



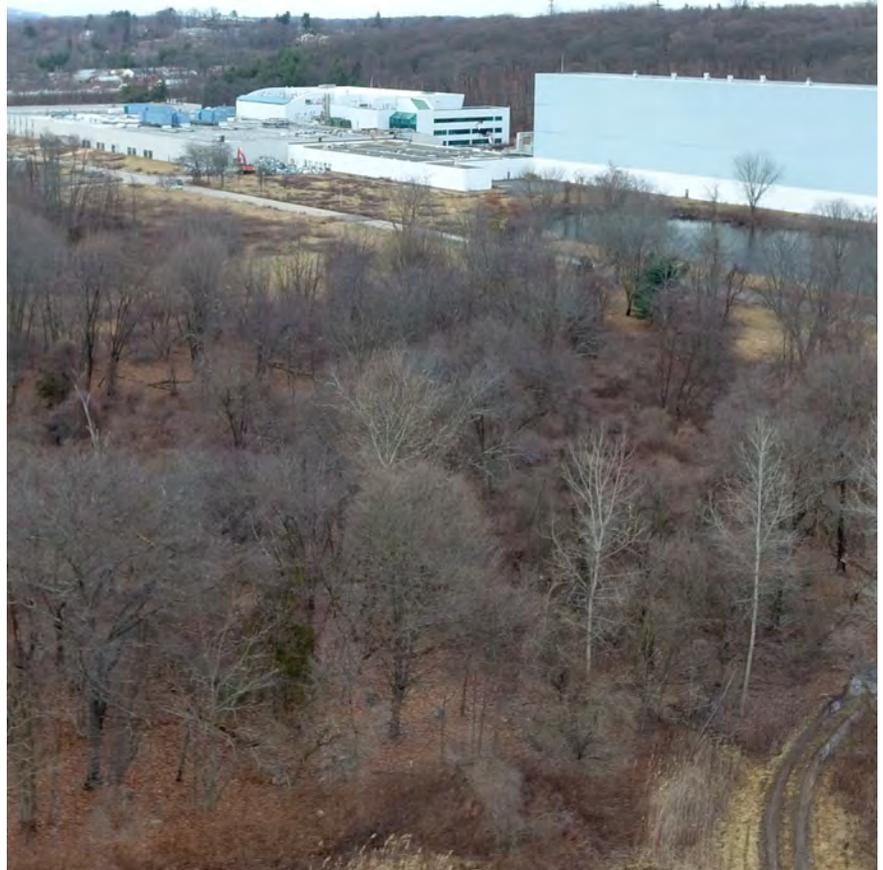
a better environment

## FIELD VISIBILITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

*Prepared by:*

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## Rockland Logistic Center

25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, Rockland County, New York

*Prepared for:*

**Brookfield Properties**

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**Brookfield**  
Properties

January 2023



## Memorandum

**To:** William Pasik, Brookfield Properties  
**From:** Gordon Perkins, GISP  
**Date:** January 24, 2023  
**Reference:** Rockland Logistics Center Proposed at 25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, New York  
**EDR Project No:** 23018

Dear Mr. Pasik,

Environmental Design & Research, Landscape Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Services, D.P.C. (EDR) provided Brookfield Properties with a visibility assessment for the proposed Rockland Logistic Center located at 25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, New York (the proposed development). The proposed development subject to the scope of this study includes the following components:

1. Three new buildings totaling 1.2 million square feet of new floor space and occupying a footprint of approximately 28.2 acres and situated on a 161.25-acre site in the Village of Suffern, Rockland County, New York. Table 1 provides details associated with each proposed building.
2. Proposed earthwork and grading influencing the finished floor elevation of each building.

