

# Midland Metro

## 7.6

## Landscape and Visual Impacts

### 7.6.1 Approach and Baseline Description

A description of the assessment methodology and criteria used to establish the significance of landscape and visual impacts is provided in *Section 6.6*, which considers long term and permanent landscape and visual impacts. *Section 6.6* also describes the baseline townscape character, identifies baseline visual receptors and identifies the landscape policies and designations within which the context of the proposed scheme is set.

### 7.6.2 Townscape and Visual Impacts

Short term townscape and visual impacts occurring during the construction of the scheme may result from the following activities:

- earthworks;
- construction of reinforced earth structures such as those at Wednesbury, Tipton Road and at Canal Street;
- widening of the railway corridor, including widening of cuttings and embankments and the provision of retaining walls;
- the use and storage of construction machinery;
- exposed soil;
- works to bridges structures, including the construction of new bridges;
- construction of stops and park and ride sites; and
- temporary work sites used for site offices and to store construction plant, vehicles and materials.

In addition, on street-running sections of the alignment in Dudley and Brierley Hill works will include the excavation of road surfaces, diversion of services, track-laying, the erection of OHLE infrastructure, stop construction and the resurfacing of affected areas. A detailed description of the construction programme and activities is given in *Section 2.7.4*. These impacts will be phased, temporary in nature and restricted to the construction period.

A description of the impacts expected to occur within each Character Zone (CZ) defined as part of this EIA, is provided below.

### 7.6.3 Assessment of Impacts on Townscape Character Zones and Landscape Resources

#### Character Zone 1: Wednesbury Industrial Estate

In addition to the provision of new track and scheme infrastructure (such as OHLE poles, track paralleling huts and stops) the construction of the scheme will require phased excavation works to create areas of embankment and to carry out works to existing bridges, in an area where there are currently no such construction works taking place. Works will also be required to expand facilities at the existing Depot in Wednesbury, although these works will be within the existing site boundary. The CZ is of low sensitivity to change as it characterised by heavy industry on either side, which includes stockpiles of construction materials and the use of heavy plant and machinery. As a result, the works will result in only a slight significant negative impact on the townscape of the CZ. The proposed temporary work areas are on existing hard surfaced industrial sites and so there will be no significant impact on landscape resources.

#### Character Zone 2: Horseley Heath

Construction in this area will include the widening of the railway embankment, in addition to bridge works and the provision of new track and scheme infrastructure. The existing rail corridor is of poor townscape quality and has a low sensitivity to change. The alignment is also located within a cutting and as a result, the works will have little impact on the wider townscape. The construction works in this CZ will therefore result in a slight significant negative impact. The proposed temporary work areas are on existing hard surfaced industrial sites and so there will be no significant impact on landscape resources.

#### Character Zone 3: Dudley Port/Burnt Tree

In addition to the provision of track and associated infrastructure, the construction of the scheme in this area will require phased excavation works to existing cuttings, the creation of embankments and works to existing bridges in an area where there are no existing construction works. The existing rail corridor is of poor townscape quality and has a low sensitivity to change. However, the alignment is located on an embankment in this area, crossing several roads, and as a result, the works will have an effect on the surrounding residential areas which are of moderate townscape quality. The construction works will give rise to a moderate significant negative impact on the wider townscape. A temporary work area is located on the playing fields serving the Conegyre Leisure Centre. The football pitch at the Leisure Centre will be reconfigured so that it can continue to operate during construction works. However, this will result in a slight significant temporary loss of landscape resources. Other work areas are located on derelict land and will not result in any significant impacts.

#### Character Zone 4: Dudley

The construction of the scheme will disrupt roads throughout Dudley town centre during excavation works, track laying, resurfacing works and the provision of stops and OHLE infrastructure. The existing footbridge on King Street will also be demolished. In addition, the character of the CZ will be disrupted due to temporary traffic management measures, the movement of machinery and the presence of site compounds. Where these works occur in the Castle Hill Conservation Area, there will be a temporary, substantial significant negative impact. In particular, visitors to Dudley Zoo and Castle will be sensitive to impacts associated with the construction of the scheme in this area, which includes a temporary work area.

However, the remainder of the CZ has a low sensitivity to change and as a result, there will be only a slight/moderate significant negative impact on townscape. Other work areas are currently used for car parking and thus they will have no significant impact on landscape resources.

