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Cogges Link Road Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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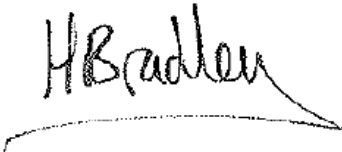
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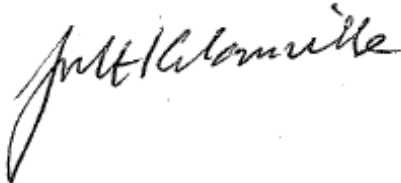
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Executive Summary

Landscape effects relate to physical changes to the landscape and its features, which might also affect the overall character of the landscape. Visual effects relate to visible changes resulting from a proposal in views from houses, work places, public open spaces, public rights of way (e.g. Footpaths and bridleways) and roads.

The proposed Cogges Link Road (CLR) includes the following landscape and visual effects:

- Removal of some existing trees, shrubs and hedgerows.
- Diversion of a branch of the River Windrush.
- A section of land lowering to provide a flood area.
- One new pond to provide surface water storage.
- Changes to the flat, open character of Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park.
- Section of existing overhead cables in Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park would be placed underground.
- Views of CLR or planted earth mounds from housing along the urban edge of Cogges, Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park, Windrush Cemetery and surrounding public Footpaths and roads.

The following actions would help to reduce the landscape and visual impacts caused by CLR and help to fit CLR into its surroundings:

- Planted earth mounds that would help to hide CLR and traffic moving along it.
- Planting along the edges of CLR, including grass and wildflower, tree and shrub planting and hedgerows.
- Planting or infilling of hedgerows, individual trees and clumps of tree and shrub planting in areas outside the corridor of CLR (where landowners agree).

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Assessment

- 1.1.1 This report examines the landscape and visual impacts associated with the construction and operation of Cogges Link Road (CLR). The assessment firstly examines and interprets the baseline landscape character and features of the area together with the visual context of the proposed road. Secondly, it assesses what the landscape and visual impacts of CLR would be against this background. The assessment has been prepared with reference to the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA). There is no separate Townscape report because CLR would not give rise to any significant impacts on the townscape of Cogges or Witney.

2 Methodology

- 2.1.1 Landscape and visual impacts have been determined by assessing the degree of change resulting from the introduction of additional structures and earthworks on the existing landscape character and features. Main views from the surrounding settlements and publicly accessible areas are also considered.
- 2.1.2 For each topic – landscape and visual – the baseline conditions have been assessed first. The predicted impacts and their mitigation have then been considered. Finally, the residual impacts which cannot be completely mitigated are discussed.
- 2.1.3 Landscape and visual impacts have been assessed at the following timeframes:-
- During operation on a winter's day, when CLR would be open to traffic, during Year 1. At this stage it is assumed that many landscape mitigation measures, such as planting, would not have had time to mature enough to take effect. It is also assumed that surrounding, retained, vegetation would not be in leaf so would offer little in terms of visual screening. Other mitigation measures, however, would have immediate effect, such as earth mounding.
 - During operation on a summer's and winter's day, year 15 following proposed opening of CLR, when it is assumed that planting mitigation measures would have reached maturity (Design Year).
 - During night time, Year 15, following proposed opening of CLR (Design Year).

Study Area

- 2.1.4 A contextual area was considered in order to establish the landscape character of the road corridor. The landscape within the corridor was surveyed in detail and this included the identification of features such as significant vegetation, topography, field patterns and buildings.
- 2.1.5 A Visual Envelope (VE) established the visual context of the CLR and the existing road and was used to define the limits of the Study Area for the visual impact assessment. The VE is defined in DMRB Volume 11, Section 3, part 5 Annex III as the area from which a scheme feature is potentially visible. The VE is defined in the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Second Edition 2002 as, 'the area of land within which there is a view of any part of the proposed development.....all changes in impact must occur within these areas.'

2.2 Landscape Effects Methodology

- 2.2.1 Landscape impacts have been described as the changes which would potentially arise as a result of the proposed Scheme. Impacts on landscape character areas have been assessed, including both landscape features and designations.
- 2.2.2 Landscape character is defined by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage as, '*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse*'. Particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, field

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patterns and human settlement create character. Character makes each part of the landscape distinct, and gives each its particular sense of place. All types of landscapes, whether a small open space within an urban area or an expansive wilderness, can be characterised.

- 2.2.4 To assess the landscape effects of the proposed Scheme, the existing landscape character was assessed through the baseline landscape survey. A review of existing landscape assessments at National, Regional and Local scales was undertaken to set the landscape character context of the proposals, followed by a detailed assessment of the landscape character and features of the road corridor. The level of impact on landscape character was judged on the landscape character areas previously defined at local level by the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, 2004, which is advised within Policy NE3 Local Landscape Character (West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011) – ‘*When considering proposals the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment, the Lower Windrush Valley Project Report and the Windrush in Witney Project Report will be taken into account where appropriate*’.
- 2.2.3 Landscape designations and field survey helped to determine existing landscape quality. Landscape quality was based on judgements regarding the condition of the landscape and value established through landscape designations. Table 1 defines landscape quality.

Table 1: Landscape Quality

Category	Criteria
Highest Quality - Exceptional	Distinctive, unique or outstanding natural landscape character, including significant degrees of amenity and tranquillity. Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover. Appropriate management for land use and land cover. Distinct features worthy of conservation. No detracting features. Sense of place. Internationally or Nationally recognised e.g. all or great majority of World Heritage Site and/or National Park and/or AONB.
High Quality	Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover. Appropriate management for land use and land cover, but potentially scope to improve. Distinct features worthy of conservation. Occasional detracting features. Sense of place. Nationally recognised e.g. localised areas within National Park and/or AONB.
Good Quality	Recognisable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and balanced combination of landform and land cover still evident. Scope to improve management for land use and land cover. Some features worthy of conservation. Occasional detracting features. Sense of place. Regionally, locally recognised e.g. all or great majority of Area of Local Landscape Importance.
Ordinary Quality	Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover often masked by land use. Scope to improve management for land use and cover. Some features worthy of conservation. Prominent detracting features.

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Category	Criteria
Poor Quality	Weak or degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover often masked by land use. Mixed or single land use dominates and/or is evident. Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation and disturbed or derelict land which could require treatment.

2.2.4 The defined landscape character areas have also been assessed according to their landscape sensitivity, which is informed by landscape quality. Landscape sensitivity refers to the degree to which the landscape could accommodate change due to road development without causing detrimental effects on character and quality. Landscape sensitivity is defined in Table 2.

Table 2: Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity Change	to	Evaluation Criteria
High		Highest or very attractive quality landscape that would be unlikely to tolerate change and effective mitigation would be difficult to achieve.
Medium		Good landscape quality that would be tolerant of a small degree of change and effective mitigation would be possible, but results could take time to be effective.
Low		An ordinary or poor quality landscape that would be tolerant of a large degree of change and effective mitigation would be readily achievable.

2.2.5 The significance of landscape impact of the proposed scheme has been defined. Significance of landscape impact is a qualitative measure of the severity of predicted landscape effects. Definitions relating to significance of landscape effect are defined in Table 3. This Table has been used as a guide to assist the professional judgement of the landscape architect in deciding the significance of landscape effects.

Table 3: Significance of Landscape Impact

	Definition A scheme/proposal...
Moderate beneficial (positive) effect	Would provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It fits very well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. There is potential, through mitigation, to enable the restoration of characteristic features, partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from intensive farming or inappropriate development. It would enable a sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed planting and mitigation measures, that is, characteristic features are enhanced through the use of local materials and species used to fit the proposal into the landscape. It would enable some sense of quality to be restored or enhanced through beneficial landscaping and sensitive design in a landscape which is not of any formally recognised quality. It would further government objectives to regenerate degraded countryside.
Slight beneficial (positive) effect	Would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. Incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they would blend in well with surrounding landscape. Would enable some sense of place and scale to be restored through well-designed planting and mitigation measures. Maintain or enhance existing landscape character in an area which is not a

