

WSP

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When to ask for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment....

..and how to identify the Pitfalls.

A practical interactive workshop session providing an overview of Landscape and Visual Appraisals and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, explaining their purpose, when to ask for one and at what level, what to consider within a scoping opinion and spotting the pitfalls in LVIA's.

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*Associate Directors -
Landscape*

Structure of this workshop..

1. Background (5 minutes)

- What are LVA's and LVIA's?

2. Screening (35 minutes)

- What is screening? (Exercise)

3. Scoping (5 minutes)

- What is scoping and what to consider in a scoping opinion

4. Pitfalls (25 minutes)

- What are the pitfalls? (Exercise)

5. What to look out for in future (5 minutes)

Image: Botallack Mines

What are we seeking to achieve?

- Improve understanding of LVAs and LVIAs;
- Provide more detail on the differences;
- Improve understanding of the screening process;
- Explain what advice would be beneficial in order to provide a scoping opinion;
- Improve understanding on what to look out for when reviewing an LVIA; and
- What to expect in the future.

Image: Cotehele – River Tamar

Section 1 - Background

What is Landscape?

“Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”.

It “covers natural, rural, urban and peri urban areas.. includes land, inland waters and marine areas”

European Landscape Convention (2002)

Section 1 - Background

What is Visual Amenity?

The interrelationship between people and the landscape.

The consideration of views people experience and their visual amenity – the overall pleasantness of the views they enjoy of their surroundings.



Image: Borgue

Section 1 - Background

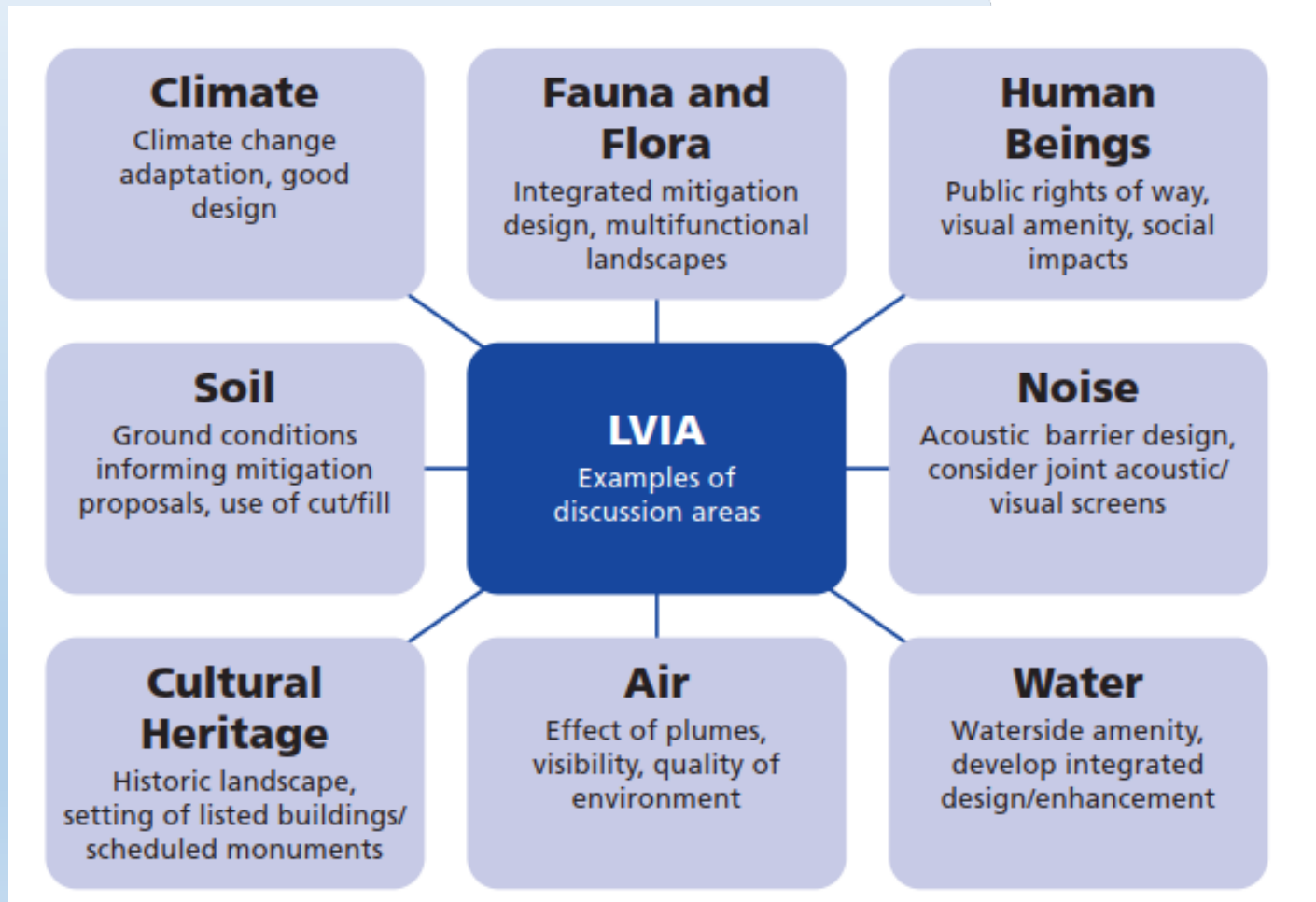
What is a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment?

