RETFORD CIRCULAR ECONOMY PROJECT

TECHNICAL APPENDIX 7.2 VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

FEBRUARY 2023

APPENDIX 7.2: VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

1 LVIA METHODOLOGY

1.1 Guidance

The following documents have been considered for the assessment of potential effects of the Proposed Development on visual amenity:

- Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', 3rd Edition ('GLVIA3')[1];
- Landscape Institute (2013), GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13[2];
- Natural England (2014), 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment'[3];
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 21 'Assessing Landscape Value outside National Designations (May, 2021)[4]; and
- Landscape Institute (2019) Advice Note TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals[5].

As recommended by GLVIA3, this is not a generic LVIA methodology, but has been tailored to be proportionate to the nature, scale, and location of the proposed Scheme.

1.2 Introduction

The level of visual effect is determined through consideration of the 'sensitivity' and 'susceptibility' of the landscape or visual receptor and the 'magnitude of change' that would be brought about by the Proposed Development were it to be constructed.

The time period for the assessment covers the construction of the plant and associated infrastructure operational use to completion of the phased extraction works (up to 2046), and then following final restoration and aftercare (up to 2060).

The assessment has involved a process of iterative design and re-assessment of any remaining, residual effects that could not otherwise be mitigated or 'designed out'. The type of effect is also considered and may be direct or indirect; temporary or permanent (reversible); cumulative; and positive (beneficial), neutral or negative (adverse). The landscape and visual assessment unavoidably involves a combination of both quantitative and qualitative assessment and wherever possible a consensus of professional opinion has been sought through consultation, internal peer review, and the adoption of a systematic, impartial, and professional approach.

1.3 Terminology

A description of the terms used in this LVIA are provided below.

[1] Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', 3rd Edition ('GLVIA3');
[2] Landscape Institute (2013), GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13 Available online: https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/glvia3-clarifications/ Accessed 07/02/2023;
[3] Natural England (2014), 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' Available online: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf Accessed: 07/02/2023;
[4] Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 21 'Assessing Landscape Value outside National Designations (May, 2021) Available online: https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2021/05/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations.pdf Accessed: 06/02/2023;
[5] Landscape Institute (2019) Advice Note TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals Available online: https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/ Accessed: 05/02/2023.

1.3.1 Sensitivity of Receptor

This is established by considering the value of the receptor and its susceptibility to change. These two aspects inform the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors as set out in Sections 1.5.1 and 1.6.1 below. For the purposes of this LVIA, receptor sensitivity is classified on a four-point scale of: negligible, low, medium, and high (refer to Tables A1.4 and A1.11).

1.3.2 Resource / Receptor Value

For the landscape resource this is related to the value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different people for different reasons. For visual receptors this relates to the recognition attached to a particular view (for example in relation to heritage assets or through planning designations) and indicators of value attached to views by visitors (for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps and the provision of facilities such as visitor centres with car parking and interpretation boards). For the purposes of the LVIA a receptor value is classified on a four-point scale of: negligible, low, medium, and high (refer to Tables A1.1, A1.2 and A1.9).

1.3.3 Susceptibility to Change

For landscape receptors this means the ability to accommodate a proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies

For visual receptors this is a product of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view and the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and visual amenity they experience.

For the purposes of this LVIA, susceptibility to change is classified on a three-point scale of: low, medium, and high (refer to Tables A1.3 and A1.10).

1.3.4 Magnitude of Change

This is gauged by assessing the type and amount of change predicted to occur in relation to the identified landscape or visual receptor. Factors influencing the magnitude of change include: size, scale and nature of change; geographical extent; and duration and reversibility of effect as set out in Sections 1.5.2 and 1.6.2 and associated tables.

For the purposes of the LVIA, magnitude of change is classified on a four-point scale of: negligible, small, medium, and large (refer to Table A1.8 and A1.14)

Where there is no change to the receptor, or indeed no view of the wind turbines, the magnitude of change is assessed as **No Change** which would result in **No Effects.**

1.3.5 Level of Effect

The level of landscape and visual effect is gauged by considering the magnitude of change along with the sensitivity of the receptor using professional judgement. For the purposes of the LVIA, level of effect is classified on a six-point scale of: negligible, minor, minor to moderate, moderate, moderate to major and major (Tables A1.15 and A1.16).