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	Definition A scheme/proposal...
	designated landscape, nor vulnerable to change. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid conflict with government policy towards protection of the countryside.
Neutral effect	Would be well designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. • Incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure that the Scheme would blend in well with surrounding landscape features and landscape elements. • Avoid being visually intrusive nor have an adverse effect on the current level of tranquility of the landscape through which the route passes. • Maintain existing landscape character in an area which is not a designated landscape, that is, neither national nor local high quality, nor is it vulnerable to change. • Avoid conflict with government policy towards protection of the countryside.
Slight adverse (negative) effect	Would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape. • Although not very visually intrusive, would impact on certain views into and across the area. • Not be completely mitigated for because of the nature of the proposal itself or the character of the landscape through which it passes. • Would affect an area of recognised landscape quality. • Would conflict with local authority policies for protecting the local character of the countryside.
Moderate adverse (negative) effect	Would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be out of scale with the landscape, or at odds with the local pattern and landform. • Be visually intrusive and would adversely impact on the landscape. • Not be possible to fully mitigate for, that is, mitigation would not prevent CLR from scarring the landscape in the longer term as some features of interest would be partly destroyed or their setting reduced or removed. • Have an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements. • Be in conflict with local and national policies to protect open land and nationally recognised countryside as set out in PPS7 and PPG2.
Large adverse (negative) effect	Would be very damaging to the landscape in that it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be at considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Would be visually intrusive and would disrupt fine and valued views of the area. • Would be likely to degrade, diminish or even destroy the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting. • Would be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality. • Cannot be adequately mitigated for. • Would be in serious conflict with government policy for the protection of nationally recognised countryside as set out in PPS7.
Very large adverse (negative) effect	Would result in exceptionally severe adverse impacts on the landscape because it would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be at complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Be highly visual and extremely intrusive, destroying fine and valued views both into and across the area. • Be irrevocably damage or degrade, badly diminish or even destroy the integrity of characteristic features and elements and their setting. • Cause a very high quality or highly vulnerable landscape to be irrevocably changed and its quality very considerably diminished. • Not be mitigated for, that is, there are no measures that would protect or replace the loss of a nationally important landscape.

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	Definition A scheme/proposal...
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be reconciled with government policy for the protection of nationally recognised countryside as set out in PPS7.

2.3 Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

2.3.1 A VE of the Scheme has been broadly defined. Key visual receptors such as properties and public rights of way within the VE and within 1km of the Scheme from which visual impacts may be experienced have then been identified, and a visual analysis of the likely degree of change resulting from the Scheme has been made. DMRB states that, ‘Adverse visual impacts in flat areas at more than 1,000m from the road are unlikely to be significant’.

2.3.1 The sensitivity of each visual receptor is assessed, as defined within Table 4.

Table 4: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Receptors
High	Viewers with high interest in their everyday visual environment and/or with prolonged and regular viewing opportunities, such as:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Users of outdoor recreational facilities whose attention or interest could be focused on the landscape e.g. walkers and horse riders.
Medium	Viewers with moderate interest in their environment and discontinuous and/or irregular viewing periods, such as:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers (outdoors) • Users engaged in outdoor sport or recreation other than appreciation of the landscape e.g. golf, hunting, water based activities.
Low	Viewers with a passing interest in their surroundings and momentary viewing periods, such as:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers/travellers/passengers of moving vehicles • People at their place of work

2.3.2 The scale or magnitude of visual change would relate to the extent of change upon visual amenity as a result of the proposed Scheme. Visual impacts have been determined by:

- The change in view with respect to loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed Scheme.
- The degree of contrast and/or change in the landscape with the existing landscape elements and characteristics.
- The duration and nature of effect.
- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor.
- The distance of viewpoint from the proposed development.
- The dominance of the impact feature in the view.

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2.3.4 Definitions of magnitude of visual impact are defined in Table 5.

Table 5: Assessment of Magnitude of Visual Impact

Magnitude	Definition
Major	The proposed Scheme would dominate or form a significant and immediately apparent part of the view that effects and changes its overall character. The proposed Scheme would cause a very significant deterioration in the existing view.
Moderate	The proposed Scheme would form a visible and recognisable new element of the view within the overall character. The proposed Scheme would cause a noticeable deterioration in the existing view.
Minor	The proposed Scheme would constitute only a minor component of the wider view. The proposed Scheme would cause a barely perceptible deterioration in the existing view.
Negligible	Only a very small part or no part of the proposed Scheme would be visible. No discernible deterioration or improvement in the existing view.
No change	No observable change in view.

2.3.3 The significance of visual effect is a measure of the severity of predicted effects from identified visual receptors. Visual impact significance is determined through correlation of the magnitude of impact (refer to Table 5) and the sensitivity of the visual receptor (refer to Table 4). This correlation and resulting significance of visual effect is illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Significance of Visual Effects

		Visual Amenity Receptor Sensitivity		
		High	Medium	Low
Impact Magnitude	Major	Very Large/Large	Large/Moderate	Moderate/Slight
	Moderate	Large/Moderate	Moderate/Slight	Slight
	Minor	Moderate/Slight	Slight	Slight/Neutral
	Negligible	Slight/ Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
	No Change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

2.3.4 The Visual Impact section describes the significance of effects only. Visual Impact Tables in Appendix A provide the breakdown of sensitivity of receptors, descriptions of views and distances from the parts of CLR that would affect the views, the magnitude of impacts and the resultant significance of visual impacts. The Visual Impact Tables break down the visual impacts in Year 1 and Year 15 (both in summer and winter) following CLR being open to traffic.

3 Baseline Landscape

Existing Land Use and Vegetation

- 3.1.1 The area south and west of Witney overlies extensive river gravel deposits and its character has been heavily modified by mineral extraction. Large areas of floodplain to the south of the A40 are occupied by gravel pits in various stages of quarrying, restoration and recolonisation, and open areas of water are a feature of this area. The River Windrush flows through Witney in a south-easterly direction, flowing west of Cogges. The Windrush is a tributary of the Thames and forms part of the Upper Thames Tributaries catchment covering approximately 27,200 hectares of the Thames Valley.
- 3.1.2 Between Witney and Cogges there is little woodland, although native hedgerows line some fields and willows and tall poplars mark the line of the river. Land use within the Study Area is predominantly rough pasture and fields are generally small and irregular in shape, influenced by the meanders of the waterways. Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park, owned by Witney Town Council, lies to the south of the Scheme between the two waterways. Public Footpaths cross the pasture and follow the line of the River in places.
- 3.1.3 To the east of Cogges, fields are larger and of more regular geometric patterns with areas of woodland. The extensive areas of pasture have a tranquil and remote character.
- 3.1.4 Development comprises the residential areas of Cogges and Witney to the north and west of the Scheme, with a large industrial area to the south west of the Scheme, at the south end of Witney. Major linear infrastructure is evident throughout the area with the A40 to the south, and lines of electricity pylons running parallel to the river between Witney and Cogges.
- 3.1.5 The vegetation of the Study Area is generally influenced by the differing topography and land use of the areas either side of Cogges and Stanton Harcourt Road. The river channels are lined with riverside trees and scrub, and there are several very small blocks of woodland to the north near Witan Way and just south of Cogges Manor. Some intermittent scrub and woodland is also to be found adjacent to the Station Lane Industrial Estate. The agricultural land on the river terraces, on the east side of the floodplain, is divided by substantial unmanaged hedgerows and bounded to the south side by a large linear woodland belt adjacent to the A40. The A40 embankments have intermittent tree and shrub cover. To the east of Cogges low managed hedgerows in varying condition, with intermittent hedgerow trees, divide the fields. Some larger groups of trees occur towards the top of the ridge, such as Cogges Wood. There are substantial hedgerows between the farmland and Cogges Hill Road and Oxford Hill.

Topography

- 3.1.6 The topography of the area is shown on Figure 1. The area west of Cogges and the Stanton Harcourt Road is part of the floodplain of the River Windrush. This is generally low lying below 80 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), and is based on the alluvium of the flood plain and associated river terraces. To the west, beyond the

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floodplain, the town of Witney lies on a low ridge of just over 80 metres AOD. East of Cogges and Stanton Harcourt Road the land rises in an easterly direction to a ridge running approximately north-south at just over 105 metres AOD. This higher ground continues south of the A40, dropping to around 90 metres AOD in the vicinity of Springhill Farm.

Designations and Planning Policies Relevant to Landscape

- 3.1.7 There are no landscape designations in close proximity to the Study Area. This assessment does, however, assess the impact on the setting of cultural heritage features. There are three Scheduled Monuments relatively close to the scheme (refer to Figure 2). These comprise:
- The remains of a medieval moated manor, priory, settlement and associated features, Cogges (north of CLR between Witney and Cogges).
 - Bishop of Winchester's Palace, 90m east of St Mary's Church (west of CLR within Witney).
 - Butter Cross (north west of CLR within Witney).
- 3.1.8 Policy BE12 Archaeological Monuments (West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011) states that, *'Development proposals that adversely affect the site or setting of nationally important archaeological monuments and monuments of local importance, whether scheduled or not, will not be permitted'*.
- 3.1.9 The western end of CLR lies within Witney and Cogges Conservation Area. Policy BE5 Conservation Areas (West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011) states that, *'historic and environmental character or appearance of the Conservation Areas will be preserved or enhanced.'*
- 3.1.10 CLR would bisect Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park, owned by Witney Town Council (refer to Figure 2). Although this is not covered by a landscape designation, it does fall within an area covered by Policy WIT3 – Windrush in Witney – in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. This policy aims to allow development, which would be visible from within this policy area, which protects and enhances the intrinsic landscape character, ecology and cultural value of the valley.
- 3.1.11 The following land allocations (illustrated on Figure 2) are also set out in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011:
- Policy area to prevent urban sprawl (south and east of CLR).
 - Land safeguarded for distributor road (encapsulates CLR footprint, although some land regrading lies outside).
 - Proposed housing site (eastern edge of Cogges).

