



Proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), Wymondley

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

R01

3rd April 2025

Prepared on Behalf of

Pivoted Power LLP (part of EDF Energy Renewables Ltd)



Document control

Document:	Landscape and Visual Appraisal
Project:	Proposed BESS, Wymondley
Client:	EDF Renewables
Job Number:	TC24243

Revision:	1	Status:	First issue
Date:	3 April 2025		
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by EDF Renewables to prepare this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) which relates to the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure on land at Wymondley, North Hertfordshire. The site covers an agricultural field, pond, and a cable corridor that connects to Wymondley National Grid Substation to the west. The proposed BESS compound is located in the north of the agricultural field, see **Figure LA.01 Site location**. The proposed BESS development would be operational for at least 30 years.
- 1.1.2 The site is located within the London Area Green Belt in North Hertfordshire District, which forms part of the extensive Green Belt area around London. A Green Belt Statement (GBS) provides a review of the Proposed Development in the Green Belt in relation to landscape character and visual amenity, see **Appendix 4**.

1.2 Scope of the Assessment

- 1.2.1 The proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) would comprise 28 containerised BESS units on concrete foundations with acoustic attenuation kit on top, 14 medium voltage skids, and other ancillary equipment including control room, stitch room, welfare facilities, spare parts container, and water tank. The BESS compound would be fenced and include CCTV cameras on poles. The BESS compound would be accessed via a gravelled track via Stevenage Road.
- 1.2.2 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) provides an assessment of the effects of the proposed development, on the landscape of the site and its context. The design of the proposed development and the identification of mitigation measures incorporated within the design to minimise adverse effects, is informed by the findings of the assessment process as it progressed. In this LVApp, effects on features identified as important to the scenic quality, or effects on the landscape character of the site and its setting are assessed. Effects on peoples' views of the site and its setting, or visual amenity, are also assessed.
- 1.2.3 For the purposes of assessing the landscape and visual effects of this proposal, study areas have been defined:
- The site extends to the redline boundary as shown on **Figure LA.01**. This LVApp refers to the 'site' as the field that the proposed BESS development is to be situated in, it excludes the cable route to the west.
 - The wider landscape context extends 3km from the site boundary, see **Figure LA.04**
 - The visual study area extends 3km from the site boundary, excluding the cable route, see **Figures LA.08**

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1.2.4 The objectives of the assessment are to:

- Describe and evaluate the landscape of the site and surrounding landscape context and the visual amenity of people in the surrounding area, which might be affected by the proposed development;
- Provide an input into the site layout, and to make recommendations for mitigation measures which can be incorporated into the development scheme;
- Examine the development proposals and analyse the potential effects on the landscape and visual amenity associated with the proposed development;
- Set out mitigation measures which could be implemented in order to avoid, reduce or offset adverse effects and, where possible, incorporate these in the scheme design;
- Provide an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development with integral mitigation measures in place.

1.2.5 The LVApp is presented with separate sections dealing with effects on landscape and effects on visual amenity. The LVApp is illustrated by plans and photographs (see **Appendix 1**) as follows:

Figure List

- **Figure LA.01** Site Location
- **Figure LA.02** Designations
- **Figure LA.03** Public Access
- **Figure LA.04** National and Local Landscape Character Assessments
- **Figure LA.05** Topography
- **Figure LA.06** Site Context
- **Figures LA.07** Site Photographs
- **Figures LA.08** Zone of Theoretical Visibility plans
- **Figure LA.09** Context Views
- **Figures LA.10** Viewpoints

1.2.6 Detailed information is presented in Appendices as follows:

- **Appendix 2** Assessment methodology
- **Appendix 3** Assessment of effects
- **Appendix 4** Green Belt Statement
- **Appendix 5** Landscape Strategy

1.3 Assessment Methodology

1.3.1 The methodology used for assessing the landscape and visual effects is based on the recommendations in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition, published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013 (GLVIA3), as set out in **Appendix 2**.

1.3.2 The Landscape Institute has advised in relation to Landscape & Visual Appraisals outside a formal EIA process in its "Statement of Clarification 1/13"¹:

In carrying out appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes. ... The emphasis on likely 'significant effects' in formal LVIA stresses the need for an approach that is proportional to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects. The same principle – focussing on a proportional approach – also applies to appraisals of landscape and visual impacts outside the formal requirements of EIA.

1.3.3 The assessment process comprises a combination of desk studies and field surveys, with subsequent analyses, and involved:

- A review of landscape designations and planning policies for the landscape, and of other landscape studies relevant to the area, including national and local landscape character assessments;
- A survey of the site and landscape context study areas and inspection of views of the site from publicly accessible viewpoints, including a photographic survey. The surveys were carried out by a Chartered Landscape Architect on 10th June 2024 during dry weather with good visibility;
- Evaluation of the features and elements of the landscape and their contribution to the landscape character, context and setting, based on these studies;
- Analysis of the development proposals and consideration of potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development;
- Assessment of the susceptibility and sensitivity of the landscape to the changes likely to arise from the development;
- Identification of the extent of theoretic visibility of the proposed development and viewers, their susceptibility and sensitivity, and view locations, supported by a viewpoint analysis; and

¹ GLVIA Statement of Clarification 1/13 10-06-13 <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/glvia3-clarifications/>

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- Assessment of magnitude of change arising from the proposal, the degree and nature of effects on the landscape and on visual amenity with the mitigation proposals in place.

Assessment and Mitigation

- 1.3.4 The effects of the development, whether beneficial or adverse, may vary in nature and degree through its lifecycle and, where feasible, mitigation measures are proposed to be incorporated in the design of the development. Where design measures cannot address identified likely adverse effects, measures such as management of the construction, operational, and decommissioning processes. The purpose of mitigation measures is first, to prevent or avoid the potentially adverse effects identified, and if that is not possible, to reduce the potential adverse effect. Where adverse effects are unavoidable, the purpose is to offset or compensate for the effect.
- 1.3.5 Details of the criteria for assessing landscape effects and visual effects are set out in those respective sections.

Guidance

- 1.3.6 In addition to GLVIA3, the following sources of guidance will be referred to:
- Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 **Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition** (GLVIA3), published August 2024.
 - Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21 **Assessing landscape value outside national designations**²
 - Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note, **Visual Representation of Development Proposals**, September 2019³
- 1.3.7 Relevant policy, landscape character assessments and other contextual information sources will be referred to, including:
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England 2014⁴
 - Natural England National Character Profiles, September 2014⁵
 - Policies relevant to the landscape and visual amenity in national, regional, and local policy including the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, and the North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment.

² <https://landscapewpstorage01.blob.core.windows.net/www-landscapeinstitute-org/2021/05/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations.pdf>

³ <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/visualisation/>

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

Photography

- 1.3.8 Photographs have a special role in describing landscape character and illustrating key views. In order for photographs to be representative and to create an image that is as similar as possible to that which is seen with the human eye, the Landscape Institute (LI) advises using a lens with a focal length equivalent to 50mm for a 35mm Single Lens Reflex (SLR) camera, and a horizontal field of view of a little under 40 degrees. The equipment used for the appraisal photography includes:
- A Canon EOS 5D Mark iii digital SLR camera with a full frame sensor;
 - Canon 50mm EF 1:1.8 II lens; and
 - Manfrotto tripod and panoramic head.
- 1.3.9 Photographs were taken with a focal length of 50mm.
- 1.3.10 Landscape photography includes wide angle or panoramic views requiring a sequence of photographs to be taken across the view. Where this approach is taken, a series of overlapping photographs are digitally spliced together in Photoshop CC using a cylindrical projection to provide a panorama approximating to the normal field of view in a landscape context. Where necessary, the contrast and brightness of individual photographs is slightly manipulated in order to create a consistent panorama without visible joins.
- 1.3.11 The viewpoint locations were established using a camera mounted GPS device and verified against Ordnance Survey grid reference and height above Ordnance Datum.

Weather

- 1.3.12 The weather is a factor affecting the assessment of, especially, visual impacts. The Met Office⁶ publish average statistics for weather patterns for the region, monthly and annual, for maximum and minimum temperatures, days of air frost, hours of sunshine, amount of rainfall - both generally and the number of days when rainfall is above 1mm. For Rothamsted, the nearest Climate station to where the site is located:
- Rainfall above 1mm per day, which limits visibility, occurs on an average of 120 days in the year, about 34% of the year.
 - There are on average 43 days when air frost occurs, which can produce hazy conditions limiting visibility, about 12% of the year.
 - There is an average of 1621 hours of sunshine per annum for the station, about the same as the East Anglia average of 1617 hours.

⁶ [Rothamsted Location-specific long-term averages](#)

2.0 Landscape Policies and Designations

2.1 National Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 12 December 2024⁷, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF 'is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.' The key principles that are of relevance to landscape and the proposed development include:

- **Section 2: Achieving sustainable development, paragraph 8** states "Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

[...]

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural... environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity... and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

Paragraph 9 goes on to state that "Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area."

Paragraph 10 states "... at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development."

- **Section 12: Achieving well-designed places, paragraph 135** states "planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

[...]

b) are visually attractive as a result of... appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding... landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place...

[...]"

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- **Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change, paragraph 166** states “In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:
 - a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and
 - b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.
- **Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paragraph 187** states “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside...
[...]

2.2 Local Planning policy

- 2.2.1 The site lies between Stevenage and Hitchin, Hertfordshire, planning policy for the area is provided by the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031, adopted 8th November 2022⁸. Relevant policies relating to site and the Proposed Development are outlined below. Local policies relating to Green Belt are provided in **Appendix 4**.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

- **Policy SP1: Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire** states that North Hertfordshire District Council will “Grant planning permission for proposals that, individually or cumulatively:
 - [...]
 - iii. provide the necessary infrastructure required to support an increasing population
 - iv. protect key elements of North Hertfordshire’s environment including biodiversity, important landscapes, heritage assets and green infrastructure (including the water environment); and
 - v. secure any necessary mitigation measures that reduce the impact of development, including on climate change...”

⁸ [north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.pdf](https://north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-12/North%20Hertfordshire%20Local%20Plan%202011-2031.pdf) (accessed July 2024)

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- **Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability** states that “The Council considers good design to be a key aspect of sustainable development. We will:
 - a) Support new development where it is well designed and located and responds positively to its local context;”
- **Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity** states that the Council will:
 - “a) Protect, identify, manage and where possible enhance a strategic multi-functional network of green infrastructure;
 - b) Consider and respect landscape character, scenic beauty and locally sensitive features...;
 - c) Protect, enhance and manage designated sites in accordance with the following hierarchy of designations and features:
 - Internationally designated sites
 - Nationally designated sites
 - Locally designated sites;
 - Non-designated sites that include important habitats and species
 - d) Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity networks including wildlife corridors, ancient woodlands and hedgerows...

[...]
- **Policy SP13: Historic Environment** states that the Council will “pursue a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment through:
 - a) Maintaining a strong presumption in favour of the retention, preservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting according to their significance...”
- **Policy D1: Sustainable design** states that “Planning permission will be granted provided that development proposals:
 - a) Respond positively to the site’s local context;
 - b) Take all reasonable opportunities, consistent with the nature and scale of the scheme, to:
 - [...]
 - iv. retain existing vegetation and propose appropriate new planting;
 - [...]
- **Policy NE1: Strategic green infrastructure** states that “Planning permission will be granted provided that development:

- a) Protects, conserves and where possible enhances the strategic green infrastructure network;
 - b) Avoids the loss, fragmentation, severance or negative impact on the function of the strategic green infrastructure network;
 - c) Creates new strategic green infrastructure where appropriate and is accompanied by a plan for its long-term maintenance and management; and
 - d) Has suitable mitigation measures or appropriate replacement to satisfactorily address adverse impacts on the strategic green infrastructure network."
- **Policy NE2: Landscape** states that "Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that:
 - a) Respect the sensitivities of the relevant landscape character area and have regard to the guidelines identified for built development and landscape management;
 - b) Do not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the landscape character area in which the site is located, taking account of any suitable mitigation measures necessary to achieve this;
 - c) Are designed and located to ensure the health and future retention of important landscape features; and
 - d) Have considered the long-term management and maintenance of any existing and proposed landscaping."

Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.2.2 The site is located to the south of the parish of Wymondley. The Wymondley Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2031 was published 26th September 2019, which forms part of the Development Plan for North Hertfordshire.
- 2.2.3 Relevant policies relating to Site and the Proposed Development are outlined below. Local policies relating to Green Belt are provided in **Appendix 4**.
- **Policy NHE1: Landscape Character** states "Where appropriate, planning applications should be accompanied by an assessment of the impact of the proposal on landscape character including historic landscape making reference to the relevant character assessment documents including the North Hertfordshire Landscape Study."
 - **Policy NHE4 Green Infrastructure** states "Where appropriate, development proposals should be supported by a Green Infrastructure plan which will provide permeability for wildlife through and around development and should be connective and functional as wildlife habitat in its own right not just as a link between habitats."

- **Policy NHE8 Landscaping Schemes** states “In considering landscaping schemes we will expect that appropriate native species are used whenever possible and that benefits to biodiversity are maximised.”
- **Policy NHE9 Historic Character and Heritage Assets** states “Development proposals should reflect and where possible, enhance, the historic character of the area...”

To protect our natural and historic environment, and retain the rural character and intimate scale of Wymondley Parish any new development should:

- be appropriately sited and of an appropriate scale, form and style;
- avoid visually intrusive locations...

2.3 Designations

- 2.3.1 Designations provide an indication of landscape value. They are areas that have been recognised for the scenic beauty and recreational potential of the landscape. Designations within 3km of the site are shown on **Figure LA.02**.
- 2.3.2 The site is located within the London Area Green Belt, which covers all the land outside the settlement boundary within the 3km study area. Further analysis of the Green Belt is provided in **Appendix 4**.
- 2.3.3 There are no statutory or locally designated landscapes within or close to the site, designated landscapes are therefore scoped out from further consideration in this LVApp.

Ancient Woodland

- 2.3.4 There are some small blocks of **ancient semi-natural woodland** within the 3km study area. The nearest to the site is Todd’s Green, which is located circa 370m to the east and adjacent to the railway line and the A1. Lucas Wood is located circa 430m to the southeast of the site and Lower Titmore Green. The only other small block of woodland in the study area is located beyond 2km of the site to the southwest.

Historic and cultural landscape designations

- 2.3.5 Relevant historic and cultural designations are shown on **Figure LA.02**.
- 2.3.6 The setting of historic and cultural designations is a consideration during the preparation of landscape and visual assessments as these features inform the overall landscape character, quality and value of the area. This LVApp does not address the effects on heritage assets however it considers the contribution these features make to landscape value and scenic quality.

Conservation areas and listed buildings

- 2.3.7 **Great Wymondley** is the nearest conservation area to the site, which is located approximately 1.4km to the north, to the north of the railway line.

- 2.3.8 **St Ippolyts** conservation area is located circa 1.5km to the west of the site, west of Wymondley Substation. **Symonds Green** conservation is located circa 1.5km to the southeast of the site, on the east side of the A1 and is surrounded by the wider settlement area of Stevenage.
- 2.3.9 Due to the distance and separation of the conservation areas from the site by surrounding settlement, key transport links and infrastructure they are scoped out from further consideration in this LVApp.
- 2.3.10 Several listed buildings are scattered throughout the 3km study area, primarily clustered within conservation areas and interspersed among historic farmsteads. The closest listed building to the site is the Grade II **Titmore Green Farmhouse**, located approximately 70m southwest of the site.
- 2.3.11 Notable listed buildings in the area include the **Grade I listed Wymondley Bury**, situated circa 300m to the north, and the **Grade II* listed Church of St Mary the Virgin**, located approximately 475m north of the site.

Scheduled Monuments

- 2.3.12 There are four Scheduled Monuments within the 3km study area, which are all located beyond 1km of the site. The nearest to the site is **Wymondley Priory**, located approximately 1.1km to the north. **Great Wymondley Castle** scheduled monument is located circa 1.6km to the north of the site, within Great Wymondley.
- 2.3.13 The remaining two Scheduled Monuments are beyond 2km from the site and include a **Roman villa 300m N of Ninesprings** in the northwest of the study area and **Minsden Chapel At Northeast Corner Of Minsden Plantation** to the southwest of the study area.