In line with best practice guidance set out in GLVIA3, in addition to assessing level, effects are classified as: beneficial, adverse or neutral, as well as direct and indirect. An effect is understood to be neutral when the predicted residual change would, on balance, result in neither an improvement, nor a deterioration of the landscape and visual resource compared with the existing situation.

1.4 Baseline

The landscape and visual baseline of the assessment was established by undertaking a detailed desk study, fieldwork, and analysis of findings to create a detailed understanding of the existing baseline visual context of both the site and surrounding landscape within the study area.

Establishing the visual amenity baseline included gathering data on the baseline and how this varies through the study area; together with its geographic extent; and how it is experienced and valued. The desk-based assessment began with a review of legislation, policy and guidance including published landscape character assessments of the area and its wider context. This developed an understanding of the baseline environment within which the 2 km radius study area is located.

The visual baseline establishes the areas from where the new components of the development can be seen, who can see them, the places where those who see them would be affected and the nature of views and visual amenity.

Together the established baseline provides an understanding of the components of the landscape and visual resource that may be affected by the development, which includes the identification of key receptors and viewpoints which represent such receptors. The baseline is of sufficient detail to enable a well-informed assessment of the likely visual effects on the baseline conditions of the Scheme.

The desk-based assessment has involved the following key activities:

- Familiarisation with the visual resources of the area within which the Proposed Development would be located;
- Identification of visual resources likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development;
- Preparation of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) maps;
- Identification of the location of viewpoints, informed by the ZTV, that were used to inform the assessment of effects of both landscape and visual resources; and
- Identification of suitable study areas for the LVIA.

Viewpoints identified through consultation and during desk studies were ground-truthed through fieldwork and their positions were fixed prior to photography being undertaken. National and regional landscape character areas and local landscape character policy areas were reviewed during fieldwork. Descriptions contained within the published landscape character assessment were augmented where necessary. Visual receptors were also assessed to ensure they are accurately represented through desk-based assessment.

1.5 Assessment of Visual Effects

Visual effects are concerned wholly with the effect of the Proposed Development on views, and the general visual amenity and are defined by the Landscape Institute in GLVIA 3, paragraphs 6.1, as follows:

"An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on views available to people and their visual amenity. The concern ... is with assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the context and character of views."

Visual effects are identified for different receptors (people) who will experience the view at their places of residence, during recreational activities, at work, or when travelling through the area. The visual effects may include the following:

- Visual effect: a change to an existing static view, sequential views, or wider visual amenity as a result of development or the loss of particular landscape elements or features already present in the view; and

- Cumulative visual effects: the cumulative or incremental visibility of similar types of development may combine to have a cumulative visual effect.

The visual assessment aims to determine from which points the Proposed Development can be seen in the surrounding landscape; this is known as the visual envelope. Once determined, a series of key representative viewpoints are chosen (i.e. areas within the visual envelope from where it may be possible to see the Proposed Development from publicly accessible viewpoints), such as residential areas, public open spaces, PRoW / public footpaths and roads.

Visual effects relate to changes in available views of the landscape and the effect of those changes on people, including:

- The direct effects of the Proposed Development on the content and character of views through the intrusion or obstruction and/or the change or loss of existing elements; and
- The overall effect on visual amenity, be it degradation or enhancement.

In predicting the effects of the Proposed Development on the visual receptors from specific viewpoints being assessed, GLVIA3 (para 6.27) states that it is helpful to consider (but not restricted to) the following issues:

- Nature of the view (full, partial or glimpsed);
- Proportion of the proposed development visible (full, most, part or none);
- Distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development and whether it would be the focus of the view or only a small element;
- Whether the view is stationary, transient or sequential; and
- The nature of the changes to the view.

Additionally, the seasonal effects of vegetation are to be considered, in particular the varying degree of screening and filtering of views.

People have different responses to views which are dependent upon context such as the:

- Location;
- Time of day;
- Season; and the
- Degree of exposure to views.

Responses to views are also dependent upon the purpose of people being in a particular place such as:

- Recreation;
- Residence;
- Employment; and
- Passing through on roads, rail or other forms of transport.

As people move through the landscape, certain activities or locations may be specifically associated with the experience and enjoyment of the landscape, such as:

- The use of paths such as footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic (BOATs) and trails;
- National or local cycle routes; and
- Tourist or scenic routes, and associated viewpoints on land or water.

