changes in their view. This is because they may be taking notice of, and enjoying the views but they are also occupied with their work or leisure activity, and they would be less familiar with the view than they would be of views from their homes.

According to GLVIA3, because the views are of a designated landscape, they are considered to be **high value views**.

5.4.2 Group 4: people on long distance paths

People travel on foot through the area on the following long-distance routes:

- Southern Upland Way
- Annandale Way
- Romans and Reivers Route

People walking on these routes have constantly changing views, which vary as they travel through the landscape. In the study area, the views are of farmland and trees, Moffat town and scattered individual houses in the countryside, stone walls (often bordering paths), roads with traffic, and hilly land in most directions. The long-distance paths found locally are marked on Figure 26 above.

Figure 30 The view towards Moffat and the site from The Southern Upland Way (about 3.5km to the south west of Moffat).

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 4: PEOPLE ON LONG DISTANCE PATHS

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people at work or at leisure in the area: **medium susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**

Magnitude of change

Only from a small number of places would people see the masterplan development, and because of the distance between the long-distance routes and the site, the change in view would likely be difficult to pick out: there would be a small increase in the area of land which Moffat occupies. Often, the people on these routes are visitors, so they are less likely to be familiar with the scene before the masterplan development, therefore many of them would not be able to pick out any change in view.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, overall, this would be a **negligible change**: "*a change which is only visible if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the view, or the extent or depth of the view*".

The duration of these changes would be **permanent but likely only seen for a few minutes** as the walker passed through the place where a view could be possible, and the change would **not be regarded as reversible.**

Summary

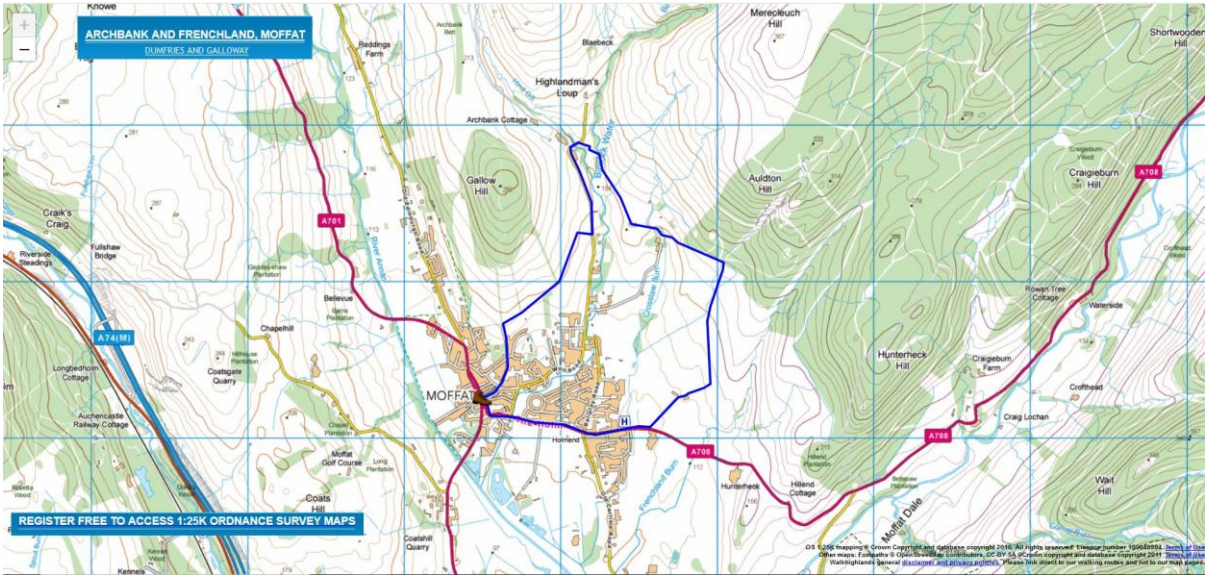
In **summary**, for these **medium-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a **permanent, infrequently seen** but **negligible** change in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.** Only from a few places would these changes in view be seen.

5.4.3 Group 5: people on local paths

People travel on foot through the area on the following local paths, many of which are promoted as "Moffat Walks", and some of which are core paths. As seen on Figure 32 below, these paths:

- pass to the east of the site to reach Walls Moated Site and the forest edge,
- cross the top of Gallow Hill,
- contour across fields to the north of Moffat.

Figure 31 Top left, the view from Gallow Hill. This photograph was not taken from the path to the summit, but from the side of the hill: the site does not appear to be visible from the path. The site is the brown fields. As the new tree planting matures, this view would become more and more filtered, Top right, views from many paths to the west of the site (such as this one, south of Gallow Hill) are edged by mature vegetation. Bottom, from paths east of the site, there are clear views towards the site.



