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Landscape and visual issues scoping exercises have been carried out in order to confirm the suitability of this site and context to accommodate a development of the nature being proposed. This work has included desk study exercises and site walkover with exploration of the surrounding context. The overall findings are that this would be a forgiving location for development with good capacity to absorb the changes without undue or disproportionate harm to the landscape setting or visual amenities of the area. Opportunities exist within the site, for the provision of areas of landscaping and public open space.

The site is a parcel of land nestled alongside the existing settlement edge of Chigwell that contains the existing Chigwell Nursery site. The site contains a large area of existing built form associated with the nursery including glasshouses, hardstanding and sheds as well as a piece of unused grassland that is allowed to go to meadow. A small brook runs through the middle of the site along the edge of the existing nursery. A clump of mature willow trees are located on this brook. The landform within the site rises up from the brook at approximately 30m AOD to 40m AOD at the north eastern corner. The landform rises in a similar manner to the south of the brook to create a fold within the landscape. This fold gives a natural containment to the site and allows both the nursery and the proposal site to recede into the wider eastern valley slope of the River Roding.

Buckhurst Hill is located on the opposite western valley slope. Views back across the valley from Buckhurst Hill may be possible only from a small number of private locations, but at over 1km from the site, these are not considered likely to be harmfully affected by the proposals. With views being heavily filtered by the vegetation surrounding the site it may be hard to pick out any change.

The site and the wider nursery site are enclosed by established woodland blocks, tree belts and a number of mature trees including some large mature oaks. These areas of woodland and tree belts restrict views out from the site to all but immediate adjacent locations, such as the residential properties on Lyndhurst Rise. An established woodland belt separates the site from the adjacent High Road, (the main road leading into Chigwell). This dense belt of mature trees screens the site from road users and existing residential dwellings opposite the site on the east of High Road. The woodland belt within the site and the tree belt along the roadside of the Chigwell Golf Club car park screens the site from the Golf Club as well as locations further to the north east and helps preserve the setting of the Grade II listed building opposite the site. The original listed building has been extended to form the modern clubhouse.

The existing nursery is accessed from the High Road via a bell mouth entrance way and is set behind an existing wrought iron fence including some ornamental tree and bedding planting. The woodland belt to the north of the existing nursery entrance is dense and well established and would quickly screen views of any development from High Road. It is understood that access into the site could be provided via this existing access point. The nursery site forms a large area of built form which extends back the length of the site and includes large areas of glasshouses, workshops and sheds. Large areas of the nursery site are also put to hard standing to allow presentation of stock within the nursery.

The woodland belt which runs along the High Road wraps around the north east of the site forming a dense woodland block which provides further screening of the site whilst providing a wooded backdrop to the site. To the north of the site are residential properties on Lyndhurst Rise and Tudor Close; where a number of these properties back onto the site they have existing rear elevation upper storey views across the site. However, an existing hedgerow and a row of semi mature Poplar trees along the boundary screen ground floor views into the site.

The site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt however the site itself contains no landscape designations and is considered to have no special landscape value except for the wooded nature of the site's boundaries. The site has extremely good visual containment with a limited number of receptors nearby to the site, and where visible, the proposals would be seen as a replacement for the existing nursery, with the proposals regarded as an area of 'infill' on the settlement edge. Existing boundary hedgerows, internal vegetation and topography of the area help to create visual containment across the site and screen the site within the wider landscape.

The opportunity exists to provide areas of public open space throughout the site. An area of open space within the south west corner of the site would be well placed to set built form back from the road maintaining the open character of High Road to the south of the existing nursery entrance.

Overall it is considered that there is scope for this development to nestle into the site with very limited landscape and visual effects for a proposal of this nature and though this would technically represent development in the Green Belt there would be no material effect on any outlying Green Belt land and the Green Belt around Chigwell would not be notably eroded.