Dartington Estate

High Level
Landscape Analysis
Report

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11333/P01 December 2017 CB/KS

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1. This report has been prepared by Tyler Grange LLP on behalf of the Dartington Estate to consider the landscape and visual constraints and opportunities for development of two parcels of land at Dartington.

1.2. The purpose of this analysis is to establish the extent to which new housing can be accommodated within the allocated sites. In order to present a concise summary of the issues, this report points out a number of issues which are influential in determining the sensitivity and potential to accommodate development.

1.3. The full detail which underpins the recommendations has been considered in the preparation of this report and will be included in the detailed analysis required at the stage of an LVA/LVIA.

1.4. The approach to considering the landscape and visual constraints is drawn from the following guidance:
   - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition 2013 (known as ‘GLVIA3’) prepared by the Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA); and

1.5. This report is not a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as required by the EIA regulations. As the proposals for the site evolve further work will be required to test the effects of development on the landscape and visual resources and to establish the appropriate mitigation and management strategy.

1.6. The contents of this report are based on a preliminary desk top study considering the following documents:
   - Devon’s Landscape Character Assessment (2015);
   - Relevant adopted and emerging policies;
   - Dartington Neighbourhood Plan and landscape evidence base (2017); and
   - The 2013 DAS for the adjoining Sawmills Field development

1.7. In addition to the desktop study a site visit was conducted, and photographic record made in December 2017.
Section 2: The Subject Sites

2.1. This report relates to two agricultural fields which are proposed as draft housing allocations. Broom Park (TTV29 7) and Sawmills (TTV29 9). Where appropriate those areas of commonality, such as landscape character context, are described in respect of both sites. Other issues such as visibility and approach to development deal with site-specific matters.

Broom Park

2.2. The northern Site (Broom Park Field) extends over approximately 8.60ha and is physically bound by the Dartington Church of England Primary School & Nursery and Dartington Cemetery to the east, a local lane, and Broom Park Estate to the north and a simple post & wire fence to the west. The site also includes woodland to the south extending to the Bidwell Brook.

2.3. Broom Park field is allocated for 80 new homes and is currently serving agricultural purposes as arable land. The topography of the site (see Plan 1: Topography) is undulating and slopes down in a south-easterly direction (from Broom Park Estate to Dartington School) with steeper drop towards the watercourse. Buildings within Broom Park Estate are characteristic by white/light finish of the walls which make it visually prominent in both close and distant views.

Sawmills

2.4. The southern Site (Sawmills field) is allocated for 40 new homes. It covers approximately 2.70ha and comprises an agricultural field on land sloping in a south-easterly direction. The field adjoins new residential development to the east and is bound by the A385 to the south. The land drops steeply towards a lane to the west (see Plan 1: Topography) which also defines the boundary of this Site. The steeper parts of the site are under woodland which encloses the agricultural area to the north and west. The new housing development to the east is characteristic by the use of natural materials of muted colours (timber cladding, natural stone walls, slate roofs, timber fences).

2.5. The Bidwell Brook Valley with the brook, riparian margins and mature woodland separate the two sites. Opposite Sawmills field, across the A385, new residential properties are currently being constructed.
Section 3: Landscape Planning Context

3.1. None of the sites is protected by any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations. See Plan 4: Landscape Designations and Public Rights of Way.

3.2. The national planning policy context sets the framework within which the sites are to be promoted and designed.

Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 (Submission July 2017)

3.3. The relevant landscape and Dartington related strategic objectives and policies include:

- Strategic Objective SO8 - Maintaining the vitality and viability of the Smaller Towns and Key Villages;
- Policy TTV29 - Site allocations in the Smaller Towns and Key Villages, this policy allocates both sites for housing;
- Strategic Objective SO10 - Maintaining a beautiful and thriving countryside; and
- Policy TTV31 - Development in the countryside.

