TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Application by

ENSO GREEN HOLDINGS J LIMITED

In respect of:

SOUTHLANDS SOLAR FARM AND BATTERY STORAGE,
LAND SOUTH OF RUNWELL ROAD (A132), RUNWELL, WICKFORD

**INSTALLATION OF A SOLAR FARM WITH BATTERY STORAGE AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE**

APPEAL AGAINST REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION,
DATE OF INQUIRY: commencing 29 October 2024

Chelmsford City Council Reference:

**23/00532/FUL**

PINS Reference:

**APP/W1525/W/24/3344509**

# APPENDICES

**to the**

**Proof of Evidence on**

## GREEN BELT, LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS

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SOUTHLANDS SOLAR FARM AND BATTERY STORAGE,
LAND SOUTH OF RUNWELL ROAD (A132), RUNWELL, WICKFORD

# INSTALLATION OF A SOLAR FARM WITH BATTERY STORAGE AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE

**APPENDICES to the**

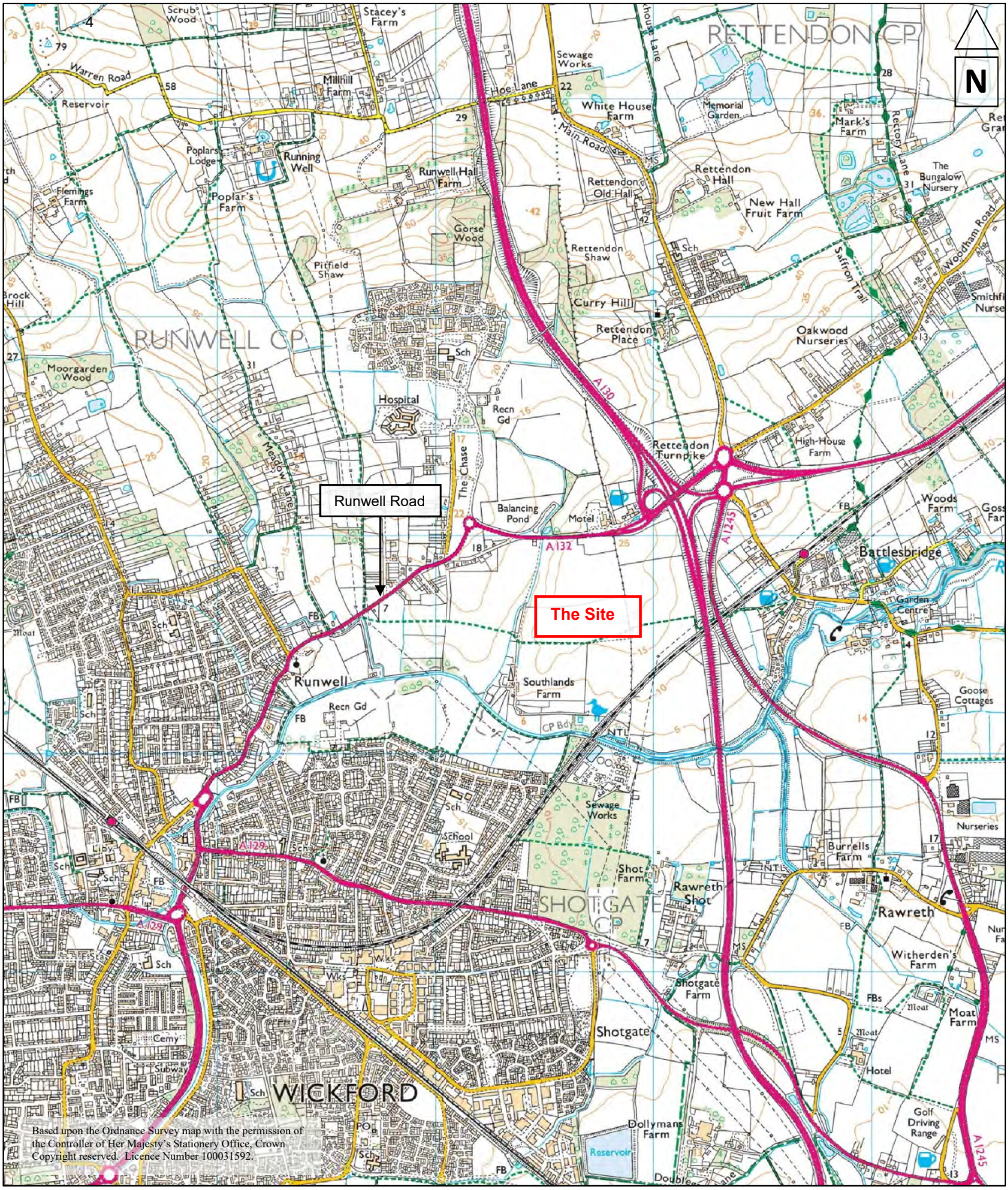
Proof of Evidence on

**Green Belt, Landscape and Visual Matters**

**Jon Etchells**

## C O N T E N T S

# Appendix A Figures




Southlands Solar Farm and Battery Storage

**Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence**

**Not to Scale**

**Figure 1 Location Plan**

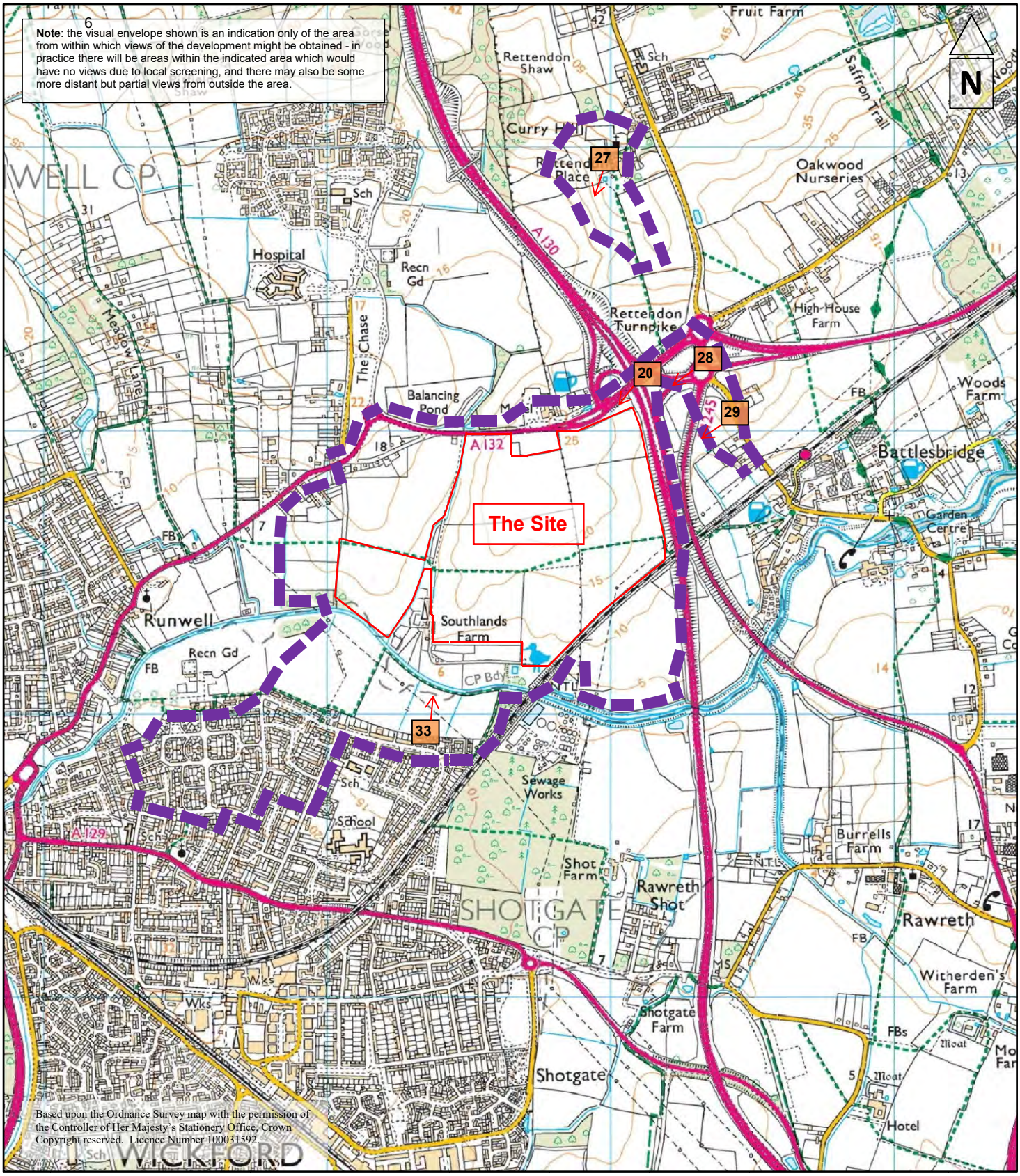

Southlands Solar Farm and Battery Storage

**Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence**

**Not to Scale**

**Jon Etchells Consulting**

**Figure 2 Aerial Photograph and Photograph Viewpoints**




15 Photograph viewpoints and direction of view. (See Figure 2 for remaining viewpoints).

Approximate extent of visual envelope.

Southlands Solar Farm and Battery Storage

**Landscape and Visual Proof of Evidence**

**Not to Scale**

**Jon Etchells Consulting**

**Figure 3 Visual Envelope and Photograph Viewpoints**

# Appendix B Photographs

See Figures 2 and 3 for photograph viewpoints.

**Photograph 1**

View north across Field 2 from the public footpath across the site - parts of Field 1 can also be seen between the trees on the far side of the field, to the left of centre in the view. The tower of All Saints' Church in Rettendon can be seen on the skyline in the centre of the view. The proposed solar panels would occupy the open fields of the site, and the views to the church from the footpath would be blocked by the panels and also the proposed fence and hedge alongside the footpath.

August 2024.

**Photograph 2**

View west across the southern part of Field 2, along the line of the public footpath across the site - Field 3 within the site is on the far side of the hedgerow and trees on the skyline. If the development proceeds the footpath would be enclosed within a 20m wide corridor bounded by security fencing (with CCTV cameras at intervals) and hedges, with solar panels occupying the field to each side of the route.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 3**

View north across the northern part of Field 3 from the public footpath across the site, at the northern end of the hedgerow within Field 3 - Field 5 within the site is beyond the trees on the far side of the field, and would be partially visible in the winter. The proposed solar panels would occupy the open fields of the site, and the presently open views would be blocked by the panels and also the proposed fence and hedge alongside the footpath.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 4**

View south west across the southern part of Field 3 from the public footpath across the site, from the same point as Photograph 3. The grassed paddocks to the south of the site can be seen on the far side of the field to the left of centre in the view, with the tall trees along the line of the River Crouch beyond them, and the electricity pylons within Wickford Memorial Park and the informal open space to its east visible above the trees. Some buildings on rising ground within Wickford can also be seen above the tree line. Despite the presence of the pylons and parts of the urban area within the view, the site itself has a strongly rural character, and the proposed solar panels would occupy the open fields of the site and completely change its character.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 5**

View west across the western part of Field 3, along the line of the public footpath across the site, from the crest of a shallow ridge. Field 4 within the site can also be seen beyond the intermittent line of trees which follows the Southlands Farm access track along the foot of a shallow local valley. The line of the footpath across Field 4 is indicated by the red arrow, and the field to the left (south) of the arrow is within the site and would be occupied by the solar panels - the part of the field to the right of the arrow is outside the site. The proposed solar panels would occupy the open fields of the site, and the presently open views would be blocked by the panels and also the proposed fence and hedge alongside the footpath, though forward views from this elevated viewpoint would remain, and would include the panels within Field 4.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 6**