#### Character Zone 5: Parkhead

The construction of the scheme in this area will involve track laying and the provision of OHLE infrastructure, in addition to phased excavation works and major reconstruction works to the Parkhead Viaduct in an area where there are currently no such works. The alignment passes through the Parkhead Locks Conservation Area and is located on a viaduct, which is visible from nearby residential properties and open space. As a result, it is highly sensitive to change. A temporary work area is located to the Parkhead Viaduct in the conservation area. This site will be accessed via a temporary access track from Holly Hall Road. The operation of the work site, and works to the Parkhead Viaduct will give rise to a substantial, significant negative impact. Although these works will be for a temporary period, it will be necessary to operate the work area for a period of around 18 months. In other areas this CZ is characterised by industrial use and therefore, the works will result in only a slight significant negative impact on the townscape. A temporary work site is also located on an industrial site at the old Brierley Hill Iron Works. No significant impacts on landscape resources are expected to occur as a result of the operation of the site.

#### Character Zone 6: Waterfront

Construction works in the vicinity of the Waterfront development, the Merry Hill Shopping Centre and at Brierley Hill will require phased road works, the implementation of traffic management measures and the construction of a piled retaining wall and embankment beside The Embankment, in addition to a new bridge over the Dudley Canal. This will result in a moderate to substantial significant negative impact on the townscape of the CZ. A temporary work area is located on a car park adjacent to the Brierley Hill Leisure Centre.

### 7.6.4 Summary of Townscape and Visual Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures will be implemented throughout the construction phase to minimise townscape and visual disruption in accordance with the draft CoCP:

- hoarding will be erected around all site compounds, offices and major works sites;
- materials and machinery will be stored tidily during the works;
- roads providing access to site compounds and works areas will be maintained free of dust and dirt; and
- lighting of compounds and works areas will be restricted to agreed working hours and that which is necessary for security, and positioned to avoid unnecessary spillage.

### 7.6.5 Summary of Residual Construction Impacts on Townscape Character Zones and Landscape Resources

A summary of the impacts on townscape CZs and landscape resources is presented in *Table 7.13*. Impacts which are of moderate to substantial significance are considered to be important, but are only temporary in nature. The summary of impacts assumes that the mitigation measures described above have been implemented.

### 7.6.6 Summary of Residual Visual Impacts

Visual receptors adjacent to the scheme and their sensitivity to change in view have been identified in *Table 7.14*. The table also identifies the characteristics of the current view, impacts on the view and the significance of the changes. The summary of impacts assumes that the mitigation measures described above have been implemented.

Table 7.13 Summary of Construction Impacts (with mitigation)

Character Zone (CZ)	Impact on Townscape Character / Landscape Resources	Significance of Impact (Positive or Negative)
CZ 1: Wednesbury Industrial Estate	Construction of infrastructure, excavation of embankment and works to bridges.  Expansion of facilities at the Depot.  Temporary work areas.	<i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>No significant impact</i>
CZ 2: Horseley Heath	Construction of infrastructure, excavation of cutting and works to bridges.	<i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>
CZ 3: Dudley Port /Burnt Tree	Construction of infrastructure, excavation of embankment and works to bridges.  Temporary work area at Coneygre Leisure Centre.	<i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>

CZ 4: Dudley	Construction of infrastructure and temporary traffic management in Dudley town centre.  Construction of infrastructure and temporary traffic management in conservation areas.  Temporary work area at Dudley Zoo car park.	<i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>Substantial significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>
CZ 5: Parkhead	Construction of infrastructure, excavation of embankment.  Impact of viaduct reconstruction on Parkhead Locks Conservation Area.  Temporary work area at Parkhead Viaduct  Other temporary work area.	<i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>Substantial significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>Substantial significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>No significant impact</i>
CZ 6: Waterfront	Construction of infrastructure, excavation of embankment and works to bridges.  Temporary work area at Brierley Hill car park.	<i>Moderate/substantial significant impact (negative)</i>  <i>No significant impact</i>

Table 7.14 Residual Visual Impacts (with mitigation)