Registered Parks and Gardens

- 2.3.14 There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within the 3km study area. The nearest is the **Grade II* listed Temple Dinsley**, situated just beyond the study area to the southwest. As a result of distance and visual separation, the historic registered park and garden is scoped out from further consideration within this LVApp.

Ecological designations

- 2.3.15 Ecological designations, although not specifically related to landscape amenity and not assessed within this report, are an indication of landscape value. Relevant ecological designations are shown on **Figure LA.02**.
- 2.3.16 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the 3km study area, they are therefore scoped out from further consideration within this LVApp.

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Local Wildlife Sites

- 2.3.17 The 3km study area contains nine locally designated wildlife sites. The closest is **Wymondley Transforming Station**, located approximately 700m to the west of the site. There are no other locally designated sites within 1km of the site.

Public access

- 2.3.18 Public rights of way and access land are shown on **Figure LA.03**.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 2.3.19 There are a number of other Public Rights of Way within the study area, broadly concentrated in the southeast and northwest. In the southeast, they radiate from out of the settlement of Stevenage, following the course of field boundaries. In the northwest, they connect villages and farmsteads with the settlement of Hitchin.
- 2.3.20 The nearest public right of way to the site extends southwards from the southern site boundary, through Titmore Green to connect with the Hertfordshire Way LDFP and other public rights of way.

Long Distance Footpaths (LDFP)

- 2.3.21 The **Hertfordshire Way** LDFP runs along the western boundary of the site, traversing the study area in a broadly north to south direction. To the north of the site, it crosses the A602 dual carriageway passing through Little Wymondley before passing under the railway line to connect with Great Wymondley. To the south of the site, the route crosses several large arable fields to connect with the Chiltern Way LDFP.
- 2.3.22 A short section of the **Chiltern Way** LDFP is located within the southwest of the study area, located approximately 2km from the site boundary at its nearest point. The route transects rising farmland and continues beyond the study area.

National Cycle Routes (NCR)

- 2.3.23 **National Cycle Route 12** traverses the eastern half of the 3km study area in a north to south direction, passing approximately 920m from the site boundary at its closest point. The route heads through Stevenage to connect with Letchworth to the north.

Open Access Land

- 2.3.24 There are two small areas of open access land within the 3km study area, both located within the settlement area of Stevenage. The closest is **Fishers Green**, a public open space located approximately 800m to the southeast of the site and **Symonds Green** public open space is situated circa 1.6km to the southeast of the site.

- 2.3.25 Due to the distance and separation of the spaces from the site by the built-up area of Stevenage and the A1(M), open access land is scoped out from further consideration in this LVApp.

3.0 Proposed development

- 3.1.1 Details of the proposed development are described in detail in the supporting planning documents and drawings. This section describes the main aspects of the proposed development which could potentially affect landscape and/or visual amenity. It also identifies features of the proposals which will assist in mitigating adverse landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.1.2 The proposed battery storage development would be situated in the north of the site. It would comprise 28 containerised BESS units on concrete foundations with acoustic attenuation kit on top resulting in an overall height of 4.182m. Serving the BESS units there would be 14 medium voltage skids units with an overall height of 3.196m. Other ancillary equipment would include a control room, a stitch room, welfare facilities, spare parts container, and a water tank would be located outside of the BESS compound with a height of 3.93m. The BESS compound would be fenced by 2.75m high security fencing with CCTV cameras on 4.2m high poles. The BESS compound would be accessed via a 4m wide gravelled track via Stevenage Road, which would mostly utilise an existing track on site.
- 3.1.3 To the south of the BESS compound is a proposed drainage attenuation swale with a drainage pipe connecting to the existing pond within the southeast of the site.
- 3.1.4 Surrounding the field boundary, existing woodland, trees and hedgerows would be retained. New native trees and hedgerows are proposed to the south of the BESS compound and along the northeast and eastern site boundary to provide visual screening whilst enhancing field boundaries and improving wildlife corridors. Additional shrub planting is proposed to the east of the BESS compound and to the west of the proposed access track, along the retained tree line to infill some existing gaps in the vegetation and provide some visual screening. In the south of the site, to mitigate for some of the recent tree and vegetation clearance, native trees and shrubs are proposed around the existing pond. Some shrub planting is also proposed along the retained hedgerow on the southern boundary of the site.

Sources of Potential Effects on Landscape and Views

- 3.1.5 The main features of the proposed development which could potentially result in landscape and visual impacts are set out below.

Construction phase

- 3.1.6 The duration of the construction of the site is expected to be approximately 14 months and would include the following:
- Temporary fencing/hoarding protecting the site perimeter.

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- The removal of grassland and some reprofiling within the battery storage compound.
- The installation of the temporary construction compound, an access track that extends from the existing access track within the site, battery storage units, transformers and storage container on loose hardcore, perimeter fencing, pole mounted CCTV cameras, and the trenching of the underground cable route.
- Activities in relation to the construction of the proposed development, including deliveries, the movement of vehicles on site.
- The removal of some individual Category U trees. The implementation of new trees, native hedgerows, shrub planting and grass mixes.
- The implementation of the proposed SuDS feature to the south of the BESS compound.
- The boring of underground cabling along the cabling route to the west of the site.

Operation

3.1.7 Completion and operational activities would include the following:

- The change of use in the north part of the site from a grass field to a battery storage site. The remaining area of the site would be a mix of retained grassland with some hedgerows, trees and shrub planting.
- The introduction of battery storage and ancillary structures within the landscape and in the context of existing pylons and overhead cables.
- The introduction of an attenuation swale to the south of the battery storage compound with new grassland mix in the context of an existing pond.
- Operational activities such as vehicle movement associated with routine inspections and maintenance of the proposed development.
- The establishment of landscape proposals such as newly planted trees, hedgerows, shrub planting and grass mixes.

Mitigation measures

3.1.8 The potential for adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity has been recognised and mitigation measures incorporated in the scheme to avoid or reduce adverse effects or to offset or compensate for unavoidable adverse effects. The Landscape Masterplan for the site includes a number of measures which would provide enhancement of landscape features that contribute to the landscape character and help to reduce the visual impact of the proposed development when viewed from publicly accessible locations.

3.1.9 Mitigation and enhancement measures incorporated into the scheme design include:

- The battery storage area is positioned inside an existing field boundary to avoid the removal of trees, where possible, and to ensure the existing field pattern is retained.

- Buffers from existing woodland, trees and hedgerows within and adjacent to the site are included to ensure existing features that contribute to the character of the landscape are retained and protected, including Root Protection Areas (RPAs).
- Strengthening and gapping up of hedgerows to reduce visual effects and reinforce these landscape elements which make an important contribution to landscape character.
- Some native trees and groups of native shrub planting is proposed along field boundaries to help screen and filter views of the proposed development which enhancing existing vegetation pattern.
- New loose hardcore gravel access tracks would follow existing access routes and would utilise the existing field gateway onto Stevenage Road.
- A new native trees, hedgerows and shrub planting are proposed to the south and east of the battery compound to enhance the existing field boundary and to provide some screening whilst providing wildlife corridors and connections to retained features.
- Cabling is to be bored under existing trees to avoid disturbance to sensitive landscape elements and to prevent the inclusion of unsightly cabling bridges.

4.0 Effects on the Landscape

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 This section deals with the effects on the landscape of the site and its surrounding context due to the proposed development of the site.

Assessment Criteria

- 4.1.2 The assessment process follows the methodology for assessing effects set out in **Appendix 2**. The degree of the likely landscape effects of the proposed development is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors to the changes arising from the development proposals, and the degree and nature of the changes in the landscape arising from the proposals.

Landscape Baseline

- 4.1.3 The landscape baseline is a description and analysis of the existing landscape, against which the effects of the proposed development are assessed, first, by reference to landscape character assessments for the area in which the site is located, at national and local levels and then, from site-specific surveys and analysis carried out for the purposes of this assessment.

4.2 National Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.2.1 The desk study has made reference to National Character Areas for England⁹. National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each NCA 'is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.'
- 4.2.2 The site is located both on the northeastern edge of **National Character Area 110: Chilterns**¹⁰ and the southwestern edge of **National Character Area 87: East Anglian Chalk**¹¹, see **Figure LA.04**. The key characteristics of the **NCA 110** which are relevant to the site and study area are identified as:
- The **chalk plateau** is incised by parallel branching valleys gently shelving to the south-east into the London Basin. The large chalk aquifer is abstracted for **water to supply London** and its surrounds and also supports flows of springs, chalk streams and the River Thames.
 - The **north-west-facing escarpment** is an abrupt relief feature beside low-lying vales, breached notably by the Thames at the Goring Gap. The escarpment lowers northwards, terminating as distinct hills...
 - Within the Chilterns, **views are enclosed within branching valleys**, sunken routeways and **extensive woodland** and **hedgerow-enclosed fields**. There are hidden, tranquil pockets along single track lanes and rights of way.
 - A mixture of **arable**, **grassland** and **woodland** and the **numerous commons** reflects the dominance of Grade 3 agricultural land. Ancient woodland has remained on extensive clay-with-flint deposits, while very steep slopes are rarely cultivated. There are, however, not inconsiderable areas of Grade 1 and 2 land that are associated with lower-lying areas and river valleys.
 - Pre-18th-century fields defined by ancient, often **sinuous hedged boundaries** are scattered throughout, including co-axial fields. Parliamentary enclosure fields are limited. **Large modern fields**, usually with ancient boundaries, cover the better agricultural land, most notably in the north-east.
 - Remnants of various historic land use types can combine rich and diverse habitats and archaeology. Many key places are publicly accessible, including Registered Parks and Gardens, historic downland and common land. Traditional flood plain landscapes and orchards are the most restricted in extent. Historic routeways, hedged boundaries and watercourses provide connectivity.

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

¹⁰ [Chilterns - National Character Area Profiles \(nationalcharacterareas.co.uk\)](http://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk)

¹¹ [East Anglian Chalk - National Character Area Profiles \(nationalcharacterareas.co.uk\)](http://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk)

- Historic downland preserves **prehistoric archaeology** and supports high numbers of rare and scarce chalk grassland vascular plants, mosses and liverworts. Diversity is enhanced by a **mosaic of chalk grassland, scrub and woodland**, with Hartslock Wood SAC being one example.
- **Nucleated settlements of medieval origin** and land farmed since prehistory are found alongside watercourses and springs in the through-valleys and at the foot of the scarp. Elsewhere, dispersed farmsteads dating from the medieval period and mid-19th-century development around commons are characteristic of the plateau.
- **Major transport routes**, including motorways, radiate from adjacent Greater London, associated with significant 20th-century development and extensive urban fringe areas.
- **Brick and flint** are the dominant traditional building materials, with Totternhoe Stone (clunch) being less common, but still distinctive
- **Numerous parkland landscapes** define large, historic estates. Designs by Humphry Repton and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown are represented, and the houses, follies and wooded features provide local landmarks.
- **Extensive rights of way, commons, open access downland, woodland** and some **parklands** provide access to the countryside. The Thames Path, the Ridgeway and the Grand Union Canal are high-profile recreation routes; locally promoted routes include the Chilterns Cycleway. Private leisure land uses, including golf courses and horse paddocks, are common near urban centres.

4.2.3 The key characteristics of the **NCA 87** which are relevant to the Site and study area are identified as:

- The underlying and solid geology is dominated by **Upper Cretaceous Chalk**, a narrow continuation of the chalk ridge that runs south-west–north-east across southern England, continuing in the Chilterns and along the eastern edge of The Wash. The chalk bedrock has given the NCA its nutrient-poor and shallow soils.
- The **rolling downland**, mostly in **arable production**, has sparse tree cover but distinctive beech belts along long, straight roads. Certain high points have small beech copses or 'hanger', which are prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape. In the east there are pine belts.
- **Settlement is focused in small towns and in villages**. There are a number of **expanding commuter villages** located generally within valleys...
- ...Today **major roads and railways are prominent landscape characteristics** of the NCA.

Local Landscape Character Assessments

- 4.2.4 The most recently published Landscape Character assessment of relevance to the site is the North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment. The site is located within the **Landscape Character Area 215: Wymondley and Titmore Green**¹², see **Figure LA.04**.
- 4.2.5 The key characteristics of the LCA are identified as:
- **Rolling chalk landscape**
 - **Irregular sized fields in arable** with **parcels of grazing** adjacent to settlements
 - **Historic pattern of small winding lanes** and historic place names
 - **Mature tree cover**
- 4.2.6 The distinctive features of the LCA are identified as:
- Flint church at St Ippolyts
 - **Wymondley transformer station**
 - **Proximity of A1(M)** at Stevenage to the east
 - **A602 crossing part on embankment and partly in cutting**
- 4.2.7 The strategy and guidelines for managing change are:
- Promote management of ancient woodlands to encourage a diverse woodland flora
 - Promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and areas of semi-natural habitat and the creation of links between habitat areas
 - **Promote hedgerow restoration** along the lines of historic field boundaries and for the creation of visual links between existing woodland areas
 - **Promote the use of traditional field hedges** in place of post and wire enclosures to new grazing areas
 - Protect and preserve the **pattern of narrow winding lanes and associated hedge banks**, sunken lanes, verges and hedges
 - **Promote the diversity of hedgerow species** and the planting of standard hedgerow trees
 - **Maintain and extend the rights of way network**
 - Encourage the **management of acidic neutral grassland areas**
 - Encourage the **management of oak and hornbeam coppice**

¹² [LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT OF NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE](#)

4.3 Site-Specific Appraisal

- 4.3.1 The following paragraphs provide descriptions of the site, which should be read alongside **Appendix 1** Topography **Figure LA.05** and Site Context **Figure LA.06**, and Site Photographs **Figures LA.07**.

The landscape and features of the site

- 4.3.2 The site is located south of Little Wymondley and east of Titmore Green, with Hitchin to the northwest and Stevenage to the southeast. It is positioned between two key transport routes, with the A602 dual carriageway running parallel to the northern boundary at a distance of approximately 40m, and Stevenage Road immediately to the south of the site.
- 4.3.3 The site lies within a predominantly flat, semi-rural landscape characterised by arable fields, small villages, and the larger settlement edges of Hitchin and Stevenage. The topography of the site itself is relatively level, with ground elevations ranging between 91m and 96m AOD. Beyond the site, the highest points within the study area are located to the southwest towards Ponders End and to the east near St. Nicholas, where land levels rise to approximately 150m AOD.
- 4.3.4 The site consists of a small, well-maintained grass field, enclosed predominantly by post and rail fencing, with a variety of vegetation beyond. The northern boundary is defined by a woodland strip that separates the site from the A602 dual carriageway. To the west, a post and rail fence marks the boundary with the adjacent Hertfordshire Way LDFP, beyond which lies a line of mature trees. The southern boundary features a well-established hedgerow with hedgerow trees running parallel to Stevenage Road, although some recent highway works to the southeast along the road have created some more open sections where vegetation has been cleared. The eastern boundary consists of a mix of open sections merging into adjacent fields with trees surrounding a pond in the southeast and trees surrounding a pylon and fenced substation to the northeast.
- 4.3.5 The site's proximity to the National Grid Wymondley Substation, located approximately 900m to the west, results in the presence of multiple pylon networks both within and adjacent to the site, as well as across the wider study area. Within the site itself, overhead power lines traverse the northern half in an east-to-west direction, contributing to the influence of energy infrastructure within the local landscape.
- 4.3.6 Beyond the site, the surrounding area is predominantly characterised by agricultural fields bordered by a combination of tree lines, hedgerows, and grass margins, interspersed with village and town settlements. To the southeast and northwest lie the expansive urban areas of Stevenage and Hitchin and their surrounding suburbs. The A1(M) skirts the west of Stevenage and continues north through the study area. A railway line, situated approximately 450m to the northeast of the site, traverses the study area in a northwest to southeast direction connecting Hitchin and Stevenage. Elsewhere there are a number of nucleated villages, including Little Wymondley, Great Wymondley, St Ippolyts, Titmore Green, Ashbrook,

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Gosmore, Graveley, Rush Green, and Symonds Green, as well as numerous scattered farmsteads and residential properties. These settlements are interconnected by a network of local roads.