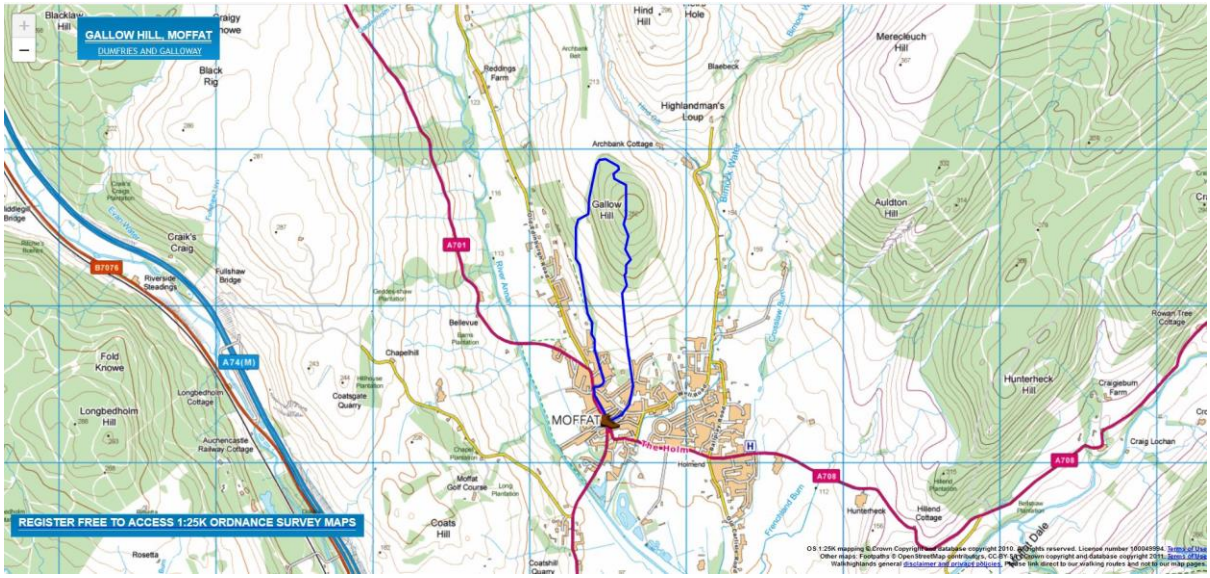


Figure 32 Maps from Walkhighland website: two local walks in the vicinity of the site.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 5: PEOPLE ON LOCAL PATHS

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people at work or at leisure in the area: **medium susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**

Magnitude of change

Because there are many paths, in different locations and at different distances, changes in view could be reasonably large and noticeable, or not visible at all. The change in view would likely last a few minutes, before the viewer passed by or changed directions. However, because they are local walks, some people may see the change repeatedly. For the most affected people (probably those on the path to the east of the site) there would be a large change in view, lasting a few minutes.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, there could be many different changes in view, or no change at all, and these changes would last for minutes.

The duration of these changes would be **permanent and frequently seen, likely lasting just a few minutes on each walk**, and would **not be regarded as reversible**.

The duration of these changes would be **permanent but likely only seen for a few minutes** as the walker passed through the place where a view could be possible, and the change would **not be regarded as reversible**

Summary

In **summary**, for these **medium-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a wide range of different changes in view, none of which would last long, but some which could be repeatedly seen by people who do the same walk day after day. They would **permanent** changes in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.**

5.4.4 Group 6: people at the Golf Course

Moffat Golf Course is on elevated land to the west of the town. From some but not all of the golf course there are expansive and panoramic views of Moffat, nestled at the confluence of two rivers, surrounded by farmland and woods, with the Moffat Hills framing the whole scene.

Figure 33 The view from the front of the Clubhouse. The site is just visible beyond the town in the middle distance.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 6: PEOPLE AT THE GOLF COURSE

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people at work or at leisure in the area: **medium susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**

Magnitude of change

From some parts of the golf course (the first and 18th hole, and the front of the clubhouse) people would see the development proposal on the far side of the town. In the panoramic scene the extent of Moffat town would increase slightly, but the overall balance of the expansive scene would remain the same, and changes would be difficult to spot.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, overall, this would be a **negligible change**: "*a change which is only visible if searched for, and which does not make any difference to the view, or the extent or depth of the view*".

The duration of these changes would be **permanent**, and would **not be regarded as reversible.**

Summary

In **summary**, for these **medium-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a **permanent negligible** change in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.**

5.4.5 Group 7: people at work outside

People work outdoors in the local area mainly in farming and forestry. These people have views of the countryside and forestry around them, but they are also occupied with looking at the work they are doing.

Figure 34 Typically, people work outdoors in farming and forestry.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 7: PEOPLE AT WORK OUTSIDE

Sensitivity

Susceptibility judgements and view value are explained above; these judgements are the same for all people at work or at leisure in the area: **medium susceptibility** receptors and **high value views**

Magnitude of change

For these people, changes in view could be large and noticeable, or not visible at all: it depends on the proximity to the site and the nature of the work being undertaken. The change in view could last a few minutes, or a large part of the day.

Following the criteria established in Table 2, there could be many different changes in view, or no change at all, and these changes would last for varying lengths of time.

The duration of these changes would be **permanent but variable in terms of length of exposure.**

Summary

In **summary**, for these **medium-susceptibility** people, with **high value views**, the masterplan development could result in a **wide range of different changes in view**, lasting different lengths of time, but some which could be repeatedly seen by people who work in the same place day after day. They would **permanent** changes in view. These changes are **unlikely to be reversed.**

5.5 People passing through the area

Sensitivity

A person's sensitivity to a change in view takes into account their **susceptibility** to the type of change in view which is predicted to be caused by the proposed scheme, and, according to GLVIA3, the **value** of the landscape in the view.

All people passing through the area are considered to have a **low susceptibility** to changes in their view. This is because they are largely focussed on the road ahead and with getting to their destination, and because they are travelling at speed, therefore less able to notice changes in view.