It is a tool to help identify and assess the changes that a proposed development will make on the urban, rural or coastal landscape and on people's visual appreciation of the landscape and the views they enjoy. It is divided into two distinct components:

- An assessment of Landscape effects
- An assessment of Visual effects

Section 1 - Background

LVIA's relationship with other topics.



Section 1 - Background

When is an LVA or LVIA carried out?

When there are concerns about the effects of a development on landscape and visual amenity.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal (informal):

- For development falling outside EIA Regulations which raises concerns about potential effects on landscape and/or visual amenity
- To provide initial review of the landscape and visual amenity of a site and its context (early stages of the planning process)
- Where only one topic (landscape or visual) is a concern

Image: Isle of Wight

Section 1 - Background

When is an LVA or LVIA carried out?

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Formal):

- As a chapter in an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- As a standalone report or chapter as part of a Strategic Environmental Assessment /Sustainability Appraisal of National Policy Statements / or Development Plans
- As a standalone LVIA for some non-EIA developments

Image: Isle of Wight

Section 1 - Background

What is a Landscape and Visual Appraisal versus a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment?

The difference between an appraisal (LVA) and an assessment (LVIA) is that Appraisals:

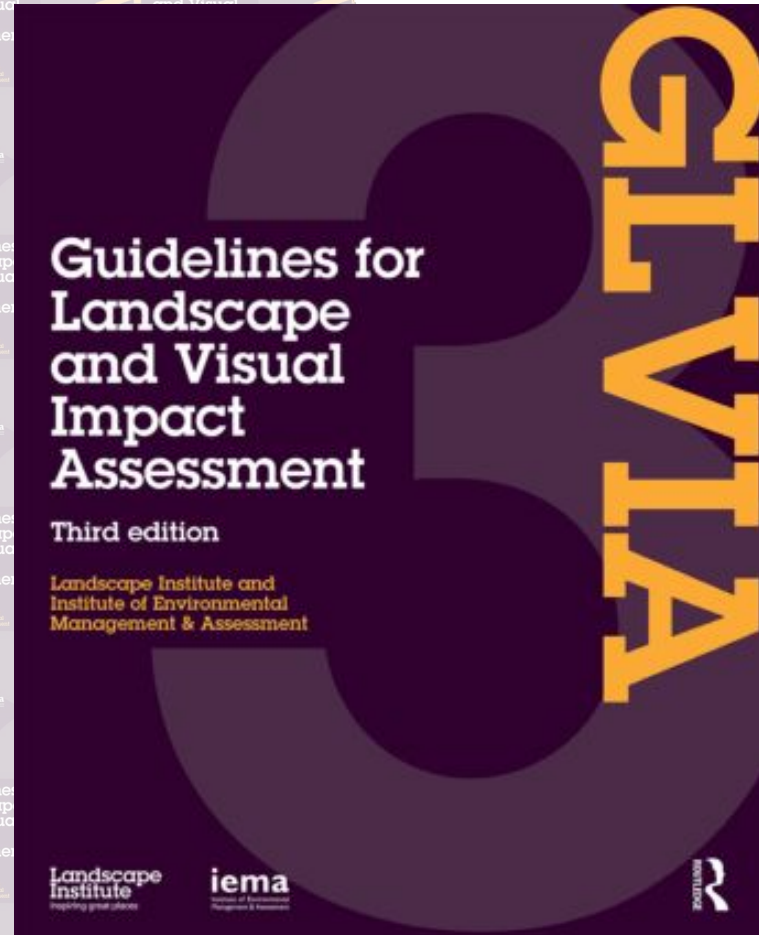
- Can be more flexible;
- Can focus on one specific topic (landscape or visual) to address a specific concern; and
- Requires no assessment of significance of effects (often referred to as notable effects)

Image: Abbey Consol, Mid Wales

Section 1 - Background

What Guidance is available and what does this seek to do?

Third edition of
Guidelines for
Landscape and Visual
Impact Assessment
(GLVIA) 2013