Public Rights of Way

- 3.1.12 There are public rights of way (PROW) throughout the Study Area. A Public Footpath (number 410/15) follows the route of the River Windrush in a north south direction through Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park. Three Public Footpaths (numbers 410/7, 410/8 and 410/41) run east from the eastern urban edge of Cogges. To the

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east. a Public Footpath (number 410/42) runs north south between the B4022 Oxford Hill and the A40, parallel with the line of the proposed route of CLR.

Existing Landscape Character Assessments

3.2 National Context

3.2.1 The Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Initiative has mapped the landscape character of England at the national level. The 'Countryside Character Volume 7: South East and London' (Ref. 6) sets the national framework within which the Study Area falls.

3.2.2 The Study Area lies within the *Upper Thames Clay Vales* character area. Relevant key characteristics of the character area are:

- *'Broad belt of open gently undulating lowland farmland on Upper Jurassic Clays containing a variety of contrasting landscapes. Includes the enclosed pastures of the claylands and the wet valley bottoms and the more settled open arable lands of the gravel.'*
- *The valley bottoms, with open floodplain landscapes displaying gravel workings and flooded pits, a regular and well ordered field pattern, willow pollards and reed beds along the watercourses.*
- *The vales in Oxfordshire are dominated by 18th century enclosure landscapes of small woods and hawthorn/blackthorn hedges.'*

3.3 Regional Context

3.3.1 The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS,) published in 2004, defines regional landscape character areas across Oxfordshire. This study identifies three regional landscape character types surrounding CLR: Woodland Estatelands, Terrace Farmlands and River Meadowlands.

Woodland Estatelands

3.3.2 Woodland Estatelands cover the land surrounding the eastern end of CLR, extending eastwards from Cogges towards Shores Green. Key characteristics which relate to this area (in the context of the study area) are as follows:

- Medium sized fields;
- Land use dominated by arable farming;
- Hedgerows generally tall and in good condition;
- Mature oak and ash hedgerow trees.

Terrace Farmlands

3.3.3 Terrace Farmlands form a narrow landscape character area running on the eastern side of the River Windrush and tributaries, crossing the line of CLR. Key characteristics which relate to the area surrounding CLR are as follows:

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- Small to medium sized fields;
- Field boundaries consist largely of ditches and some hedges;
- Gappy hedgerows, in better condition where they border roads;
- Hedgerow species include field maple, buckthorn and wild privet;
- Hedgerow trees include pollarded crack willows and some ash.

River Meadowlands

3.3.4 River Meadowlands cover the immediate floodplain of the River Windrush and its various tributaries. Key characteristics which relate to the area surrounding CLR are as follows:

- Small semi-improved grass fields with some arable farming;
- Hedges bordering roads are usually tall, thick and in good condition;
- Field hedgerows in comparison are sometimes low, gappy and replaced by fencing in places;
- Field hedgerow species include blackthorn, hawthorn and elm often adjacent to ditches;
- Ash and willow trees in the hedges and alongside ditches;
- Some river channels are lined by a dense corridor of pollarded willows;
- Flooded gravel pits from previous extraction works.

3.4 Local Context

3.4.1 The landscape character assessment that provides the local context for the Study Area is the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment (WOLA), published in 1998 (Ref. 7). This document provides the most detailed landscape information currently available for the Study Area. Policy NE3 Local Landscape Character (West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011) states that, *'Development will not be permitted if it would harm the local landscape character of the District. Proposals should respect and, where possible, enhance the intrinsic character, quality and distinctive features of the individual landscape types'*.

3.4.2 The Study Area lies within three character areas identified in the WOLA (refer to Figures 3 and 5):

- Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture
- Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi- Enclosed Flat Vale Farmland
- Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland

Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture

3.4.3 The far western side of the Study Area falls within this character area. The character area extends south following the River Windrush and valley bottom to north of Hardwick. The character area is described overall as:

- *'Located immediately adjacent to rivers and minor water courses on land prone to flooding, particularly in winter;*

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- *Distinctively flat low lying land (below 70m AOD);*
- *Predominantly under permanent pasture with only occasional cultivated land;*
- *Riparian character, with strong pattern of ditches often lined by willow;*
- *Landscape structure provided by lines and groups of mature trees, with willow and alder conspicuous;*
- *Intimate, semi-enclosed and pastoral character;*
- *Remote and tranquil with limited intrusion by people and buildings;*
- *Moderate to low intervisibility.'*

Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi-Enclosed Flat Vale Farmland

3.4.4 The valley side west of Cogges falls within this character area, which extends much further south, generally following the course of the river. The character area is described overall as:

- *'Drained and cultivated land (arable or reseeded grassland) within the floodplain;*
- *Distinctively flat and low lying;*
- *Network of ditches;*
- *Stronger landscape structure of willow lined ditches, hedgerows and occasional woodland blocks;*
- *Semi-enclosed character with moderate to low intervisibility.'*

Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland

3.4.5 The eastern side of the Study Area (east of Cogges) lies within the Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland character area with key characteristics as follows:

- *'Low-lying land off the floodplain floor (generally above 70m AOD);*
- *Well drained, productive land underlain by river terrace gravels;*
- *Large-scale, cultivated fields (arable predominant) with regular field boundaries;*
- *Weak structure of tightly clipped hedges and few hedgerow trees (dry stone walls absent);*
- *Open denuded character;*
- *High intervisibility;*
- *"Two dimensional", expansive landscape with dominant sky.'*

4 Landscape Impact

4.1.1 The following local landscape character areas, described above, would be affected by the Scheme:

- Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture
- Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi- Enclosed Flat Vale Farmland
- Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland

Impact on Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture

4.1.1 The landscape is assessed as being of good quality and the sensitivity of the landscape is assessed as being medium. The Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park, to the south of Farm Mill, promotes a sense of place and local interest. Although there are currently urban elements within the park, such as the overhead power cables, the area forms a distinct green space between the urban boundaries of Cogges and Witney to the east and west.

4.1.2 CLR would be on an embankment, with bridges crossing the River Windrush, severing the Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park. The raised landform would be noticeably out of character within the flat floodplain landscape and would reinforce the physical and visual severance of the Windrush valley already caused by the A40. A section of the River Windrush (West Branch) would be diverted beneath CLR, creating a slightly longer and more meandering channel. A series of swales would run along the bottom of embankments either side of CLR, which would not appear out of place within this low lying landscape. An existing Footpath (No.410/15) would be diverted to follow the line of the diverted river beneath CLR, slightly altering the existing patterns within the park. In addition, CLR would impact on the southern edge of Witney and Cogges Conservation Area to the south of Farm Mill (refer to 4.1.10).

4.1.3 There would be some direct loss of hedgerows, trees and some small woodland blocks to the south of Farm Mill. However the landscape mitigation proposals would largely replace lost vegetation in the longer term. In addition to this, the scheme would provide the benefit of laying sections of existing overhead power cables underground. An area of existing arable land to the east would also be used as compensation land for the disruption caused to the park, partially offsetting the impacts caused by severance. The extended Country Park would include a car parking area, accessed off CLR. The benefit of placing electricity cables underground and the extent of compensation land would not, however, fully counteract the adverse impacts caused by severance through the park. There would be a moderate adverse impact in terms of magnitude of landscape impact. Therefore, overall CLR would have a moderate adverse impact on the local landscape character area at all timescales.

Impact on Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi-Enclosed Flat Vale Farmland

4.1.4 The landscape is assessed as being of poor quality and the sensitivity of the landscape is assessed as being low. The A40 corridor and the close proximity to the western edge of Cogges residential area disrupt the sense of place.

4.1.5 CLR would be raised on embankment through the landscape, although strong

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vegetation belts throughout the area would give a low visibility. There would be an increased urbanisation of the area. A proposed surface water storage lagoon between the existing A40 and CLR would appear slightly at odds with the landscape, particularly with space and engineering constraints limiting the design, shape and levels. The visual and aural impacts of moving traffic would reduce the tranquillity of the area, but this is already affected by the surrounding housing and roads, particularly the A40. The landscape impact would be Slight Adverse one year following the opening of CLR, reducing to Neutral 15 in the Design Year when planting mitigation would have matured.