Characteristics and aesthetics of the site

- 4.3.7 The site comprises a broadly flat, well-maintained grass field. The landform of the site mirrors the surrounding area, characterised by simple, flat lowland. The site is partially overlooked to the south by gently rising land.
- 4.3.8 The character of the site is influenced by its proximity to the Wymondley Transformer Station, with the associated pylons and overhead cables that transect the site and its setting, forming prominent features. Additionally, the site's character is influenced by the nearby A602 dual carriageway, and to a lesser extent, the local railway line and M1 motorway. The relatively busy Stevenage Road that runs along the southern boundary of the site, further influences the site's setting, adding movement and sound. Surrounding woodland, tree lines and hedgerows generally limit long-distance views, creating some sense of enclosure, with some narrow mid-distance views available to the south.

Landscape Value

- 4.3.9 The characteristics, sensitivities and guidelines in the existing character assessments at national and local level and the site-specific analyses carried out for the purposes of this LVApp were taken into account as indicators of the aspects of the landscape important to the character and evaluated according to the criteria in **Appendix 3, Table A3-1** in order to determine the value of the landscape receptors.
- 4.3.10 Overall, the landscape value of the site and study area is of 'local' value due to the following factors:
- The site is located in part of an agricultural field that comprises well-maintained grass. The wider study area has a variable landscape quality, from some designated historic sites, locally designated ecological sites, and small nucleated villages, to contrasting features such as the A1(M), A602 dual-carriageway, local railway line, and National Grid Substation with associated overhead cables and pylons.
 - Scenic / visual quality is generally confined to short to mid-distant views due to the woodland belts associated with key transport routes and infrastructure, and the gently rolling topography. These features contribute to the visual quality but associated sound of the A602 dual carriageway and Stevenage Road interrupts quietness with views of pylons and overhead cables also reducing the rural qualities.
 - The land within the site is not considered to be a rare feature and is representative of the surrounding small agricultural fields.

- No evidence of artistic or literary associations with the site or study area has been noted as part of this appraisal.
- The site and study area has recreational uses both along public rights of way and long-distance footpaths, where users of the routes would appreciate some of the scenic qualities noted above.

4.3.11 The features/elements/characteristics identified as important or “key” to the landscape character of the site are identified as:

- Irregular field patterns and sizes
- Boundaries predominantly defined by outgrown hedgerows with mature trees.
- Semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views
- Recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDFP

4.4 Effects on the Landscape

4.4.1 This section examines the nature of landscape effects arising as a result of the proposed development with reference to:

- effects on landscape fabric within the site, its features and qualities;
- effects on landscape character, including consideration of effects on designated landscapes; and
- effects on the landscape setting of settlements, public rights of way and roads.

4.4.2 Landscape character is derived from the combination and pattern of landscape elements. The effects of proposed development on landscape character would arise from its relationship to these combinations and patterns, and thus the character of the landscape. Effects on the landscape features, qualities and character may occur where there are either direct or indirect physical changes to the landscape. Direct changes to landscape fabric would only occur within the application boundary.

4.4.3 The effect of the proposed development on landscape character will depend on key characteristics of the receiving landscape; the degree to which the proposed development is considered consistent with or at odds with them; and how the proposed development would be perceived within the setting, with perception being influenced by:

- the distance to the site;
- weather conditions; and
- the ‘fit’ of the proposed development within the landscape pattern and characteristics.

4.4.4 The LVApp covers the following scenarios:

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- Construction phase - this includes the installation of the proposed BESS compound and ancillary structures.
- At year 1 of operation – the fully constructed and operational BESS development.
- At year 10 of operation – the fully constructed and operational BESS development with the proposed mitigative planting having established.

Sensitivity

4.4.5 Landscape sensitivity is a product of consideration of the value associated with the landscape receptor and its susceptibility to the changes likely to arise from the proposed development. Criteria for determining the landscape value and landscape susceptibility are set out in **Appendix 2**. For this appraisal, the assessment of sensitivity is based on bringing value and susceptibility considerations together in one combined step, in accordance with the criteria set out in **Appendix 2**.

4.4.6 The receptors, their value and susceptibility are set out in the following table, with the resultant judgement of their sensitivity to the proposed development:

Table 4-1 Susceptibility and Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Irregular field patterns and sizes	Medium value: a characteristic of the area with few detractors, not within a designated landscape	Low susceptibility as BESS is to be accommodated within existing field pattern	Moderate-lesser sensitivity
Boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees.	Medium value: natural features which make a contribution to the landscape, not within a designated landscape.	Low susceptibility to change as features are to be retained and protected with appropriate buffers between the proposals and existing woodland, trees and hedgerows	Moderate-lesser sensitivity
Semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views	Medium value: local characteristics typical of the area with some detractors.	Moderately susceptible to change and disturbance with the introduction of BESS.	Moderate sensitivity
Recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDFP	Medium value: the landscape is the setting for recreational access where the landscape forms part of the experience	Moderately susceptible to perceptual change with the construction of the proposed development	Moderate sensitivity

Magnitude of change

- 4.4.7 The magnitude of change considers the key features of the proposed development, as described in section 3.0, and the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by these changes or by the structures associated with the development. The magnitude of change is fully described and set out in **Appendix 3, Table Appendix 3.1. Table 4-2** below provides a summary of the assessments:

Table 4-2 Landscape receptors and magnitude of change summary

Landscape Receptor	Magnitude of Change
Irregular field patterns and sizes	Construction: medium-small Year 1 of operation: medium-small Year 10 of operation: medium-small
Boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees.	Construction: small Year 1 of operation: small Year 10 of operation: negligible
Semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views	Construction: medium Year 1 of operation: medium Year 10 of operation: medium-small
Recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDFP	Construction: medium Year 1 of operation: medium-small Year 10 of operation: small

Assessment of effects on the landscape

- 4.4.8 Consideration of the magnitude of the changes due to the proposed BESS development is combined with consideration of the sensitivity of landscape receptors affected by the proposals to assess the degree and nature of the effect at each stage of the development, including construction, operation, and decommissioning of the proposed BESS.
- 4.4.9 Final conclusions about the degree of landscape effect, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in **Table A2-5**. The assessment is provided in **Appendix 3, Table Appendix 4.2** and a summary of the effects is provided below in **Table 4.3**:

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Table 4-3 Effects on Landscape Receptors

Landscape Receptors and Sensitivity	Effects during construction	Effects at year 1 of operation	Effects at year 10 of operation
Irregular field patterns and sizes: moderate-lesser sensitivity	Moderate-minor, adverse	Moderate-minor, adverse	Moderate-minor, neutral
Boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees: moderate-lesser sensitivity	Minor, neutral	Minor, neutral	negligible
Semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views: moderate sensitivity	Moderate, adverse	Moderate, adverse	Moderate-minor, adverse
Recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDGP: moderate sensitivity	Moderate, adverse	Moderate-minor, adverse	Minor, adverse

5.0 Effects on Visual Amenity

5.1 Scope and Assessment Criteria

- 5.1.1 This section deals with the effects on visual amenity, arising from changes in the views available to people in the surrounding area.
- 5.1.2 The general methodology for assessing the effects in this report is set out in **Appendix 2**.
- 5.1.3 The degree of the likely visual effects of the proposed BESS development is determined by relating the sensitivity of the receptors to the changes arising from the development proposals, and the degree and nature of the changes in the views available to people and in their visual amenity arising from the proposals.

5.2 Visual Baseline

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- 5.2.1 Zone of Theoretic Visibility (ZTV) plans have been generated by computer to identify the geographic extents within which views may be available of the proposed BESS development, see **Figures LA.08**. They were calculated to the height of 4.2m Above Ordinance Datum

(AOD) to represent the 'worst case scenario'. The viewer eye-height for the ZTVs has been set at 2m above ground level.

- 5.2.2 The ZTVs produced include both a bare earth scenario and a screening features scenario, where features such as buildings and vegetation were taken into account. The computer generated ZTV in **Figure LA.08-1** was calculated using LIDAR composite DTM (Digital Terrain Model) with a spatial resolution of 1m. This based upon "bare earth scenario," i.e., no allowance has been made for the potential screening by existing buildings, woodland, trees and hedgerows. The computer generated ZTV in **Figure LA.08-2** was calculated using LIDAR composite DSM (Digital Surface Model) with a spatial resolution of 1m, which includes heights of existing buildings and vegetation in the data. The screening effects of other surface features such as individual trees and hedgerows may not be picked up in the data.
- 5.2.3 **Figure LA.08-1** shows that the "bare earth scenario", visibility of the majority of the proposed BESS development would be potentially visible to the south of the A602, to the west of the A1(M) and within 1.5km of the site boundary. To the east of the A1(M) and beyond 1km of the site, the ZTV shows that the majority of the proposed BESS development would be potentially visibility from elevated areas in the built-up area of Stevenage. To the southwest of the site and beyond 2km of the site boundary, the northeast facing elevated slopes are also illustrated to have potential views of the majority of the proposed BESS development. To the north of the A602 there is some moderate coverage of the ZTV on slightly elevated ground between Great Wymondley and Gravelly.
- 5.2.4 **Figure LA.8-2** shows that once surface screening is taken into account, the footprint of the ZTV is similar, however the extent of visibility reduces considerably in coverage and from the majority of the proposed BESS development being visible to a moderate a part of the development being visible only. Stevenage is no longer covered by the ZTV, and potentially visible areas are limited to mainly more elevated areas.

Viewpoint study

- 5.2.5 A photographic survey was undertaken to identify the potential extent of the visibility of the proposed development by locating viewpoints available to sensitive receptors. To inform the initial viewpoint selections, visual study area from the site was mapped showing the surrounding landscape designations, public access, landscape character and the predicted ZTV for the proposed development. Potentially sensitive visual receptors within the study area include residents, users of public rights of way and Long-distance footpaths, and road users.
- 5.2.6 Based on the collated data, initial representative viewpoint locations were selected that relate to the "receptors", that is, residents and users of the landscape, and locations from which they may have views towards or of the site. For each of the viewpoints, the precise location was chosen during the field studies to represent the most open view available subject to local features such as vegetation, buildings or localised topographic variation.

- 5.2.7 A total of 7 views were photographed to illustrate the site and the surrounding landscape and appearance from publicly available locations. Of the 7 views that were taken, 4 views were carried forward as representative viewpoints for the visual amenity assessment. The locations of the 4 viewpoints (1-4) and context views (A, B and C) are shown on **Figures LA.08**.
- 5.2.8 The context photographs are shown on **Figures LA.09** and viewpoint photographs are presented on **Figures LA.10**. Photographs from within the site were also taken to illustrate its features and context, see **Figures LA.07**.
- 5.2.9 **Table 5.1** below lists the 4 viewpoints, the location details, the receptors represented, and the reasons for selection.

Table 5-1 Viewpoint details

Viewpoint reference	Location	Distance & direction from site	Receptors represented/Reasons for selection
01	Hertfordshire Way, adjacent to the west boundary of the site	1m from the west site boundary	Users of the long-distance footpath • Close distant view of the site. • The screening ZTV indicates that most of the proposed development would potentially be visible.
02	Stevenage Road	3m from the southern boundary of the site	Nearby residents, users of the Hertfordshire long distance footpath, and local road users • Close distant view of the site. • Represents key receptors including residents. • The screening ZTV indicates that most of the proposed development would potentially be visible.
03	Footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green	410m from the southern site boundary	Footpath users • The screening ZTV indicates that a moderate part of the proposed development would potentially be visible.
04	Hertfordshire Way to the southeast of the site	1.32km from the southern boundary of the site	Users of the long-distance footpath • The viewpoint is elevated and has distant views towards the site. • The screening ZTV indicates that a moderate part of the proposed development would potentially be visible.

5.2.10 **Table 5-2** below provides a description of the landscape context at each of the 5 viewpoint locations and description of the existing view towards the site.

Table 5-2 Existing assessment viewpoint descriptions

Viewpoint reference	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
01 - Hertfordshire Way, adjacent to the west boundary of the site	The viewpoint is located on the Hertfordshire Way LDFP along the western boundary of the site, offering some open views into the site between gaps in vegetation. To the north of the site, the route passes through a dense woodland belt and crosses the A602 dual carriageway to connect with Little Wymondley. To the south, the route follows Stevenage Road for a short distance before heading south across farmland.	The view looks across the site from the west, with the timber post and rail fence marking the boundary between the site and the Hertfordshire Way LDFP in the foreground. In the middle ground are views of the well-maintained grass field that is surrounded by woodland blocks of mature trees that limits more distance views. Pylons are viewed above the woodland with overhead cables above the site.
02 - Stevenage Road	The viewpoint is located at the gated entrance in the southwest corner of the site along Stevenage Road. To the west of the gate, the Hertfordshire Way LDFP follows the western boundary of the site, extending north and west from the viewpoint. The surrounding landscape is characterised by well-established, mature hedgerows interspersed with outgrown hedgerow trees, creating a sense of enclosure. To the southwest is the listed building and associated structures at Titmore Court.	The view looks over the gated entrance to the site, across the gently sloping grass field of the site. The view is backdropped in the mid-distance by woodland blocks with pylons and overhead cables across the view creating horizontal and vertical elements interrupting the skyline.
03 – Footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green	The viewpoint is located on a Public Right of Way (PROW) that traverses the centre of an agricultural field to the south of the site. The footpath runs between Lower Titmore Green and Lucas Wood. The surrounding landscape is characterised by well-established, mature hedgerows interspersed with outgrown hedgerow trees along the boundaries of the	The foreground of the view looks across a pasture field towards the southern extent of the site. This field is lined by a dense hedgerow that spans the breadth of the view. Beyond the hedgerow, the mid-distant backdrop of the view consists of various pockets of mature woodland and individual trees, which screen views of the site itself. Pylons and overhead cables are visible across the view, above the woodland trees.

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Viewpoint reference	Landscape context at viewpoint location	Existing view towards site
	farmed fields, contributing to a well-defined and enclosed rural character.	
04- Hertfordshire Way to the southeast of the site	The viewpoint is located on the Hertfordshire Way LDFP, that follows a farm track to the north of Almshoe Bury. It is situated on an elevated section of the route that offers long distant and open views to the north. The surrounding landscape is characterised by a series of large arable fields with the large farmstead at Almshoe Bury located to the south.	The view is characterised by gently undulating and open arable fields extending northwards. In the foreground, the Hertfordshire Way runs down the centre of the view, along a farm track, bisecting the fields. To the north, the lower-lying landscape consists of arable fields defined by hedgerow boundaries, interspersed with clusters of mature trees and occasional blocks of woodland. Scattered small settlements and residential properties are viewed throughout the mid and far ground, between gaps in vegetation. Above the vegetation, several pylons and overhead cables stretch across the breadth of the view. In the distance, a mast within the Wymondley National Grid site is visible above the treeline. To the northwest, in the direction of the site, the concrete water tower at Wymondley Recreation Ground can also be seen among the treelines.

5.3 Visual receptors

- 5.3.1 The assessment of visual effects is described by considering how the different groups of “visual receptors” may be affected by the proposals in the site. The following is a review of the viewers (the visual receptors) and the views available to them at the selected representative locations:

People in settlements and residential properties

- 5.3.2 The primary settlement areas within the 3km study area are located on its fringes, encompassing the urban areas of Hitchin and Stevenage. The surrounding landscape is characterised by nucleated villages, including Little Wymondley, Great Wymondley, St Ippolyts, Titmore Green, Ashbrook, Gosmore, Graveley, Rush Green, and Symonds Green, alongside numerous scattered farmsteads and residential properties. A representative sample of views from these settlements has been taken forward for assessment and includes:

- Residents in the hamlet of **Titmore Green**, represented by **viewpoint 02**.

5.3.3 Due to the surrounding topography and intervening vegetation, residents in settlements elsewhere in the study area would have little or no change to their views as a result of the BESS development, see **Figure LA.08-2**. The ZTV also confirms that Hitchin and Stevenage would not have views of the proposed development as a result of intervening landform and vegetation.

Users of public rights of way

5.3.4 There are a number of public rights of way within the 3km study area, including several footpaths within close proximity to the site and the Hertfordshire Way LDFP, which runs north to south along the western boundary of the site. The Chiltern Way is also located in the southwest of the study area, approximately 2km from the site. A representative sample of views from the public rights of way network have been taken forward to the assessment and include:

- Users of the **Hertfordshire Way**, represented by **Viewpoints 01, 02 and 04**.
- Users of public rights of way to the southeast of the site, represented by **Viewpoint 03**.