Other Pertinent Issues

- Grade II Listed Building - Lownard Cottage – located in the valley between the sites; and
- Public Footpath 414FP13 – connecting the A385 with Lownard Cottage.
Section 4: Landscape Character

4.1. Landscape character is defined in the Landscape Institute’s guidance (‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’, Landscape Institute (LI) 2013 and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) 2013) as:

“A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.”

4.2. Characterisation is:

“The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.”

4.3. The character areas identified by the published landscape character assessment are illustrated in Plan 5: Landscape Character Areas.

4.4. Natural England’s “National Character Assessment,” identifies the site within NCA 151: South Devon. The importance and presence of the landform which creates the distinct valleys and ridges are illustrated in Plan 1: Topography.

Devon’s landscape character assessment

4.5. Both sites lie within landscape character area (LCA) Mid Devon Valley and Slopes. The key characteristics which correspond to the LCA’s description include:

- Landscape underlay by slate, shales and limestone giving rise to a steep-sided, winding, narrow river valley and tributary valleys;
- Surrounding rolling hills generally with steep slopes; more gentle slopes to the north with numerous springs;
- Limestone geology evident in occasional disused quarries and limestone walls and buildings;
- Broadleaved and mixed woodland on steep bluffs; less-wooded narrow tributary valleys whose streams are often tree-lined;
- Good agricultural land quality, resulting in a mixed pattern of pasture and arable in sub-regular medium to large fields enclosed by dense hedgerows;
- Semi-natural habitats that include river and stream corridors, mixed and broadleaved woodland, hedgerows and mature trees;
- Occasional old orchards and small parks associated with the historic house;
- Settlement pattern of scattered houses, farms, hamlets and nucleated villages, frequently with limestone or render and slate vernacular buildings, as well as some cob and thatch and brick and tile; historic town of Totnes;
• Network of winding, enclosed, narrow lanes with some main roads crossing and fringing the landscape; and

• Views across and along valleys to nearby hills and towards Dartmoor.

4.6. The strategy for protection and management outlined within the Character Assessment includes:

• Protect important views to and from the hills across the surrounding landscapes, including views of Dartmoor;

• Protect the landscape’s strong sense of tranquillity, resisting highway improvements and lighting schemes that would affect these special qualities;

• Protect the sparse settlement pattern of houses, farms, hamlets and small nucleated villages;

• Prevent the linear spread of development along river valleys and roads wherever possible, to maintain the settlements’ characteristic form and peaceful character. Utilise the woodland cover and topography to filter views of any new development;

• Protect traditional building styles and materials, particularly the use of limestone, reflecting these in new development wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable design);

• Protect the landscape’s network of quiet lanes enclosed by woodland and species-rich hedgebanks, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements or signage; and

• Manage and enhance the field patterns, restoring lost and gappy Devon hedgebanks using traditional methods and styles of construction, including stone facing on banks using local materials wherever possible.
Section 5: Summary of Landscape Matters which will influence the approach to development in each location

5.1. This section should be read in conjunction with Plan 7: Landscape Opportunities and Constraints. Based on the preliminary desktop and fieldwork the key issues pertinent to both sites relate to:

- Topography;
- Vegetation;
- Field boundaries; and
- Land use of the abutting areas.

Topography

5.2. The landform of the sites is illustrated in Plan 1: Topography. The landform plays a crucial role in the options for both current land use and potential development. Both sites are situated on undulating slopes which drop in a south-easterly direction. The majority of the sites are formed of gentle slopes, being steeper around the boundaries and associated with the Brook. The Sawmills Field drops steeply towards the lane to the west while the Broom Park Field slopes towards the Bidwell Brook.

Vegetation

5.3. The steeper parts of the sites which are not suitable for agricultural purposes are covered by woodland. The woods frame both sites – Sawmills Field along the western and southern boundary and Broom Park Field in the southern part of the field. The woodland is associated with the Bidwell Brook and forms a significant landscape feature that affects the visual connectivity with surrounding areas.

Field Boundaries

5.4. Some of the field boundaries – especially the northern boundary of Broom Park field are formed by Devon hedgebanks, which is a typical feature of the local landscape. There is a simple post & rail timber fence along the A385 and the southern boundary of the Sawmills field.