Impact on Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland

- 4.1.6 The landscape is assessed as being of ordinary quality and the sensitivity of the landscape is assessed as being low. Whilst the landscape is in fair condition, it appears to lack aesthetic quality and is influenced by the A40 corridor to the south and urban edge of Cogges to the west.
- 4.1.7 CLR would be mainly within cutting as it runs through the character area, with an earth bund forming a false cutting containing it from the eastern edge of Cogges. There would be some direct loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, but this would be limited in the context of the surrounding landscape. CLR would impinge slightly upon Windrush Cemetery, accessed off the B4022 to the north, although the existing boundary hedgerow within the Cemetery would be retained and enhanced where possible. The increased noise would slightly reduce the tranquillity of the area which is already affected by the urban edge of Cogges and roads, particularly the A40. The landscape impact would be Slight Adverse one year following the opening of CLR, reducing to Neutral in the Design Year when planting mitigation along cutting slopes would have matured.

Effects on Relevant Designations

- 4.1.8 CLR would not impinge on any of the three identified Scheduled Monuments because of surrounding vegetation and built development. Therefore, CLR would have a Neutral impact on the setting of the Scheduled Monuments.
- 4.1.9 CLR enters the Conservation Area at the eastern edge of Witney. However, the impact on the Conservation Area would be Neutral because of the minimal extent of encroachment into the designated area and the industrial character of this urban edge of Witney.

Overall Residual Landscape Impact

- 4.1.10 CLR is assessed as having an overall Slight Adverse residual landscape impact. Planting mitigation, the existing A40 corridor to the south and the benefit of Country park compensation land and putting existing overhead electricity cables underground would lessen some of the landscape impacts caused by the scheme. However, CLR would cause localised Moderate Adverse residual landscape impacts on the floodplain of the River Windrush and the tranquillity of the Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park. CLR would sever this narrow belt of open space, which currently forms a distinct parcel of landscape between Witney and Cogges.

5 Visual Baseline

Visual Envelope

5.1.1 The VE is illustrated on Figure 4, together with the locations of key visual receptors. For the western section of Cogges Link, the VE is bounded to the north by the block of woodland that lies to the south of the Cogges Manor Farm Museum complex. To the west the VE is enclosed by the edge of Station Lane Industrial Estate and the mature woodland and fringing vegetation around Farm Mill and Witan Way. To the east the VE extends to the housing at Cogges. The VE to the south is defined by the A40.

5.1.2 For the eastern section of the Cogges Link, the VE is determined to the north and east by the land rising up towards Cogges Hill. To the south and west the VE is enclosed by the A40 and Cogges housing development respectively.

5.2 **Baseline: Existing Views**

5.2.1 5.2.1 A proportion of the CLR would run through cutting, thereby limiting views from surrounding visual receptors. However, some public areas, roads, houses and public rights of way within 1km of CLR would have views of the development.

5.2.2 The junction of CLR with the B4022 Oxford Hill would be visible from properties north of Oxford Hill. Properties west of Cogges Hill Road at the northern extent of CLR would have views of CLR, although traffic would be moved further away from some properties with the removal of the northern section of Cogges Hill Road where it joins the B4022.

5.2.3 There would be views of CLR from properties on the eastern and southern edges of Cogges. Mature planting defines and screens the edge of the housing estate to the north. The first floor rear windows of the properties located at the edge of the estate are visible from the adjoining fields, 100-150 metres away. Oxford Hill (B4022) and the A40 are not visible from the edge of the estate; they are screened from view by hedged field boundaries and rising land to the east. The eastern side of Oxford Hill (B4022) is screened by mature structure planting.

5.2.4 The properties located west of Stanton Harcourt Road, off Wadard's Meadow, have views limited by a high grass bund and mature tree and shrub planting located on the western side of Stanton Harcourt Road.

5.2.5 There would be no views of CLR from property numbers 17, 19, 21 and 23 Blakes Avenue. These are bungalows and views of CLR would not be possible because of an existing belt of mature vegetation to the east.

5.2.6 Views of CLR from properties on the western side of Cogges would be limited due to intervening hedge lined field boundaries located 30-150 metres away. The character is semi-enclosed. The spire of St Mary's church is visible to the west. Witan Way is screened from view by woodland and tree lined ditches on the valley floor.

5.2.7 Station Lane to the west of CLR comprises business and residential properties at Station Lane Industrial Estate, Des Roches Square, Sainsbury's supermarket

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and St Mary's Mead. All except the industrial estate are screened from the valley floor by the mature woodland associated with Farm Mill. For properties overlooking the roundabout there would be some potential for limited views of the proposed Scheme southeast of the mature woodland associated with Farm Mill.

- 5.2.8 Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park would have views of CLR running northwest/southeast, elevated on embankment. There would be views of CLR from an existing public open space between Cogges and the A40 to the south, directly east of Stanton Harcourt Road. This area is currently used as an informal games pitch and would be significantly decreased in size as an impact of CLR implementation.
- 5.2.9 There would be views of CLR from several public Footpaths within the area. Footpath No. 410/15 runs north south through Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park along the River Windrush and would be diverted by CLR positioned on embankment. Footpath Nos. 410/41, 410/7 and 410/8 also run from west to east from the outer eastern edge of Cogges toward the existing main road corridors of the A40 and B4022. CLR would bisect these three Footpaths and Footpath numbers 410/7 and 410/8 would be stopped up and follow a surfaced path on reaching the eastern edge of CLR. Views of CLR would be possible from Footpath No. 410/42, to the east which joins the A40 and B4022.
- 5.2.10 There would be views of CLR from Stanton Harcourt Road which passes over the existing A40 to the south of Cogges and from the northern end of Cogges Hill Road as it nears the B4022. CLR would also be visible in parts from the existing A40 where landform allows.
- 5.2.11 Full details of anticipated impacts in the winter of year 1 and winter and summer of year 15 are provided in Appendix 1. Visual receptors are grouped into houses, public buildings and areas, Public Rights of Way and roads.

6 Visual Impact

Residential Properties

- 6.1.1 Properties 71 – 83 inclusive (odd numbers) north of the B4022 Oxford Hill would have views of an increase in road infrastructure around the junction with the CLR. A section of the existing belt of trees along Cogges Hill Road would be removed to accommodate the junction. The proposed junction would be wider than the existing junction between Cogges Hill Road and the B4022 Oxford Hill. There would be a slight adverse impact in Year 1 because of the removal of some of the existing vegetation on the corner of Cogges Hill Road and Oxford Hill and the widened junction. This would reduce to Neutral in the Design Year due to establishment of mitigation planting on CLR verges.
- 6.1.2 Properties 2 – 8 and 18 – 28 Oxford Hill inclusive (even numbers) have a well established vegetation belt positioned on a raised bund between properties west of CLR off Wadard's Meadow and Cogges Hill Road. This provides a filtered screen for views of existing and proposed road infrastructure from upper storey windows. CLR would involve moving traffic from the northern section of Cogges Hill Road slightly further from these properties, although there would be an additional junction off Cogges Hill Road opposite the entrance of Wadard's Meadow. Removal of a section of the existing tree belt on the existing junction of Cogges Hill Road and the B4022 and opposite Wadard's Meadow for the accommodation of the junction to CLR would be necessary. There would be a Slight Adverse impact in Year 1 because of the wider road, additional junction and loss of existing vegetation. Mitigation planting and the diversion of traffic slightly further away from these properties would lessen the impact to Neutral in the Design Year.
- 6.1.3 Property numbers 1 – 9, 25 – 33, 65 – 71, 89 – 111 and 129 – 133 inclusive (odd numbers) Blakes Avenue, at the northern end of the western edge of Cogges, have a well established tree belt to the east, running between the properties and the line of CLR. There would be partial removal of existing field boundary hedgerows to accommodate the earthworks and CLR. The proposed planted embankment would partially screen the carriageway itself, but the artificial change in landform and the reduction in length of view would have an impact on views from these properties. The area of open space to the east of these properties would be redesigned as part of the scheme and the land re-contoured to accommodate an informal playing field. Additional planting would be proposed as part of the redesign. The character of the area would remain fairly open and informal. Overall from these properties, there would be a Slight Adverse impact at all time scales. The impact would not decrease over time because of the severed view and close proximity of land remodelling.
- 6.1.4 Property numbers 45 – 65, 69, 71 and 97 – 105 Eton Close inclusive (odd numbers) do not have the benefit of an existing well established visual screen (as properties to the north do) between them and the proposed CLR. A proposed false cutting would screen the road corridor but would in itself affect views in the landscape which is currently rough grassland with native hedgerow boundaries. As a result of the change in landform and the visibility of the tops of higher vehicles moving along CLR, there would be a Moderate Adverse impact in Year 1 in views from upper storey windows. The visual impact would reduce to Slight Adverse in the Design Year, as proposed mitigation planting on the embankment matures.