**Table 1. Proposed Building Description**

Proposed Structure	Size	FFE (ft)	Maximum Elevation (ft)	Building Height (ft AGL)	Notes
Building 1	963,100 SF	315.5	361.7	46.2	Does not require a visual beacon due to an extant structure that exceeds the proposed building 1 height by 62.4 feet above ground level (AGL).
Building 2	170,500 SF	320.0	359.2	39.2	Visual beacon required to document proposed building height from abutting properties
Building 3	88,200	321.5	360.7	39.2	Visual beacon required to document proposed building height from abutting properties

This study included the following:

1. Two separate discussions with Bonnie Franson, AICP CEP, PP of Nelson Pope Voorhis (NPV), representing the Village of Suffern in the review of the proposed development. The purpose of these discussions was to develop and agree upon an alternative to launching a helium-filled balloon to provide a visual representation of the proposed building height.
2. A preliminary site visit on December 30, 2022, to investigate the feasibility of erecting visual beacons representing the full height of the proposed structures.
3. A final site visit on January 20, 2023, to observe and photograph views from the abutting properties and to characterize the potential offsite visibility of the proposed development.
4. This summary memorandum and supporting figures.

### **Methodology**

As mentioned previously, it was NPV's preference to raise a large helium-filled balloon to the maximum height of buildings 2 and 3 so that the village could understand the height and scale of the proposed structures and to help characterize their visibility from abutting properties. However, due to the inherent risks associated with ballooning (wind, tree canopy, and instability), it was determined by EDR in discussion with NPV and Brookfield Properties that an alternative approach could serve the same purpose. As such, EDR contracted a scissor lift with a maximum extended vertical height of 50 feet and a constructed pole sign with a maximum vertical reach of 41 feet. It was determined that this approach would sufficiently meet the intended goals of this effort.

On January 20, 2023, each of these visual beacons (the sign and the scissor lift) were positioned at a central location along the proposed south wall of buildings 1 and 2. Ground elevations were obtained using lidar data at these locations so that EDR could account for finished grade considerations at each location. The field team used a sub-meter global positioning system (GPS) with a digital base map illustrating each building footprint in order to find the appropriate south wall center points. The sign erected to represent building 2 was strapped to a tall tree within 10 feet of the building's south wall. The sign represents a height of 41 feet above existing grade, which is approximately 7 feet higher than the proposed building. As it was not easy to adjust the height of the sign, it was left in place and represents a conservative estimation of the proposed building height. The scissor lift was positioned within 5 feet of the proposed building 3 south wall center and raised to a height of approximately 43 feet. Once erected, the heights of all visual beacons were confirmed with a hypsometer and GPS readings were taken to confirm the field location. Each visual beacon is illustrated in Figure 1, pages 4 and 5.

EDR also raised a small unmanned aerial system (SUAS or Drone) to the maximum height of each structure with the intent of capturing images toward the abutting properties during the field effort. These images are illustrated in Figure 1, sheets 2 and 3. It should be noted that because the proposed building 2 does not exceed the height of the existing forest canopy, a UAS flight was not possible in this location. As an alternative, the flight was performed at the north-south axis midpoint of the building. The UAS images presented in Figure 1 (Photographs A1, A2, and A4) demonstrate that the forest canopy that will remain after building construction will be an effective partial or total buffer from abutting properties. Photograph A3 was taken from an elevated position south of the Suffern Free Library to illustrate the extensive vegetative buffer between the proposed development and the abutting properties.

Figure 1, Sheets 6 through 9 illustrate ground-level vantage points photographed while the building 2 and 3 visual beacons were in place. The ground-level vantage points included one location from the Tagaste Monastery, two locations at the Suffern Free Library, and four locations at the Esther Gitlow Towers. Varying degrees of visibility were observed at each of these locations, and the following general observations were made during the site visit:

1. The existing railroad embankment that runs between the proposed development and the abutting properties will be an effective screening element from the Suffern Free Library. While the scissor lift (building 3) was barely visible through the trees at the parking lot level, the recessed courtyard and seating area will not likely see building 3 due to extensive screening provided by the railroad embankment (Viewpoint 3, Sheet 7).
2. The scissor lift was visible through the existing vegetative buffer from the north lawn of the Monastery and from the Suffern Free Library parking lot. As shown in Viewpoints 1 and 2 (Sheet 6), the green scissor lift is difficult to discern through the existing vegetation, and during the summer months (leaf-on conditions) it is anticipated that the proposed building 3 will be substantially or completely screened from view. It should be noted that these outdoor spaces are likely to receive the majority of use during the summer months.
3. From the Ester Gitlow Towers, the visual beacon for building 2 was clearly visible from the rear parking lot of the residential community. However, only approximately half of the sign was visible due to a steep drop in grade to the proposed development. As such, while building 2 will certainly be visible from this location, at least the lower half of the wall will be screened from view. This is likely to reduce the perceived scale of the building when viewed from ground-level locations.
4. Elevated viewers looking into the site will likely see substantially more of the proposed development. However, as illustrated in the UAS image in Photograph A3, development on this site is not without precedent. In fact, the disused, crumbling buildings that currently

occupy the site are becoming an eyesore, and the area is currently in a bad state of repair. A new vibrant (and lower profile) development could improve the aesthetic of the site and bring a sense of purpose to a disused and blighted location.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the visibility study conducted and described herein, EDR respectfully recommends the following potential mitigation strategies to minimize potential visibility of the proposed development:

1. Maintain existing vegetative buffers wherever practicable.
2. Used muted colors such as off white, grey, or blue grey where practicable.
3. In site design, create opportunities for sustainable landscaping, including a mix of native evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs to soften views into the site.
4. Use variable color to break up the scale of the building by implementing panels of light and dark on the exterior of the building and introducing negative space to the building facade.
5. Keep light onsite and use downward directed, fully shielded (full cut-off) light fixtures. To the extent practicable, avoid fixtures near the site boundary where they could affect abutting properties.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the visibility analysis, EDR feels that Brookfield Properties has already minimized the degree of visibility and visual impact through responsible siting of the proposed development on a currently disused industrial development in a topographic depression. Because the existing topography of the site is lower than the abutting properties, the full extent of the development will be substantially screened from view. Notwithstanding, the proposed site is also very much lower than newly proposed developments that are under construction around the site. As such, it is anticipated that the proposed development will become completely screened from most areas in the village once these newly constructed buildings are complete.

## Figures

Figure 1 - Photographic Documentation Locations



## Rockland Logistics Center

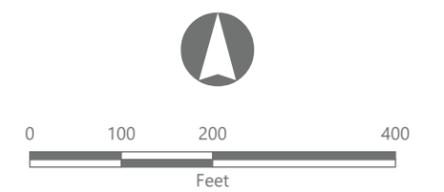
25 Old Mill Road  
Suffern, New York

Visibility Study  
Sheet 1 of 9

Proposed Building Footprint

### Viewpoint

- Aerial View
- Character Image
- Ground Level Viewpoint



Prepared February 10, 2023  
Basemap: NYS orthoimagery map service

Photo A1



Building 2 - 44 Feet AGL Looking South-Southeast

Photo A2



Building 3 - 40 Feet AGL Looking South-Southeast

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25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, New York

### Visibility Study

Photo A3



Suffern Free Library - 170 Feet AGL Looking North toward proposed building 1, 2, and 3

Photo A4



Building 1 - 40 Feet AGL Looking Southwest to Southeast

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25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, New York

### Visibility Study

Photo B1



Building 3 - Visual Indicator ((Scissor Lift at 43 Feet AGL)

Photo B2



Building 3 - Visual Indicator (Scissor Lift at 43 Feet AGL)

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### Visibility Study

Photo B1



Building 2 - Visual Indicator During Construction (Yellow Sign 36"x36")

Photo B2



Building 2 - Completed Visual Indicator at 41 Feet AGL (Yellow Sign 36"x36")