Section 1 - Background

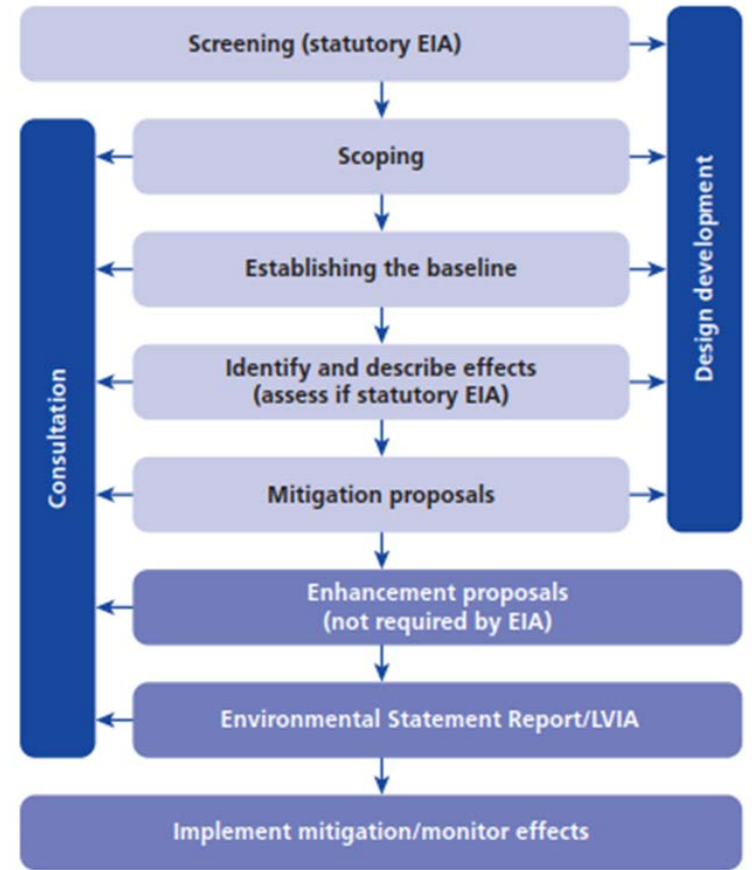
What Guidance is available and what does this seek to do?

- Better advice on assessing “significance” of effect and assessing cumulative effects
- Greater focus on terminology, proportionality and professional judgements
- Considers the European Landscape Convention (ELC)
- Encourages a move away from tables and matrices
- Promotes a collaborative approach
- Makes assessments relevant
- Improves understanding of the issues
- Makes assessment efficient

Section 1 - Background

What are the key stages in LVIA?

- Site selection
- Screening (statutory EIA)
- Scoping
- Establishing the study area
- Baseline Studies
- Assessment & Impact Prediction (feeding into design as an iterative process)
- Mitigation (and enhancement)



Section 2 – Screening

What is Screening under the EIA Directive? (Stage 1 EIA)

Screening decision based on Annex I – III of the EIA Directive translated into EIA Regs 2017:

Schedule 1 Projects are EIA development;
Schedule 2 Projects can also be EIA development (based on applicable thresholds / criteria); and
Schedule 3 Selection criteria for Schedule 2.

Section 2 – Screening

What is Screening under the EIA Directive? (Stage 1 EIA)

Schedule 3: Selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development:

- Characteristics of development
- Location of development
- Types and characteristics of the potential impact



Section 2 – Screening

Determining whether an LVIA is required in relation to EIA

Can a single issue such as a landscape designation justify the need for an ES?

A: YES

- If Schedule 1, Schedule 2 (exceeds / meets thresholds/ criterion and / or is in a 'sensitive area') or at the SoS discretion

If justified, EIA ensures a greater level of rigour

It is not satisfactory to screen projects with potential significant effect out of EIA on the basis that technical reports will be submitted alongside a planning application

Section 2 – Screening

Case Studies

Based on groups please review 1 case study per table:

- Urban mixed use development (Table 1)
- Middlehurst Reservoir (Table 2)
- Fairlands 2 Wind Turbine (Table 3)

This is to determine whether it is an EIA on landscape and visual grounds not whether it is an LVA or LVIA

Remember - is it appropriate and proportionate?

Section 3 - Scoping

What is the aim of scoping?

Aim:

- Set out issues in respect of the most relevant likely effects

Benefits:

- First opportunity for the developer, their advisors and the competent authority to make contact
- Determine whether landscape and visual effects are of concern

Section 3 - Scoping

What should a Scoping Report contain?

- Baseline conditions
- Description of the project
- Methods, assessment techniques and presentation of material
- Limitations and assumptions
- Scope of assessment
- Mitigation

Section 3 - Scoping

What to comment on in a Scoping Opinion?

What can you do to help?

Comment on...

- Study area
- Information / guidance
- Baseline studies
- Likely receptors
- Likely effects and significance
- Requirement for cumulative impact assessment
- Multiple benefits
- Consultation

Image: Drax Power Station

Section 3 - Scoping

What to comment on in a Scoping Opinion?

The LVA and LVIA should be **appropriate** and **proportionate**

What you can do to help?

- Scope out unnecessary material
- Consider information requests
- Don't say yes to everything - it also requires a willingness to say "No"!

Remember **YOU** have the local knowledge and can help avoid reams of unnecessary paperwork!

Image: Deep sea cable laying

Section 4 - Pitfalls

What are the pitfalls in undertaking an LVIA and what should you look out for?

We would like you to discuss on your tables, based on your experience, some of the pitfalls you have encountered when reviewing an LVIA?