Land Use of Abutting Areas

5.5. Apart from woodland within parts of the sites, there are several significant built-up areas directly adjoining the two sites which should be taken into consideration when designing the new development. Broom Park adjoins Broom Park Estate which is characteristic by terraced houses and, being situated higher on the slope, forms a distinct feature in views. There is a cemetery to the north-east and Dartington School with a cluster of buildings of various scale to the south-east.
The scheme should incorporate features which protect and retain the tranquil setting to the cemetery.

5.6. Sawmills is a logical continuation of the new housing development to the east. These new houses have been designed to complement the local character and there is a potential to extend the quality space through careful design.
Section 6: Visual Context

6.1. This section examines the visibility of the sites with reference to views towards them from the surrounding areas. The starting point for this appraisal is based on the findings of the GIS first sieve analysis GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Plans 2 and 3: GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility), which does not take into account built form or vegetation and has been refined and verified through field assessment.

6.2. The photographs have been taken during a site visit in December 2017 using an SLR digital camera using a focal length equivalent to 50mm. The photographs were then stitched into panoramas using Adobe Photoshop software. They are intended to provide an indication of the view and extent of visibility. They represent a variety of receptors within the public domain and the views they are most likely to experience. The photographs were taken in winter when the deciduous vegetation filters the views less than during the summer months.

6.3. In terms of visibility, it is important to distinguish between the visibility of the entire area of the sites and visibility of the open areas used as agricultural fields with the potential to be developed. Some views offer visibility of the sites but the parts that are visible are covered with woodland. The wooded areas of both sites are featured in views and in most cases, prevent, filter and limit views of the open areas of the fields. This is to be considered when assessing the extent of visibility of both sites. ‘View of the site’ within this report refers to views of the open, agricultural portions of the sites.

6.4. Plan 6: Viewpoint Locations and Plan 7: Photoviewpoints 1-14 illustrate the location of the viewpoints selected to represent the typical visual receptors.

6.5. The zone of theoretical visibility calculated from the digital model of terrain extends up to North Wood to the north, over the majority of the settlement within Dartington and over the upper part of the ridgeline south of Dartington. The fieldwork, however, has confirmed that the visibility of the sites is limited to primarily localised views (as shown in the photoviewpoints) due to:

- Intervening mature vegetation and woodland within and outside the sites;
- Tall hedgerows and Devon hedgebanks along lanes which tunnel the views with limited opportunities of views across the wider landscape;
- Built form, mainly within Dartington and adjacent scattered estates;
- Accessibility limited to public footpaths, publicly accessible roads, and lanes.

6.6. Unless taken directly from the site boundaries, short distance views of the sites (Views 1-9) are largely limited. This is mainly caused by the topography of the surrounding areas as this does not offer sufficient elevation to overlook the intervening vegetation and built form.

6.7. Sawmills site is not visible from locations other than a short section of the A385 on the approach to Dartington. It is due to the woodland around the field and the built form of the new housing area to the east.

6.8. Broom Park is relatively larger, more open; and due to its topography more exposed to views. Such views are however, largely limited and filtered through the built form of Dartington School, the woodland in the southern part of the site and other vegetation in the near surroundings. The upper parts of the field are partially visible, sometimes only in glimpsed views. The Broom Park Estate and its typical terraced buildings dominant some of the views.
6.9. Distant views (Views 10-14), from elevated positions, occasionally afford clearer views of the fields within the sites. This includes views from lanes on ridgelines to the north-west and south of the site, although opportunities for views are limited to several field gates as the tall Devon hedgebanks prevent most views of the wider landscape. The viewpoints on the ridgelines offer far reaching views and feature all the characteristic features of the local landscape. They all feature the Broom Park Estate with the terraced houses and some of them Dartington School. The prominence of the Estate within the views relates to its elevated location and the appearance of the buildings which are bright white with dark roofs, contrasting starkly with the muted tones of the landscape context. The buildings within Dartington School appear bright as well and therefore draw a significant amount of attention within the visual composition. The elevated areas of Broom Park and Sawmills are visible in the distant views but are also seen in the context of the adjacent built form and are partially obscured by the woody vegetation within and around the site.