View north from the same point as Photograph 5, showing the northern part of Field 3 and parts of Field 5 within the site visible through the intermittent hedge line between the two fields. This view would be closed down and blocked by the panels and also the proposed fence and hedge alongside the footpath.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 7**

View east along the line of the public footpath from the same point as Photograph 5, showing part of Field 3 extending across the view, with the hedgerow within the southern part of the field running to the right of the footpath in the middle ground of the view. The proposed solar panels would occupy the open fields of the site, and the presently open views would be blocked by the panels and also the proposed fence and hedge alongside the footpath, though some forward views along the footpath corridor would remain.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 8**

View south from the same point as Photograph 5, showing the grassed paddocks to the south of the site on the far side of the field and the tall trees along the line of the River Crouch beyond the paddocks, with the electricity pylons and buildings on rising ground within Wickford visible above the tree line. This view would be closed down and blocked by the panels and also the proposed fence and hedge alongside the footpath.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 9**

View north west from the A130 as it passes the site - part of Field 2 within the site can be seen through a gap in the roadside vegetation on the right of the view, and the site would be more readily visible in the winter.

August 2024.

**Photograph 10**

View east across Field 2, along the line of the public footpath through the site, showing the highway planting on the A130 embankments, which encloses the site to the east. The bridge on the right of the view carries the A130 over the railway line.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 11**

View south west across the southern part of Field 2 within the site, showing the tall trees alongside the railway line as it runs along the south eastern site boundary at this point. The electricity pylon in the centre of the view is just within the site.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 12**

View south east across the southern part of Field 2 within the site, again showing the tall trees alongside the railway line extending across the view on the far side of the field. The hedge on the right edge of the view is within the site, between Fields 2 and 3. The electricity pylon on the left of the view is also shown in Photograph 11, and is just within the site.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 13**

View east along the line of the public footpath as it runs just to the north of Field 4 within the site - the part of the field to the right of the footpath is within the site, and the shallow ridge landform within Field 3 can be seen beyond the intermittent line of trees which runs alongside the Southlands Farm access track. The trees to the right of the footpath are along the eastern boundary of Field 4.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 14**

View south west from the north eastern corner of Field 4 within the site, showing the tall trees along the line of the River Crouch, which runs along the south western site boundary at this point. The electricity pylon visible above the trees is within Wickford Memorial Park.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 15**

View west from the same point as Photograph 14, along the line of the public footpath as it passes along the north side of Field 4 within the site (the part of the wider field to the right of the footpath is not within the site). The hedge on the skyline runs along the site boundary on the western side of Field 4.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 16**

View east towards the site along the line of the public footpath - Field 4 within the site is on the far side of the hedge line and is largely screened in the summer, though there would be some filtered views to the site through the hedge in the winter.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 17**

View south east towards the site from the old alignment of Runwell Road - the field in the middle ground beyond the post and rail fence is the northern part of Field 4, and is not within the site. The rising ground beyond the line of trees, indicated by the red arrow, is part of Field 5 within the site, and the line of trees is along the western side of that field.

Two images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 18**

View east along the A132 Runwell Road - the north western corner of Field 5 within the site is behind the trees on the right of the view.

August 2024.

**Photograph 19**

View south from close to the viewpoint for Photograph 18 - there are some filtered views through the trees to the north western corner of Field 5 within the site in the summer, and those views would be clearer in the winter.

August 2024.

**Photograph 20**

View south west towards the site from the A132 bridge over the A130 - the group of mature trees in Field 1 within the site can be seen where indicated by the red arrow, and Field 2 can also be seen in the background to the left of those trees. The solar panels would extend across most of the area beyond the road in this view.