According to GLVIA3, because their views are of a designated landscape, they are considered to be **high value views**.

5.5.1 People travelling to and from Moffat on Selkirk Road (Group 8)

Figure 35 People passing on Selkirk Road can see the site to the north of the road.

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS ON GROUP 8: PEOPLE PASSING THROUGH THE AREA ON SELKIRK ROAD

Summary

People passing by on Selkirk Road would see the change in view for the time it takes them to travel along about 600m of the road as they passed by in a vehicle, filtered intermittently by roadside trees, hedges and buildings.

5.6 Summary

The way in which the proposed masterplan development would affect people's views varies from place to place and according to whether the viewer is a resident, or just temporarily in the area.

Unsurprisingly, people who live immediately around the edge of the site would experience a large change in view, from fields to housing. Other people living elsewhere in Moffat or the surrounding countryside would have either a negligible change in view or no change in view.

People on long distance footpaths would have a negligible change in view; and only from a small number of fairly distant locations.

People on local paths or at work outside in the local area would have different types of change in view, depending on their location. For people at the golf course, there would be negligible changes in view, and only from a few places.

People passing by on Selkirk Road would only have a fleeting change in view.

For many people living, at work or leisure, or passing through, there would be no change in view at all, as can be seen on the ZTV Figure 13 and Figure 26).

6 Findings leading to masterplan guidelines

6.1 Introduction

The above primary appraisal has been used to identify landscape and visual effects which the masterplan proposal could cause, but also to help draw up a series of guidelines to address those effects.

Other issues which inform the guidelines are:

- the other environmental topics
- constraints, as shown on Figure 36 below.
- place-making, informed by Dumfries and Galloway Council's Supplementary Guidance Design Quality of New Developments, and captured succinctly in two of their diagrams which are reproduced below in Figure 37 and Figure 38.

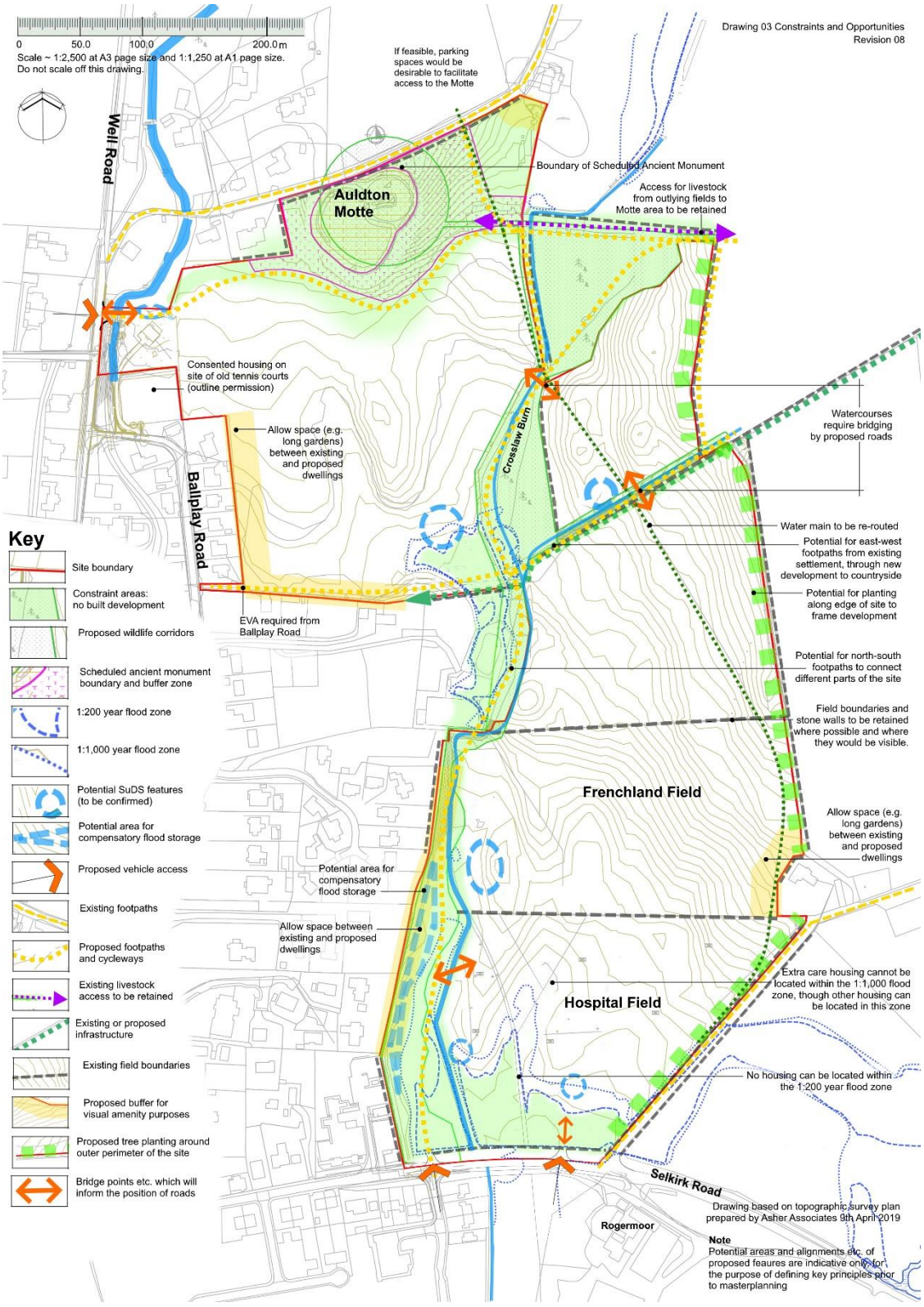


Figure 36 The constraints and opportunities which emerged from the masterplan team's environmental, technical and design studies.