5.3.5 **Context View B, (Figure LA.09-1)** illustrates the view from the **Chiltern Way LDFP**, approximately 2.6km southwest of the site. The viewpoint is located on elevated land, looking north toward the site over the surrounding rolling fields. Given distance and screening from surrounding trees, the site is not visible and there would be little or no perception of change to the view as a result of the development.

5.3.6 **Context View A (Figure LA.09-1)** illustrates that visibility of the site from public rights of way to the south diminishes with increasing distance due to screening provided by mature tree lines, woodland, and boundary hedgerows.

Road users

5.3.7 The primary route through the 3km study area is the A1(M), located approximately 650m to the east of the site, running in a north to south direction. The A602 dual carriageway also passes through the area from east to west, close to the north of the site, linking Stevenage and Hitchin to the A1(M). In addition, Stevenage Road runs parallel to the southern boundary of the site, providing access to the surrounding villages. A number of other local roads connect villages and hamlets within the study area. A representative sample of views for users of roads have been taken forward to the assessment and include:

- Users of Stevenage Road, represented by **Viewpoint 02**

5.3.8 **Context View C (Figure LA.09-2)** illustrates that there is currently visibility from Stevenage Road, south of the pond. This is due to recent highway works by the Council, which have resulted in existing vegetation being cut back. As a result, oblique views of the site over a very

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short duration for road users will remain until the vegetation regenerates and proposed planting establishes.

- 5.3.9 Due to the surrounding topography and intermittent vegetation, road users elsewhere in the study area would have little or no change to their views as a result of the BESS development, see **Figure LA.08-2**.

5.4 Effects on visual amenity

- 5.4.1 The visual assessment covers the assessment scenarios described in paragraph 5.4.3 below.

Sensitivity

- 5.4.2 The susceptibility of viewers is affected by factors such as the distance to the viewer, the relative number of viewers affected and the importance of the site in the overall view. The context of the viewpoint may also contribute to the ability to accommodate change, for example, people viewing from residential properties or from a valued landscape might be regarded as less able to accommodate change, than those viewing from an industrial context. **Table A2-9 in Appendix 2** provides examples of High, Moderate and Lesser sensitivity, demonstrating how the contributing factors are interpreted.

- 5.4.3 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is assessed as follows:

- **People in settlements and residential properties:** high susceptibility to changes in their visual amenity; open unobstructed views including the site assessed as of high value: **high sensitivity**, and filtered, oblique or partial views of moderate susceptibility: **moderate sensitivity**.
- **Users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP:** high susceptibility to change in their visual amenity; open views of the site moderate-high value: **moderate-high sensitivity** and filtered, oblique or partial views of moderate susceptibility: **moderate sensitivity**.
- **Users of public rights of way:** moderate susceptibility to change in their visual amenity; open views of the site of moderate value: **moderate sensitivity** and filtered, oblique or partial views of low susceptibility: **moderate-lesser sensitivity**.
- **Users of public roads:** low susceptibility to change in their visual amenity; filtered, oblique or partial views of low value: **lesser sensitivity**.

Magnitude of Change

- 5.4.4 The existing views for each representative viewpoint are described in Table 5.2 above. Descriptions of the proposed development within each view is described and an analysis of the degree and nature of changes is presented in **Appendix 3, Table Appendix 3.3**. A summary of the magnitude of change is provided in Table 5-3 below.

Table 5-3 Viewpoint and magnitude of change summary

Reference viewpoints	Magnitude of change:
01- Hertfordshire Way, adjacent to the west boundary of the site	Construction: medium-great At 1 year of operation: medium-great At 10 years of operation: medium
02- Stevenage Road	Construction: medium-great At 1 year of operation: medium-great At 10 years of operation: medium
03 - Footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green	Construction: small At 1 year of operation: negligible At 10 years of operation: negligible
04 - Hertfordshire Way to the southeast of the site	Construction: small At 1 year of operation: negligible At 10 years of operation: negligible

Effects on visual receptors

- 5.4.5 Final conclusions about the degree of visual effects, whether adverse or beneficial, relate to the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in **Table A2-10**. Visual receptors are grouped based on their sensitivity and the nature of the view available. For each group of receptors, representative viewpoints are listed. Detailed assessments are provided in **Appendix 3, Table Appendix 3.4** and a summary of the effects is provided below in **Table 5.4**:

Table 5-4 Effects on Visual Receptors

Visual receptors, sensitivity, and reference viewpoints	Effects during construction	Effects at year 1 of operation	Effects at year 10 of operation
People in residential properties at close distance to the site with oblique or partially screened and/ or filtered views towards the site: moderate sensitivity 02- Stevenage Road	Moderate, adverse	Moderate-minor, adverse	Minor, adverse
Users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP within or close to the with open views of the site: moderate-high sensitivity 01- Hertfordshire Way, adjacent to the west boundary of the site 02- Stevenage Road	Moderate-major, adverse	Moderate-major, adverse	Moderate, adverse

BESS, Wymondley

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Visual receptors, sensitivity, and reference viewpoints	Effects during construction	Effects at year 1 of operation	Effects at year 10 of operation
Users of the footpath network local to the site to the southeast with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: lesser sensitivity 03 - Footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green	Minor, adverse	Negligible	Negligible
Users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP beyond 1km to the site with filtered, oblique or partial views: moderate-lesser sensitivity 04 - Hertfordshire Way to the southeast of the site	Minor, adverse	Negligible	Negligible
Local road users close to the site with oblique, filtered or partial views of the site: lesser sensitivity 02- Stevenage Road	Minor, adverse	Minor, adverse	Minor, adverse

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Baseline

- 6.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by EDF Renewables to prepare this Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) which relates to the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure on land at Wymondley, North Hertfordshire. The site covers an agricultural field, pond, and a cable corridor that connects to Wymondley National Grid Substation to the west. The proposed BESS compound is located in the north of the agricultural field and would be operational for at least 30 years.
- 6.1.2 This LVApp has assessed the potential effects of the proposed development on the landscape character and visual amenity for a 3km study area.
- 6.1.3 The methodology used for assessing the potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity were based on the recommendations in GLIVA3. The application of the guidance document established an appropriate scope for this assessment to be undertaken.

6.2 Summary of findings

Landscape assessment

- 6.2.1 Desk studies reviewed landscape designations, public access, and referred to national and local landscape character assessments, and relevant national and local policy information. The studies confirmed that the study site is not located within or close to a designated landscape. The site is located within the London Area Green Belt, which covers all the land outside the settlement boundary within the 3km study area. Further analysis of the Green Belt is provided in **Appendix 4**.
- 6.2.2 In relation to the published landscape character assessments, relevant key characteristics that are of relevance to the site and surrounding area include: Rolling chalk landscape; Irregular sized fields in arable with parcels of grazing adjacent to settlements; Historic pattern of small winding lanes; Mature tree cover; Wymondley transformer station; Proximity of A1(M) at Stevenage to the east; A602 dual carriageway crossing part on embankment and partly in cutting.
- 6.2.3 A site-specific appraisal was conducted to identify the landscape features, characteristics, and aesthetics. The appraisal confirmed the site's location to the south of Little Wymondley and east of Titmore Green, with Hitchin to the northwest and Stevenage to the southeast. The site consists of a small, well-maintained grass field, predominantly enclosed by post and rail fencing, with a variety of vegetation beyond. The northern boundary is defined by a woodland strip that separates the site from the A602 dual carriageway, while Stevenage Road runs parallel to the southern boundary. The Hertfordshire Way LDFP runs along the western boundary of the site. Beyond the site, the surrounding area is predominantly characterised by agricultural fields bordered by a combination of tree lines, hedgerows, and grass margins, interspersed with village and town settlements.
- 6.2.4 The assessment of landscape effects considered the impact of the proposed development on landscape features, qualities, and characteristics within the site and the wider surrounding landscape character during construction, at year 1 of operation, and at year 10 of operation. The findings concluded that during the construction of the proposed BESS development, effects on the **irregular field patterns and sizes** of the site were assessed as **moderate-minor adverse** during construction and at year of operation but at year 10, following the establishment of new planting, effects would reduce to neutral. the overall pattern and size of the field would alter slightly with the introduction of the hedgerow and trees to the south of the proposed BESS compound, but changes would be consistent with adjacent fields and characteristics.
- 6.2.5 Effects on the **boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees**, were assessed as **minor neutral** during construction and at year 1 of operation as all existing vegetation on the site would be retained and protected, with infill planting introduced to address any gaps. By year 10 of operation, effects were assessed as

negligible due to the establishment of the proposed planting, which would be ingrained with the existing vegetation resulting in no apparent change to the landscape receptor.

- 6.2.6 The effects on the **semi-rural qualities of the site with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views**, have been assessed as being **moderate adverse** during the construction and at year 1 of operation as the proposed development would introduce the BESS compound in the north of the site, but would be in context to overhead lines and several pylons close to the site, and the nearby A602 dual carriageway. By year 10 of operation, effects would reduce to **moderate-minor adverse**, as the proposed planting matures, reinforcing the sense of enclosure and reflect some of the semi-rural qualities of the site.
- 6.2.7 Effects on **recreational access along the Hertfordshire Way LDGP**, which runs along the western boundary of the site, has been assessed as **moderate adverse** during the construction phase due to the additional sound and movement close to the route, which may result in some short-term disruptions/diversion. At year 1 of operation, effects would reduce to **moderate-minor adverse**, as any direct impacts on the PRow would have ceased, with the footpath retained and protected. However, indirect effects would be near views and perception of the landscape of the north of the site altered by the development. By year 10 of operation, effects would further reduce to **minor adverse**, as the establishment of the proposed planting would help integrate the battery storage infrastructure into the surrounding landscape, softening its visual presence.
- 6.2.8 Overall, the proposed development would introduce changes to the character of the north of the site through the addition of the BESS development, associated infrastructure, and planting. However, the southern half of the site would remain largely unaltered and landscape character of the surrounding landscape would remain unaffected by the proposal. During construction, activities on the site would likely be perceived in the context of the adjacent Stevenage Road, A602 dual carriageway, and existing energy infrastructure, and by years 1 and 10 some adverse effects would reduce. Key features of the site, such as the irregular field pattern and size, hedgerow boundaries with outgrown trees, and sense of enclosure, would be retained and protected with new planting enhancing green infrastructure connections and pattern. Over time, as the proposed planting establishes, the effects on the landscape would reduce with the proposed development becoming more integrated into the surrounding landscape and its presence softened below the overhead cables.

Visual assessment

- 6.2.9 To confirm the baseline studies of designations, landscape character, and ZTV mapping, a total of 7 views were photographed to illustrate each site and their appearance from publicly available locations. Of the 7 views that were taken, 4 views were carried forward as representative viewpoints for the visual amenity assessment.
- 6.2.10 The visual assessment concluded that for **people in residential properties at close distance to the site with oblique or partially screened and/ or filtered views towards the site** visual effects were assessed as **moderate adverse** during the construction due to the increase

of vehicles accessing the site via Stevenage Road with the northern part of the site largely screened from view by intervening vegetation. At year 1 of the proposed development, effects would reduce to **moderate-minor adverse** and by year 10 of operation effects would further reduce to **minor adverse** due to the establishment of proposed planting.

- 6.2.11 For users of the **Hertfordshire Way LDFP** within or close to the site with open views, effects were concluded to be **moderate-major adverse** effect during construction and at year 1 of operation. There would be near and open views from very short sections of the route, between gaps in the retained trees and vegetation. By year 10 of operation, effects would reduce to moderate adverse as proposed planting would screen and filter some near views. Beyond the site boundary, views of the proposed development would further reduce along the route due to the screening effects of woodland belts, trees and hedgerows. For users of the **Hertfordshire Way LDFP beyond 1km from the site**, where views are filtered, oblique, or partial, effects would be **minor adverse** during both construction and would reduce to **negligible** at year and year 10 of operation. This is due to the surrounding vegetation screening views and the wider composition of the view would remain unaffected.
- 6.2.12 Users of the **footpath network southeast of the site, where views are oblique, partial, and filtered**, effects were also assessed **minor adverse** during construction, reducing to **negligible** at year 1 and year 10 of operation.
- 6.2.13 **Local road users in close proximity to the site**, with oblique, filtered, or partial views, effects were assessed as **minor adverse** during construction and at year 1 of operation, due to some gaps in the vegetation along the southern boundary and the proximity of the receptor to the site. Effects would be transient over a short section of Stevenage Road, and within the context of frequent views of energy infrastructure travelling through the landscape. By year 10 of operation, although the proposed planting would be established, there may be some small views between some gaps in vegetation, visual effects would remain as **minor adverse**.
- 6.2.14 Overall, the most adverse visual effects would occur within or immediately adjacent to the site, particularly for users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP. As distance quickly increases from the site, visual effects would reduce, particularly beyond 0.5km from the site, where intervening vegetation screens views towards the site. Any small views of the proposed development would be viewed in context to the numerous pylons and vast overhead cables that span views. Overtime, as the proposed planting establishes, views of the proposed BESS development would further reduce, particularly from the south along Stevenage Road.
- 6.2.15 Weather conditions, as described in paragraph 1.3.12 above would limit visibility for receptors as conditions that limit visibility occur due to rainfall (120 days on average in the year) and air frost (43 days on average in the year).

6.3 Conclusions

- 6.3.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) has thoroughly assessed the potential landscape and visual impacts in relation to the proposed BESS development through a combination of

desk studies, a walk-over of the site, and survey and reconnaissance of the surrounding landscape.

- 6.3.2 The proposed BESS development would be located within the north of the site that forms part of a well-maintained grass field bounded by a woodland belt, trees and hedgerows that is set below overhead cables that connect to nearby pylons. Proposed access would follow mainly follow existing access on the site. Proposals for the site include the retention and incorporation of key existing landscape features, such as the adjacent woodland, tree lines, and hedgerows, which would help to integrate the proposed battery storage development into the landscape. Proposal includes the planting of new trees, hedgerows, native shrubs and grassland to enhance green infrastructure, vegetation pattern and wildlife corridors.
- 6.3.3 Visual effects of the proposed development would be restricted to within close proximity of the site due to surrounding trees and vegetation screening views towards the site. Near views of the proposed development would be viewed in context to pylons adjacent and close to the site, and below the overhead pylons directly above the site. Over time, views of the proposal would become increasingly ingrained into the landscape through the establishment of proposed trees, native hedgerows and areas of native shrub planting.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Figures

Appendix 2 – Assessment Methodology

Appendix 3 – Assessment of Effects

Appendix 4 – Green Belt Statement

Appendix 5 – Landscape Strategy

Appendix 1 – Figures

Figure LA.01	Site Location
Figure LA.02	Designations
Figure LA.03	Public Access
Figures LA.04	National and Local Landscape Character Assessments
Figure LA.05	Topography
Figure LA.06	Site Context
Figures LA.07	Site Photographs
Figures LA.08	Zone of Theoretical Visibility plans
Figure LA.09	Context Photographs
Figures LA.10	Viewpoints

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Site location LA.01

- Key**
- Site boundary
 - 1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)
 - Districts
- Features:**
- Substations
 - Pylons
 - Overhead lines

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km
Scale 1:22,500 @ A3
TC24243 BESS Wymondley.gqz
March 2025


Floor 7, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF24 0EB

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Designations LA.02

- Key**
- Site boundary
 - 1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)
 - Ancient Woodland:

- Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland

Historic and cultural

- Scheduled Monuments

Listed Buildings:

- Grade I
- Grade II
- Grade II*

- Conservation Areas
- Registered Parks and Gardens (beyond study area)

Ecology designations:

- Local wildlife sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (beyond study area)

Planning designations:

- Green Belt

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km
Scale 1:22,500 @ A3
TC24243 BESS Wymondley.qgz
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Public access

LA.03

Key

-  Site boundary
-  1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)
-  Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Byway open to all traffic
-  Restricted byway
-  Unmetalled unclass country road
-  Chiltern Way
-  Hertfordshire Way
-  National Cycle Route
-  Access land