Two images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 21**

View south west across the western part of Field 1 within the site from the field entrance off Runwell Road. Field 1 within the site is in the foreground, and part of Field 5 can be seen through the trees to the right of centre in the view, with Field 2 also partially visible to the left of the tree line which runs between Fields 2 and 5.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 22**

View south east from the same point as Photograph 21, showing Field 1 within the site in the foreground, and parts of Field 2 visible between the intermittent line of trees which runs along the boundary between Fields 1 and 2.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 23**

View north west from the south eastern part of Field 2 within the site, showing the trees between Fields 1 and 2 towards the right of the view (part of Field 1 can just be seen beneath the trees where indicated by the red arrow), with the tree line between Fields 2 and 5 towards the left of the view.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 24**

View north east from the western side of Field 2, showing the line of trees between Fields 1 and 2 on the far side of the field. The hedge on the left edge of the view is between Fields 2 and 3. Note also the views to the local landmark of All Saints' Church in Rettendon (indicated by the red arrow).

Two images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 25**

View north west from the eastern side of Field 3 within the site, just to the west of the viewpoint for Photograph 24, showing the line of trees between Fields 3 and 5 extending across the view on the far side of Field 3.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 26**

View west along the line of the public footpath through the site, from the same point as Photograph 25, showing the northern end of the hedgerow which runs to the south from the footpath to the southern boundary of Field 3.

Three images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 27**

View south towards the site from the public footpath just to the south west of All Saints' Church in Rettendon - part of Field 5 within the site can just be seen to the left of the tall tree where indicated by the red arrow, and the northern part of Field 4 (which is not within the site) can be seen to the right of the tree.

August 2024.

**Photograph 28**

View south west from the A1245 to the north west of Battlesbridge - part of Field 1 within the site can be seen where indicated by the red arrow, with part of Field 2 also visible further to the left in the view.

August 2024.

**Photograph 29**

View west from Hawk Hill just to the north west of Battlesbridge - part of Field 2 within the site can just be seen through the trees where indicated by the red arrow, and the view to the site would be clearer in the winter.

August 2024.

**Photograph 30**

View south west from the public footpath to the west of Battlesbridge - the site is towards the right of this view, on the far side of the A1245 and A130, and is well screened by the road embankments and the vegetation along them.

Two images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 31**

View north east towards the site from the southern part of Wickford Memorial Park - the site is well screened by trees within the park and alongside the River Crouch, which runs between the park and the site.

August 2024.

**Photograph 32**

View north east from the north eastern part of Wickford Memorial Park - parts of Field 4 within the site can be seen through the trees alongside the River Crouch, and the site would be more readily visible in the winter.

August 2024.

**Photograph 33**

View north towards the site from the southern part of the informal open space to the east of Wickford Memorial Park. Part of Field 3 within the site can be seen through a gap in the line of trees alongside the River Crouch where indicated by the red arrow, and the site would be more readily visible in the winter.

Two images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 34**

View east towards the site from the public footpath close to Runwell Road - the site is well screened in the summer by two intervening hedge lines, but there may be some glimpses of it in the winter from this point.

August 2024.

**Photograph 35**

View north from the public footpath in the western part of Field 4, showing properties along the old alignment of Runwell Road with clear views to the site from both ground and first floor windows (the site extends to the south behind this viewpoint, and the field between the viewpoint and the houses is not within the site).

Two images combined, August 2024.

**Photograph 36**

View west along the line of the public footpath from the eastern edge of Field 2 within the site, showing the expansive rural views which can be obtained from the footpath, which runs across the open fields of the site for a distance of around 1.2km.

Three images combined, August 2024.

# Appendix C Summary of Landscape and Visual Effects

| Table 1: Summary of Landscape Effects | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Landscape Receptor** | **Quality and Sensitivity** | **Baseline Situation** | **Proposals and Mitigation** | **Landscape Change** | **Effects in Year 1 (Winter)** | **Effects in Year 15 (Summer)** |
| **Landscape features within and around the site.** | Overall medium quality and value - site is part of a generally pleasant, rural, open landscape though also some detractors in the form of the busy roads and pylons.<br><br>Mature trees and hedges within the site are important elements of the local landscape, with medium to high sensitivity, and the large, open arable fields are also characteristic features. | The site comprises 5 large, broadly rectilinear arable fields, divided by variable hedges with some mature trees.<br><br>The site is in the countryside, in active agricultural use and has a predominantly rural character. | Proposals would not involve any significant loss of existing vegetation, but would lead to large scale landscape change - the site area is around 66ha, and measures roughly 1.15km from west to east and 0.75km from north to south. The solar panels would cover the majority of the site area, and there would also be a number of structures up to 3.9m in height, together with around 7.5km of security fencing and 2.2km of stone surfaced access tracks.<br><br>Some new planting in the form of new or reinforced hedges and tree planting, peripheral areas would be grassed and the proposals are for the areas beneath the panels to be maintained by sheep grazing. | No significant loss of existing vegetation, but widespread change and loss of the presently open, undeveloped fields, extensive areas of which would be covered with solar panels.<br><br>The large, open arable fields of the site are characteristic features of the local landscape, and would be lost as a result of the development (noting that they could be reinstated at the end of the 40 year period).<br><br>High degree of change within the site. | **High adverse effects** in terms of the replacement of the presently open fields by the solar farm development. | Some reduction in effects as new planting matures, but net adverse effects would persist into the future at a **moderate to high adverse** level - the loss of the open fields would be a continuing effect. |
| **National Character Area 111, The Northern Thames Basin.** | Not stated specifically, and will vary within such a large area, but likely to be at least medium away from larger settlements and major transport routes. | The area of and around the site forms a very small part only of this large national character area, but is generally characteristic of it. | Proposals (though covering a wide area) are small scale in relation to this national character area.<br><br>Proposals as described above. | The local landscape change resulting from the proposals would be negligible in the context of this large character area. | **Insignificant** at this scale. | **Insignificant** at this scale. |
| **County Landscape Character Area, the South Essex Farmlands.** | Sensitivity to most potential changes is described as medium, but is likely to vary across the area. | The site is on the southern edge of the character area, which extends for around 30km from west to east. | Proposals (though covering a wide area) are relatively small scale in relation to this large character area.<br><br>Proposals as described above. | The local landscape change resulting from the proposals would be low in the context of the character area taken as a whole. | **Insignificant** at this scale. | **Insignificant** at this scale. |
| **Borough Landscape Character Area, the South Hanningfield Wooded Farmland** | Noted as having relatively high sensitivity to change. | Area is around 8.5km from west to east, so the site occupies a significant proportion of the character area. | Proposals (though covering a wide area) are relatively small scale in relation to this large character area.<br><br>Proposals as described above. | The local landscape change resulting from the proposals would be low to medium in the context of the character area taken as a whole. | **Slight to moderate adverse** this scale. | **Slight to moderate adverse** at this scale. Introduction of large scale development and loss of open fields would be a long term adverse effect. |
| | | | | | | |