Please focus your comments around the following topic areas:

- Landscape Character
- Visual Amenity (including visualisations)
- Mitigation
- General Comments (such as Methodology)

Section 4 - Pitfalls

Feedback from Group Discussions

Landscape Character

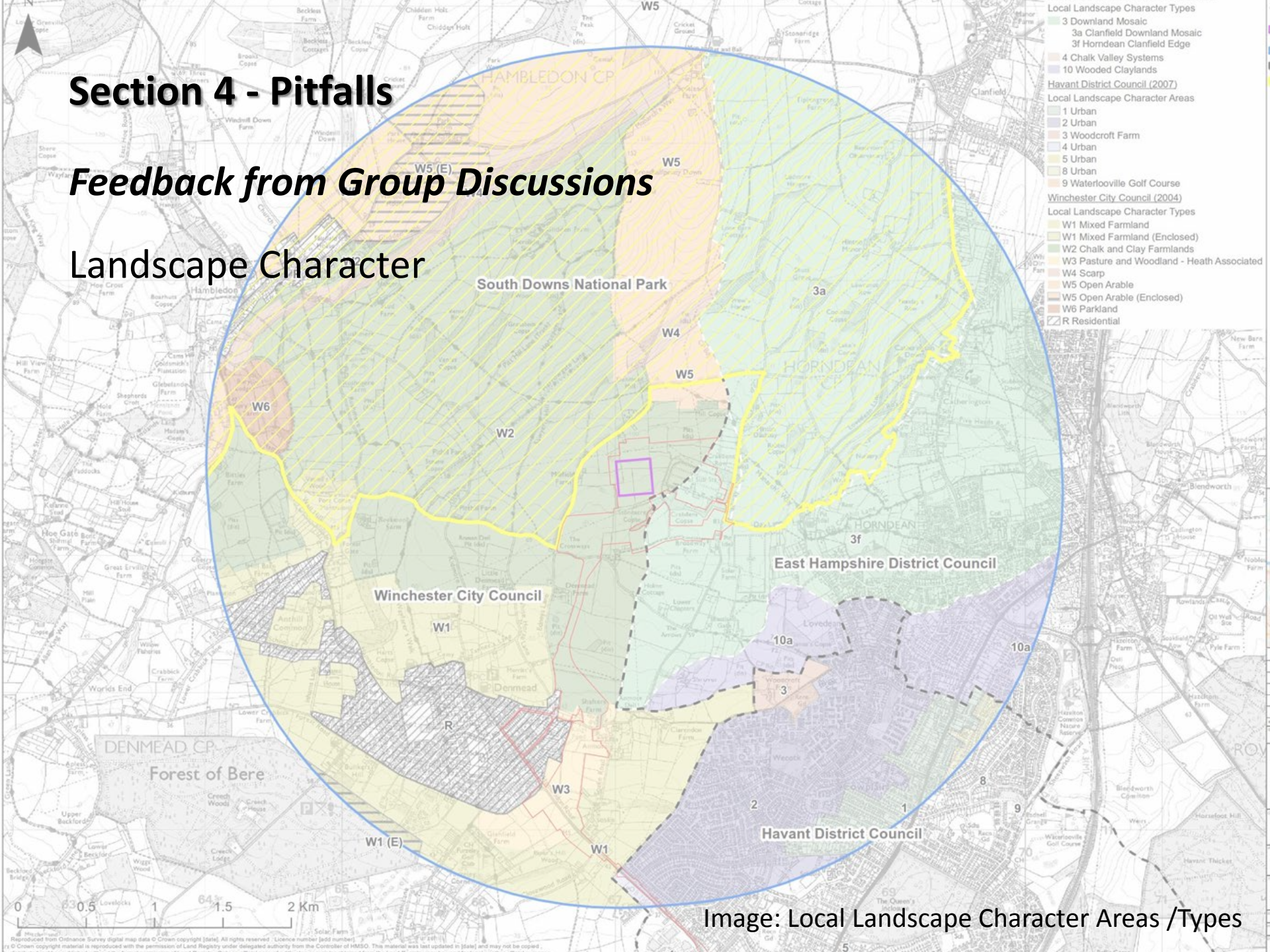


Image: Local Landscape Character Areas /Types

Section 4 - Pitfalls

Feedback from Group Discussions

Visual Amenity and Visual Receptors (visualisations)