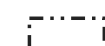

Floor 7, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF24 0EB

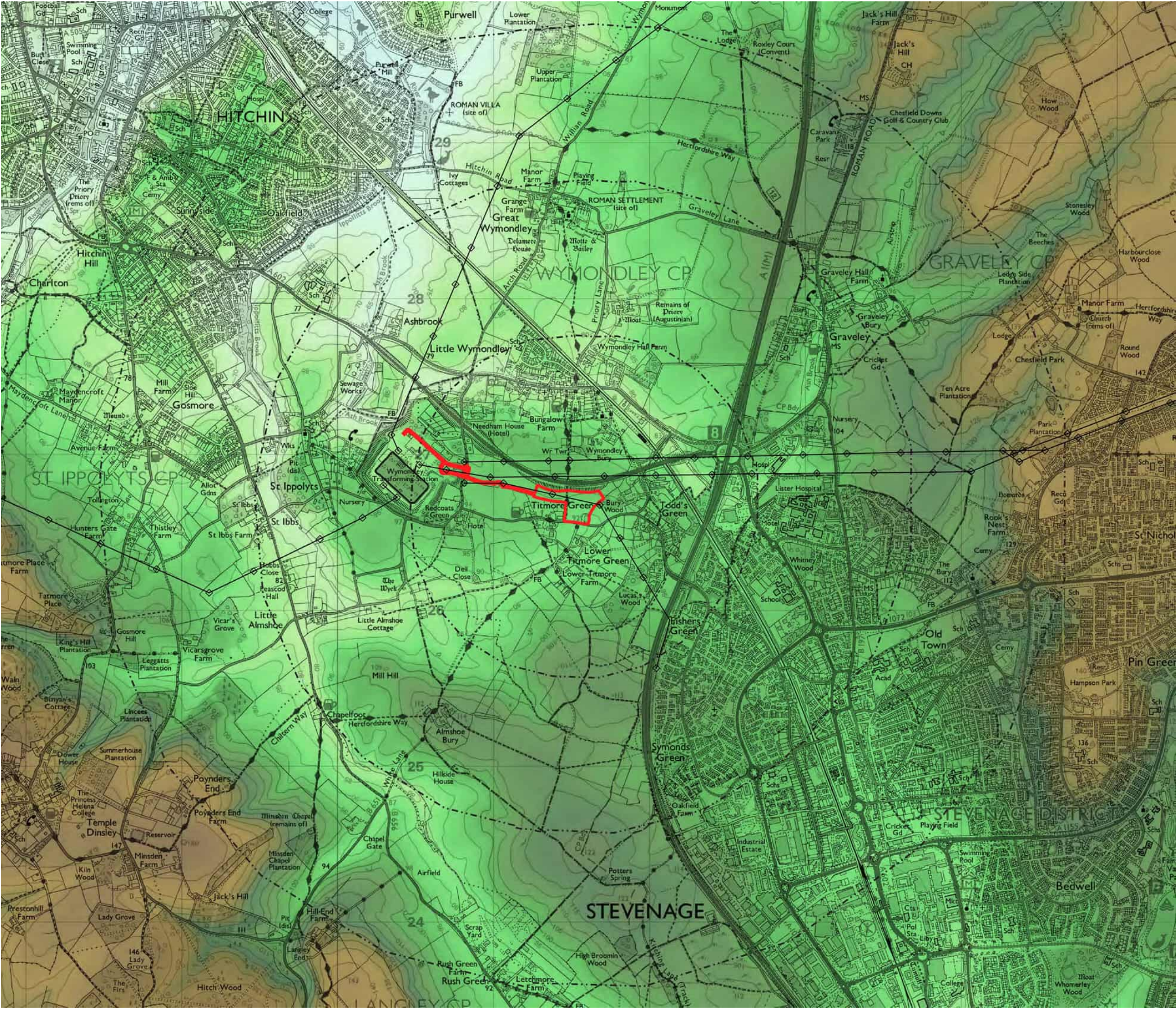
BESS, Wymondley

Landscape Character

LA.04

Key

-  Site boundary
 -  1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)
 -  National Charater Areas
- Hertfordshire LCAs:
-  Wymondley and Titmore Green
 -  Arlesey / Great Wymondley
 -  Almshoe Plateau
 -  No LCA
 -  Langley Valley
 -  Langley Scarp
 -  River Oughton and Purwell Valleys
 -  Baldock Gap
 -  Weston Plateau Parklands
 -  Offley / St Paul's Walden
 -  Weston - Green End Plateau



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Topography **LA.05**

Key

- Site boundary
- 1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)

m AOD:

50
60
70
80
90
100
110
120
130
140
150
160

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km

Scale 1:22,500 @ A3

TC24243 BESS Wymondley.qgz

March 2025

North

tir collective
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Floor 7, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF24 0EB

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Wymondley BESS: East option

L.06

Site context

- Key
- Site boundary (main area)

BESS area

Contours:

1m

5m

Listed Buildings:

Grade II

Footpath

Hertfordshire Way Long Distance Footpath

Features:

Pylons

Overhead lines

1

Site Photos (1-3)



Site Photo 1: View from the south of the site looking north



Site Photo 2: View from the east boundary of the site looking west



Site Photo 3, Part 1: View from the north of the site looking south



Site Photo 3, part 2: View from the north of the site looking south

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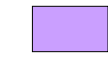
ZTV: Bare Earth

LA.08-1

Key

-  Site boundary
-  BESS area
-  1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)

Zone of Theoretical Visibility calculated to 4.2m high

-  Minor part of the proposed development potentially visible
-  Moderate part of the proposed development potentially visible
-  Most of the proposed development potentially visible

-  Chiltern Way
-  Hertfordshire Way
-  National Cycle Route
-  Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Byway Open to all Traffic
-  Restricted byway
-  Unmetalled unclassified county road

 01 Viewpoint locations

 A Context photos

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km
Scale 1:22,500 @ A3
TC24243 BESS Wymondley.qgz
March 2025


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BESS, Wymondley

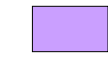
ZTV: Screening

LA.08-2

Key

-  Site boundary
-  BESS area
-  1km buffers from the site boundary (excluding cable route)

Zone of Theoretical Visibility calculated to 4.2m high

-  Minor part of the proposed development potentially visible
-  Moderate part of the proposed development potentially visible
-  Most of the proposed development potentially visible

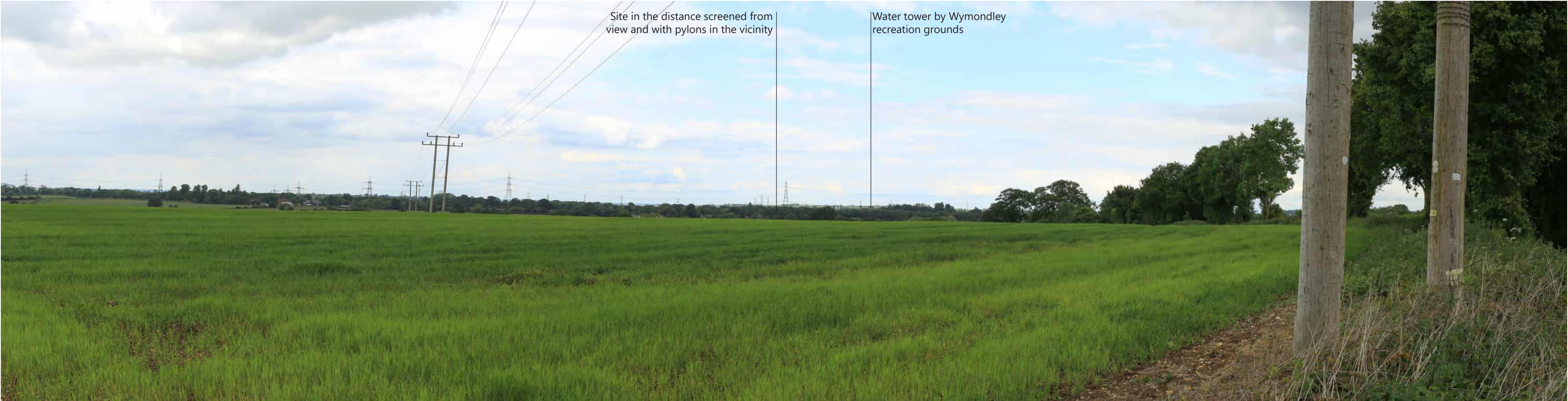
-  Chiltern Way
-  Hertfordshire Way
-  National Cycle Route
-  Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Byway Open to all Traffic
-  Restricted byway
-  Unmetalled unclassified county road

 01 Viewpoint locations

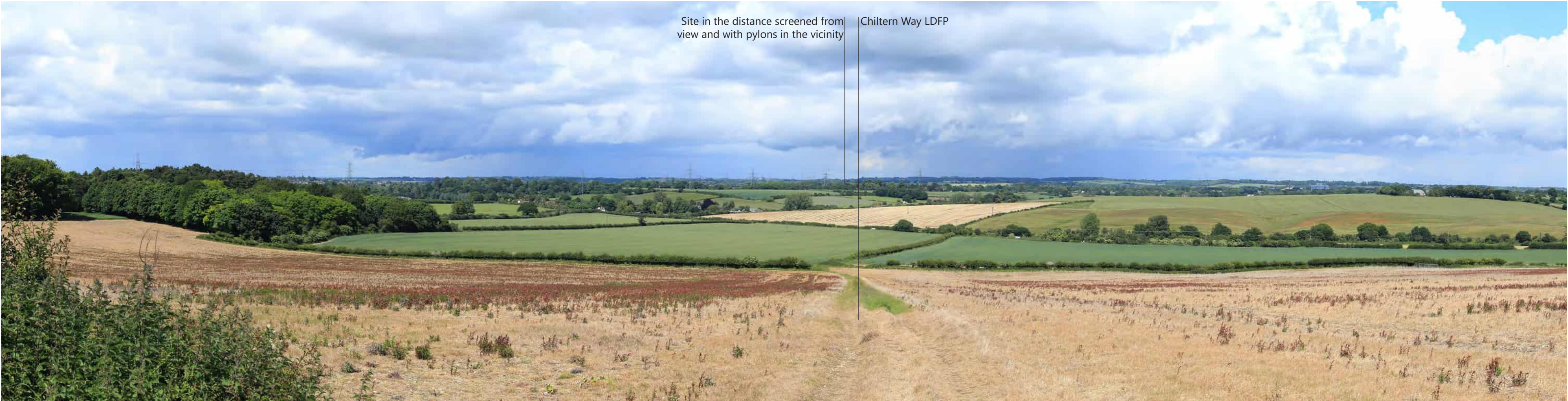
 A Context photos

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 km
Scale 1:22,500 @ A3
TC24243 BESS Wymondley.qgz
March 2025


Floor 7, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, CF24 0EB



Context view A: View from a bridleway to the south of the site, looking north



Context view B: View from the Chiltern Way Long Distance Footpath, close to Poynders End, looking northeast towards the site



Context view C: View from a Stevenage Road to the southeast of the site to show the recent vegetation clearance associated with the Council highways work



Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:		Horizontal field of view:	90° (cylindrical projection)	Correct printed image size:	820 x 250mm
OS reference:	E520815 N226910	Vertical field of view:	27°	Camera:	EOS 5D Mk III
Ground level:	96m AOD	Enlargement factor:	96%	Lens:	50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Direction of view:	137°	Principal distance:	812.5mm	Camera height:	1.5m AGL
Distance to site:	1m	Paper size:	840 x 297mm (extended A3)	Date and time:	13/06/2024 12:04

Project no. TC24243 March 2025

Viewpoint 01: View from the Hertfordshire Way LDPP alongside the west boundary of the site

Wymondley BESS

LA.10-1



Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:		Horizontal field of view:	90° (cylindrical projection)	Correct printed image size:	820 x 250mm
OS reference:	E521341 N226402	Vertical field of view:	27°	Camera:	EOS 5D Mk III
Ground level:	95m AOD	Enlargement factor:	96%	Lens:	50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Direction of view:	310°	Principal distance:	812.5mm	Camera height:	1.5m AGL
Distance to site:	2m	Paper size:	840 x 297mm (extended A3)	Date and time:	10/06/2024 13:27

Project no. TC24243 March 2025

Viewpoint 02: View from Stevenage Road alongside the south boundary of the site

Wymondley BESS

LA.10-2



Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:		Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)	Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
OS reference:	E521756 N226202	Vertical field of view: 27°	Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
Ground level:	93m AOD	Enlargement factor: 96%	Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Direction of view:	159°	Principal distance: 812.5mm	Camera height: 1.5m AGL
Distance to site:	381m	Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)	Date and time: 10/06/2024 16:41

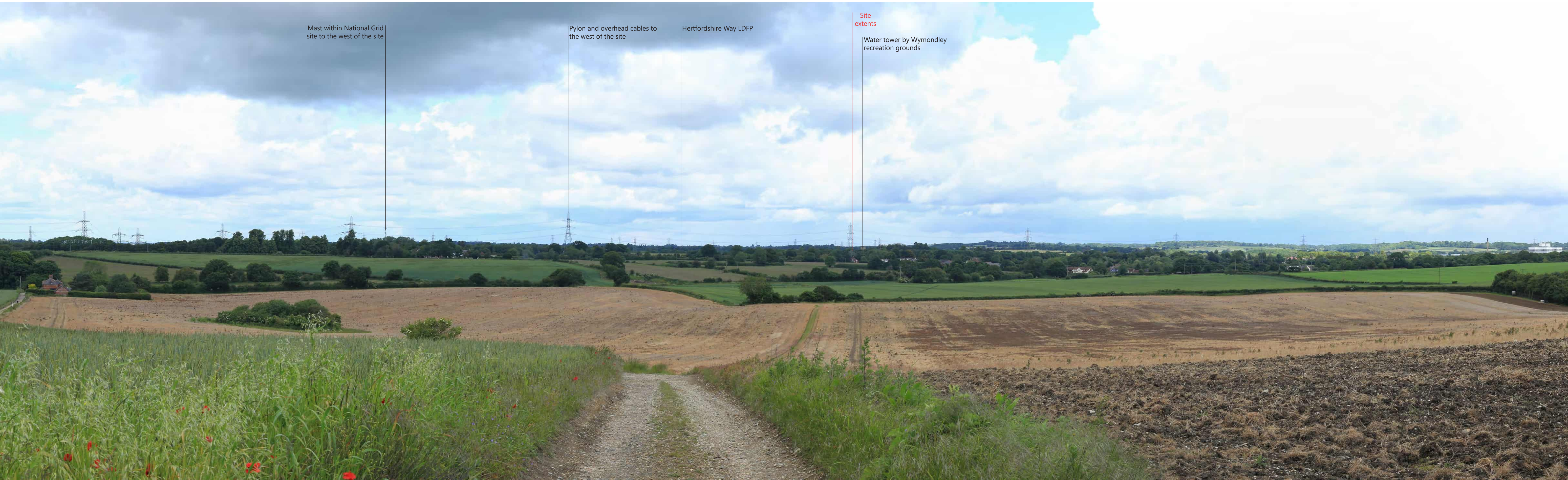
Project no. TC24243 March 2025

Viewpoint 03: View from a footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green

Wymondley BESS

LA.10-3





Baseline Photograph

View flat at a comfortable arm's length

Viewpoint information:

OS reference: E520883 N225845
Ground level: 89m AOD
Direction of view: 310°
Distance to site: 990m

Horizontal field of view: 90° (cylindrical projection)
Vertical field of view: 27°
Enlargement factor: 96%
Principal distance: 812.5mm
Paper size: 840 x 297mm (extended A3)

Correct printed image size: 820 x 250mm
Camera: EOS 5D Mk III
Lens: 50mm (Canon EF 50mm f/1.8)
Camera height: 1.5m AGL
Date and time: 10/06/2024 13:58

Project no. TC24243 March 2025

Viewpoint 04: View from the Hertfordshire Way LDFP

Wymondley BESS

LA.10-4



Appendix 2 – Assessment Methodology

The methodology used in this assessment has been based upon the recommendations in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in April 2013 (GLVIA3).