Character Zone	Main Visual Receptors	Sensitivity and Characteristics of Current Views	Impact on Views	Significance of Impacts/Evaluation
CZ 1: Wednesbury Industrial Estate	Residents – tower block in Wednesbury.	Low – elevated distant view of the disused railway embankment and surrounding land.	Residents in the tower block will have elevated distant views of the construction works in between heavy industrial units.	<b><i>Slight significant impact (negative)</i></b>  A highly sensitive receptor group will view major construction works for a short period of time but from a distance.
CZ 2: Horseley Heath	Residents on west side of line: Properties on Eagle Lane, Bramah Way, Daisy Meadow, St. Helens Avenue, Mansion Drive, Horseley Road and Station Street. Residents on east side of line: Properties on Horseley Road, Dovecote Close, Church Lane, Park Lane East and Smith Place.	High – elevated views into cutting of disused and overgrown railway line with varying amounts of vegetation and fence screening and significant fly tipping.	Residents of Eagle Lane, Bramah Way, Daisy Meadow, St. Helens Avenue, Mansion Drive, Horseley Road and Station Street will have views of the construction beyond back gardens and filtered in places by private fences.	<b><i>Substantial significant impact (negative)</i></b>  A highly sensitive receptor group will view major construction works for a short period of time.
CZ 3: Dudley Port /Burnt Tree	Residents on west side of line: Properties on Carnegie Avenue, Harrowby Drive, Sedgley Road,	High – residents of Jays Avenue, Harrowby Drive and Carnegrie Avenue have views over their back gardens and	Residents of Jays Avenue, Harrowby Drive and Carnegrie Avenue will have views of the construction beyond back	<b><i>Substantial significant impact (negative)</i></b>  A highly sensitive receptor group will view major construction works for a short period of time.

	Fernwood Croft, Mayfair Gardens, Lindley Avenue, Birmingham New Road. Residents on east side of line: Properties on Jays Avenue, Tudor Court, Victoria Road, Coneygre Road. Users of the Coneygre Sports Centre.	filtered in places by fences and vegetation of the railway at the same level as the houses. Properties on Tudor Court back onto and have direct views of the mothballed railway line. Residents of Victoria Road, Coneygre Road, Mayfair Gardens, West Sedgley Road, Ferwood Croft and Linley Avenue have views across back gardens of the disused railway embankment.	gardens and filtered in places by private fences.  Properties on Tudor Court will have direct views of the construction.  Residents of Victoria Road, Coneygre Road, Mayfair Gardens, West Sedgley Road, Ferwood Croft and Linley Avenue will have views of the construction beyond back gardens and filtered in places by private fences.	
CZ 4: Dudley	Office workers in Dudley town centre, shoppers and passers by. Visitors to Dudley Zoo and Castle.	Low – receptors have views from various elevations of the complex urban townscape of Dudley including roads and transport, buildings of various architectural styles, car parks, a bus station and shops.	A large number of people will view construction works throughout Dudley and along the bypass as well as traffic management throughout the construction period.	<b>Slight/moderate significant impact (negative)</b>  A low sensitive receptor group will have views of major works for a short period.
	Residents of properties in New Road, and Grazebrook Road.  Cranebrook Park	Moderate – medium distance views of the Dudley Southern Bypass.	A small number of residents in New Road, and Grazebrook Road will have views of the construction works along the bypass.	<b>Moderate significant impact (negative)</b>  A highly sensitive receptor group will view major construction works for a short period of time but from a distance.
CZ 5: Parkhead	Residents on west side of line:  Properties on Kent Place, Buxton Road, Highgate Road and Cochrane Road.	High – elevated views over the disused railway line, the industrial valley below and the Parkhead Viaduct. Partial screening in places by mature trees at Parkhead.	Properties on Kent Place, Buxton Road, Highgate Road and Cochrane Road will have elevated views of the construction works.	<b>Substantial significant impact (negative)</b>  A highly sensitive receptor group will view major construction works for a short period of time.
	Recreational users of the Dudley Canal path and park	Moderate – views from canal paths and the park of Parkhead viaduct above.	Recreational users of Parkhead Locks will have views of the works to the viaduct from below and of the temporary work site.	<b>Substantial significant impact (negative)</b> A moderately sensitive group will view major construction works for around 18 months.
CZ 6: Waterfront	Office workers and shoppers at the Waterfront development and Merry Hill Centre and passers by.	Low - receptors have views from various elevations of the Waterfront development and Merry Hill Centre, roads and car	A large number of receptors will view construction works around the Waterfront development and Brierlev Hill as well	<b>Slight/moderate significant impact (negative)</b>  A low sensitive receptor group will have views of major works for a short

		parks surrounding them and along the canal paths.	as traffic management throughout the construction period.	period.
	Recreational users of the Dudley Canal path and Brierley Hill leisure centre	Moderate – receptors have the same views as above but from the canal side	Recreational users will see construction works and the new bridge being erected.	<b>Moderate significant impact (negative)</b> A moderately sensitive group will view construction works for a short time.

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