6.10. The upper/northern parts of the Broom Park Field are therefore the most visually sensitive area of this site. The Sawmills Field is relatively less visually sensitive and if developed would form a continuation of the existing development.
Section 7: Landscape and Visual Recommendations

7.1. Both sites are allocated for housing and compliance with the local policies should ensure that the potential adverse effects of the new development are minimised through careful design, location and appropriate mitigation measures. Plan 7 illustrates the landscape and visual recommendations to minimise the effects of development on the local landscape and visual character.

7.2. There is an opportunity to create high-quality housing within both sites that will complement the local landscape character and correspond with the key characteristics of the Mid Devon Valley and Slopes Landscape Character Area. To achieve appropriate assimilation in the landscape there will need to be detailed consideration of the scale, massing and materials used for the new houses.

7.3. Broom Park site is located between several fragmented built-up areas and there is an opportunity to infill the undeveloped space and create a new, attractive settlement edge.

7.4. Sawmills directly adjoins new housing development and will form a logical continuation to the west. An opportunity arises from the potential of strengthening the existing field boundaries by introducing new Devon hedgebanks replacing the existing timber post & rail fences.

7.5. Attention should be paid to the condition of the existing woodland within both sites to ensure that it is retained and provides the desired backdrop and visual barrier between both sites and view filtering feature in both close and distant views. This can be delivered through an agreed Management Plan. Maintaining and improving the condition of the woodland will also ensure that the setting of the Grade II listed cottage located in the valley between the sites is not affected.

7.6. In most views, the settlement of Dartington is partially visible in local views. In general terms, the settlement is largely hidden by the woods and copses around the village. This is beneficial when considering the visibility of the new development as it will continue to benefit from the same containment and filtering provided by the landform and woodland cover, and will not add to a general mass of built form.

7.7. In close views, new development within the two sites will be significantly obscured by vegetation and in distant views, it will appear as an infill between Dartington School and Broom Park Estate. The development within Sawmills Field will infill a wedge between the existing new houses and the houses currently under construction.

7.8. The relatively visually sensitive areas within Broom Park will benefit from green spaces and especially trees incorporated into the design to soften and filter the views consistent with the functionality of the existing vegetation. The new buildings within Sawmills should not breach the skyline currently formed by the woodland.

7.9. The scale, massing and materials should be carefully designed and selected to prevent the visual dominance of the new houses in (especially) distant views. The new development should complement the adjoining housing areas.
Section 8: Summary

8.1. Our initial landscape analysis confirms that both sites can accommodate the allocated number of new houses although there are a number of factors that need to be taken into consideration with regards to the sites’ sensitivity and constraints.

8.2. Both sites benefit from the presence of mature woodland within the site boundaries which proves to reduce the sites landscape and visual sensitivity. Both sites are situated on undulating slopes. Landscape features in form of tall vegetation will have to be incorporated into the layout of the elevated parts of Broom Park Field to mitigate the visual sensitivity of that part of the site. The development within Sawmills Field will have to complement the adjoining existing built form. With appropriate boundary treatment and management of the existing woodland, there is the potential to create a high-value space that will complement the local character and create an appropriate approach to Dartington.
Plans

Plan 1: Topography
11333/P01 December 2017 CB/KS

Plan 2: GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sawmills Field
11333/P02 December 2017 CB/KS

Plan 3: GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Broom Field Park
11333/P03 December 2017 CB/KS

Plan 4: Landscape Designations and Public Rights of Way
11333/P04 December 2017 CB/KS