BESS developments have particular characteristics which are potential sources of impact on landscape character and on visual amenity:

Table A2-1 characteristics of battery storage developments

Character	Criteria
Location	The location of battery storage developments is typically dictated by the location of existing large substations and cable connections. Battery storage is frequently located in fields of consistent or gentle gradient.
Ground disturbance	Battery storage is generally constructed on concrete foundations. Cable routes are typically bored underground without changes above ground. Gravel access tracks are constructed to connect with nearby roads.
Construction compound	Construction compounds are temporary and used for delivery of the components.
Appearance	Battery storage units are typically laid out in rows, offset from field boundaries. The units are metal finish and can be finished in a subdued colour. The compound is surrounded by fencing with some CCTV cameras on poles.
Activity for maintenance and repair	Personnel, with vehicles and equipment, visiting the battery storage site at regular intervals, and the activities associated with the maintenance operations.
Views	Battery storage developments are generally constructed in small fields or part of a field within existing and sometimes enhanced hedgerow boundaries.
Duration	The battery storage site would be in place and is likely to be operational for at least 30 years. The construction is expected to be up to 14 months', and the effect during this period is considered short term.

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Landscape Effects Assessment

Establishing the landscape baseline

Baseline studies for assessing the landscape effects included a mix of desk study and field work to identify and record the character of the landscape and the elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors which contribute to it.

The elements that make up the landscape in the study area were recorded, including:

- physical influences - geology, soils, landform, drainage and water bodies;
- land cover, including different types of vegetation and patterns and types of tree cover;
- the influence of human activity, such as, land use and management, the character of settlements and buildings, the pattern and type of fields and enclosure; and
- the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, e.g.: its scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity, wildness.

The overall character of the landscape in the study area was considered, including the particular combinations of elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects that make each distinctive, usually by identification as key characteristics of the landscape. Evidence about change in the landscape was considered, including the condition of the different landscape types and/or areas, and their constituent parts and evidence of current pressures causing change in the landscape.

Landscape value

The European Landscape Convention promotes taking account of all landscapes, including ordinary or undesignated landscapes. The relative value attached to the landscape was considered at the baseline stage to inform the judgments about the effects likely to occur, whether to areas of landscape as a whole or to individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions, at the community, local, national or international levels.

Landscape designation is a starting point in understanding landscape value, but value may also be attached to undesignated landscapes. Special Qualities, reasons for designation, relevant policies in management plans or designation-specific policies in development plans, were consulted in assessing the relative value of the landscape within designated areas.

Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition, and where scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important associations, are likely to be highly valued. For "ordinary, everyday landscapes", the judgement was based upon the degree to which they are representative of typical character, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of its elements, scenic quality, sense of place, aesthetic and perceptual qualities.

When determining the landscape value, the following elements were considered, in addition to consideration of values associated with designations:

- The importance of the landscape, or the perceived value of the landscape to users or consultees, as indicated by, for example, international, national or local designations;
- The importance of elements or components of the landscape in the landscape character of the area or in their contribution to the landscape setting of other areas;
- Intrinsic aesthetic characteristics, scenic quality or sense of place, including providing landscape setting to other places;
- Cultural associations in the arts or in guides to the area, or popular use of the area for recreation, where experience of the landscape is important;
- The presence and scale of detractors in the landscape and the degree to which they are susceptible to improvement or upgrading; and
- Conservation interests: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.

The following table indicates the criteria used to determine the Landscape value:

Table A2-2 Criteria to determine landscape value.

Value	Criteria
High Value	Landscapes subject to international or national designations, and non-designated landscapes where the following considerations apply: Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact and in good condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape; There are important cultural and artistic associations; They are representative of typical character of the area or have a character or elements that are valued for their rarity; Particular components may be identified as important contributors to the landscape character; The landscape is valued for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.
Medium Value	Landscapes subject to local designations, and non-designated landscapes where the following considerations apply: Areas of landscape whose character is judged to be intact with few detractors; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features make a contribution to the landscape; There are cultural and artistic associations;

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Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Value	Criteria
	They are representative of typical character of the area or have a character or elements that are identified for their rarity; Particular components may be identified as contributors to the landscape character; The landscape is a setting for recreational activities where experience of the landscape forms part of the experience.
Low Value	Areas of non-designated landscapes whose character is in poor condition; Scenic quality, wildness or tranquillity, and/or natural or cultural heritage features are not key characteristics of the landscape; Cultural and artistic associations are absent; They are not representative of typical character of the area, but are also not valued for rarity; Particular components may be identified as contributors to the landscape character; There is little scope for recreational activities where experience of the landscape is important.

Where the value identified falls between high, medium and low, an intermediate level of value is assigned, e.g., "low-medium or medium-high." The basis for the value assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

The landscape baseline report aims to:

- describe, map and illustrate the character of the landscape of both the wider study area and the site and its immediate surroundings;
- identify and describe the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape, particularly those that are key characteristics contributing to its distinctive character;
- indicate the condition of the landscape, including the condition of landscape elements or features;
- project forward drivers and trends in change and how they may affect the landscape over time, in the absence of the proposal; and
- evaluate the landscape and, where appropriate, its components, aesthetic and perceptual aspects, particularly the key characteristics.

Assessing the Landscape Effects

The baseline information about the landscape was combined with understanding of the details of the proposal to identify and describe the landscape effects. The landscape receptors were identified, that is, the components or aspects of the landscape likely to be affected, such as, overall character or key characteristics, individual elements or features, or specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.

Interactions between the landscape receptors and the components or characteristics of the development at its different stages were considered: construction and operation, and the different types of effect: direct and indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, adverse and beneficial.

Landscape effects considered included:

- change in and/or partial or complete loss of elements, features or aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- addition of new elements or features that will influence the character and distinctiveness of the landscape; and
- combined effects of these changes on overall character.

The landscape effects were categorised as adverse, beneficial, or negligible in their consequences for the landscape, judged from the degree to which the proposal fits with existing character and the contribution the development makes to the landscape in its own right, even if in contrast to existing character.

The assessment of the landscape effects was based on assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change in the landscape arising from the proposal.

Sensitivity of the landscape receptors

The sensitivity of landscape receptors combines judgments of their susceptibility to the type of change arising from the development proposal and the value attached to the landscape.

Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

The value attached to the landscape receptors was established in the baseline study.

The sensitivity of landscape receptors to change is categorised as high, moderate or lesser, in accordance with the criteria set out below to determine the susceptibility and value of the landscape receptor.

When determining the landscape susceptibility, the following elements were considered:

- The ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the landscape character and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies;
- The degree to which the changes arising from the development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area;

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- The degree to which the changes arising from the development would alter individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character; and
- Existing landscape studies may identify the sensitivity of the landscape type or area or its characteristics to the general type of development that is proposed.

The following table indicates the criteria used to determine the landscape susceptibility:

Table A2-3 Criteria for landscape susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	The changes arising from the type of development would alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area. The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character. The type of development would compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape. The changes arising from the type of development would alter or remove elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to the landscape character or add new elements that would reinforce the key characteristics of the landscape character.
Low Susceptibility	The changes arising from the type of development would not alter the overall character, quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area. The type of development would not compromise the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies for the landscape. The changes arising from the type of development would not alter or remove individual elements or features or aesthetic and perceptual aspects important to, or add new elements incongruous to, the landscape character.

Where the susceptibility identified falls between high and low, an intermediate level of susceptibility is assigned, e.g., "moderate." The basis for the scale of susceptibility assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

Table A2-4 illustrates indicative criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity combining value and susceptibility.

Category	Indicative criteria
High sensitivity	A highly valued landscape e.g., of national or international importance, whose character or key characteristics are very susceptible to change; Aspects of the landscape character are highly valued as “key characteristics” and, often identified as susceptible to change in national or local character assessments; The landscape character is highly valued as intact and in good condition and particularly vulnerable to disturbance; A highly valued landscape with no or limited potential for substitution or replacement.
Moderate sensitivity	A landscape of local importance or value, whose character or key characteristics are susceptible to change; Other characteristics of the landscape character also valued in national or local character assessments and susceptible to change; The landscape character is valued for moderate condition and not particularly vulnerable to disturbance; A moderately valued landscape with some potential for substitution or replacement.
Lesser sensitivity	No or little evidence of value or importance attached to the landscape area, its features or characteristics; Few features, characteristics or qualities susceptible to disturbance or particularly susceptible to improvement or upgrading. Good potential for substitution or replacement

Where the sensitivity based on the combination of the judgement of susceptibility and value falls between high, moderate and lesser, an intermediate level of sensitivity is assigned, e.g., “lesser-moderate or moderate-high”. The basis for the sensitivity assigned to the landscape receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study and analysis of the nature of the potential effects on the receptor as a result of the proposed development.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

Effects on landscape receptors are assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility.

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Table A2-5 Considerations for assessing magnitude of landscape change.

Consideration	Indicative criteria
Size or scale of change	Categorised on a scale of Large, Medium, Small, Negligible or None, based upon: The extent of existing landscape elements that will be lost (or added), the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape; The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or additions of new ones; Whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.
Geographical area over which the landscape would be changed	Categorised on a scale of: Small: at site level, within the development site itself or at the level of the immediate setting of the site; Medium: at the scale of the landscape type or character area within which the proposal lies; Large: where the development influences several landscape types or character areas.
The duration of the changes	The durations of changes due to the development are categorised as: Short term: zero to three years; Medium term: three to twenty years; Long term: twenty to forty years; Permanent: more than forty years.
Reversibility	The prospect and the practicality of the effect being reversed.

Indicative criteria used to determine the magnitude of change is as follows:

Table A2-6 Indicative criteria for assessing magnitude of landscape change.

Magnitude of Change	Landscape Change
Great change	Major size or scale of change, affecting the landscape type or character of the area within which the proposal lies or extending over the wider area; likely to be longer term or permanently, with low prospect of reversibility
Medium change	Intermediate size or scale of change, affecting part of the landscape type or character of the area within which the proposal lies, or larger scale of change at the level of the site or immediate context; likely to continue into the medium term, with good prospect of reversibility

Magnitude of Change	Landscape Change
Small change	A minor proportion of the extent of the character type or area is affected or smaller scale of change over a larger extent; the changes occur at the level of the site or immediate context, and likely to be short term and reversible.
Negligible	No apparent change to landscape characteristics

While GLVIA3 includes the duration of the change in the consideration of the magnitude of change, in some cases a major size or scale of change of shorter duration may be considered a "great change".

Assessment of landscape effects

Final conclusions about the degree of effect, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes combined, based upon the following indicative considerations and criteria:

Table A2-7 Indicative criteria for assessing landscape effects.

Landscape effect	Indicative criteria
Major	Highly sensitive landscape completely degraded or greatly changed, with little or no scope for mitigation; Great improvement, sufficient to upgrade overall landscape character. Irreversible adverse or beneficial effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes.
Moderate	Medium change to moderately sensitive landscape or its character; lesser change to higher sensitivity landscape or greater change to less sensitive landscape.
Minor	Small or limited adverse change to the existing landscape or its character; greater change to less sensitive landscape; Considerable scope for mitigation; Small improvement to the existing landscape. Reversible adverse or beneficial effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value.
Negligible	No perceptible change to the existing landscape or its character; The change is difficult to discern.

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Intermediate conditions may be described, such as Moderate-Major, where the criteria for Moderate may be exceeded but not qualify as Major. Where magnitude of change is “None,” the effect would correspondingly be “None.”

Effects may be adverse or beneficial. In some instances, the effect may be offset by other considerations, for example, through the mitigation or landscape proposals, and the resulting effect may be neither beneficial nor adverse.

Visual Effects Assessment

Establishing the visual baseline

Baseline studies for visual effects establish:

- the area in which the development may be visible;
- the different groups of people who may experience views of the development;
- the location where they will be affected;
- the nature of the views at those points; and
- the different groups of people who may be affected by the changes in views or visual amenity.

The potential areas where the site and development proposal are likely to be visible were mapped. Landscape components affecting visibility, like buildings, walls, fences, trees, hedgerows, woodland and banks, were identified through field surveys and mapped where relevant.

The people within the area who may be affected by the changes in views and visual amenity – the visual receptors – were identified, for example:

- people living in the area;
- people passing through on roads and the local lanes;
- people visiting promoted landscapes or attractions; and
- people engaged in recreation of different types, including users of public rights of way, bridleways and access land.

Where relevant, views that form part of the experience and enjoyment of the landscape were noted, for example, from promoted paths, tourist or scenic routes and associated viewpoints.

The proposed viewpoints selected were discussed with the local authority, and informed by the visual appraisal, field surveys, and by desk-based research on various issues, for example, access and recreation, valued landscapes, tourist attractions and destinations, popular vantage points, and relative distribution of population. Viewpoints were selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptors.

The details of viewpoint locations were mapped and catalogued, sufficient to allow someone else to return to the location and record the same view. Photography was carried out in accordance with the Landscape Institute, Advice Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019).

The baseline report aims to describe, map and illustrate:

- the type of people (visual receptors) likely to be affected, making clear the activities they are likely to be involved in when enjoying the view;
- details of the viewpoints and of the visual receptors likely to be affected at each;
- the nature, composition and characteristics of the existing view, noting any particular horizontal or vertical emphasis, and any key foci; existing views have been illustrated in annotated photographs identifying important components of the view.
- elements, such as landform, buildings or vegetation, which may interrupt, filter or otherwise influence the views;
- whether or how the view may be affected by seasonal or weather variation.

Assessing the Visual Effects

Predicting and describing visual effects

The baseline information about the visual receptors was combined with understanding of the details of the proposal to identify and describe the visual effects, considering:

- changes in views and visual amenity arising from elements of the development;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the development and whether the viewer would focus on the development due to its scale and proximity or whether the development would be only a small or minor element in a panoramic view;
- whether the view is stationary or transient or one of a sequence of views;
- the nature of the changes: changes in the skyline, creation of a new visual focus in the view, introduction of new elements, changes in visual simplicity or complexity, alteration of visual scale or the degree of visual enclosure; and
- seasonal differences in effects, arising from the varying degree of screening and/or filtering of views by vegetation in summer and winter.

Categorising the visual effects as adverse or beneficial (or neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity was based on judgments about whether the changes affect the quality of the visual experience, and the nature of the existing views and the nature of the changes to the views.

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The visual effects were assessed, based on assessment of the nature of the visual receptors and their sensitivity, and the nature of the effect on views and visual amenity, that is, the magnitude of visual change.

Sensitivity of the visual receptors

The people or groups of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint – the visual receptors – are assessed in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and the value attached to particular view locations and views.

The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations and the extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views or the visual amenity they experience at particular locations. The context of the location also contributes to susceptibility, for example, people viewing from residential properties or from a valued landscape are likely to be more susceptible to change than people viewing from an industrial context. Table A2-8 illustrates indicative criteria used to determine visual receptor susceptibility:

Table A2-8 Indicative criteria to determine visual receptor susceptibility.

Susceptibility	Criteria
High Susceptibility	Residents at home. People engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to designated landscapes, heritage assets, or other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience. Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.
Moderate Susceptibility	Residents at home with oblique, filtered, interrupted views. People engaged in outdoor sports and recreation, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the activity/sport rather than the view. Visitors to the landscape where the surroundings contribute to the experience.
Low Susceptibility	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape. People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity not on their surroundings and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, except along recognised scenic routes, where awareness of views is likely to be high.

Where the susceptibility identified falls between high and low, an intermediate level of susceptibility is assigned, e.g., "medium." The basis for the scale of susceptibility assigned to the visual receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

Judgments were made about the value attached to the views identified, taking account of recognition, for example, in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations, appearance in guidebooks or on tourist maps, promotion of particular locations or provision of facilities provided for their enjoyment, such as parking places, sign boards and interpretive material, or references to them in literature or art.

The sensitivity of visual receptors to change is categorised as high, moderate or lesser, in accordance with the criteria set out below.

Table A2-9 Indicative criteria for visual sensitivity

Category	Indicative criteria
High sensitivity	Viewers in residential or community properties. Views experienced by many viewers. Daily, prolonged or sustained views available over a long period, or where the view of the landscape is an important attractant. A view from a landscape, recreation facility or route valued nationally or internationally for its visual amenity.
Moderate sensitivity	Viewers in residential or community properties with partial or largely screened views of the site. Frequent open views available. Viewers are pursuing activities such as sports or outdoor work, where the landscape is not the principal reason for being there or the focus of attention is only partly on the view. A view from other valued landscapes, or a regionally important recreation facility or route.
Lesser sensitivity	A view of low importance or value, or where the viewer's attention is not focused their surroundings. A view from a landscape of moderate or less importance, or a locally important recreation facility. Occasional open views or glimpsed views available; passing views available to travellers in vehicles. A view available to few viewers.