1.5.1 Evaluating Visual Sensitivity to Change

To determine visual effects both the sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of change must be considered. Determining visual sensitivity is the combination of susceptibility to change and value of a view. It is considered that a combination of high susceptibility to change and high value is likely to result in the highest sensitivity, whereas a low susceptibility and value is likely to result in the lowest level. The value, susceptibility to change and resultant sensitivity of a visual receptor are broadly categorised based on the following Tables A1.7 and A1.8 below. It should be noted that the levels are indicative and in practice there is not a clear distinction between criteria levels.

The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in the view and visual amenity is related to activity they are engaged in and the extent to which their attention is focussed on the views and visual amenity at that location. As such, those receptors most sensitive to change are likely to include people engaged in outdoor activities where an appreciation of the landscape is the focus or residents in areas where the landscape setting contributes to the setting of the properties.

Conversely, those considered least sensitive to change include (but are not restricted to) people engaged in outdoor sports or recreation where there is no focus on the surrounding landscape/views and people at their place of work where the focus is on the work activity.

See Table A1.7 below for a full description of the criteria used to assess the susceptibility of viewpoints.

Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views depends upon:

- The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and
- The extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.[6]

The criteria used to assess the susceptibility of a visual receptor are summarised in Table A1.7 below.

Table A1.7 Visual Receptor Sensitivity to Change

Susceptibility	Type of Receptor
High	Residents at home. Views from well used public rights of way including strategic footpaths / long distance trails and cycle routes (where the attractive nature of the countryside is a significant factor in the enjoyment of the walk). Visitors along scenic routes and to recognised viewpoints. Visitors to protected landscapes or heritage assets where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. The location, numbers, frequency of use and visual context of the viewpoint would be high. Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes along scenic routes, where the appreciation of the view contributes to the enjoyment and quality of the journey.
Medium	Views experienced from boats, public rights of way / footpaths used locally and passing through the landscape and well used footpaths within settlements.

[6] Ibid. 1. Paragraph 6.32

	Views from places of worship and associated grounds, schools, country parks and golf clubs. Views experienced by users of local roads where there are clear / open views across the landscape and low levels of traffic. The location, numbers, frequency of use and visual context of the viewpoint would be medium.
Low	Views experienced from places of work where workers and visitors are concentrating on their day to day activities. Views experienced by on near to motorways, major roads Views experienced by users of the rail network and main roads travelling at speed or local roads where the focus is upon the road ahead owing to traffic conditions and the context / composition of the view. Views experienced from less well used public rights of way which pass through less attractive landscapes or townscapes and are not used for enjoyment of the scenery. Views experienced by those playing or spectating at outdoor sports or utilising outdoor sports facilities. The location, numbers, frequency of use and visual context of the viewpoint would be low.

In making judgements about the value of each view, the assessment should take into account the following:

- Recognition of the value to a particular view, e.g. in relation to heritage assets or planning designations; and
- Indicators of the value attached to views by others, e.g., in guide books, tourist maps, literary references, painting etc.

Table A1.8 below shows a full description of the criteria used to assess the value of the view.

The value attached to views should be made on judgements based on the following:

- Recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations; and
- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment and references to them in literature or art.

The criteria used to assess the value of views are summarised in Table A1.8 below.

Table A1.8 Value Attached to Views

Value	Criteria
High	Views from and within landscapes / viewpoints of national importance (National Parks, National Scenic Areas, AONBs), highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms an important part of the experience, or heritage assets, or through planning designations such as conservation areas, listed buildings, Gardens & Designed Landscapes / Registered Parks & Gardens or with important cultural associations, or where the view is deemed by the assessor to be of a high value.
Medium	Views from landscapes / viewpoints of regional/district importance, or visitor attractions at regional or local levels where the view forms part of the experience, or local planning designations, or with local cultural associations, or where the view is deemed by the assessor to be of a medium value.
Low	Views from landscapes / viewpoints with no designations not particularly popular as a viewpoint, and unlikely to be visited specifically to experience the view available with

Value	Criteria
	minimal or no cultural associations, or where the view is deemed by the assessor to be of a low small value.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

The sensitivity of visual receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between the value of views and the susceptibility of the different viewers to the proposed change. Professional judgements are made on the merit of the view based on the visual receptor, with Table A1.9 below serving as a guide.