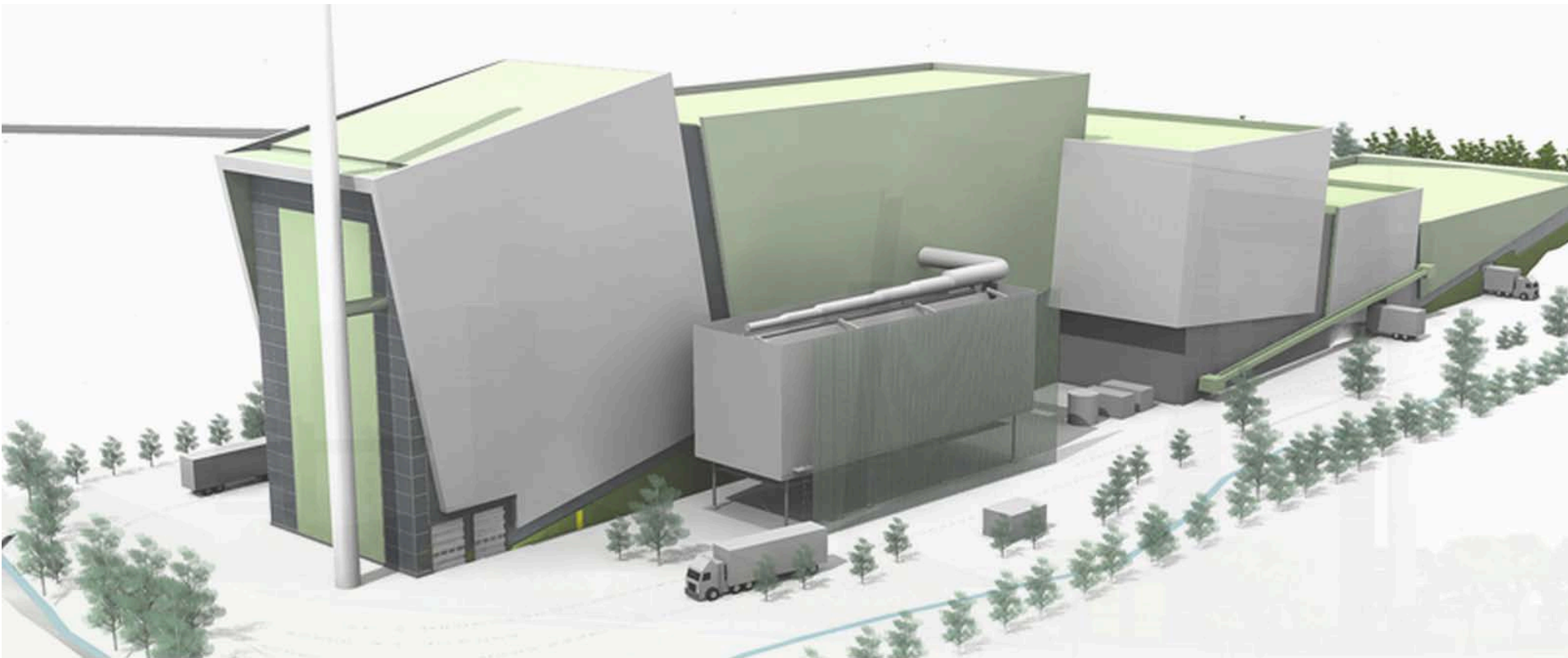
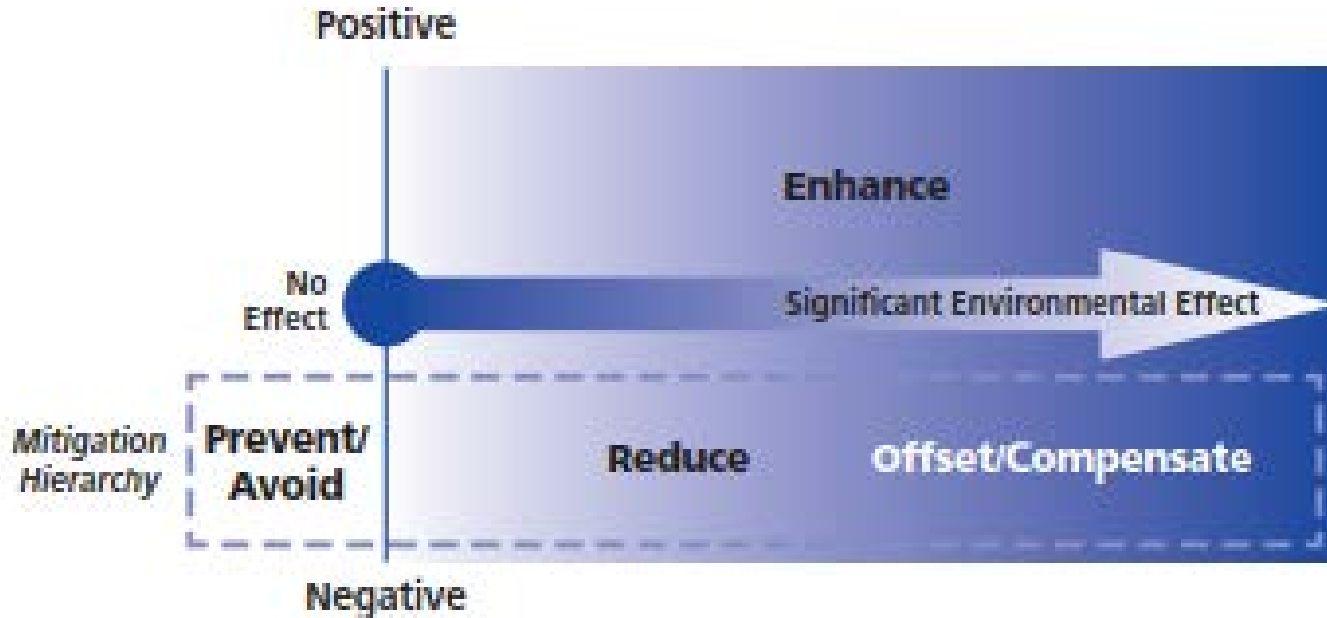