Where the sensitivity based on the combination of the judgement of susceptibility and value falls between high, moderate and lesser, an intermediate level of sensitivity is assigned, e.g., "lesser-moderate or moderate-high". The basis for the sensitivity assigned to the visual receptor is linked back to evidence from the baseline study and analysis of the nature of the potential effects on the receptor as a result of the proposed development.

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Magnitude of visual change

The visual effects identified are evaluated in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, duration and reversibility.

Table A2-10 Considerations for assessing magnitude of visual change.

Consideration	Indicative criteria
Size or scale of change	Categorised on a scale of large, medium, small or none, based upon: The degree of the loss or addition of features in the view; The extent of changes in the composition of the view, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development; The degree of contrast or integration of the changes with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics; The nature of the view of the proposed development, whether full, partial or glimpsed, or the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced.
Geographical area over which the changes would be experienced	The geographic extent reflects: The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible; The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development.
The duration of the changes	Categorised as: Short term: zero to three years; Medium term: three to twenty years; Long term: twenty to forty years; Permanent: more than forty years.
Reversibility	The prospect and the practicality of the effect being reversed.

Indicative criteria used to determine the magnitude of change is as follows:

Table A2-11 Indicative criteria for assessing magnitude of visual change.

Magnitude of Change	Visual Change
Great change	Major size or scale of change, affecting a large proportion of the angle of the view, or affecting views from a wide area; continuing into the longer term or permanently, with low prospect of reversibility.
Medium change	Intermediate size or scale of change, affecting part of the angle of the view, or affecting some views from the wider area, or larger scale of change in views from within the immediate context of the site; continuing into the medium term, with good prospect of reversibility.
Small change	A minor proportion of the angle of view is affected or the contribution of the changed elements or characteristics to the composition of the view is not

Magnitude of Change	Visual Change
	important; the changes are viewed from longer distances, are short term and reversible.
Negligible	Barely perceptible change or the change is difficult to discern; No change in the view or the changes due to the development are out of view.

Judging the overall visual effects

Final conclusions about the degree of visual effects, whether adverse or beneficial, relate the separate judgements about sensitivity of the receptors and magnitude of the changes, as illustrated in the indicative criteria shown in Table A2-12:

Table A2-12 Indicative criteria for assessing visual effects.

Visual effect	Indicative criteria
Major	Great change or visual intrusion experienced by highly sensitive viewers or from highly sensitive public viewpoints; The proposal would cause a great deterioration in the existing view available to highly sensitive viewers; Great improvement in the view, sufficient to upgrade overall visual amenity. Large scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view, especially where affecting people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity or people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes.
Moderate	Medium change or visual intrusion experienced by moderately sensitive viewers; Smaller change to higher sensitivity viewers or greater change to less sensitive viewers.
Minor	Small or localised visual intrusion in the existing view, especially for less sensitive viewers. Small or localised reduction in visual intrusion, or improvement in the view. Reversible short-term changes, in views available to people for whom the view of the landscape is not the principal focus of interest.
Negligible	Negligible change in the view or the change is difficult to discern even for a highly sensitive viewer.

In addition to these criteria, in some instances the effect may be discernible or greater, but offset by other considerations, for example, through the mitigation or landscape proposals for the development, and the resulting effect is neither beneficial nor adverse.



Appendix 3 – Assessment of Effects



Table Appendix 3.1: Landscape Magnitude of Change

Landscape Receptor	Magnitude of Change <u>during construction</u>	Magnitude of Change at <u>year 1 of operation</u>	Magnitude of Change at <u>year 10 of operation</u>
Irregular field patterns and sizes	The construction activities would be contained within the existing and retained field pattern. There would be some level changes within the north of the site and the implementation of the proposed hedge to the south of BESS compound would partially alter the shape of the field. The scale of change to the field pattern is assessed as small, affecting only the site and its immediate surroundings. Some changes would be permanent whilst others would be leading to long-term and reversible changes. Therefore, the magnitude of change is considered to be medium-small.	During operation, the proposed development would be integrated within the retained field pattern, with the layout of the BESS infrastructure shaped accordingly. Mitigation measures would enhance the existing hedgerow features that define the field boundaries, although the field’s size and pattern would be altered by the mitigative planting in the centre, effectively splitting the field into two. However, this change would still be consistent with the irregular field patterns and sizes typical of the area, and the enhancements would be permanent. The scale of change to the field pattern is assessed as medium-small, limited to the site and its immediate surroundings. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be medium-small.	At year 10, the magnitude of change would be similar to the changes at year 1, but the associated shrub planting, hedgerows, trees, and grassland within the site would be established. The magnitude of change would be considered medium-small.
Boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees.	The boundary trees and hedgerows would be retained and protected, with appropriate buffers established around Root Protection Areas. Proposed mitigation planting, including new hedgerows, trees, and areas of shrub planting would subtly alter the existing field pattern while reinforcing its structure. No vegetation would be removed to accommodate the BESS infrastructure. The scale of change is assessed as small, affecting a limited geographical area. These alterations would be permanent but would complement and enhance the existing landscape character. Consequently, the magnitude of change is considered to be small.	During operation of the BESS development, existing hedgerows and trees would be retained, continuing to form a key characteristic of the area. Proposed mitigation planting would strengthen the existing field boundaries, providing some screening while also enhancing wildlife corridors and ecological connectivity. The scale of change is assessed as small, affecting a limited geographical area. While the new planting would result in a permanent alteration, it would reinforce and enhance the existing landscape character. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be small.	At year 10, the proposed planting along the site boundaries would be established and ingrained, reinforcing the existing landscape character. The magnitude of change would be negligible.

Landscape Receptor	Magnitude of Change <u>during construction</u>	Magnitude of Change at <u>year 1 of operation</u>	Magnitude of Change at <u>year 10 of operation</u>
Semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views	Construction activities on the site would introduce additional sound and movement, further diminishing the semi-rural qualities. However, these activities would be perceived within the context of the fast-moving vehicles along the adjacent A602 dual carriageway and the relatively local busy Stevenage Road. The sense of enclosure within the site is likely to be retained, along with the few short- to mid-distance views. The scale of change is assessed as medium-small, affecting a small geographical area within a landscape already influenced by transport links and overhead lines and pylons. While construction would be a short-term process, it would result in long-term change. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be medium.	The proposed development would detract from some of the rural qualities for part of the site, although this would be in the context of existing overhead lines and pylons within the site and its immediate vicinity. The proposed infrastructure and planting would introduce additional elements, interrupting some short and mid-distance views to the south. The scale of change is assessed as medium, affecting a small part of the geographical area over the long-term. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be medium.	At year 10, the shrub planting, hedgerows, trees, and grassland within the site would be established, reinforcing the sense of enclosure and screening some short- and mid-distance views. The scale of change is assessed as medium-small, affecting a limited geographical area within an area that is influenced by energy infrastructure and key transport links. Overall, the magnitude of change is concluded to be medium-small.
Recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDFP	During construction, there could be some short-term interruptions/ diversions to the Hertfordshire Way LDFP along the western boundary of the site. Perceptual changes for users of this route would also include the movement and sound of construction vehicles, as well as the installation of the BESS and associated infrastructure. However, some of these sounds would be experienced in the context of the neighbouring A602 dual carriageway and Stevenage Road. The scale of change is assessed as large-medium, though it would affect only a small part of the geographical area. While the construction activities would be short-term, they would result in long-term changes. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be medium.	The Hertfordshire Way LDFP passing the west boundary of the site would be retained and protected. Perceptual changes would be short-distance views of the proposed development, though some of these views would be filtered by the retained and proposed vegetation. The scale of indirect long-term changes is assessed as medium that would affect a small part of the geographical area. Overall, the magnitude of change is considered to be medium-small.	By year 10, the magnitude of change to the landscape character experienced along the Hertfordshire Way would be comparable to that at year 1, but the proposed planting would be largely established. The established planting scheme would aid in integrating the battery storage infrastructure into the surrounding landscape, softening their visual presence. Although the proposed development would remain noticeable along a short section of this route, the maturity of the vegetation would reduce its visual prominence and contribute to a more cohesive appearance with the surrounding landscape context that contains pylons and overhead cables. Consequently, the magnitude of change is considered to be small.

Table Appendix 3.2: Landscape effects

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity to changes arising from the proposals	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effects <u>during construction</u>	Degree & nature of effects at <u>year 1 of operation</u>	Degree & nature of effects at <u>year 10 of operation</u>
Irregular field patterns and sizes	Moderate-lesser sensitivity	During Construction: Medium-Small Year 1 of operation: Medium-Small Year 10 of operation: Medium-Small	Effects would be moderate-minor adverse due to the small change for the moderate-lesser sensitive receptor.	Effects would be moderate-minor adverse due to the small change on the landscape for the moderate-lesser sensitive receptor.	Effects would be moderate-minor and maybe regarded as neutral as the proposed development would be ingrained within the existing field pattern. Although the established hedgerow would almost spit the field in two, the pattern reflects adjacent fields and sizes.
Boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees	Moderate-lesser sensitivity	During Construction: Small Year 1 of operation: Small Year 10 of operation: Negligible	Effects would be minor and maybe regarded as neutral as existing vegetation would be retained and protected.	Effects would be minor and maybe regarded as neutral as existing vegetation would be retained and protected.	Effects would be negligible as the establishing planting would be ingrained with the retained vegetation. There would be no apparent change to the landscape characteristic.
Semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views	Moderate sensitivity	During Construction: Medium Year 1 of operation: medium Year 10 of operation: Medium-Small	Effects would be moderate adverse due to the medium changes for moderate sensitive receptor within an area that is currently influenced by energy infrastructure and key transport routes.	Effects would be moderate adverse due to the medium changes for moderate sensitive receptor within an area that is currently influenced by energy infrastructure and key transport routes.	Effects would be moderate-minor adverse as the proposed planting would be more established.
Recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDFP	Moderate sensitivity	During Construction: Medium Year 1 of operation: Medium-Small Year 10 of operation: Small	Effects would be moderate adverse due to the medium changes for moderate sensitive receptor.	Indirect effects would be moderate-minor adverse due to the medium changes for moderate sensitive receptor.	Indirect effects would be minor adverse due to the small changes as proposed planting provides some screening and filtering of views for moderately sensitive receptor.



Table Appendix 3.3: View with proposed development and magnitude of change

Viewpoint reference	View of the proposed development <u>during construction</u> and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development at <u>year 1 of operation</u> and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development at <u>year 10 of operation</u> and magnitude of change
01- Hertfordshire Way, adjacent to the west boundary of the site	There would be some near and open views of the construction activities between gaps in the retained vegetation, below the overhead cables. Movement and sound from construction activities would also be discernible within the immediate setting, although in the context of sound associated with the A602 dual carriageway. The scale of change to the view would be medium-large, with views of the construction activities occurring at close range below views of the overhead cables with woodland blocks forming the backdrop. The changes to the view would be over a wide angle of view, although the geographical extent of effects would be localised to this stretch of the footpath. While the construction activities would be short-term, they would lead to long-term changes in the landscape. Overall, the magnitude of change during construction is considered to be great-medium.	At year 1 of operation, the proposed BESS development, associated infrastructure, and initial planting would introduce a clearly visible additional feature at close range, occupying a large portion of the field of view. The previously grass field would now accommodate the BESS development in its northern extents. While the proposed vegetation would be in its early stages of establishment, some degree of integration would occur due to the accommodation of the proposal within the existing topography and field pattern, alongside existing pylon and overhead line infrastructure. The scale of change is assessed as medium-large, affecting a small localised geographical area of the footpath. While the changes to the view are considered long-term, they would remain reversible. Overall, the magnitude of visual change is assessed as great-medium.	After ten years of establishment, the scale of change would be similar to year one however, the effects of mitigation through established mitigation planting would be in place. Some degree of integration would occur due to the establishment of proposed vegetation and the accommodation of the proposal within the existing field pattern backdropped by woodland, alongside existing pylon and overhead line infrastructure. The scale of change is assessed as medium over a wider proportion of the angle of view, affecting a small geographical area of the footpath. While the changes to the view are considered long-term, they would remain reversible. Overall, the magnitude of visual change is assessed as medium.
02- Stevenage Road	There would be near and open views of the construction activities within the site from the proposed access. Positioned at the site entrance, this location would experience movement and sound from construction activities within the context of the relatively busy Stevenage Road. The scale of change to the near view would be medium-large over a wide proportion of the angle of view, below the woodland backdrop. The geographical area affected would be small, limited to the footpath and site access. The magnitude of change during construction is assessed as medium-great.	The BESS development, associated infrastructure, and initial planting would introduce a clearly visible additional feature at near range, albeit within close context of existing overhead cables and pylons. While the newly implemented mitigative vegetation in the centre of the site would be unestablished, it would begin to soften some views of the proposed development. The scale of change to the view would be medium-large over a wide proportion of the angle of view. The geographical area affected would be small, limited to the footpath and access point, while views elsewhere along Stevenage Road would be largely screened and filtered. The magnitude of change is assessed as medium-great.	After ten years of establishment, the scale of change would be similar to year one however, the effects of the established mitigation planting would be in place. Screening and filtering of views would be provided by planting to the south of the BESS development, in the middle of the site, helping to integrate the proposal into the view within the context of existing energy infrastructure. The scale of the change to the view after ten years would be medium.

Viewpoint reference	View of the proposed development <u>during construction</u> and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development at <u>year 1 of operation</u> and magnitude of change	View of the proposed development at <u>year 10 of operation</u> and magnitude of change
03 - Footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green	It is likely that much of the construction activities would be screened and filtered by intervening vegetation along field boundaries between the viewpoint and the site, particularly during the summer months when vegetation is in leaf. There may be some increased perception of noise and movement within the landscape due to construction activity, but these would be experienced in the context of the nearby Stevenage Road and A1(M). The scale of change to the view is assessed as small over a medium proportion of the angle of view with much of the view screened and filtered by vegetation. The geographical area affected would be localised to the footpath. While construction activities would be temporary, they would lead to long-term changes. The magnitude of change during construction is considered to be small.	The proposed development is likely to be screened from view by intervening vegetation, particularly during the summer months when vegetation is in leaf. The recessive colours of the proposed development combined with proposed planting, although not yet established, is likely to result in the development being imperceptible. Any small glimpse views of the proposed development would be viewed in context to existing energy infrastructure directly above and adjacent to the site. Due to the screening effects of intervening vegetation and the context of existing energy infrastructure, the proposed development is unlikely to be discernible. The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible.	The scale of change ten years after completion would remain similar to that at year one; however, by this time, the proposed planting within the site would be fully established. As a result, any small glimpses are likely to be fully screened. The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible.
04 - Hertfordshire Way to the southeast of the site	Due to the distance of the viewpoint from the site and intervening vegetation within the context of the site, any views of the construction activities are likely to be limited, particularly during the summer months when vegetation is in leaf. The activities would be viewed below several pylons and overhead cables crossing the skyline. Any changes to the view would be small over a small proportion of the angle of view. The geographical area affected would be limited to more elevated sections of the footpath. While construction activities would be temporary, they would result in long-term changes. Overall, the magnitude of change during construction is assessed as small.	The BESS development and most of its associated infrastructure in the distance would be largely screened and filtered from view by intervening vegetation, particularly during the summer months when vegetation is in leaf. Any small glimpses of the proposed development may not be discernible below the prominent energy infrastructure across the view. Due to the screening effects of intervening vegetation and the context of existing energy infrastructure, the proposed development in the distance is unlikely to be discernible. The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible.	The scale of change ten years after completion would remain similar to that at year one; however, by this time, the proposed planting within the site would be fully established. As a result, any small glimpses are likely to be fully screened. The magnitude of change is assessed as negligible.