Table A1.9 Visual sensitivity criteria

Value	Criteria
High	A well balanced view containing attractive features and notable for its scenic quality. A view which is an important reason for receptors being there. A view which is experienced by a large number of people and/ or recognized for its qualities. A view with a medium – high susceptibility to change, and experienced by visual receptors of a high sensitivity.
Medium	An otherwise attractive view that includes some attractive or discordant features or visual detractors. A view which plays a small part in the reason why a receptor would be there. A view which is locally recognized. A view with a low - medium susceptibility to change, and experienced by visual receptors of a low - medium sensitivity.
Low	A view that is unattractive, discordant and/or contains many visual detractors. A view which is unlikely to be part of the receptor's experience. A view with a negligible susceptibility to change, and a low sensitivity.

1.5.2 Magnitude of Visual Change

The magnitude of change to visual receptors is assessed in terms of the following:

- The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the Proposed Development;
- The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and
- The nature of the view of the Proposed Development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it would be experienced and whether views would be full, partial or glimpsed.

Table A1.10 below sets out the criteria used to assess the magnitude of visual change. Not all aspects of a criterion need to be met for an evaluation to be given.

Geographical Extent

The geographical extent of the visual change identified at viewpoints is assessed by reference to a combination of the ZTV and field work. The following factors are considered:

The geographical extent of a visual effect reflects:

- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the Wind turbines; and
- The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

Duration and Reversibility of Visual Change

The following terminology, which considers whether views would be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible, is used to describe the duration of the visual change at representative viewpoints:

- Short-term: 0-5 years;
- Medium-term: 5-10 years; and
- Long-term: 10 to 40 years.

For the purposes of this assessment the Proposed Development has been assessed as long term, but temporary.

Reversibility is a judgement about whether or not a development can be removed, and once removed can the view be fully or partially restored.

Overall Magnitude of Visual Change

The three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of visual change are combined as shown in Table A1.10.

Table A1.10 Assessment of Magnitude of Visual Change

Magnitude evaluation	Size, scale and nature	Geographical Extent	Duration & Reversibility
Large	Occupies an extensive proportion of the view and may even obstruct a significant portion of the view. Views may become the dominant feature. Considerable change to the majority / many existing landscape elements and/or landscape character; fundamental changes the surroundings and baseline to a large extent; very noticeable	Ranging from notable change over extensive area to intensive change over a more limited area.	Long term; permanent / non- reversible or partially reversible.
Medium	Occupies much of the view but would not fundamentally change its characteristics. Changes would be immediately visible but not a key feature of the view. Some change to existing landscape elements and /or landscape character; discernible changes the surroundings of a receptor, such that its baseline is partly altered; readily noticeable.	Moderate changes in a localised area.	Medium term; semi-permanent or partially reversible.
Small	Occupies a small portion of the view and therefore would not result in a change to the view's composition. Small change to existing landscape elements and/or	Minor changes in a localised area.	Short term / temporary; partially reversible or reversible.

Magnitude evaluation	Size, scale and nature	Geographical Extent	Duration & Reversibility
	landscape character; slight, but detectable impacts that do not alter the baseline of the receptor materially not readily noticeable		
Negligible	Occupies a small portion of the view and therefore would not result in a change to the view's composition. Small change to existing landscape elements and/or landscape character; slight, but detectable impacts that do not alter the baseline of the receptor materially not readily noticeable	Minor changes in a localised area.	Short term / temporary; partially reversible or reversible.
No Change	There are no changes to the existing view.		

1.6 Nature of Effect

The nature of an effect is also assessed. This is dependent on a number of criteria which vary between effects on visual amenity. Effects are classified as beneficial, neutral or adverse according to the following definitions:

- **Beneficial** effects contribute to the visual resource through the enhancement of desirable characteristics or the introduction of new, positive attributes. The removal of undesirable existing elements or characteristics can also be beneficial, as can their replacement with more appropriate components;
- **Neutral** effects occur where the Proposed Development neither contributes to nor detracts from the visual resource or where the effects are so limited that the change is hardly noticeable. A change to the landscape and visual resource is not considered to be adverse simply because it constitutes an alteration to the existing situation; and
- **Adverse** effects are those that detract from or weaken the landscape and visual resource through the introduction of elements that contrast in a detrimental way with the existing characteristics of the visual resource, or through the removal of elements that are key in its positive characterisation.