Figure 37 From Dumfries and Galloway's "Design Quality of New Development", the six qualities of successful places.

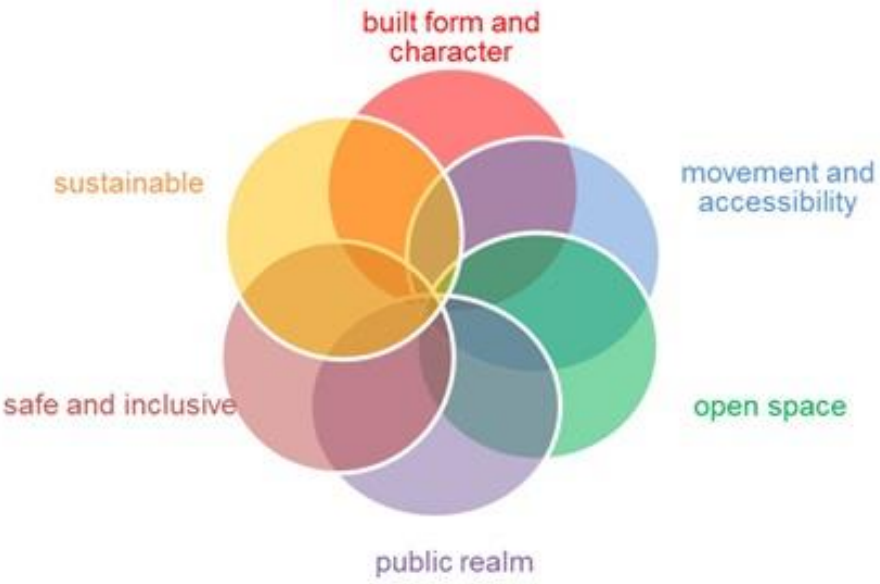


Figure 38 From Dumfries and Galloway's "Design Quality of New Development", key design principles and criteria for creating good quality and successful places.

6.2 The landscape and visual guidelines

Below is a list of all the guidelines which relate to either landscape or visual amenity. These emerged from the previously described landscape and visual appraisal. They are taken from the full list (which takes all environmental and place-making issues into account) as found in Chapter 7 of the Masterplan Report.

Each guideline is written in normal text and below that, in *italics*, is a discussion on how each individual guideline supports landscape and visual amenity interests, either to minimise adverse effects or to capitalise on opportunities for enhancement or benefit.

These landscape and visual amenity guidelines are then taken forward into the following Chapter 7, and used to "test" the masterplan.

6.2.1 Landform

- Avoid major re-modelling of the natural landform.
- Avoid engineered earth modelling which creates uncharacteristic landforms.
- Ensure that any earth-modelling flows into adjacent unchanged landform naturally.
  These guidelines are to ensure there is little adverse effect on the characteristic topography of the landscape.

6.2.2 Layout

- Avoid placing new dwellings close to existing dwellings – include long back gardens to provide distance and privacy.
- Align houses to avoid window-to window close views between existing and proposed dwellings.
  These guidelines are to reduce adverse visual impact for people living immediately around the edge of the masterplan site.

6.2.3 Built form

- Include a variety of rooflines, heights, shapes and orientations along eastern edge of the development so that the new settlement edge has a similar appearance to the existing: diverse, complex and textured, without a solid wall of built form or a continuous horizontal line of roofs. Occasional taller buildings on the outer eastern edge of the development would not necessarily be undesirable, as this would match the existing varied edge of the settlement.
  This guideline is to help the new development settle in to its landscape setting, with the same kind of broken-up rooflines as are found in the older parts of Well Road.
- Build dwellings from a variety of locally-used materials: Locharbriggs sandstone, whinstone, painted stone and render, harling, and painted detailing around doors and windows. A variety of materials along the eastern edge is particularly important to ensure a diverse, rich and textured appearance along the settlement boundary.
  This guideline is to support landscape character, by ensuring there is not a stark, or blocky appearance to the new settlement edge.

6.2.4 Open Space

- Retain an area of open space around Auldton Motte.
  This guideline also supports cultural heritage and its aim is to provide a spacious setting for the monument, which otherwise would be difficult to interpret or even see.

6.2.5 Existing vegetation

- Retain the woodland blocks within the site except for making some small clearances to allow footpaths through. Manage the woodland for its long-term presence on the site.
- Retain trees on Auldton Motte.
- Retain trees along water courses and on the north-western edge of the site, except where they need to be removed for vehicle access into the site.
- If possible, retain trees along the ditch within the southern end of the site. However, these trees are not particularly valuable specimens, so good place-making would be prioritised above their retention.
  These measures are to support both landscape character and visual amenity; mature existing vegetation is particularly useful to create a setting in which a new development instantly appears "settled" and "softened".