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- 6.1.1 Properties on the south eastern edge of Cogges would incur visual impacts from proposed earthworks which would be located in close proximity to the south and east of these properties. CLR would run within shallow cutting parallel to the existing A40 south of these properties. Traffic would be partially screened, but there would be views of the tops of higher vehicles. The top of the cutting would be very close to the properties (approximately 10m at the closest point). The existing open space used informally as a games area would be reduced to approximately one third of its original size and the existing games pitch would be lost. Mitigation proposals include redesign of the remaining public open space to accommodate a playground, earth mounding and additional planting. Existing vegetation to the south of the area would be removed to accommodate CLR. Property numbers 100 to 108 inclusive (even numbers), 109, 111, 115, 117 and 121 Eton Close would incur a Large Adverse impact in Year 1. The level of impact would reduce over time as a result of maturing mitigation planting on proposed cutting slopes to Moderate Adverse in the Design Year.
- 6.1.5 46 properties along the south – western edge of Cogges, off Manor Road and Cogges Hill Road, would have slight glimpses of CLR through mature vegetation on intervening field boundaries. Although the field boundary vegetation is dense, traffic moving along CLR would be partially visible and the visual impact on these properties would be Slight Adverse at all timescales.
- 6.1.6 Station Lane to the west of CLR comprises business and residential properties at Station Lane Industrial Estate, Des Roches Square, Sainsbury's supermarket and St Mary's Mead. All except the industrial estate are screened from the valley floor by the mature woodland in the Farm Mill and Witan Way area. For properties overlooking the proposed roundabout (1 and 2 Des Roches Square), there would be limited views of CLR as it joins Witan Way. Some existing mature woodland east of Witan Way would be lost in this area. However the road would be seen against a foreground of Witan Way and the existing roads which join it. The visual impact would be Slight Adverse in Year 1, reducing to Neutral in the Design Year, when planting on the cutting slopes would soften the impact.

Public Places

- 6.1.7 CLR would run through Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park on an embankment, bisecting it in a northwest/southeast direction. There are currently urban influences within the park including overhead electricity cables, the industrial estate to the west and A40 corridor to the south. However, the park forms a relatively tranquil parcel of land between the channels of the River Windrush. Proposals include placing sections of the overhead cables underground, which would be visually beneficial. An area of additional existing arable land to the east of the River Windrush (East Branch) would be provided as compensation land for the park, visually enlarging the extent of the open space used for recreational purposes. However, this would not mitigate the adverse visual impacts of CLR in this area. Overall, visual impacts from within the park would be Large Adverse in Year 1. No tree and shrub planting is proposed along a section of the road embankments to retain the open character of the landscape. Therefore near that section of the route, the visual impact would remain Large Adverse in the Design Year.
- 6.1.8 CLR would be visible from the recently established Windrush Cemetery to the east, accessed off the B4022 Oxford Hill. Whilst the infrastructure and lighting of Oxford Hill to the north already impose on the cemetery, CLR would encroach

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- 6.1.9 Views from Stanton Harcourt Road as it runs northbound over the A40 would be affected. CLR would be visible to the east, running alongside the A40, broadening the dominance of the current road corridor through the landscape and developing odd parcels of land between CLR and housing within Cogges. The proposed retained area of public open space would be visible from the bridge, incorporating a playground and planting. To the west of the bridge, the proposed surface water storage lagoon would be visible alongside CLR. Within the constraints of space and engineering requirements, the lagoon would potentially appear a little artificial and fail to integrate into the surrounding landscape character. Arable land further west would be used as compensatory land for Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park, providing views across recreational pasture as within the existing park. From the topographically higher location of the bridge, vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists would have a clear but brief elevated view of CLR. Screening vegetation would not lessen the impact significantly from this location, although it would assist in integrating CLR into the landscape. There would be a Slight Adverse impact at all timescales.
- 6.1.10 From the A40 to the south (where it runs on embankment or at a level with the topography to the north), there would be passing views of CLR where it runs on embankment to the west. There would also be views of the proposed water storage lagoon immediately west of Stanton Harcourt Road. Current views consist of farmland, hedgerows and the southern edge of Cogges residential development. CLR would cause a Slight Adverse impact in Year 1 from the A40. Given the passing nature of views from vehicle travellers and proposed planting on embankment slopes and around the proposed surface water storage lagoon, the level of impact would reduce to Neutral in the Design Year.
- 6.1.2 CLR would sever Footpath No. 410/15 which runs north - south through Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park. It would run on an embankment across the park, providing clear views from the Footpath, which would be diverted in part to follow the line of the diverted River Windrush (West Branch). The river and Footpath would share an underpass beneath CLR. Visual impacts from Footpath No. 410/15 would be Large Adverse in Year 1. No planting is proposed along a section of the embankments, and the impact would therefore still be Large Adverse in the Design Year.
- 6.1.11 CLR would sever Footpath No. 410/41, which runs west from the eastern boundary of Cogges residential development. From the Footpath west of CLR, the proposed road would not be visible behind the proposed planted false cutting but it would detract from the existing field boundary pattern. Walking north - west on Footpath No. 410/41, on the east of CLR, moving vehicles along the road would be visible where the proposed cutting is shallow. The proposed

- 6.1.12 There would be glimpses of CLR from Footpath No. 410/42, approximately 410 metres to the east, which joins the A40 and B4022. However, views would be partially obscured by hedged field boundaries. Due to the intermittent views and distance (approximately 325m at the closest point), the level of impact would be Slight Adverse in Year 1. Mitigation planting would mature, forming a hedgerow boundary effect along the top of the cutting, reducing the level of impact to Neutral in the Design Year.
- 6.1.13 CLR would sever both Footpath Nos. 410/7 and 410/8, which currently branch eastwards off Cogges Hill Road. The Footpaths would be stopped up on reaching CLR and would connect to a surface path running along CLR. Both Footpaths would view the proposed screen mound from the west of CLR and the proposed junction with Cogges Hill Road to the north. From the east, views of CLR would be available where the proposed cutting is shallow. Where the Footpaths meet CLR, clear views north and south along the carriageway would be evident. CLR would cause a Large Adverse impact in Year 1. Proposed planting along earthworks would allow a decrease in impact to Moderate Adverse in the Design Year.

7 Landscape and Visual Mitigation

7.1.1 The landscape mitigation measures presented as part of CLR have been designed to reflect the character of the landscape and to reduce the visual impact on the wider landscape, properties and public rights of way. Specific landscape measures include the following:

- Use of screen mounding and cuttings to visually screen CLR;
- Use of shallow cutting and embankment slopes to reflect surrounding topography;
- Proposed planting on embankments and cuttings to soften artificial landform and provide additional visual screening;
- Design of surface water storage lagoon to be modelled to appear as natural as possible under space and engineering constraints;
- Planting around surface water storage lagoon to integrate into surrounding landscape;
- Positioning of sections of overhead electricity cables running through Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park underground;
- Landscape and biodiversity planting within Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park;
- Additional parcel of existing arable land to be used as Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park compensation land;
- Construction of new public open space, adjacent to Cogges Hill Road, to accommodate informal playing field to replace playing area to the south which would be lost to the Scheme;
- Redesign of existing public open space south of Eton Close to accommodate playground area;
- Additional replacement area of public open space to the east of Cogges Hill Road.;
- Off-site hedgerow planting, by agreement with land owners, to the east.

7.1.2 Types of planting would be:

- Species rich grassland;
- Native tree and shrub planting;
- Native hedgerow planting.

7.1.3 Proposed native tree and shrub planting would be at an average spacing of 1.5m centres. The outer two rows of any planting block would consist of shrub species planted in a random mix. Planting would comprise native species indigenous to the area, such as Hawthorn, Birch, Oak and Cherry.

7.1.4 The proposed surface water storage lagoon would incorporate wetland planting on embankments. Aquatic and marginal planting would be included in the landscape scheme.

7.1.5 The retained public open space to the south, and the proposed replacement area of public open space to the east would be designed on the following principles so as to fit into the existing landscape character of the surroundings:

- Contouring to be gentle to reflect the local landscape character;

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- Existing vegetation to be replaced where possible;
- Planting to reflect species found throughout the surrounding landscape, comprising mixes of native tree and shrub species.

8 Conclusion

Landscape Impact

- 8.1.1 The landscape assessment undertaken for each of the defined landscape character area and relevant designations are summarised in Appendix A, Table 11. Planting mitigation, the existing A40 corridor to the south and the benefit of putting existing overhead electricity cables underground would lessen some of the initial landscape impacts caused by the scheme. However, although significant sections of the route would cause Slight Adverse or Neutral landscape impacts, CLR would provide localised Moderate Adverse residual landscape impacts on the floodplain of the River Windrush and the tranquillity of the Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park. CLR would sever this narrow belt of open space, which currently forms a distinct parcel of landscape between Witney and Cogges. The overall residual landscape impact is assessed as being Moderate Adverse.