| Table 1: Summary of Landscape Effects (continued) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Landscape Receptor** | **Quality and Sensitivity** | **Baseline Situation** | **Proposals and Mitigation** | **Landscape Change** | **Effects in Year 1 (Winter)** | **Effects in Year 15 (Summer)** |
| **The site and immediate surrounds** (i.e. area within the visual envelope shown on Figure 3). | Medium quality and value - site and surrounds are part of a generally pleasant, open, rural landscape with some positive aspects but also some detractors.<br><br>Medium to high sensitivity to development of the type proposed - the proposed development would be large scale and out of character with the generally rural character of the local landscape. | The site comprises 5 large, broadly rectilinear arable fields, divided by variable hedges with some mature trees.<br><br>The site is in the countryside, in active agricultural use and has a predominantly rural character. It comprises almost all of the open agricultural land between the settlements of Battlesbridge to the east and Runwell to the west.<br><br>In the local, mainly open landscape there are clear views across the site, in particular from the well-used public footpath across it, and also distinctive views from that route to the tower of All Saints' Church in Rettendon. | Proposals would not involve any significant loss of existing vegetation, but would lead to large scale landscape change - the site area is around 66ha, and measures roughly 1.15km from west to east and 0.75km from north to south. The solar panels would cover the majority of the site area, and there would also be a number of structures up to 3.9m in height, together with around 7.5km of security fencing and 2.2km of stone surfaced access tracks.<br><br>Some new planting in the form of new or reinforced hedges and tree planting, peripheral areas would be grassed and the proposals are for the areas beneath the panels to be maintained by sheep grazing. | Change within the site would be at a high level, as the presently open fields would be replaced by extensive areas of solar panels and associated infrastructure.<br><br>The degree of change to the landscape around the site would be medium, within the visual envelope shown on Figure 3 in Appendix A. | **High adverse** for the landscape within the site, noting that the site covers a large area, and these high level effects would therefore be felt over a broad area of what is at the moment open countryside.<br><br>**Moderate adverse** for the area around the site within the visual envelope, as the development would lead to the loss of the open arable fields which are a characteristic part of the local landscape, would be locally discordant and visually intrusive, but would have limited visibility, with only parts of the site visible in most views. | **Moderate to high adverse** for the landscape within the site - effects would decline to some extent over time as a result of the proposed planting, but it would take perhaps 7 to 10 years for the proposed hedges to reach the height of the solar panels or the perimeter fencing and form a robust hedge, and there would still be some visibility through the new hedges in the winter, and above them in the summer in some views. The loss of the presently open fields would represent a long term change in local landscape character.<br><br>**Slight to moderate adverse** for the area around the site within the visual envelope. |
| | | | | | | |

| Table 2: Summary of Visual Effects | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Visual Receptor** | **Sensitivity** | **Baseline Situation** | **Proposals and Mitigation** | **Magnitude of Change** | **Effects in Year 1 (Winter)** | **Effects in Year 15 (Summer)** |
| **Properties along Runwell Road** | High for 6 properties along the old road alignment with views from ground and first floor windows, medium for a further 2 properties with more limited views. | Existing views vary with degree of enclosure by garden vegetation, but are generally open, rural and attractive, though parts of the urban area to the south are visible in the distance beyond the site, above intervening trees.<br><br>The northern side of Field 4 within the site is around 300m from these properties. | Solar panels in Field 4 would be visible, though the site falls away to the south and not all of Field 4 would be visible. Some views also to panels within Fields 3 and 5, mainly in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting along the north side of Field 4 would provide some screening over time. | From negligible up to low, depending on openness of view and screening by garden and boundary vegetation.<br><br>Views of the solar panels would be at distances of at least 260m. | **Moderate adverse** for three properties with the most open views, **slight to moderate adverse** for a further three properties and **slight adverse** for Southlands Cottages. | All effects would be expected to decrease slowly with time, as the proposed planting begins to mature, but some adverse effects would persist, as previously open views would be closed down to some extent by the new planting and some views of the panels in Fields 3 and 5 would be likely to remain. |
| **Toby Carvery** | Medium for people using the restaurant or staying in the hotel, on the north side of Runwell Road. | Open and largely rural views across the site, above the road and also the site boundary hedge, from mainly first floor windows.<br><br>Existing views are across the road and also (for Field 5) across the intervening uncultivated area which is not within the site. | Solar panels in Fields 1 and (to a lesser extent) Field 5 would be visible, together with the fenced compound and the structures within it. Existing access would remain.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | Medium - views would be filtered by intervening vegetation.<br><br>Views of the solar panels would be at distances of at least 100m, and across the A132. | **Moderate adverse**. | **Slight adverse** - effects would be expected to decrease slowly with time, as the proposed planting begins to mature, but some adverse effects would persist, as previously open views would be closed down to some extent, and some views from upper floor windows would remain. |
| **Southlands Farmhouse** | Medium, property is partially screened by farm buildings and views would be principally from first floor windows. | Farmhouse is partially enclosed by garden vegetation and also the farm buildings to its east and north. Some views across Field 3. | Solar panels in Field 3 would be visible, but only one part of the site would be visible for most of these receptors.<br><br>Proposed perimeter hedge would provide some screening over time. | Low - views would be filtered by intervening vegetation and buildings.<br><br>Views of the solar panels would be at distances of at least 60m. | **Slight to moderate adverse**. | **Slight adverse** - effects would be expected to decrease slowly with time, but some views from upper floor windows would remain. |
| | | | | | | |

| Table 2: Summary of Visual Effects (continued) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Visual Receptor** | **Sensitivity** | **Baseline Situation** | **Proposals and Mitigation** | **Magnitude of Change** | **Effects in Year 1 (Winter)** | **Effects in Year 15 (Summer)** |
| **Properties in Wickford to the south and south west** | Medium for around 10 properties to the south of the informal space along Beauchamps Drive, and around a further 14 properties on rising ground within the urban area to the south west of the site. | Filtered views to Fields 3 and 4 within the site, above or through gaps in the tree line along the River Crouch (views would be clearer in the winter).<br><br>Existing views include the line of pylons which runs across the open space between the river and the urban edge. | Solar panels in Fields 3 and 4 would be partially visible, but only one field would be visible for most of these receptors.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | From negligible up to low, depending on openness and distance of view and screening by garden and boundary vegetation.<br><br>Views of the solar panels would be at distances of at least 70m. | **Slight to moderate adverse** for around 6 properties to the south with more open views and **insignificant** for the remainder, and **slight to moderate adverse** for around 6 properties to the south west with more open views and **slight adverse** effects for the remainder | All effects would be expected to decrease slowly with time, as the proposed planting begins to mature, but some adverse effects would persist, as some elevated views would remain and perimeter hedges would not provide a complete screen. |
| | | | | | | |