6.2.6 New planting

- Plant groups of trees around the perimeter but do not create a solid belt of vegetation, which would be uncharacteristic, would separate the settlement from the wider countryside, and could over-shade the adjacent farmland. Both ornamental and native species would be used here.
- Plant a line of lime trees along the edge of Selkirk Road to tie in with the distinctive, historic line of limes found along The Holm to the west of the masterplan site.
- Plant tree groups within the site in clusters, lines and as individuals. Use lines and avenues of trees to help people navigate the site.
- Plant native trees and some ornamentals within the open space to frame and shelter different areas and to provide continuous wildlife corridors.
- Plant trees to reduce visual impact for people living in adjacent areas, where it is possible to do this without causing its own adverse effect (for example, where they would be very close to existing dwellings, causing shading).
  New planting can in time also support landscape character and visual amenity.

6.2.7 Field patterns and boundaries

- Retain the field pattern where possible, and use it to develop a sense of place and distinctive areas within the whole of the site.
- Where existing stone walls would be "lost" between back gardens, use the stone elsewhere in more visible and prominent locations, to reinforce local landscape character.
  These measures are to help preserve key characteristics of the landscape.

7 Review

7.1 Introduction

All relevant guidelines have been taken from the previous Chapter 6 and used here to "test" the masterplan. This is the secondary landscape and visual appraisal for the masterplan.

This review is based on the masterplan proposals which are illustrated by the following figures, each of which is available as a scaled, stand-alone drawing.

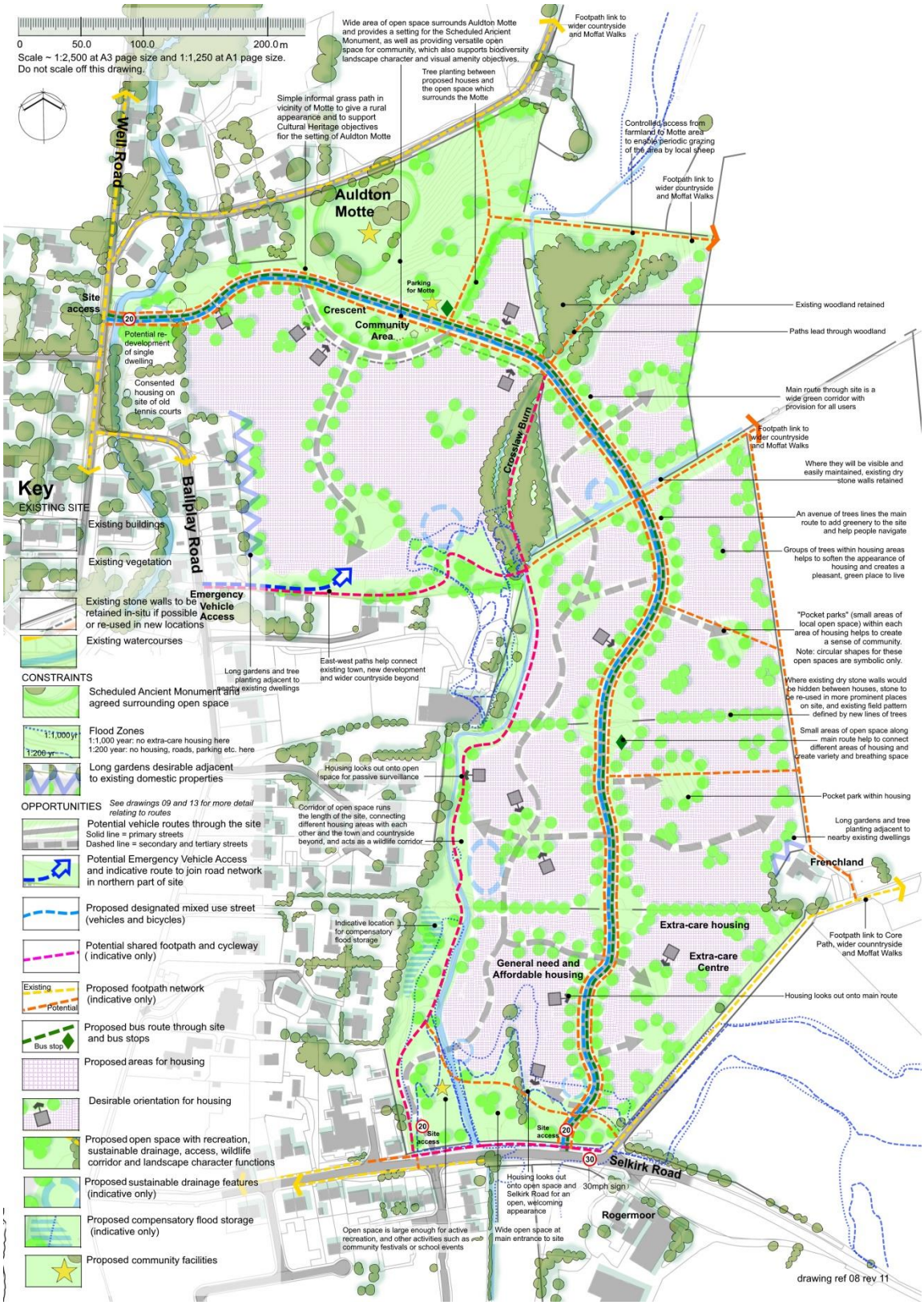


Figure 39 The masterplan for the site. The following review was based on this plan.