Visual Impact

- 8.1.2 Views from residential properties, public places, roads and public rights of way would be adversely affected. Tables 9 and 10, Appendix A, summarise the predicted impacts of CLR on surrounding visual receptors. 85 properties would be affected overall. In Year 1, 102 properties affected would suffer Slight Adverse impacts, with 11 suffering Large Adverse impacts and 18 suffering Moderate Adverse impacts. During the Design Year, no properties would experience a Large Adverse impact. There would be no adverse impacts as a result of proposed lighting at the junctions with existing roads, because of existing lighting along Cogges Hill Road and Witan Way. Whilst there would be a slight increase in night time illumination at the junctions, the impact is assessed as Neutral due to the limited amount of additional lighting and existing light pollution.
- 8.1.3 Other non residential visual receptors which would incur significant adverse impacts, include four Footpaths which would be severed by CLR. Impacts from these Footpaths would be Large Adverse. Witney Lakes and Meadows Country Park would also experience a Large Adverse impact in Year 1 due to the high visibility of the road on embankment as it crosses the open space. There would be a Moderate Adverse visual impact in Year 1 on views from Windrush Cemetery, where CLR would encroach on its boundary. In the Design Year, there would still be a Large Adverse impact on Witney Lakes and Meadows Country Park and Footpath No. 410/15 because no tree or shrub vegetation would be planted on the CLR embankment and the road and traffic would still be visible, severing the park and Footpath. The visual impact on Windrush Cemetery would be Slight Adverse in the Design Year and the visual impact from the A40 and Footpath No. 410/42 would be Neutral.

9 References

- 1 Highways Agency *Section 3 Part 5 of Volume 11 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (2007)
- 2 The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Second Edition* (2002)
- 3 Department for Transport *Transport Analysis Guidance* (2008)
- 4 West Oxfordshire District Council *West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Adopted 2006*
- 5 Oxfordshire County Council *Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016*
- 6 West Oxfordshire District Council *Windrush in Witney Project Report*
- 7 Countryside Agency *Countryside Character Volume 7: South East and London* (1998)
- 8 Oxfordshire County Council *Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study* (2004)

10 APPENDIX A

Table 7: Visual Impact Totals

Visual Impact Level	Significance of Visual Impact at Year 1 (Winter)				Significance of Visual Impact at Year 15 (Summer)				Significance of Visual Impact at Year 15 (Winter)			
	Numbers Affected				Numbers Affected				Numbers Affected			
	Large Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral	Large Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral	Large Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral
Views from residential and other Properties with high sensitivity to change due to road development	11	18	102	0	0	11	93	27	0	11	93	27
Views from Public Footpaths, public access land and minor local roads with medium sensitivity to change due to road development	4	2	3	0	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2
OVERALL TOTALS	15	20	105	0	2	14	95	29	2	14	95	29

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Table 8: Visual Impact on Properties

Receptor Number (refer to Figure 4)	Name/Number of Viewpoint/Receptor	Description of Existing view	Approximate Distance from Proposed carriageway Edge, metres	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Visual Impact winter Year 1	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance of Visual Impact Winter Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Significance of Visual Impact Summer Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Lighting Impact
1	71 – 83 inclusive (odd numbers), B4022 Oxford Hill	Junction between the B4022 and Cogges Hill Road with communication equipment. Native woodland planting belts.	25	High	Minor Enlarged junction visible.	Slight Adverse	Native planting on cutting slope and earthworks.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
2	2 – 8 and 18 – 28 inclusive (even numbers)	Earth mound planted with a native vegetation belt. Traffic along Cogges Hill Road beyond and hedgerow boundary along eastern side of road.	30 - 50	High	Minor CLR and junction between CLR and Cogges Hill Road partially visible through existing vegetation belt.	Slight Adverse	Native tree and shrub planting within highway boundary.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
3	1 – 9, 25 – 33, 65 – 71, 89 – 111 and 129 – 133 inc. (odd nos) Blakes Avenue, Cogges east boundary	Rough pasture on undulating land, viewed through a tall tree belt. Views to a significant belt of young native planting along field boundary.	74 - 130	High	Minor Significant amount of young planting belt lost and views of artificial screening bund and informal playing field.	Slight Adverse	Native tree and shrub planting on proposed screen bund. Proposed open space area and associated planting within open space between housing and CLR.	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral

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Receptor Number (refer to Figure 4)	Name/Number of Viewpoint/Receptor	Description of Existing view	Approximate Distance from Proposed carriageway Edge, metres	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Visual Impact winter Year 1	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance of Visual Impact Winter Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Significance of Visual Impact Summer Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Lighting Impact
4	45 – 65, 69, 71, 97 - 105 inc (odd nos) Eton Close, Cogges east boundary	Rough pasture on undulating land.	28 - 140	High	Moderate Views of artificial screening bund.	Moderate Adverse	Native tree and shrub planting on proposed bund.	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral
5	100 – 108 inclusive (even nos), 107, 109, 111, 115, 117 and 121 Eton Close, Cogges se boundary	Views of existing informal playing field and well established planting between open field and highway boundary of A40 to the south. Overhead cables along southern boundary.	30 - 50	High	Major There would be views of the screening bund and views of high sided vehicles.	Large Adverse	Proposed planting on cutting slopes. Playground and associated planting within public open space between housing and CLR. Bunding to screen CLR.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Neutral
6	1 and 2 Des Roches Square, Witan Way	Views of existing Witan Way roundabout and Witan Way/Station Lane. Mature vegetation associated with farm Mill visible across Witan Way.	30 - 70	High	Minor Views of CLR leading off existing roundabout.	Slight Adverse	Proposed native planting on embankments.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
16	Properties 39 – 89 (along the sw periphery of Cogges) Manor Road and Cogges Hill Road	Views of farmland enclosed by dense mature hedgerow boundaries.	30 - 150	High	Minor Views of CLR and moving traffic through existing boundary hedgerows.	Slight Adverse	Proposed native planting on embankments.	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral

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Table 9: Visual Impact on Roads, Public Places and Public Rights of Way

Receptor Number (refer to Figure 4)	Name of Viewpoint/Receptor	Description of Existing view	Approximate Distance from Proposed carriageway Edge, metres	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Visual Impact winter Year 1	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance of Visual Impact Winter Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Significance of Visual Impact Summer Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Lighting Impact
7	Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park	Flat open grass floodplain adjacent to meandering River Windrush and tributaries. Existing overhead electricity cables joined to timber pylons.	0 at closest point	High	Major CLR would sever the park and would be visible running on embankment across the park. Other visible effects would be a diversion of a section of the River Windrush and diversion of a public Footpath.	Large Adverse	Putting existing overhead cables underground.	Large Adverse	Large Adverse	Neutral
8	Windrush Cemetery, Oxford Hill, east of cogges	Young but broad native planting belt overlooking rough pasture with the eastern boundary of Cogges residential area. Lighting visible along Cogges Hill Road.	0 at closest point	High	Moderate Existing boundary hedgerow would be removed, opening up views of traffic moving along CLR (in cutting).	Moderate Adverse	Replacement native hedgerow along highway boundary.	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral

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Receptor Number (refer to Figure 4)	Name of Viewpoint/Receptor	Description of Existing view	Approximate Distance from Proposed carriageway Edge, metres	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Visual Impact winter Year 1	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance of Visual Impact Winter Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Significance of Visual Impact Summer Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Lighting Impact
9	Stanton Harcourt Road bridge	Views of planting along cutting slopes of A40 and established planting on edge of public open space between A40 and Cogges urban edge. Informal playing field set within public open space.	0 at closest point	Low	Moderate Elevated views of CLR corridor, redesigned public open space to the east and lagoons to the west.	Slight Adverse	Planting on cutting slopes of CLR. Playground and associated planting/redesign of public open space between southern edge of Cogges and proposed CLR. Planting around water storage lagoon to west.	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse	Neutral
10	A40, south of CLR	Glimpses of open pasture and hedgerow boundaries stretching to views of the urban edge of Cogges.	30 at closest point	Low	Minor Glimpses of CLR where it runs on embankment. Views of the lagoons between the A40 and CLR.	Slight Adverse	Planting on earthworks and adjacent to proposed surface water storage area.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
11	Footpath No.410/15, running through Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park to the west of the scheme.	Views across flat grassland surrounding River Windrush. Electricity cables and timber pylons crossing park.	0 at closest point	High	Moderate Direct views of CLR on embankment where it runs across the existing route of the Footpath.	Large Adverse	Section of electricity cables placed underground.	Large Adverse	Large Adverse	Neutral