| Table 2: Summary of Visual Effects (continued) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Visual Receptor** | **Sensitivity** | **Baseline Situation** | **Proposals and Mitigation** | **Magnitude of Change** | **Effects in Year 1 (Winter)** | **Effects in Year 15 (Summer)** |
| **Users of Public Rights of Way** | High, for users of the footpath across the site (Footpaths 23/ 229 and 8/ 231). | Route runs across the site for a distance of around 1.2km, and for all of that distance runs across open, undeveloped agricultural land. Views are pleasant and open, with some views to the local landmark of All Saints' Church in Rettendon. Also some views of adjoining busy roads (though they are largely screened by roadside trees), the urban edge to the south west and electricity pylons. | Solar panels in Fields 2, 3 and 4 within the site would be visible at close range, together with some more limited views of those within Fields 1 and 5. The footpath would run for much of the 1.2km length across the site length within a fenced corridor around 20m in width, with tall security fencing and CCTV cameras to each side of it.<br><br>The proposed planting (hedgerows to each side of the route as it passes through Fields 2 and 3, and a narrow belt of woodland planting to its south through Field 4) would provide some screening over time (though the solar panels would still be visible through the planting in the winter, even in the longer term), but the presently expansive views from the footpath would be closed down and lost, and the experience of walking along this route would change completely. | High - as people pass along the route they would gain a clear impression of the large scale of the site, and the proposals would dominate their visual experience. | **High adverse** - the presently rural experience of walking along the route would change completely, and the open views would be closed down, including those to the church, which would be lost. | **Moderate to high adverse** - loss of open views would persist, and even if the solar panels are screened there would be some awareness of the security fencing and CCTV cameras. |
| | High, for users of the same footpath to the west of the site. | Route continues through the paddocks to the west of the site, with some screening provided by site boundary vegetation. | Some views to the solar panels within Field 4, mainly in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | Low - any views of the panels would be limited, and for people walking towards the site only. | **Moderate adverse** and for a short length of footpath only. | **Insignificant** - there would be no significant visibility of the solar panels in the summer. |
| | High, for users of the footpath adjacent to All Saints' Church in Rettendon. | Route runs downhill to the south from the churchyard.<br><br>Views are expansive and include busy roads and other detracting features. | Distant and partial views to some parts of the site, at distances of around 1 to 1.2km, site would have greater visibility in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | Negligible, only parts of the site would be visible, as part of a wide and expansive view. | **Slight adverse** - the overall view would not be significantly affected. | **Insignificant** - there would be very limited visibility of the solar panels in the summer. |
| **Users of recreational facilities** | High, for users of Wickford Memorial Park, including the footpaths across it and the informal open space to its east. | The formal park and open space appear to be well maintained and used, and are largely screened from the site by the tall trees along the line of the River Crouch, but there are some glimpse views of the site in the summer, and views would be more open in the winter. | Some views to the solar panels within Fields 3 and 4, mainly in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | Change would vary within these areas with the amount of screening vegetation, but would be up to low for areas with clearer (but still partial and filtered) views. | Effects would vary from **moderate adverse** for parts of the open spaces with clearer views, to **slight adverse** for parts with more limited views. | All effects would be expected to decrease slowly with time, and effects in the summer would be at a lower level. |

**Table 2: Summary of Visual Effects (continued)**

| Visual Receptor | Sensitivity | Baseline Situation | Proposals and Mitigation | Magnitude of Change | Effects in Year 1 (Winter) | Effects in Year 15 (Summer) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Users of local roads** | Low, for motorised users of the A130, A132 and Hawk Hill. | The site is generally screened from the roads to its north and east by boundary vegetation, but there would be some glimpse views in the summer and clearer views in the winter, as most of the boundary vegetation is deciduous. Some filtered views to the northern part of the site from the A132 Runwell Road (and the footway along its southern side), some views from the A130 to the south of Runwell Road as it passes the eastern sides of Fields 1 and 2, and also some views of the eastern part of the site from the A132 bridge across the A130, and from the roundabout to the east of the bridge and Hawk Hill as it runs downhill into Battlesbridge. | Solar panels in Fields 1, 2 and 5 within the site would be visible, but only one part of the site at a time would be visible for most of these receptors. Most views would be partial and filtered, but would be clearer in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | Low - visibility would be intermittent and partial. | **Slight adverse** for motorised users, for a short duration only, though numbers of receptors affected would be quite high. | **Insignificant -** there would be very limited visibility of the solar panels in the summer, once the perimeter planting has begun to mature. |
| | Medium for people using the footway along the south side of the A132. | Some filtered views into Fields 1 and 5 in the summer, and views would be clearer in the winter. | Solar panels in Fields 1 and 5 within the site would be visible, and views would be clearer in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time. | Generally low - solar panels would be set back from the northern site boundary, but some clearer views into the site at the proposed access. | **Slight to moderate adverse** for non-motorised users. | **Slight adverse** - effects would be expected to decrease slowly with time, as the proposed planting begins to mature and would be at a lower level in the summer, but some adverse effects would persist, and views at the proposed access would not be screened. |
| **Users of the railway line** | Low. | Some filtered views into Fields 2 and 3 in the summer, and views would be clearer in the winter | Solar panels in Fields 2 and 3 within the site would be visible - views would be partial and filtered, but would be clearer in the winter.<br><br>Proposed planting would provide some screening over time, though no hedge is proposed along the south sides of Fields 2 and 3 where adjacent to the railway line. | Low - visibility would be intermittent and partial, though there would be a general awareness of the spread of panels across the site as the viewer moves. | **Slight adverse**, for a short duration only in the context of an overall journey, though numbers of receptors affected would be quite high. | **Insignificant -** there would be limited visibility of the solar panels in the summer. |

# Appendix D Methodology

## LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

### 1 General

1.1 In landscape and visual assessments, a distinction is normally drawn between landscape effects (i.e. effects on the character or quality of the landscape, irrespective of whether there are any views of the landscape, or viewers to see them) and visual effects (i.e. effects on people's views of the landscape, principally from residential properties, but also from public rights of way and other areas with public access). Thus, a development may have extensive landscape effects but few visual effects (if, for example, there are no properties or public viewpoints), or few landscape effects but significant visual effects (if, for example, the landscape is already degraded or the development is not out of character with it, but can clearly be seen from many residential properties).

1.2 The core methodology followed is that set out in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', produced jointly by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Landscape Institute ('the GLVIA', 1995, revised 2002 and 2013). The document 'Landscape Character Assessment, Guidance for England and Scotland, 2002' (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage) also stresses the need for a holistic assessment of landscape character, including physical, biological and social factors. This document notes that '*Landscape is about the relationship between people and place*.'

1.3 Further information is set out in 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment', October 2014 (Christine Tudor, Natural England) to which reference is also made. This paper notes that 'Landscape' is defined in the European Landscape Convention as: '*Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*'.

1.4 The GLVIA guidance is on the principles and process of assessment, and stresses that the detailed approach adopted should be appropriate to the task in hand. It notes that professional judgement is at the core of LVIA, and that while some change can be quantified (for example the number of trees which may be lost), '*much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements*' (GLVIA, section 2.23), and the Landscape Institute's Technical Committee has advised that the 2013 revision of the GLVIA '*places greater emphasis on professional judgement and less emphasis on a formulaic approach*'. The judgements made as part of the assessment were based on the tables set out below.

1.5 Assessment of the baseline landscape was undertaken by means of a desk study of published information, including Ordnance Survey mapping and landscape character assessments at national, county and local scales.

## 2 Methodology for this Assessment

2.1 For the purposes of this assessment, the guidance set out above was generally adhered to, with the following specific refinements:

1. Landscape and visual effects were assessed in terms of the magnitude of the change brought about by the development (also referred to in the GLVIA as the *'nature of the effect'*, though as effects are the end product of the assessment, rather than one of the inputs to it, the term change is used to avoid confusion ) and also the sensitivity of the resource affected (also referred to in the GLVIA as the '*nature of the receptor'*). There is some confusion in the guidance about the term 'impact'; the overall process is known as Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, but what is actually assessed is more usually referred to as effects, and the GLVIA does also use the word 'impact' to mean the action being taken, or the magnitude of change. In order to avoid this source of confusion, this assessment does not use the word 'impact', but instead refers to the **magnitude of change** caused by the development, which results (in combination with the sensitivity of the resource affected) in landscape and visual **effects**.

2. Landscape and visual effects have been considered in terms of whether they are direct or indirect, short term/temporary or long term/permanent, and beneficial or adverse. It is also important to consider the area over which the effects may be felt, and to note that effects will generally tend to decline with distance from the development in question, so the scale at which the judgement is made will affect the level of significance of the effects.

3. The **magnitude of change** will generally decrease with distance from its source, until a point is reached where there is no discernible change. It will also vary with factors such as the scale and nature of the proposed development, the proportion of the view that would be occupied by the development, whether the view is clear and open, or partial and/or filtered, the duration and nature of the change (e.g. temporary or permanent, intermittent or continuous etc), whether the view would focus on the proposed development or whether the development would be incidental in the view, and the nature of the existing view (e.g. whether it contains existing detracting or intrusive elements).