Image: Energy from waste, Gloucestershire

Section 4 - Pitfalls

Feedback from Group Discussions

Mitigation



Section 4 - Pitfalls

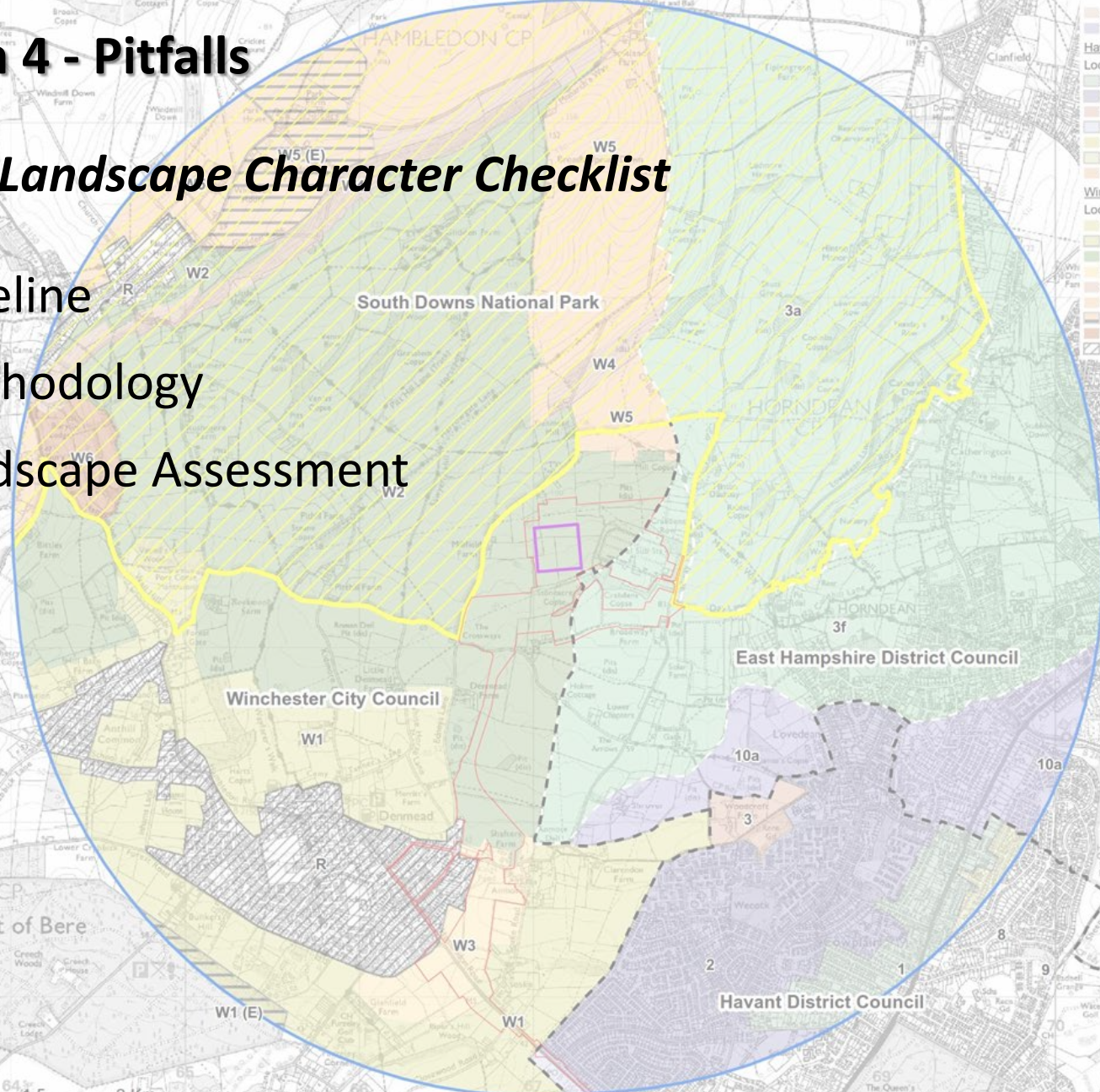
Feedback from Group Discussions

General (Scope, Study Area, Data Collection and Consultation, Methodology and Other)

Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Landscape Character Checklist

- Baseline
- Methodology
- Landscape Assessment



Local Landscape Character Types

- 3 Downland Mosaic
- 3a Clanfield Downland Mosaic
- 3f Horndean Clanfield Edge
- 4 Chalk Valley Systems
- 10 Wooded Claylands

Havant District Council (2007)

Local Landscape Character Areas

- 1 Urban
- 2 Urban
- 3 Woodcroft Farm
- 4 Urban
- 5 Urban
- 8 Urban
- 9 Waterloooville Golf Course

Winchester City Council (2004)

Local Landscape Character Types

- W1 Mixed Farmland
- W1 Mixed Farmland (Enclosed)
- W2 Chalk and Clay Farmlands
- W3 Pasture and Woodland - Heath Associated
- W4 Scarp
- W5 Open Arable
- W5 Open Arable (Enclosed)
- W6 Parkland
- R Residential

Image: Local Landscape Character Areas /Types

© Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of Land Registry under delegated authority from the Controller of HMSO. This material was last updated in [date] and may not be copied.