Plan 5: Landscape Character Areas
11333/P05 December 2017 CB/KS

Plan 6: Viewpoint Location Plan
11333/P06 December 2017 CB/KS

Plan 7: Landscape Opportunities and Constraints
11333/P08 December 2017 CB/KS

Photoviewpoints 1-14
11333/P07 December 2017 CB/KS
The plan has been modelled using GIS computer software (QGIS) and Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 data, and as such does not take into account built form or vegetation present within the landscape.
The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) illustrates the extent to which the development on the site at 9m above ground is potentially visible within a 5km radius (1.6m high receptor). The ZTV has been modelled using GIS computer software (Global Mapper) and Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 data, and as such does not take into account built form or vegetation present within the landscape. Field verification is required to refine the accuracy of the ZTV.
Source:
The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) illustrates the extent to which the development on the site at 9m above ground is potentially visible within a 5km radius (1.6m high receptor). The ZTV has been modelled using GIS computer software (Global Mapper) and Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 data, and as such does not take into account built form or vegetation present within the landscape. Field verification is required to refine the accuracy of the ZTV.
Plan 4: Landscape Designations and Public Rights of Way
As Shown (Approximately) @ A3
11333/P04
December 2017

- Site Boundary
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled Monument
- Rights to Roam/Open Access Land
- Public Footpath
- Public Bridleway
- Public Right of Way Reference
- Listed Building
Plan 5: Landscape Character Areas

Mid Dart Valley and Slopes
Mid Avon and West Dart Valleys and Ridges
Southern Dartmoor and Fringes

Dartington Estate, Stage 1
CB/KS
December 2017

As Shown (Approximate) @ A3
11333/P05

Drawing Title
Drawing No.
Date
Checked
Dartington Estate, Stage 1

Plan 6: Viewpoint Location Plan

As Shown (Approximate) @ A3
11333/006
December 2017

Site Boundary
Viewpoints
Broom Park Estate - visually prominent cluster of residential buildings due to their elevated location. Retain and strengthen hedgerow along the boundary of the estate.

Local lanes form a strong landscape feature and a visual barrier due to the tall Devon Hedgebanks on lane’s both sides.

Long views from existing properties will be lost to built form. Opportunity to retain some of the views through design and distribution of the built form and open space within the masterplan.

Opportunity to create a stronger boundary by introducing Devon Hedgebank.

Opportunity to create an attractive entrance and vehicular access with the use of native Devon Hedgebank and design that includes natural materials.

Retain and maintain existing woodland to provide visual barrier between the new development and surrounding areas. Opportunity to incorporate the woodland into open space with access to the Bidwell Brook.

Sawmills Field

Retain and maintain existing woodland to provide visual barrier between the new development and surrounding areas. Opportunity to incorporate the woodland into open space.

Public Footpath 414FP13

Existing houses directly adjoining the site. Opportunity to design the new development in a way that complies to the local landscape character and complements the design of the existing developed residential areas.

Residents of the existing houses enjoy views across the field towards the woodland to the west. Opportunity to retain some of the views through design and distribution of the built form and open space within the masterplan.

Construction site for new housing development.

Direct views into the site can be limited and the boundary strengthened by introducing new Devon Hedgebank instead of the existing post & rail fence.

Long views from the site are limited by the arising new development opposite the site. Opportunity to create a visually attractive space within the site through design and distribution of built form and open space.
**Photoviewpoints 1 and 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photoviewpoint 1:</th>
<th>Lane forming the western boundary of Sawmills Field Site.</th>
<th>Distance from Site:</th>
<th>10m</th>
<th>Orientation:</th>
<th>North-East</th>
<th>Coordinates:</th>
<th>SX 78185 62095</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description / Commentary:</strong></td>
<td>The view captures the wooded steep slope of the western part of the site.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photoviewpoint 2:</th>
<th>Droridge Lane at junction with A385</th>
<th>Distance from Site:</th>
<th>15m</th>
<th>Orientation:</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>Coordinates:</th>
<th>SX 78306 61940</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description / Commentary:</strong></td>
<td>The site is dominated by mature trees on the approach to Dartington.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Photoviewpoint 3: Sawmills Field Site

Distance from Site: 5m  
Orientation: North-West  
Coordinates: SX 78405 62001

Description / Commentary: View across the agricultural part of the site towards the wooded part to the north.