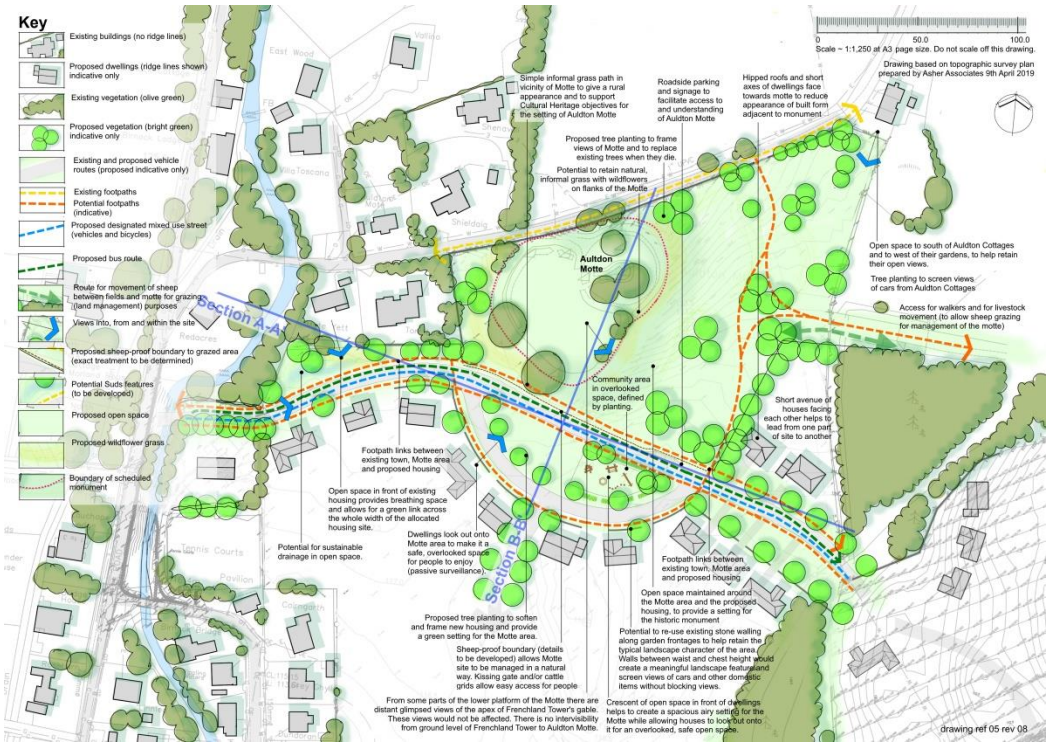


Figure 40 An illustrative plan for the north of the site, which the following review tests against the guidelines.

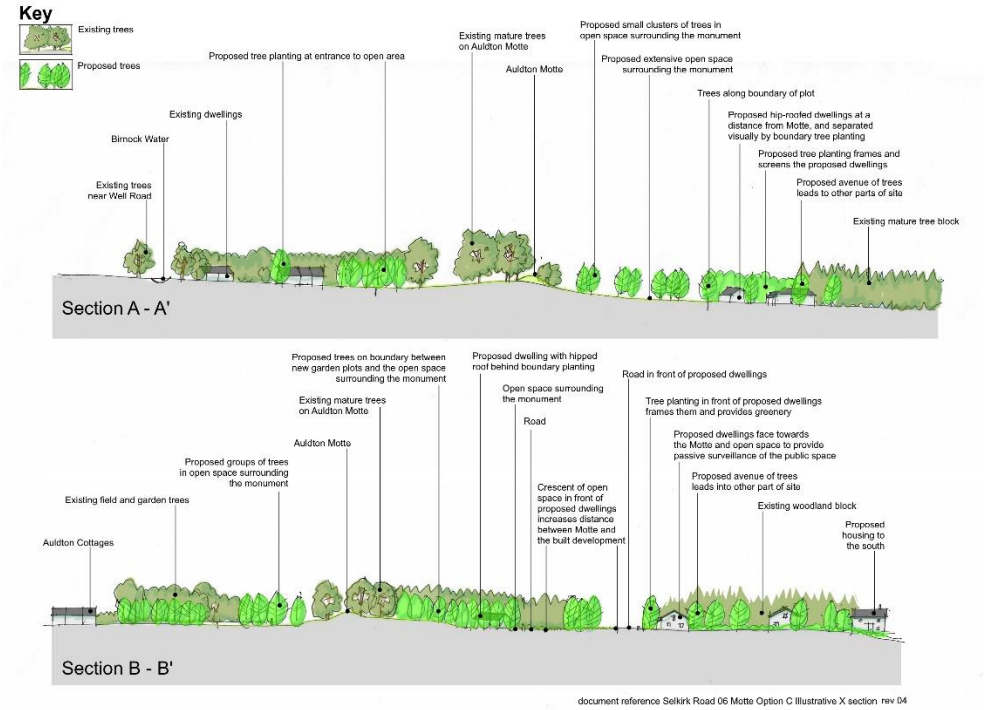


Figure 41 Cross sections through the areas shown in Figure 40.

7.2 Review

The following tables (which can also be found in the masterplan report) summarise how the various landscape character and visual amenity guidelines have been applied, and demonstrated in the masterplan.