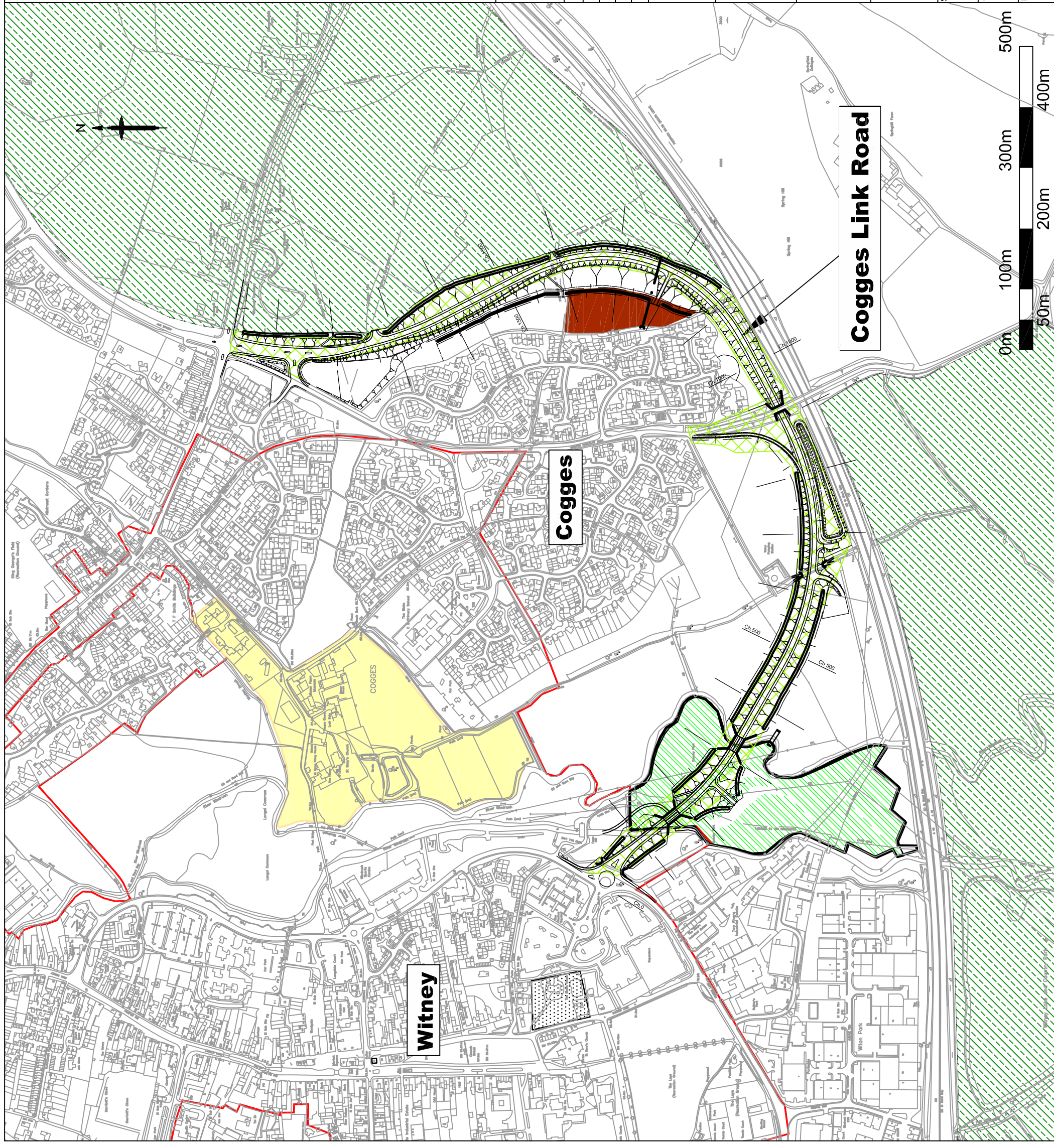
Oxfordshire Highways
Cogges Link Road
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Receptor Number (refer to Figure 4)	Name of Viewpoint/Receptor	Description of Existing view	Approximate Distance from Proposed carriageway Edge, metres	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Visual Impact winter Year 1	Proposed Mitigation Measures	Significance of Visual Impact Winter Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Significance of Visual Impact Summer Year 15 (taking screen planting into account)	Lighting Impact
12	Footpath No. 410/41 running east from the eastern edge of Cogges.	Rough pasture on gently undulating land. Native hedgerow boundaries.	0 at closest point	High	Moderate Direct views of CLR to the south. Views of artificial landform which creates screening bunds along the route corridor.	Large Adverse	Planting on proposed embankment and cutting slopes.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Neutral
13	Footpath No. 410/42 east of Cogges linking the A40 with the B4022.	Rough pasture with native hedgerow boundaries.	410 - 330	High	Minor There would be intermittent glimpses through intervening vegetation of CLR.	Slight Adverse	Planting on proposed cutting slopes.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
14	Footpath No. 410/7 running east off Cogges Hill Road.	Rough pasture on undulating land. Views to a significant belt of young native planting along field boundary.	0 at closest point	High	Moderate Views of artificial landform and the tops of high sided vehicles.	Large Adverse	Planting on proposed embankment and cutting slopes.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Neutral
15	Footpath No. 410/8 running east off Cogges Hill Road.	Rough pasture on undulating land. Views to a significant belt of young native planting along field boundary.	0 at closest point	High	Moderate Views of artificial landform and the tops of high sided vehicles.	Large Adverse	Planting on proposed embankment and cutting slopes.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Neutral



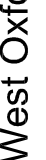




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Cogges Link Road
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Table 10: Landscape Impact

Landscape Character Area/ Designations	Landscape Quality	Landscape Sensitivity	Magnitude of Landscape Impact	Significance of Landscape Impact Year 1	Significance of Visual Impact Year 15 (taking mitigation into account)
Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture (Oxfordshire County Council <i>Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (2004)</i>)	Good Occasional detracting features. Sense of place. Distinct features worthy of conservation – River Windrush and Winey Lake and Meadows Country Park.	Medium Good quality landscape tolerant of a small amount of change.	Moderate Adverse Partial change and loss of features and characteristics of a medium sensitivity.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse
Lower Windrush Valley and Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi- Enclosed Flat Vale Farmland (Oxfordshire County Council <i>Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (2004)</i>)	Poor Detracting features – A40. Poor sense of place.	Low Poor quality landscape tolerant of a large degree of change.	Slight Adverse Minor loss of or change to elements, features or characteristics of a landscape of low sensitivity.	Slight Adverse	Neutral
Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland (Oxfordshire County Council <i>Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (2004)</i>)	Ordinary Weak structure. Large scale cultivated fields.	Low Poor quality landscape tolerant of a large degree of change.	Slight Adverse Minor loss of or change to elements, features or characteristics of a landscape of low sensitivity.	Slight Adverse	Neutral
Scheduled Monuments	High Designated for historic importance.	High Setting protected by planning policy.	Neutral No change to landscape setting	Neutral	Neutral
Conservation Area	High Designated for historic and environmental importance.	High Historic and environmental character protected by planning policy.	Slight Adverse Minor loss of or change to elements	Slight Adverse	Neutral
Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park	Good Sense of place. Some detracting features. Recognisable and characteristic features and patterns.	Medium Open space between built up areas with distinct qualities – flat topography with river channels.	Moderate Adverse Partial loss of or change to elements, features or characteristics.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse



Legend

-  Conservation Area
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  West Oxfordshire Adopted Local Plan 2011
-  Policy area to prevent urban sprawl
-  Land Safeguarded for Distributor Road
-  Proposed Housing Sites
-  Witney Lake and Meadows Country park, owned by Witney Town Council