4. In terms of **sensitivity**, residential properties were taken to be of high sensitivity in general, although this can vary with the degree of openness of their view (see Table 7 below). Landscapes which carry a landscape quality designation and which are otherwise attractive or unspoilt will in general be more sensitive, while those which are less attractive or already affected by significant visual detractors and disturbance will be generally less sensitive (see Table 4 below).

5. For both landscape and visual effects, the assessment is of the development **complete with the proposed mitigation measures**. Those measures are part of the proposed development, and there has therefore been no assessment of a hypothetical, unmitigated development. However, as the mitigation measures involve planting, they will take time to become effective, and the assessment therefore makes allowance for this, considering an initial scenario in the winter of the first year after planting and then a future scenario where the planting has begun to mature.

6. The GLVIA suggests in section 3.32 that an assessment should distinguish between significant and non-significant effects (based on the fact that the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact

Assessment) Regulations 2017 require the assessment of '*direct and indirect significant effects*' on the environment). Where an assessment forms part of a wider EIA and is summarised in an Environmental Statement (ES), that judgment may be for the editor of the ES to make, but in an assessment which is not part of an EIA, it should be noted that the GLVIA makes it clear in section 3.34 that '*effects not considered to be significant will not be completely disregarded*', and therefore adverse landscape and visual effects of any level (other than no effect or negligible) should be carried forwards by the decision maker into the overall planning balance, as they still constitute harm (or benefit).

**LANDSCAPE EFFECTS**

7. **Landscape change** was categorised as shown in Table 1 below, where each level (other than no change) can be either beneficial or adverse:

| **Table 1 ~ Magnitude of Landscape Change** | |
|---|---|
| **Category** | **Definition** |
| **No change** | No loss or alteration of key landscape characteristics, features or elements. |
| **Negligible** | Very minor loss or alteration (or improvement, restoration or addition) to one or more key landscape characteristics, features or elements. |
| **Low** | Minor loss of or alteration (or improvement, restoration or addition) to one or more key landscape characteristics, features or elements. |
| **Medium** | Partial loss of or damage (or improvement, restoration or addition) to key characteristics, features or elements. |
| **High** | Total or widespread loss of, or severe damage (or major improvement, restoration or addition) to key characteristics, features or elements. |

The GLVIA suggests that size/ scale, geographical extent and duration and reversibility of the development can also influence the magnitude of change, but the approach adopted here is to assess the magnitude of change according to the above criteria (and the size/ scale of the development will have a bearing on the judgements made), and for the magnitude of change to then form part of the judgments as to the level of significance of landscape effects (as set out in Paragraph 15 below), and the effects assessed are then qualified according to their duration, reversibility and geographical extent.

8. **Landscape quality** was judged on site by an experienced assessor, with reference to the criteria shown in Table 2 below. **Landscape condition** (i.e. the physical state of the landscape, including its intactness and the condition of individual landscape elements) can have a bearing on landscape quality, as indicated.

| Table 2 ~ Criteria for Determining Landscape Quality | |
|---|---|
| **Category** | **Typical Criteria** [1] |
| **Very high quality** | National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty standard - the area will usually (though not necessarily, especially for small areas) be so designated. It is also possible that some parts of designated areas may be of locally lower quality, if affected by detractors. Will generally be a landscape in good condition, with intact and distinctive elements. |
| **High quality** | Attractive landscape, usually with a strong sense of place, varied topography and distinctive landscape or historic features, and few visual detractors. Will generally be a landscape in good condition, with intact and distinctive elements. |
| **Medium quality** | Pleasant landscape with few detractors but with no particularly distinctive qualities. Will generally be a landscape in medium condition, with some intact elements. |
| **Low quality** | Unattractive or degraded landscape, affected by visual detractors. Will generally be a landscape in poor condition, with few intact elements. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of landscapes which may be judged to be of the given quality - they are not intended to be applied in full or literally in all cases.

9. The quality of the landscape is one element which goes into the consideration of **landscape value**, which also takes account of other factors, including rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreational value and perceptual aspects such as wildness or tranquillity - these are some of the factors listed for the consideration of landscape value in Box 5.1 of the GLVIA on its page 84.

10. Box 5.1 has come to be used as a default method for determining landscape value, and is frequently referenced. However, it should be noted that it appears in the GLVIA under the heading of 'Undesignated landscapes', and also predates the February 2019 NPPF, which states that valued landscapes should be protected and enhanced '*in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*'. This shows that landscapes which have statutory protection (i.e. AONBs and National Parks) or an identified quality in the development plan should be regarded as valued, and secondly that the protection to be afforded to valued landscapes will vary with their status, with statutorily protected landscapes receiving the highest level of protection, and landscapes recognised and protected by development plan policies valued and protected at a lower level, but still above that of ordinary countryside. It is also often useful to include some consideration of the function that an area of landscape may have in determining its value, for example if it plays a role in the separation and setting of settlements.

11. The GLVIA considers landscape value as a measure to be assessed in association with landscape character, in order to avoid consideration only of how scenically attractive an area may be, and thus to avoid undervaluing areas of strong character but little scenic beauty. It is defined in the glossary of the GLVIA as:

*'The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.'*

Landscape value was judged on site by an experienced assessor, with reference to the above discussion and the criteria shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 ~ Criteria for Determining Landscape Value**

| Category | Typical Criteria [1] |
|---|---|
| **Very High Value** | Often very high quality landscapes, usually in good condition, with intact and distinctive elements. Will often (though not necessarily, especially for small areas) be a statutorily designated landscape with strong scenic qualities. May have significant recreational value at national or regional scale and include recognised and/or popular viewpoints. May have a strong functional element, for example in providing an open gap between settlements. May also be a rare landscape type, or one with strong wildlife, cultural or other interests or connections. |
| **High Value** | Often high quality landscapes, usually in good condition, with some intact and distinctive elements. Will sometimes be a designated landscape with strong scenic qualities. May have significant recreational value at a local scale and include some recognised and/or popular viewpoints. May be a rare landscape type, or one with some wildlife, cultural or other interests or connections. May be a landscape of limited quality, but with a strong functional element, for example in providing an open gap between settlements. |
| **Medium Value** | Often pleasant, medium quality landscapes, usually in reasonable condition, with some intact or distinctive elements. Unlikely to be a statutorily or locally designated landscape, but may have some localised scenic qualities. May have some recreational value at a local scale or include some local viewpoints, or have a functional role, for example in providing an open gap between settlements. May have some wildlife, cultural or other interests or connections. |
| **Low Value** | Likely to be a lower quality landscape, usually in poor condition, with few intact or distinctive elements. Likely to have limited recreational value at a local scale with no significant viewpoints. Few if any wildlife, cultural or other interests or connections. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of landscapes which may be judged to be of the given value - they are not intended to be applied in full or literally in all cases.

12. The assessment of landscape value is then carried forward into the determination of landscape sensitivity.

13. **Landscape sensitivity** relates to the ability of the landscape to accommodate change of the type and scale proposed without adverse effects on its character (i.e. its susceptibility to change), and also to the value of the landscape concerned. As noted in the GLVIA (section 5.39), sensitivity is '*specific to the*

*particular project or development that is being proposed and to the location in question*'. Susceptibility is defined in the GLVIA as '*The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences*.' Susceptibility is judged according to the criteria set out in Table 4 below.

| Table 4 ~ Criteria for Determining Landscape Susceptibility | |
|---|---|
| **Category** | **Typical Criteria** [1] |
| **High Susceptibility** | A landscape with a low capacity to accommodate change, either because the change in question would be large scale and/ or out of character with the existing landscape, or because the landscape has little capacity to accept or absorb that change which would be poorly screened and readily visible. The change would conflict with the existing character of the landscape. |
| **Medium Susceptibility** | A landscape with a moderate capacity to accommodate change, either because the change in question would be generally in scale and/ or character with the existing landscape, or because the landscape has some capacity to accept or absorb that change, which would be partially screened. The change would conflict with the existing character of the landscape to some extent. |
| **Low Susceptibility** | A landscape with a high capacity to accommodate change, either because the change in question would be small scale and/ or in keeping with the existing landscape, or because the landscape has a high capacity to accept or absorb that change which would be well screened. The change would complement the existing character of the landscape. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of landscapes which may be judged to be of the given level of susceptibility - they are not intended to be applied in full or literally in all cases.