Photoviewpoint 4: Sports fields east of site

Distance from Site: 240m  
Orientation: West  
Coordinates: SX 78622 62111

Description / Commentary: The buildings of Broom Park Estate are visible but the Broom Park Field is visible only in glimpses through vegetation. The new houses east of Sawmills Field together with mature trees prevent view of the field.
Residents of the new houses have views across the field towards the woodland on the steep part of the site. The group of mature pine trees in the south-western corner of the site forms a significant landscape feature prominent in some views.

The buildings of Dartington School and mature vegetation allow only partial view over Broom Park Field. The Sawmills Field site is not visible.
Photoviewpoint 7: Footpath opposite drive to Dartington Dairy farm.

Distance from Site: 360m  Orientation: South-West  Coordinates: SX 78895 62579

Description / Commentary: The Broom Park Field site is clearly visible in this view as it adjoins Dartington School and Broom Park Estate. Sawmills Field is not visible.

Photoviewpoint 8: Footpath parallel to the A384

Distance from Site: 125m  Orientation: South  Coordinates: SX 78429 62730

Description / Commentary: View directly into Broom Park Field site as it adjoins the cemetery and an enclosed area known as Hazel Park. The characteristic Devon Hedges form the field boundary. The development of Broom Park Estate is visible through the vegetation. The new residential development adjacent to Sawmills Field is visible but the site itself is hidden from view.
### Photoviewpoint 9: Broom Park Field northern boundary

**Distance from Site:** 0m  
**Orientation:** South  
**Coordinates:** SX 78396 62598

**Description / Commentary:** View directly into the Broom Park Field site. The hedge aligning the boundary with Hazel Park constraints this view and buildings within Dartington School form a significant feature too. The new development east of Sawmills Field site is visible but the site itself is hidden from view.

### Photoviewpoint 10: Huxhams Cross Farm

**Distance from Site:** 600m  
**Orientation:** South-East  
**Coordinates:** SX 77837 62987

**Description / Commentary:** Although the site is not visible in this view, the houses of Broom Park Estate form a significant feature in the view. Broom Park Field site is located lower on the slope and is therefore hidden from view.
**Photoviewpoint 11**: Unnamed lane north-west of Westcombe

**Distance from Site**: 2.28km  
**Orientation**: South-East  
**Coordinates**: SX 75917 62372

**Description / Commentary**: One of many similar views experienced by people travelling along the lane on the ridgeline to the east-west of the site. The views are through field gates as the lane is usually surrounded by tall Devon Hedgebanks on both sides. The view represents a typical local landscape character and stretches far to the skyline above Totnes. The Broom Park Estate is clearly visible and so it the Broom Park Field site which appears surrounded by woodland in this view.

**Photoviewpoint 12**: Unnamed lane on the ridgeline, south of Blakemore

**Distance from Site**: 2.80km  
**Orientation**: North-East  
**Coordinates**: SX 76950 59796

**Description / Commentary**: This view through a field gate captures typical local landscape character and offers partial view of both sites. The vegetation filters the view to a large extent.
### Photoviewpoint 13: Drive to Drosley Barton

**Distance from Site:** 1.60km  
**Orientation:** North-East  
**Coordinates:** SX 77998 60353

**Description / Commentary:** There is an opportunity for a view through a field gate on the approach to Drosley Barton which offers a glimpsed view of the Broom Park Field site adjoining Broom Park Estate. The Sawmills Field site and other parts of Dartington - except for the church spire - are hidden from view.

### Photoviewpoint 14: Harper’s Hill Public Footpath 456BR7

**Distance from Site:** 2.30km  
**Orientation:** North-West  
**Coordinates:** SX 79436 59972

**Description / Commentary:** There are only occasional views from the footpath and as other views from the ridgeline this view captures the undulating topography of the local landscape and offers partial view of both sites.