London Eye 135m (442ft)

Section 4 - Pitfalls

Proposed Wind Turbine 125m (410ft)

WSP's Visual Amenity and Visual Receptor Checklist

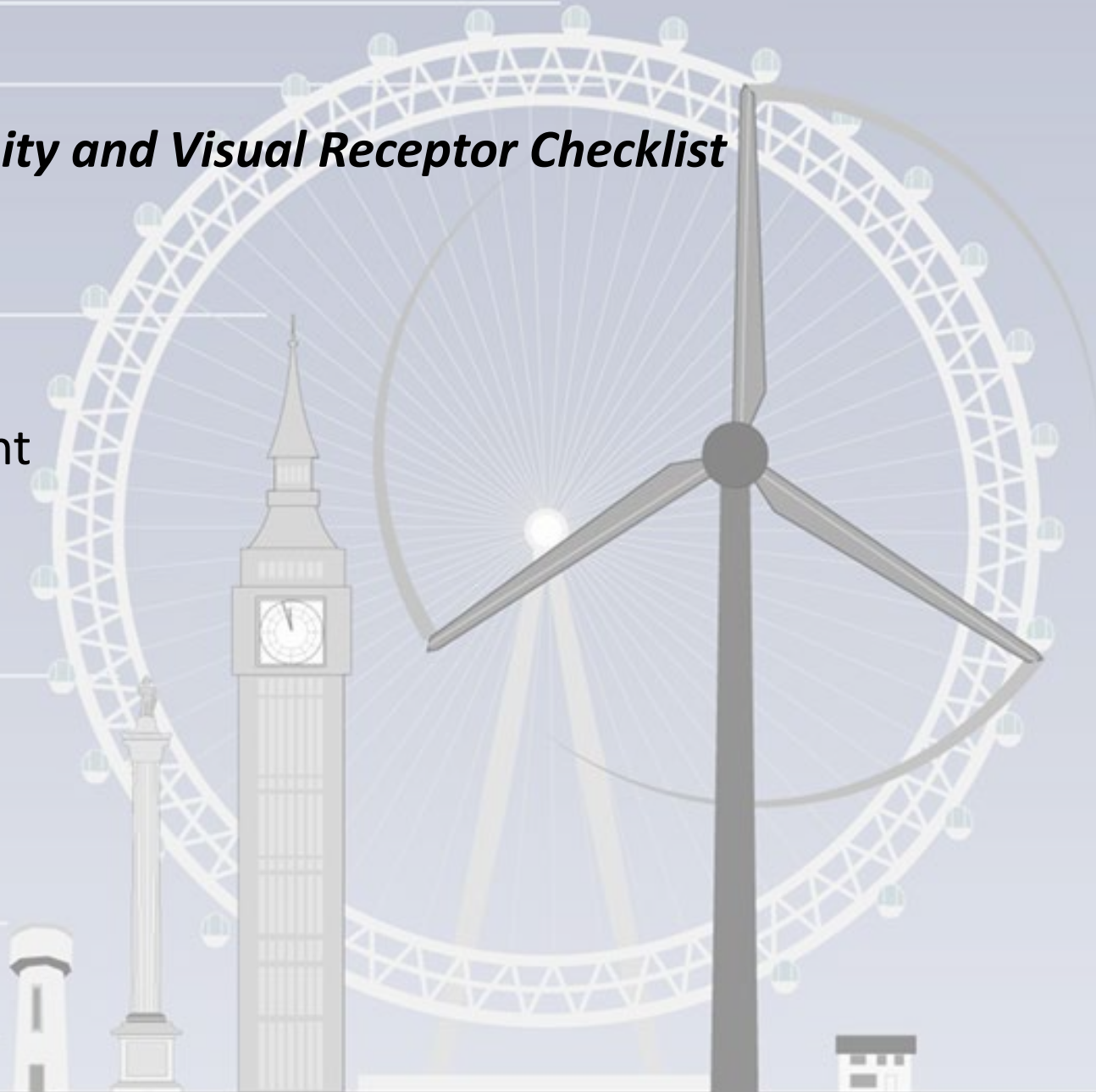
- Baseline
- Methodology
- Visual Assessment

Big Ben Tower 96.3m (316ft)

Nelsons Column 51.6m (169ft)

Weston Water Tower 21m (69ft)

Average House 7m (23ft)



Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Visualisations

It is important to understand the terminology relating to visualisations or photomontages...