14. The judgement as to sensitivity combines judgements on susceptibility and value. A landscape of high sensitivity will tend be one with a low ability to accommodate change and a high value, and vice versa. Landscape sensitivity was judged according to the criteria set out in Table 5 below, taking into account factors such as the presence or absence of designations for quality and the nature of the proposed change.

| Table 5 ~ Criteria for Determining Landscape Sensitivity | |
|---|---|
| **Sensitivity** | **Typical Criteria** |
| **Very High** | A landscape with a very low ability to accommodate change because such change would lead to a significant loss of valuable features or elements, resulting in a significant loss of character and quality.<br><br>Development of the type proposed would be discordant and prominent.<br><br>Will normally occur in a landscape of very high or high quality or value. |
| **High** | A landscape with limited ability to accommodate change because such change would lead to some loss of valuable features or elements, resulting in a significant loss of character and quality.<br><br>Development of the type proposed would be discordant and visible.<br><br>Will normally occur in a landscape of high quality or value, but can also occur where the landscape is of lower quality but where the type of development proposed would be significantly out of character. |
| **Medium** | A landscape with reasonable ability to accommodate change. Change would lead to a limited loss of some features or elements, resulting in some loss of character and quality.<br><br>Development of the type proposed would be visible but would not be especially discordant.<br><br>Will normally occur in a landscape of medium quality or value, a low quality/value landscape which is particularly sensitive to the type of change proposed, or a high quality/value landscape which is well suited to accommodate change of the type proposed. |
| **Low** | A landscape with good ability to accommodate change. Change would not lead to a significant loss of features or elements, and there would be no significant loss of character or quality.<br><br>Development of the type proposed would not be readily be visible or would not be discordant.<br><br>Will normally occur in a landscape of low quality or value. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of landscapes which may be judged to be of the given sensitivity - they are not intended to be applied in full or literally in all cases.

15. **Landscape effects** were determined according to the interaction between magnitude of change and sensitivity, as summarised in Table 6 below. As noted in the GLVIA (section 5.55):

'… *susceptibility to change and value can be combined into an assessment of sensitivity for each receptor, and size/scale, geographical extent and duration and reversibility can be combined into an assessment of magnitude for each effect* [i.e. magnitude of change]. *Magnitude and sensitivity can then be combined to assess overall significance*.'

As noted in Paragraph 7 above, qualifications as to the extent, duration and reversibility of the effects are made after the level of effects has been determined, noting that short term effects may be of less importance in the decision making process.

| Table 6 ~ Significance Criteria for Landscape Effects | |
|---|---|
| **Significance** | **Typical Criteria**[1] |
| **No Effect** | The proposals:<br>• complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape<br>• incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure that the scheme will blend in well with the surrounding landscape<br>• avoid being visually intrusive and adverse effects on the current level of tranquillity of the landscape<br>• maintain existing landscape character in an area which is not a designated landscape nor vulnerable to change. |
| **Insignificant** | The proposals:<br>• generally fit the landform and scale of the landscape<br>• have limited effects on views<br>• can be mitigated to a reasonable extent<br>• avoid effects on designated landscapes. |
| **Slight Adverse** | The proposals:<br>• do not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape<br>• will impact on certain views into and across the area<br>• cannot be completely mitigated because of the nature of the proposal or the character of the landscape<br>• affect an area of recognised landscape quality or value<br>• would lead to minor loss of or alteration to existing landscape features or elements, or introduce some minor new uncharacteristic elements. |
| **Moderate Adverse** | The proposals are:<br>• out of scale or at odds with the landscape<br>• visually intrusive and will adversely impact on the landscape<br>• not possible to fully mitigate<br>• will have an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality or value, or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements<br>• would lead to loss of or alteration to existing landscape features or elements, or introduce some new uncharacteristic elements. |
| **High Adverse** | The proposals are damaging to the landscape in that they:<br>• are at variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape<br>• are visually intrusive and would disrupt important views<br>• are likely to degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting<br>• will be damaging to a high quality or value, or highly vulnerable landscape<br>• cannot be adequately mitigated<br>• would lead to significant loss of or alteration to existing landscape features or elements, or introduce some significant new uncharacteristic elements. |
| **Major Adverse** | The proposals are very damaging to the landscape in that they:<br>• are at considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape<br>• are visually intrusive and would disrupt fine and valued views<br>• are likely to degrade, diminish or even destroy the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting<br>• will be substantially damaging to a high quality or value, or highly vulnerable landscape, or would fundamentally alter a less valuable landscape<br>• cannot be adequately mitigated<br>• would lead to extensive loss of or alteration to existing landscape features or elements, or introduce some dominant new uncharacteristic elements. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of situation in which landscape effects of the given level of significance may be expected - they are not intended to be definitions to be applied in full or literally in all cases.
2. Effects in the 'Major Adverse' category are unlikely to occur with most forms of development, but the scale set out above is intended to cover all potential forms of development in all landscapes, so this category is likely to apply only where the landscape is extremely sensitive and/ or where the development is at a very large scale or of a very intrusive nature.

| Table 6 ~ Significance Criteria for Landscape Effects (continued) | |
|---|---|
| **Significance** | **Typical Criteria[1]** |
| **Slight Beneficial** | The proposals:<br>• fit the landform and scale of the landscape<br>• will improve certain views into and across the area to a limited extent<br>• can be effectively mitigated<br>• remove small scale unattractive or discordant features<br>• benefit an area of recognised landscape quality or value<br>• would introduce some minor new or restored positive and characteristic elements. |
| **Moderate Beneficial** | The proposals:<br>• fit the landform and scale of the landscape<br>• will improve certain views into and across the area<br>• can be effectively mitigated<br>• remove significant unattractive or discordant features<br>• benefit a landscape of recognised quality or value, or enhance vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements<br>• would introduce some new or restored positive and characteristic elements. |
| **High Beneficial** | The proposals provide significant benefit to the landscape in that they:<br>• are in accord with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape<br>• will improve important views<br>• are likely to enhance a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting<br>• will lead to improvement to a high quality or value, or highly vulnerable landscape<br>• need no significant mitigation<br>• would introduce some significant new or restored positive and characteristic elements. |
| **Major Beneficial** | The proposals provide very significant benefit to the landscape in that they:<br>• are in accord with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape<br>• will improve expansive and/or fine and valued views<br>• are likely to significantly enhance a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting<br>• will lead to substantial improvement to a high quality or value, or highly vulnerable landscape<br>• need no mitigation<br>• would introduce some extensive or highly significant new or restored positive and characteristic elements. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of situation in which landscape effects of the given level of significance may be expected - they are not intended to be definitions to be applied in full or literally in all cases.
2. Effects in the 'Major Beneficial' category are unlikely to occur with most forms of development, but the scale set out above is intended to cover all potential forms of development in all landscapes, so this category is likely to apply only where the landscape is extremely sensitive and/ or where the development leads to some major or widespread landscape improvements.