The LVIA describes the overall effects on receptors and explains the justification for each assessment. For each assessed effect, a conclusion has been drawn on whether the effect is beneficial, neutral or adverse.

1.7 Significance of Landscape Visual Effects

The level of landscape and visual effect and whether it is significant or not has been assessed based on the sensitivity of the affected resource / receptor, and the magnitude of change caused by the Proposed Development, as set out for each of the above in the preceding tables.

The combined sensitivity and magnitude used to determine the level of effect and whether significant or not is summarised within Table A1.11 below. Note that effects can be either positive or negative, and in some cases, neutral (neither positive, nor negative).

Table A1.11 Matrix for Determining Significant of Effect

		Sensitivity (value / importance)			
		High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
Magnitude of change	**Large**	**Major**	**Moderate – Major**	Minor – Moderate	Negligible
	Medium	**Moderate – Major**	**Moderate**	Minor	Negligible
	Small	Minor – Moderate	Minor	Negligible – Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

In accordance with Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations)[7] it is important to determine whether the predicted visual effects arising from the development are likely to be significant. The dark grey shaded cells are generally considered to be significant in the context of the EIA Regulations. Significant visual effects highlighted in bold in the text, relate to all those effects which result in a **Major**, **Moderate – Major**, and **Moderate** landscape or visual effect. Moderate levels of landscape and visual effect could also be considered significant, and explanation is provided by the assessor where these occur.

Unshaded cells denote effects that would be 'not significant' and therefore ones which are generally considered to be not material to the planning decision.

It should be noted that the above matrix is intended as a framework for assessment only and that the level of effect (significance) would vary depending on the circumstances, the type and scale of development proposed, the baseline context and other factors. The gradations of magnitude of change and level of effect used in the assessment represent a continuum; the assessor has used professional judgement when gauging the level of effect and determining whether or not an effect should be considered significant.

Table A1.12 below provides a more detailed summary of the categories of effect.

Table A1.12 - Categories of Landscape and Visual Effect

Level of Effect	Description of Landscape Effect	Description of Visual Effect
Major	Considerable change over an extensive area of a highly sensitive landscape, fundamentally affecting the key characteristics and the overall impression of its character.	The development would become a prominent feature and would result in a very noticeable change to an existing highly sensitive and well composed view.
Moderate	Small or noticeable change to a highly sensitive landscape or more intensive change to a landscape of medium or low sensitivity, affecting some key characteristics and the overall impression of its character.	The development would introduce some enhancing or detracting features to an existing highly sensitive and well composed view, or would be prominent within a less well composed and less sensitivity view, resulting in a noticeable improvement or deterioration of the existing view.
Minor	Small change to a limited area of landscape of high or medium sensitivity or a more widespread	Where the proposed development would form a perceptible but not enhancing or detracting feature within a view of high

[7] Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations). Available online: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment Accessed 07.02.2023

Level of Effect	Description of Landscape Effect	Description of Visual Effect
	area of a less sensitive landscape, affecting few characteristics without altering the overall impression of its character.	or medium sensitivity or would be a more prominent feature within a poorly composed view of low sensitivity, resulting in a small improvement or deterioration of the existing view.
Negligible	No discernible improvement or deterioration to the existing landscape character.	No discernible improvement or deterioration in the existing view.
No Effect	The development would not affect the landscape receptor.	The development would not affect the view
Major	Considerable change over an extensive area of a highly sensitive landscape, fundamentally affecting the key characteristics and the overall impression of its character.	The development would become a prominent feature and would result in a very noticeable change to an existing highly sensitive and well composed view.

2 VISUAL ASSESSMENT OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

Planning law contains a widely understood principle that individuals (i.e. visual receptors at a single residential property) have no 'right to a view' and that the outlook or view from a private property is a private interest and not therefore protected by the UK planning system.

However, the planning system also recognises situations where the effects on residential visual amenity are considered as a matter of public interest. This matter has been examined at a number of public inquiries where the key determining issue was not the identification of significant effects on views, but whether a proposed development would have an overbearing effect and/or result in unsatisfactory living conditions, leading to a property being regarded, objectively, as an unattractive (as opposed to a less attractive) place in which to live.