Table 5: summarising how landscape character guidelines have been applied in the masterplan

Guideline	Application on masterplan
• Retain trees in and around the site.	• Two tree blocks within site to be retained. • Trees on the Motte are to be retained. • Trees along the watercourse in the south of the site to be retained if possible.
• Plant groups of trees around the perimeter of site to soften the built edge of the development. Avoid solid belts of trees around the edge as this would not reflect the current character of rooflines "peeping" between trees on the eastern edge of Moffat.	• Groups and individual trees are proposed along the eastern boundary of the site. No solid belts of trees along its edge.
• Plant groups of trees within the development to soften and frame rooflines as seen from a distance or from higher ground (as is found in existing housing on the eastern edge of Moffat).	• Groups of trees will be peppered around the site, among houses, along roads and within open spaces shown on the masterplan.
• Plant both native tree species and ornamental trees within the site, to tie in to ornamental statuesque tree character on the eastern edge of Moffat.	• Suggested tree species for both native and ornamental specimens are provided.
• Plant a line of trees (for example limes) along the southern edge of the site to tie in with the existing distinctive line of trees on the southern side of The Holm to the west of the site.	• A line of trees was proposed along Selkirk Road. However, during public consultation it was agreed that these trees should be removed from the masterplan.
• Retain the field pattern if possible.	• Field boundaries are shown as being retained on the masterplan, except where they are "broken through" to connect one housing block to another (and one community with another).
• Retain dry stone dykes in existing positions if they will be visible parts of the scene. If not (e.g. if located in between back gardens) re-use the stone for new walls in more visible locations.	• The masterplan suggests where to retain drystone dykes, and where to move stone to more suitable locations if appropriate. Where dry stone walls would disappear between houses, a line of trees is suggested instead, so that the original field pattern can still be seen, especially from higher ground to the east.

• Avoid modification to land form.	• The gentle landform does not need major intervention to allow development, so only minor modifications of landform are proposed: - to create flat platforms for individual houses, working with the natural landform - to create acceptable road gradients - to ensure path gradients are feasible, suitable for all users including wheelchair and pushchair users. - to create sustainable drainage features and compensatory flood storage
• Use a variety of building materials to reflect the diverse mix of materials found in Moffat: - Red Locharbriggs sandstone and grey whinstone, sometimes used together on the same building or garden wall. - Painted stone and painted render - Painted surrounds to windows and doors - Harling - A small amount of timber cladding.	• Suggested materials are included in the masterplan report, to be applied at detailed design stage.
• Where possible in open space (The Motte), allow sheep to graze the grass for a traditional appearance.	• Agricultural access is indicated on masterplan and described in the masterplan report.

Table 6 summarising how visual amenity guidelines have been applied in the masterplan

Guideline	Application on masterplan
• Where proposed houses abut existing properties, have long gardens to reduce appearance of built form for existing residents.	• Areas where this measure would be applied are indicated on the masterplan.
• Use tree planting between existing and proposed houses, but avoid a solid band of planting where existing houses are close to the boundary.	• Shown indicatively on the masterplan.
• Align proposed houses to avoid window-to-window views between existing and proposed dwellings.	• Shown indicatively on masterplan.
• Above-mentioned tree planting measures around the perimeter to soften views of development for people at leisure in the hills to the east of Moffat.	• As above under “Landscape”.

8 Summary and conclusion

8.1 Introduction

In most cases, landscape and visual appraisal is a tool used to identify the effects which a closely defined development proposal could cause. The purpose is to assist decision-makers in planning applications and also to help develop a design which would reduce adverse effects and seize opportunities for enhancement. In master-planning, there are no specific development proposals to study, but nevertheless, the principles of appraisal can be used to support the masterplan and to produce guidelines for future detailed design proposals. The way in which this has been done, alongside other environmental studies and place-making, is explained in Chapter 1. The masterplan is guided by the findings of the landscape and visual appraisal, but also by other environmental studies, end-user requirements and by site-specific place-making principles.

The landscape and visual appraisal followed guidance in The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Edition 3 (GLVIA3), adapted for master-planning requirements. It was informed by landscape character evidence bases and field work, and was undertaken by two qualified and experienced landscape assessors. Appraisal techniques from GLVIA3 include definition of landscape and people's levels of *sensitivity*, and judgements on the *magnitude of change* which the proposed scheme could cause.

For **landscape**, the local landscape character (published landscape character types), the Moffat Hills Regional Scenic Area, and the townscape of the eastern side of the town were studied.

For **visual amenity**, the views enjoyed by people living in the study area, at work and at leisure, and passing through the area were studied.

8.2 Landscape effects

8.2.1 Published landscape character types

The local landscape character of the area has been defined and described in the published Landscape Character Assessment no. 94 for Dumfries and Galloway. The masterplan site is located within landscape character type 7: Middle Dale, with landscape character type 19: Southern Upland framing it on higher land to the north. The published key landscape characteristics (which apply in or around the site) are:

- Broad valley.
- Sheep and cattle-grazed improved pastures.
- Medium-scale field enclosures (stone dykes more common than hedgerows).
- Dale contained by uplands: forestry and rough grazing.
- Settlements with high townscape value.