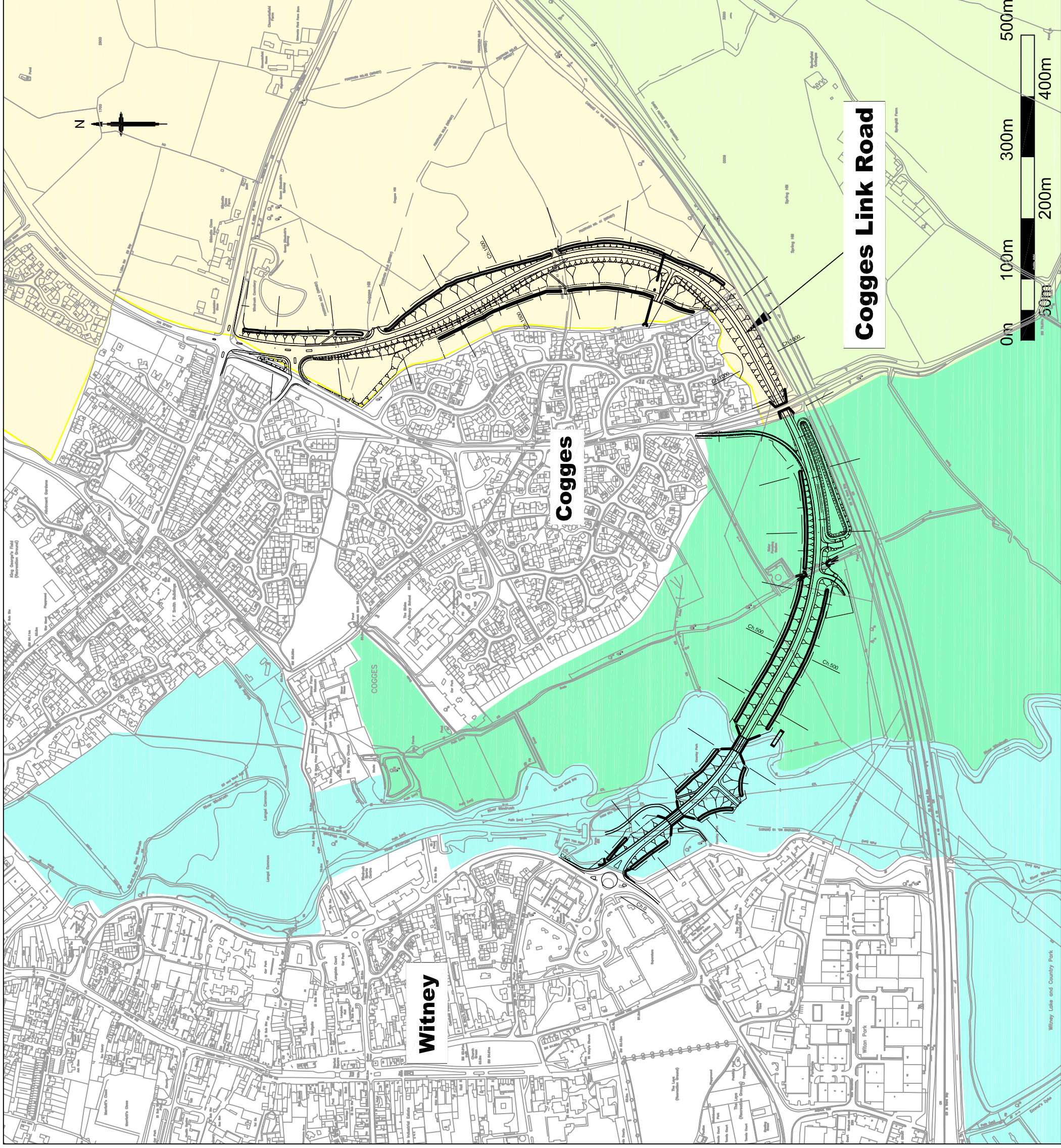
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	Purpose of issue	Rev	Date	Date	Apprd

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Project Cogges Link					
Title Designations & Planning Policies Relevant to Landscape					
Scale N.T.S.	Drawn By HB	Checked By MG	Approved By JM		
Client's Ref	Date 25.03.08	Date 26.03.08	Date 28.03.08		
Drawing Number	Figure 2				Rev A



Legend

Local Character Areas as derived from the West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment, 1998

- Lower Windrush Valley & Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture
- Lower Windrush Valley & Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi-Enclosed Flat Vale Farmland
- Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland
- Eynsham Vale: Semi-enclosed rolling vale farmland

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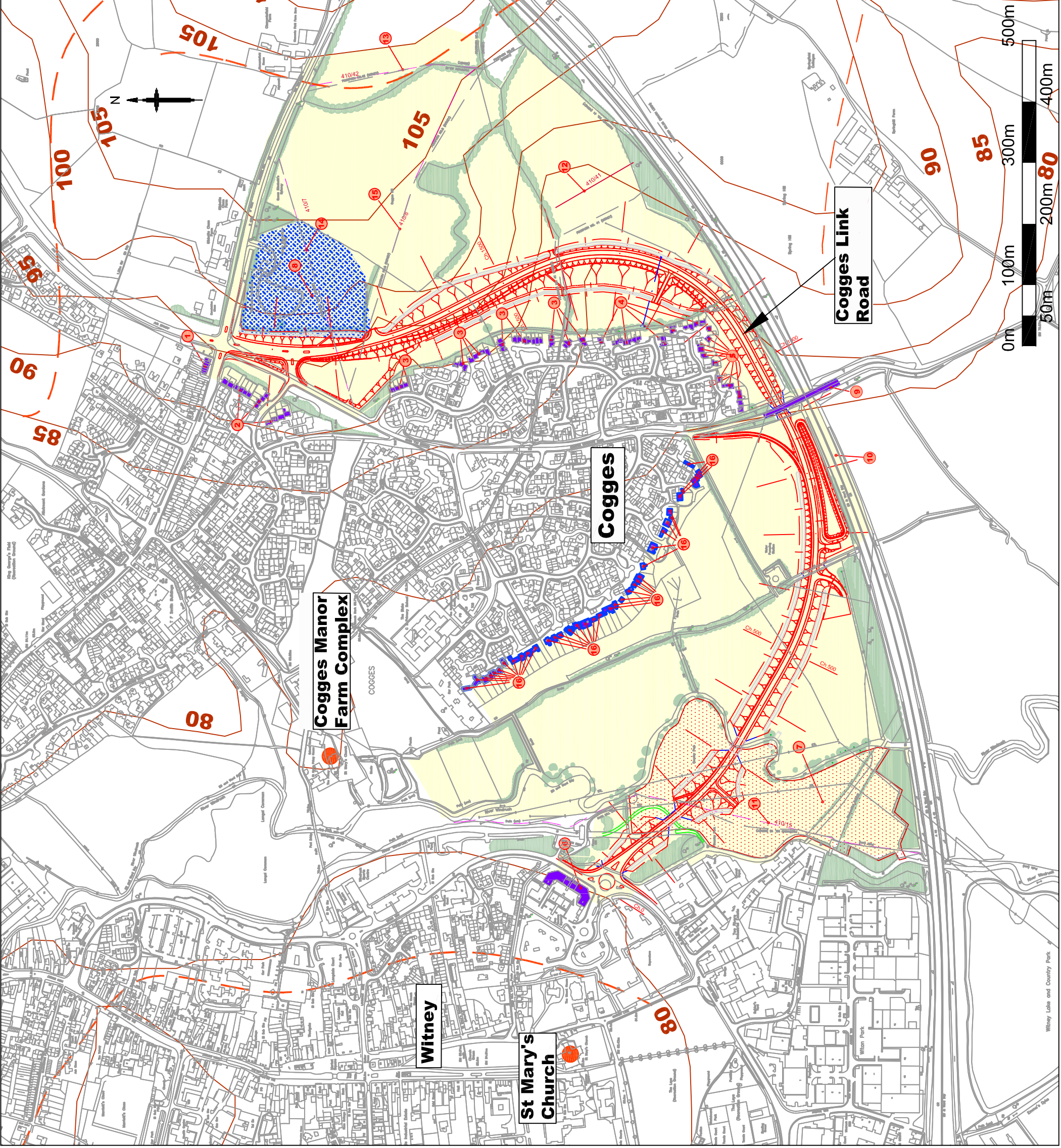
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Project		Cogges link	
Title			
Landscape Character Areas			
Scale	N.T.S.	Drawn By	HB
		Checked By	MG
		Approved By	JM
Clients Ref		Date	25.03.08
		Date	26.03.08
		Date	28.03.08
Drawing Number		Rev	A
		Figure	3



Legend

- Visual Envelope
- Ridgeline
- Contour
- Landmarks
- Existing woodland/tree cover

Visual Receptors

- Visual Impact Schedule Reference No.
- Witney Lake and Meadows Country Park
- Footpaths
- Windrush Cemetery

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Project **Cogges Link**

Title **Visual Impact**

Scale	N.T.S.	Drawn By	HB	Checked By	MG	Approved By	JM
Client's Ref	Date 25.03.08	Date 26.03.08	Date 26.03.08	Date 28.03.08	Date 28.03.08	Date 28.03.08	Date 28.03.08

Drawing Number **Figure 4**

Rev **A**



Lower Windrush Valley & Eastern Thames Fringes: Floodplain Pasture



Eynsham Vale: Open Rolling Vale Farmland



Lower Windrush Valley & Eastern Thames Fringes: Semi-Enclosed Flat Vale Landscape

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Project **Cogges Link**

Title **Landscape Character Photograph Sheet**

Scale	N.T.S.	Drawn By	HB	Checked By	MG	Approved By	JM
Clients Ref		Date	25.03.08	Date	26.03.08	Date	28.03.08

Drawing Number	Figure 5	Rev	A
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