As a consequence the visual assessment methodology provides for a much more detailed assessment of the closest residential properties. This allows the assessor, and consequently the determining authority, to make a judgement as to whether the residents at these properties would be likely to sustain unsatisfactory living conditions which it would not be in the public interest to create. Reviews of decisions demonstrate that significant changes to the views available from a residential property, and its curtilage, are not the decisive consideration.

By way of further clarification, the methodology for assessing the visual effects on views from residential properties allows for two stages of assessment as follows:

- The first stage is to identify those properties where a significant visual effect on a view from the property is likely to occur.
- The second stage is to consider the residential amenity and whether, in terms of the wider public interest, the visual effects would result in unsatisfactory living conditions, leading to a property being regarded, objectively, as an unattractive (as opposed to a less attractive) place in which to live.

A residential property, for the purposes of environmental impact assessment, should be one that was designed and built/converted for that purpose and currently (at the time of the assessment) remains in a habitable condition, of a safe construction, wind and water tight with appropriate vehicle access, and services (drinking water, sanitation, and power supply). Related buildings such as barns/outbuildings, garage, huts and derelict properties

should generally be excluded from the assessment, unless they form part of the curtilage of an existing residence.

The sensitivity of individual residential receptors is assessed as high in each case.

The assessment of residential properties or groups of residential properties in this case has been limited to those properties within 0.5 km of the Proposed Development, which appear on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 scale map. Whilst most of the properties can be viewed at close range from public roads and footpaths, some of these properties are accessed via private or gated roads and due to these access limitations, they have been assessed from the nearest public road or footpath which may be at greater distance from the property. The assessment, in this instance, should therefore be regarded as a 'best estimate' of the likely visual effects.

The assessment has been further supported by aerial and ground level photography as well as map based data. The assessment takes account of the likely views from the ground floors of properties and main garden areas, but excludes upper floors and other land that may be connected with the property. Relevant information considered as part of the assessment may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Scale of Development:
  - Number and height of the proposed development;
  - The horizontal extent or AOV of the visible array; and
  - Separation distance (closest and furthest buildings).
- Description of Property, as far as this can be ascertained:
  - Orientation and size of property and whether views from the property towards the Proposed Development would be direct or oblique;
  - Location of principle rooms and main living areas such as living/dining rooms, kitchens and conservatories, as opposed to working areas such as farm buildings and utility areas;
  - Location of principle garden areas which may include patios and seating areas as opposed to less well used areas such as paddocks or garages; and
  - The effects of any screening by landform, vegetation or nearby built development.
- Location and Context:
  - The aspect of the property in terms of the overall use and relationship to the garden areas and surrounding landscape;
  - The principle direction of main views and visual amenity; and
  - The context and nature of any intervening built form or structures e.g. other existing development, farm buildings or forestry.

3 VIEWPOINT SELECTION

Viewpoint analysis is used to assist the LVIA and is conducted from selected viewpoints within the 2 km radius Study Area. The purpose of this is to assess both the level of visual impact for particular receptors and to help guide the design process and focus the visual assessment.

A range of viewpoints are examined in detail and analysed to determine whether a significant visual effect would occur. By arranging the viewpoints in order of distance it is possible to define a threshold or outer limit beyond which there would be no further significant effects.

The assessment involves visiting the viewpoint location and viewing wireframes and photographic panoramas prepared for each viewpoint location. The fieldwork is conducted in periods of fine weather and good visibility and also considers seasonally reduced leaf cover.

Viewpoint selection followed good practice guidance and in particular paragraphs 6.18 to 6.20 of GLVIA3. The viewpoints chosen were used to aid the description of effects on both landscape and visual resources.

The selection of viewpoints was made on the basis of the following types of publicly accessible viewpoints, as follows:

- Representative viewpoints (for example, representing views of users of a particular footpath);
- Specific viewpoints (for example, a key view from a specific visitor attraction);
- Illustrative viewpoints (chosen to demonstrate a particular effect/specific issue);
- Any important sequential views, for example, along key transport routes; and
- Any additional viewpoints that have been requested by consultees at Scoping.

For the purposes of the LVIA, all of the viewpoints were taken from publicly accessible land.