Development of the masterplan site would have little effect on characteristics such as the broad valley and the sense of this being a dale contained by uplands. However, there would inevitably be a loss of sheep- and cattle-grazed improved pasture; this would result from any kind of development on this allocated housing site, or indeed on any area of open grazed land. The proposed development may affect the field enclosure and field pattern and the high-quality townscape of the existing settlement. Guidelines to address these effects have been produced. These guidelines seek to deal with a range of different scenarios which could occur when detailed design begins.

8.2.2 Designated landscapes

The Moffat Hills have been designated as a Regional Scenic Area. While this is not a statutory designation, it indicates the way in which the landscape and scenery are valued at a regional level. The masterplan site lies within this designated area, but towards its southern edge, near settlement and not in the heart of the hills. The published key landscape characteristics of the RSA are:

- Smooth, high, steep-sided rounded hills dissected by steep clefts
- A mosaic of different vegetation on high summits
- Coniferous plantations on the lower slopes
- Scattered farms with improved pastures enclosed by stone walls (dykes)
- Moffat, an important tourist centre

Many of the above landscape characteristics apply more to the hills that frame the site, or to Annandale and Moffat Dale to each side (out of view of the site), than to the site itself. This means that the proposed masterplan development would have very little effect, if any, on the key landscape characteristics.

8.2.3 Townscape

On the eastern edge, Moffat's **townscape** is mature, with a variety of houses and much mature, ornamental vegetation, especially to the north. It has, as the above landscape character descriptions state, a "high townscape value". The use of local stone for buildings and walls contributes to the townscape character, although recent development immediately adjacent to the site is perhaps less varied and complex than older housing. The masterplan development has potential to either enrich and improve the townscape edge, or to cause its deterioration and the guidelines below seek to build and improve on the existing character.

8.2.4 Landscape character summary

The most important landscape effects which development of the masterplan site could cause, and which need to be taken into account, relate to the field pattern and stone dykes, and the townscape of the eastern edge of Moffat town. Many key landscape characteristics would not be affected by the masterplan proposal.

8.3 Visual amenity

8.3.1 People living in the area

Many people live in the local area, but those living immediately adjacent to the site would be most affected by the masterplan development. Most of these people live on the western edge of the site, with a small number to the north, east and south. These people would have a distinct change in view: from a view of the edge of Moffat, containing fields and hills, to a view of houses, gardens, roads, open spaces and vegetation. Other people living elsewhere in the area would have a much less noticeable change in view from their homes, if they could see the development at all. The guidelines seek to reduce adverse changes in views especially for the people living closest to the site.

8.3.2 People at school, leisure or work in the area

People work outdoors in the local area, mainly in farming and forestry. The scenery around them is an important part of their day's work but they are also focussed on the job in hand. The people working in the fields to the immediate east of the site would be most affected by a change in view; housing would be closer and a more prominent part of their view. The guidelines to mitigate any adverse effects on these people's views are listed below.

Climbing, shooting and mountain biking take place in the Moffat Hills but around the site area, walking appears to be the main outdoor activity, by local people and visitors. The town promotes a collection of walks into the hills called the "Moffat Walks". Core Path *Archbank and Frenchland* runs along the south eastern boundary of the site for part of its length. There are also informal walks on old routes, for example to the top of Gallow Hill, to the north west of the site. People walking to the north and east of the site would experience a change of view while they are passing the site: the built-up edge of the town would be closer to them, and a more prominent part of the scene, while they were passing. Guidelines to address this issue are listed below.

8.3.3 People passing through the area

People pass the site on the A708 Selkirk Road immediately to the south of the site. These people would have a brief change in view; built form would be in their view, obliquely for a few moments longer as they entered or left the town.

8.3.4 Visual amenity summary

People living around the edge of the site would be most affected by development of the masterplan site, but most people living in Moffat would not be affected. People working in the fields to the east of the site would also be affected when nearby and when not focussing on their work. From some walks, including promoted Moffat Walks and one Core Path, people out walking would have housing, trees and gardens closer in their view than they currently do, for the length of time that they are passing the site. There would be very few places on long distance routes where people could see the masterplan proposal, and those views would be distant.

8.3.5 Key landscape and visual effects

The key landscape character effect which the proposed masterplan proposal could cause would be loss of the field pattern and the dry-stone dykes which mark the field boundaries.

The key visual amenity effect would be the change in view for people living immediately around the edge of the site.

8.4 Guidelines

The landscape and visual guidelines (found in Chapter 6) which have emerged from this appraisal have been designed to be:

- Easy to understand.
- Adaptable.
- Measurable.
- Integrated with other environmental issues, and place-making aspirations.

8.5 Conclusion

This appraisal follows advice given in GLVIA3, adapted to enable it to:

- Make a preliminary appraisal of likely effects, based on basic development parameters; then
- Produce a series of landscape and visual amenity guidelines to address these predicted effects and guide masterplan design; then
- Make a secondary appraisal by testing the masterplan design against the guidelines.

The proposed masterplan development would inevitably change the character of site itself, and people living around the site would have a marked change in view. Other than this, landscape and visual effects would be limited.

The guidelines have been developed in order to address landscape and visual amenity effects, even if they would be small effects. Opportunities for enhancement have also been seized.

These guidelines are meant to be carried forward to detailed design stage and the aim is for scheme designers to use them when developing proposals, and for planning decision makers to use them when considering planning applications.

To be successful, and to lead to successful places, the landscape and visual guidelines need to be used alongside those for other environmental issues, and those which support place-making aspirations.