**VISUAL EFFECTS**

16. For **visual** effects, the GLVIA (in section 2.20) differentiates between effects on specific views and effects on '*the general visual amenity enjoyed by people*', which it defines as:

'*The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area*.'

There is obviously some overlap between the two, with **visual amenity** largely being an amalgamation of a series of views. This assessment therefore considers effects on specific views, but then also goes on to consider the extent to which effects on those views may affect general visual amenity, taking into account considerations such as the number of views within which the development may be present, the magnitude of change to those views, the discordance of the development, the relative importance of those views, and also the number and importance of other views in which the development is not present.

17. In describing the nature and content of a view, the following terms may be used:

- No view - no views of the site or development.
- Glimpse - a limited view in which the site or development forms a small part only of the overall view.
- Partial - a clear view of part of the site or development only.
- Oblique - a view (usually through a window from within a property) at an angle, rather than in the direct line of sight out of the window.
- Fleeting - a transient view, usually obtained when moving, along a public right of way or transport corridor.
- Filtered - views of the site or development which are partially screened, usually by intervening vegetation, noting the degree of screening/filtering may change with the seasons.
- Open - a clear, unobstructed view of the site or development.

18. For the purpose of the assessment visual change was categorised as shown in Table 7 below, where each level (other than no change) can be either beneficial or adverse:

**Table 7 ~ Magnitude of Visual Change**

| Category | Definition |
|---|---|
| **No change** | No discernible change. |
| **Negligible** | The development would be discernible but of no real significance - the character of the view would not materially change.<br>The development may be present in the view, but not discordant. |
| **Low** | The development would cause a perceptible deterioration (or improvement) in existing views.<br>The development would be discordant (or would add a positive element to the view), but not to a significant extent. |
| **Medium** | The development would cause an obvious deterioration (or improvement) in existing views.<br>The development would be an obvious discordant (or positive) feature of the view, and/or would occupy a significant proportion of the view. |
| **High** | The development would cause a dominant deterioration (or improvement) in existing views.<br>The development would be a dominant discordant (or positive) feature of the view, and/or would occupy the majority of the view. |

19. **Sensitivity** was also taken into account in the assessment, such that a given magnitude of change would create a larger visual effect on a sensitive receptor than on one of lesser sensitivity (see Table 8 below). As discussed above for landscape sensitivity, the sensitivity of visual receptors is determined according to the susceptibility of

the receptor to change and the value attached to the view in question, with higher value views being those from specific or recognised viewpoints or those from Public Rights of Way where users would be expected to be using the route with the intention of enjoying the views from it.

| Table 8 ~ Criteria[1] for Determining Visual Sensitivity | |
|---|---|
| **Sensitivity** | **Typical Criteria** |
| **Very High** | Visitors to recognised or specific viewpoints, or passing along routes through statutorily designated or very high quality landscapes where the purpose of the visit is to experience the landscape and views. |
| **High** | Residential properties[2] with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from ground and first floors and from two or more windows of rooms in use during the day[3].<br><br>Users of Public Rights of Way with predominantly open views in sensitive or unspoilt areas.<br><br>Non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside.<br><br>Visitors to heritage assets where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience, or visitors to locally recognised viewpoints.<br><br>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside - e.g. Country Parks, National Trust or other access land etc. |
| **Medium** | Residential properties[2] with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from first floor windows only[3], or an oblique view from one ground floor window, or may be partially obscured by garden or other intervening vegetation.<br><br>Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.<br><br>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views or where the purpose of that recreation is incidental to the view.<br><br>Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas.<br><br>Motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside. |
| **Low** | People in their place of work.<br><br>Users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main routes.<br><br>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the purpose of that recreation is incidental to the view. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of situation in which visual sensitivity of the given level may be expected - they are not intended to be definitions to be applied literally in all cases.
2. There is some discussion in the GLVIA as to whether private views from residential properties should be included within an LVIA, as they are a private (rather than a public) interest, but they have been included in this assessment on the basis that they are likely to matter most to local people. The appropriate weight to be applied to such views can then be determined by the decision maker.
3. When (as is usually the case) there has been no access into properties to be assessed, the assumption is made that ground floor windows are to habitable rooms in use during the day such as kitchens/dining rooms/living rooms, and that first floor rooms are bedrooms.

20. **Visual effects** were then determined according to the interaction between change and sensitivity (see Table 9 below), where effects can be either beneficial or adverse. Where the views are from a residential property, the receptor is assumed to be of high sensitivity unless otherwise stated.

| Table 9 ~ Significance Criteria for Visual Effects | |
|---|---|
| **Significance** | **Typical Criteria[1]** |
| **No Effect** | No change in the view. |
| **Insignificant** | The proposals would not significantly change the view, but would still be discernible. |
| **Slight** | The proposals would cause limited deterioration (or improvement) in a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, but would still be a noticeable element within the view, or greater deterioration (or improvement) in a view from a receptor of low sensitivity. |
| **Moderate** | The proposals would cause some deterioration (or improvement) in a view from a sensitive receptor, or less deterioration (or improvement) in a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be a readily discernible element in the view. |
| **High** | The proposals would cause significant deterioration (or improvement) in a view from a sensitive receptor, or less deterioration (or improvement) in a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be an obvious element in the view. |
| **Major** | The proposals would cause a high degree of change in a view from a highly sensitive receptor, and would constitute a dominant element in the view. |

1. Note that the above criteria are indicators of the types of situation in which visual effects of the given level of significance may be expected - they are not intended to be definitions to be applied literally in all cases.

21. **Photographs** were taken with a digital camera with a lens that approximates to 50mm. This is similar to a normal human field of view, though this field of view is extended where a number of separate images are joined together as a panorama. Visibility during the site visits was good (by definitions set out on the Met Office website, i.e. visibility was between 10 to 20km).

22. The Landscape Institute have produced guidance on the use of visualisations (Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals, September 2019). As its title suggests, this guidance is largely to do with how a proposed development is illustrated, but does also contain sections on baseline photography. Section 1.2.7 states that '*Photographs show the baseline conditions; visualisations show the proposed situation*', though it does than also go on to provide guidance for what it refers to as 'Type 1 Visualisations', which are in fact baseline images - 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs'. The detailed guidance for these images suggests that panoramic images should be presented at A1 size. As this guidance is extensive, and is intended for use where visualisations such as photomontages are also produced, it has been followed for this assessment in terms of its general recommendations regarding lens types, noting where images have been combined into panoramas and the use of annotations to describe the content of the photographs and the extent of the site within them, but not in terms of all of the recommendations for presentation of images. The photographs included within this assessment are intended as general representations of what can be seen from the viewpoints used, and are not a replacement for observing the site and the views on the ground - any decision maker making use of this assessment should visit the site, and the photographs are simply an *aide-memoire* to assist consideration following a site visit, not a replacement for it.

23. A useful concept in considering the potential visual effects of a development is that of the visual envelope (or zone of visual influence, ZVI). This is the area from within which the development would be visible. Any significant visual effects will therefore be contained within this area, and land falling outside it need not be considered in terms of visual effects. The area from within which the various elements of the proposed development would be visible has therefore been estimated using the manual approach set out in the GLVIA (section 6.7), with map interpretation,

rough cross sections where required, site observation using an eye height of 1.7m and visualisation of the potential visibility of the proposed development. The boundary shown for the visual envelope is an estimate - it is not a firm or absolute boundary, and should be taken as an indication of the area from within which views of the development are likely to be possible. In some cases, some limited views of parts of the new development may be obtained from areas outside the identified visual envelope, from more distant properties or from elevated, distant vantage points, above intervening vegetation or other screening features, and such views are referred to where appropriate in the assessment.