Image: Visualisation of a Converter Station

Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Visualisations

- Level 0 – Location and size of proposal
- Level 1 – Location, size and degree of visibility of proposal
- Level 2 – As level 1 and description of architectural form
- Level 3 – As level 2 and use of materials/lighting



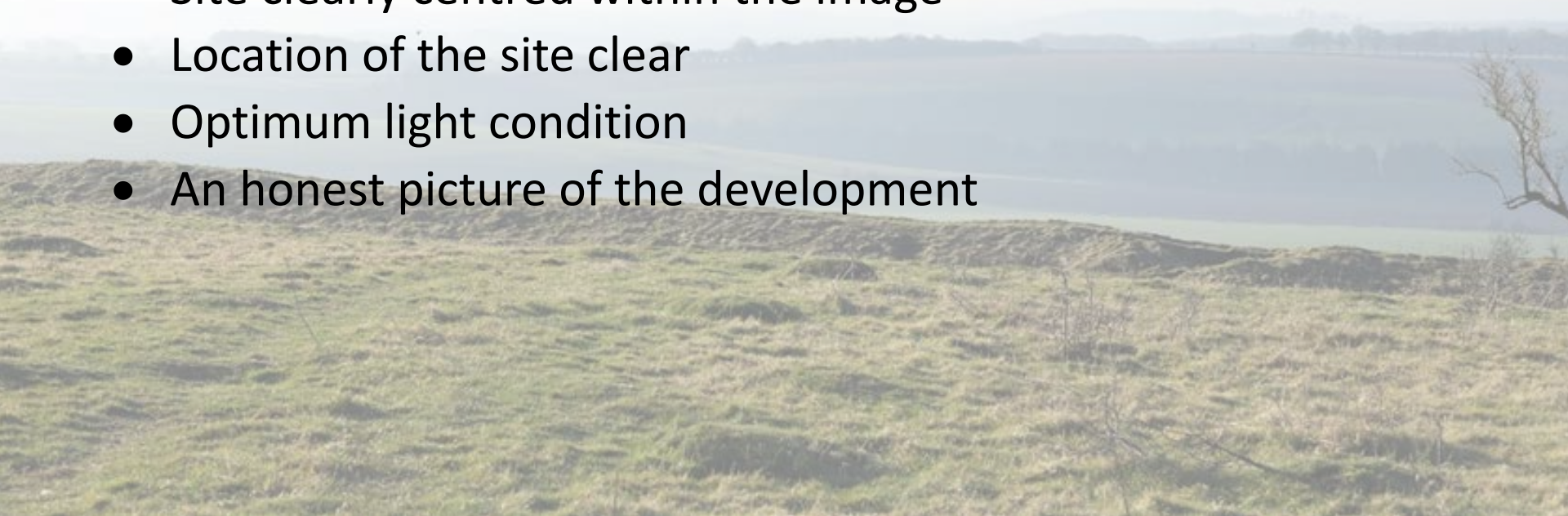
Image: Wandle Road, Croydon

Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Viewpoints and Visualisations Checklist

Key points to consider:

- Viewpoints agreed and representative
- Viewpoints based on a worst case scenario
- Single frame and wider photos to provide context
- Site clearly centred within the image
- Location of the site clear
- Optimum light condition
- An honest picture of the development



Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Viewpoints and Visualisations Checklist (continued)

Key points to consider:

- Matching viewpoints
- Obstructions in the foreground
- Clarity of information
- Availability of high resolution images
- Images correctly photostitched



VISIT THE SITE!

Section 4 - Pitfalls

Mitigation

Whilst mitigation is an important part of the design process the term “mitigation” itself is not used in EIA Regulations.

There are different forms of mitigation

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary



The best form of mitigation is through design responding to local context – this might not involve screening!

Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Mitigation Checklist

Key points to consider....

- Drawn on baseline conditions.
- Been avoided / prevented
- Incorporated into scheme design.
- Addressed temporary and permanent effects.
- Been considered during construction, operation and possibly decommissioning.



Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's Mitigation Checklist

Key points to consider....

- Be reduced?
- Be delivered, are practicable and effective?
- Have consultations taken place over mitigation?
- Generate impacts themselves
- Contribute to sustainable development



Section 4 - Pitfalls

WSP's General Checklist

- Scope / Study Area
- Methodology
- Baseline Data Collection
- Other

REMEMBER:

YOU are the local experts!

YOU must question requirements, challenge requests and be prepared to say No!

YOU must determine at what level the application / development would be unacceptable in terms of planning?

Section 5 – What to look out for in future?

Our concluding thoughts...

LVAs and LVIAs are:

- Qualitative rather than quantitative
- Informed by professional judgement
- Use local knowledge and common sense
- Should be an iterative process
- Be appropriate and proportionate
- Be intelligible
- Clearly presented

Section 5 – What to look out for in future?



- Residential Visual Amenity Assessments (RVAA)
- Imminent Guidance on Photography and Photomontage
- Biodiversity Net Gain

When to ask for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment....

..and how to identify the Pitfalls.



Any final questions?

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Thankyou...