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### Visibility Study

Viewpoint 1



Building 3 Indicator (Scissor Lift) - From the Tagaste Monastery

Viewpoint 2



Building 3 Indicator (Scissor Lift) - From the Suffern Free Library

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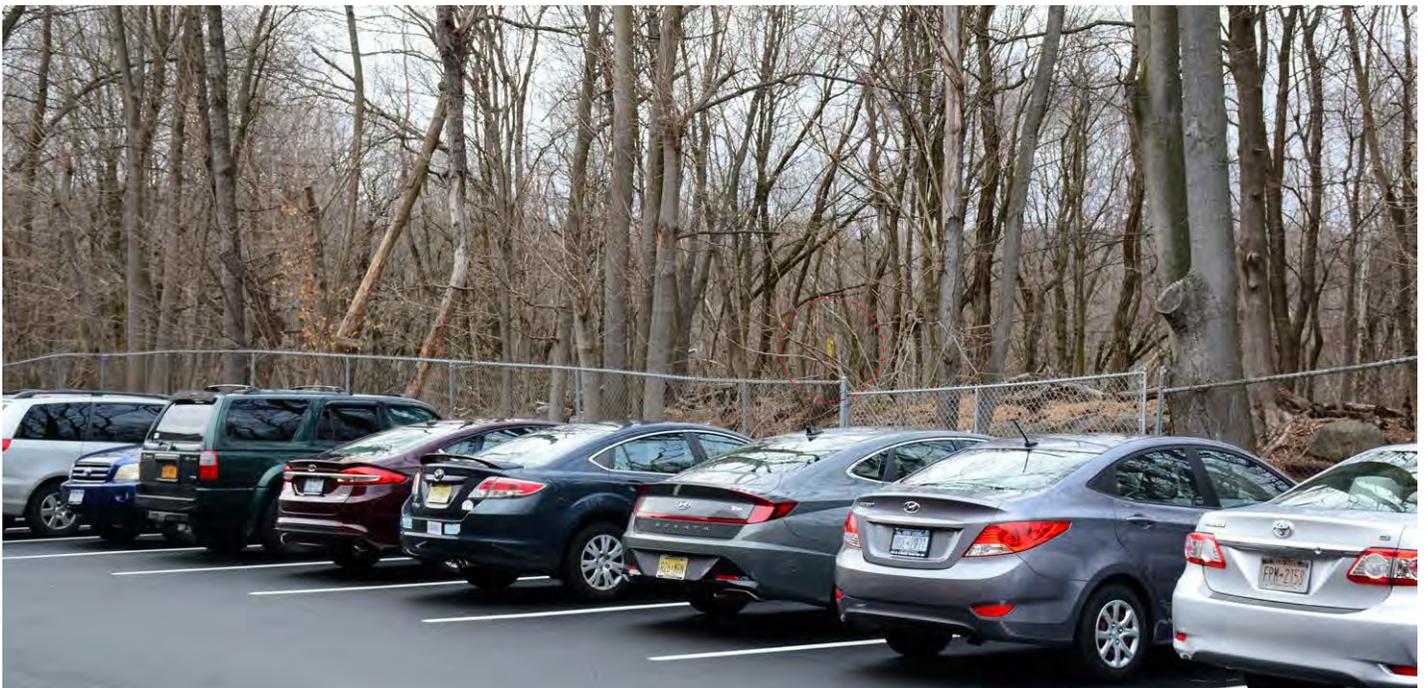
*Visibility Study*

Viewpoint 3



Building 3 Indicator Not Visible (Scissor Lift) From the Suffern Free Library

Viewpoint 4



Building 2 Indicator (Yellow Sign) From Esther Gitlow Towers

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25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, New York

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Viewpoint 5



Building 2 Indicator (Yellow Sign) From Esther Gitlow Towers

Viewpoint 6



Building 2 Indicator (Yellow Sign) From Esther Gitlow Towers

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25 Old Mill Road, Suffern, New York

*Visibility Study*

Viewpoint 7



Building 2 Indicator (Yellow Sign) From Esther Gitlow Towers

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*Visibility Study*