Table Appendix 3.4: Visual effects

Visual Receptors & Sensitivity	Reference Viewpoints	Magnitude of change	Degree & nature of effects <u>during construction</u>	Degree & nature of effects at <u>year 1 of operation</u>	Degree & nature of effects at <u>year 10 of operation</u>
People in residential properties close to the site with oblique or partially screened and/ or filtered views towards the site: moderate sensitivity	02- Stevenage Road	During Construction: Medium-great Completion – Year 1: Medium-great Completion – Year 10: Medium	Due to the screening effect of surrounding vegetation, visual changes are likely to be mainly restricted to construction activity at the site entrance, along Stevenage Road. The visual effects would be moderate adverse during the short-term activities.	Retained vegetation is likely to largely screen views towards the proposed development for nearby residents. Effects would be moderate-minor adverse .	Proposed planting would be established alongside retained vegetation, further limiting the oblique and partially screened views for residents. Effects would be minor adverse .
Users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP within or close to the with open views of the site: moderate-high sensitivity	01 - Hertfordshire Way, adjacent to the west boundary of the site 02 - Stevenage Road	During Construction: Medium-great Completion – Year 1: Medium-great Completion – Year 10: Medium	Effects would be moderate-major, adverse as a result of the combination of moderate-high sensitivity receptors and medium-great magnitude of change.	Effects would be moderate-major, adverse as a result of the combination of moderate-high sensitivity receptors and medium-great magnitude of change.	Due to proposed vegetation being established and partially screening some views, effects would be moderate, adverse as a result of the combination of moderate-high sensitivity receptors and medium or medium-great magnitude of change.
Users of the footpath network local to the site to the southeast with oblique, partial and filtered views of the site: moderate-lesser sensitivity	03 - Footpath to the east of Lower Titmore Green	During Construction: Small Operation at year 1: Negligible Operation at year 10: Negligible	Views of the construction activities would be largely screened from view by intervening vegetation, effects would be minor, adverse .	Negligible	Negligible
Users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP beyond 1km to the site with filtered, oblique or partial views: moderate sensitivity	04 - Hertfordshire Way to the southeast of the site	During Construction: Small Operation at year 1: Negligible Operation at year 10: Negligible	Due to the existing energy infrastructure within the distance view, effects would be minor, adverse .	Negligible	Negligible
Local road users close to the site with oblique, filtered or partial views of the site: lesser sensitivity	02- Stevenage Road	During Construction: Medium-great Completion – Year 1: Medium-great Completion – Year 10: Medium	Effects would minor, adverse for road users traveling close to the site where there would be oblique views between small gaps of retained vegetation. Any views of the activities would be over the short duration.	Effects would minor, adverse for road users traveling close to the site where there would be oblique views between small gaps of retained and proposed vegetation. Any views of the proposed development would be over the short duration.	Effects would minor, adverse although the proposed vegetation would be established, some small views maybe possible between some gaps.

Appendix 4 – Green Belt Statement

Appendix 4 – Green Belt Statement

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Tir Collective is instructed by EDF Renewables to produce this Green Belt Statement (GBS). This statement is Appendix 2 to the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp) in relation to the proposed BESS development, Wymondley, North Hertfordshire. The LVApp attached to this appendix is accompanied by a series of figures, see **Appendix 1**, which should be read alongside this GBS.
- 1.1.2 The Site is located within the London Area Green Belt in North Hertfordshire District. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that this type of development within a Green Belt is only approved in very special circumstances. This statement relates to the five purposes of the Green Belt as defined at NPPF paragraph 143¹.
- 1.1.3 In preparing this GBS, reference has been made to the Landscape Institute's Landscape Briefing: Green Belt Policy, April 2018. It recognises that "Green Belt is a spatial planning tool, not a designation that provides landscape protection. Current Green Belt policy does not require Green Belt to be of high landscape quality or even particularly attractive."²

1.2 London Area Green Belt

- 1.2.1 The Site is located within the London Area Green Belt in North Hertfordshire District. It forms part of the wider and extensive Green Belt around London, covering areas that is outside of larger settlement areas such as Hitchin, Stevenage, and Little Wymondley. Within the vicinity of the Site, the Green Belt covers existing development including Wymondley Transforming Station to the west and smaller settlements such as Titmore Green and St Ippolyts.

1.3 Green Belt Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated February 2025³, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF 'is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.' The key principles that are of relevance to Green Belt and the Proposed Development include:

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/13-protecting-green-belt-land>

² Page 5, The Landscape Institute, Landscape Briefing: Green Belt, April 2018, on LI website: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/policy/green-belt-policy/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

- **Section 13: Protecting Green Belt land, paragraph 142** states “The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.”
- **Paragraph 143** lists the five purposes that the Green Belt serves:
 - a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.”
- **Paragraph 153** states “Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved in except in very special circumstances.”
- **Paragraph 154** states “Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

[...]

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

ii. engineering operations;
- **Paragraph 160** states “When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.”

NPPF Guidance: Green Belt

- 1.3.2 The Green Belt Planning Practice Guidance, updated 27 February 2025, provides advise on the role of Green Belt in the planning system. Of relevance to the Proposed Development and landscape and visual aspects is:

- **“What factors can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt?”**

Assessing the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, where it is relevant to do so, requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case. By way of example, the courts have identified a number of matters which may need to be taken into account in making this assessment. These include, but are not limited to:

- openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume

- [...]”

Local Planning Policy

- 1.3.3 Planning policy for the area is provided by the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031, adopted 8th November 2022.

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

- 1.3.4 Green Belt policies relevant to the Site and the Proposed Development include:

- **Policy SP5: Countryside and Green Belt** states North Hertfordshire District Council “support the principles of the Green Belt and recognise the intrinsic value of the countryside....

[...]

c) will only permit development proposals in the Green Belt where they would not result in inappropriate development or where very special circumstances have been demonstrated; and

d) will operate a general policy of restraint in Rural Areas beyond the Green Belt through the application of our detailed policies”.

Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.3.5 The site is located in the southeast of the parish of Wymondley. The Wymondley Neighbourhood Development Plan 2015-2031 was published 26th September 2019, which forms part of the Development Plan for North Hertfordshire.

- 1.3.6 Green Belt policies relevant to the Site and the Proposed Development include:

- **Policy GB1** states “Development proposals impacting on Wymondley Parish must comply with Government Green Belt policy; primary consideration will be given to effective use of brown-field sites, which are not of high environmental value.

Development proposals should not impact negatively on Wymondley Parish – particularly in terms of visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt landscape and its important contribution to the character of our villages/hamlets.”

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031: Green Belt Review

- 1.3.7 The **North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031: Green Belt Review**, published 2016 and then updated in 2018 provides an assessment of the contribution of Green Belt within North Hertfordshire to the purposes of Green Belt as set out in NPPF.

1.3.8 The report uses the following criteria:

3	Site or parcel makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purpose(s)
2	Site or parcel makes a moderate contribution to Green Belt purpose(s)
1	Site or parcel makes a limited contribution to Green Belt purpose(s)

1.3.9 The review subdivided the Green Belt in North Hertfordshire into 22 parcels for analysis. The Site is located in the south of parcel 10: Little Wymondley, which covers the area between the southeast of Hitchin and the northwest of Stevenage, except for the settlement area of Little Wymondley. The boundaries are defined by the Hitchin settlement edge, the district boundary at Stevenage, the A1(M), and other local roads.

1.3.10 Table 2-1 below provides a summary of the review for parcel 10: Little Wymondley in relation to its contribution to four of the five Green Belt purposes. Green Belt Purpose 5, as defined in NPPF, is not assessed in this Green Belt Review.

Table 2-1 Parcel 10: Little Wymondley

Green Belt purpose	Parcel 10: Little Wymondley Strategic Assessment of the existing Green Belt
Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	3 - Plays a significant part in the prevention of sprawl from Hitchin to the northwest.
Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	3 - Plays a significant part in the preventing Hitchin and Stevenage merging.
Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	2 - This parcel is more urbanised than the neighbouring countryside due to the amount of transport routes, small settlements and urban fringe land use. In relation to maintaining a sense of openness, particularly in light of proximity to a settlement edge. The parcel makes a Moderate Contribution due to the "generally mixed levels of visual and physical openness due to topography and urbanising influences."
Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	2 - Has some contribution to the setting of Hitchin. However, no direct visual link with the historic core.

Green Belt purpose	Parcel 10: Little Wymondley Strategic Assessment of the existing Green Belt
Overall evaluation and contribution to Green Belt purposes	Has a close relationship with the north-west edge of Stevenage and the southern edge of Hitchin. Links the buffer between Letchworth/Hitchin to the wider countryside to the west. Overall makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purposes, helping to prevent sprawl and the merger of towns.

1.3.11 The Green Belt Review identified the principal features of the Green Belt in North Hertfordshire. Of relevance to the Site and the Proposed Development are:

- A strategic role as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt to the north of London, helping to shape the growth of the conurbation and the towns on its periphery.
- A sub-regional role in separating the towns of Stevenage and Hitchin...
- A sub-regional role in protecting the countryside from the sprawl of built-up areas both to the east and west of the District.
- A sub-regional role in providing a transition to open countryside between Stevenage/Hitchin and Luton...
- A local role in protecting the setting of the historic towns of Hitchin...
- A local role in protecting the countryside from encroachment generally and the setting of villages within that countryside.

1.3.12 The Green Belt Review then went on to provide a more detailed evaluation. The 22 parcels were subdivided into sub-parcels and an assessment of the contribution the sub-parcels make to the Green Belt purposes was then reviewed. The Site is located in west of sub-parcel **10e** (parcel 10 was subdivided into 5 sub-parcels (a-e)). The west boundary of the sub-parcel 10e is defined by Blakemore End Road; the south boundary by Stevenage Road; the east boundary by the A1(M) and District boundary; and the north boundary by the A602.

1.3.13 Table 2-2 below provides a summary of the review for sub-parcel 10e in relation to its contribution to four of the five Green Belt purposes.

Table 2-2 Sub-parcel 10e

Green Belt purpose	Parcel 10: Little Wymondley Strategic Assessment of the existing Green Belt
Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	3 - Plays a significant part in the prevention of urban sprawl to northwest of Stevenage.

Green Belt purpose	Parcel 10: Little Wymondley Strategic Assessment of the existing Green Belt
Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	3 - Plays a critical role in the preventing Hitchin and Stevenage merging.
Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	2 – Protects countryside in gap between Hitchin and Stevenage. In relation to maintaining a sense of openness, particularly in light of proximity to a settlement edge. The sub-parcel makes a Moderate Contribution as there are “Generally mixed levels of visual and physical openness due to topography and urbanising influences. Scattered development at Titmore Green and plays reinforcing role to adjoining parcels which prevent outward encroachment of Stevenage and Hitchin.”
Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	1 – No relationship with historic towns.
Overall evaluation and contribution to Green Belt purposes	Significant Contribution Parcel is part of the green wedge between Stevenage and Hitchin and makes a significant contribution to Green Belt purposes.

1.4 Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS)

1.4.1 An LVApp was produced by Chartered Landscape Architects at Tir Collective in March 2025. It was produced in accordance with current best practice **Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition**, GLIVA3⁴. It describes the landscape of the Site, the surrounding landscape context, and reviews the potential landscape and visual amenity effects as a result the Proposed Development. The LVApp is attached to this appendix.

1.4.2 The conclusions of the landscape character and visual amenity review in relation to the Green Belt are described below.

Landscape character

1.4.3 The site is not located within a designated landscape and there is no public access on the site, but the Hertfordshire Way Long Distance Footpath (LDFP) runs alongside the west boundary

⁴ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment in 2013

of the site. In relation to national and local Landscape Character Assessments, relevant key characteristics of the site and immediate vicinity include the irregular field patterns and sizes; boundaries predominantly defined by intact and outgrown hedgerows with mature trees; semi-rural qualities with sense of enclosure and some short to mid distance views; and recreational access along Hertfordshire Way LDFP

- 1.4.4 A site-specific appraisal was conducted to identify the landscape features, characteristics, and aesthetics. The appraisal confirmed the site's location to the south of Little Wymondley and east of Titmore Green, with Hitchin to the northwest and Stevenage to the southeast. The site consists of a small, well-maintained grass field, predominantly enclosed by post and rail fencing, with a variety of vegetation beyond. The northern boundary is defined by a woodland strip that separates the site from the A602 dual carriageway, while Stevenage Road runs parallel to the southern boundary. The Hertfordshire Way LDFP runs along the western boundary of the site. Beyond the site, the surrounding area is predominantly characterised by agricultural fields bordered by a combination of tree lines, hedgerows, and grass margins, interspersed with village and town settlements.
- 1.4.5 The assessment of landscape effects considered the impact of the proposed development on landscape features, qualities, and characteristics within the site and the wider surrounding landscape character during construction, at year 1 of operation, and at year 10 of operation. The proposed development would introduce changes to the character of the north of the site through the addition of the BESS development, associated infrastructure, and planting. However, the southern half of the site would remain largely unaltered and landscape character of the surrounding landscape would remain unaffected by the proposal. During construction, activities on the site would likely be perceived in the context of the adjacent Stevenage Road, A602 dual carriageway, and existing energy infrastructure, and by years 1 and 10 some adverse effects would reduce. Key features of the site, such as the irregular field pattern and size, hedgerow boundaries with outgrown trees, and sense of enclosure, would be retained and protected with new planting enhancing green infrastructure connections and pattern. Over time, as the proposed planting establishes, the effects on the landscape would reduce with the proposed development becoming more integrated into the surrounding landscape and its presence softened below the overhead cables.
- 1.4.6 The site is located in close proximity to the National Grid Wymondley Substation, meaning that energy infrastructure, such as pylons and overhead lines, is a common feature within the wider landscape. These pylons traverse the site and its immediate surroundings, reinforcing the presence of existing energy infrastructure in the area.

Visual amenity

- 1.4.7 The visual amenity assessment of the LVApp evaluated the potential impacts of the proposed development on surrounding residents, users of public rights of way, and local road users. The assessment concluded that the most adverse visual effects would occur within or immediately adjacent to the site, particularly for users of the Hertfordshire Way LDFP. As distance quickly increases from the site, visual effects would reduce, particularly beyond 0.5km from the site,

where intervening vegetation screens views towards the site. Any small views of the proposed development would be viewed in context to the numerous pylons and vast overhead cables that span views. Overtime, as the proposed planting establishes, views of the proposed BESS development would further reduce, particularly from the south along Stevenage Road.

1.5 The Site's contribution to the Green Belt purposes

- 1.5.1 As stated above in the Green Belt Policy section, NPPF identifies five purposes that Green Belt serves, which are: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. Relevant Green Belt purposes are discussed below in relation to the landscape and visual assessments.

To check unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

- 1.5.2 It is noted that all the parcels and sub-parcels identified within the Green Belt Review that encircle Hitchin and parcels adjacent to Stevenage have all been reviewed as providing a "significant" contribution to this Green Belt purpose.
- 1.5.3 The proposed development would be situated on part of a small field on the outskirts of Titmore Green village, between two roads: the A602 dual carriageway which runs parallel to the northern boundary and Stevenage Road which lies immediately to the south of the site. Stevenage is located circa 800m to the southeast at its nearest point and is skirted by the A1(M) on the western edge of the settlement. Hitchin is located circa 2.3km to the northwest of the site. Several agricultural fields and nucleated villages are between Stevenage and Hitchin and contribute to the semi-rural character between the large settlement areas and key transport routes.
- 1.5.4 The proposed development would occupy a small area within part of a small field, approximately 900m east of the National Grid Wymondley Substation. It is located within the context of the substation's pylon infrastructure, which traverses the landscape, including the site. Given the type and character of the proposed development that requires to be in close proximity to the National Grid's substation, its context of overhead cables and pylons, its separation from settlement, and the distance between the large built-up areas that surround the site, it is considered that the site would not contribute towards the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

- 1.5.5 It is noted that parcel 10 and adjacent parcels to the north (14) and northeast (15) as well as the sub-parcels identified within the Green Belt Review have been reviewed as providing a "significant" contribution to this Green Belt purpose for maintaining separation between Hitchin and Stevenage.

- 1.5.6 The site is located on the north-western edge of the small village of Titmore Green with Little Wymondley situated circa 400m to the north, north of the A602 dual carriageway. The surrounding area is characterised by nucleated villages, including Great Wymondley, St Ippolyts, Ashbrook, Gosmore, Graveley, Rush Green, and Symonds Green. The next closest settlement beyond Little Wymondley is the northwestern Stevenage suburb of Symonds Green, located just beyond the A1(M), over 700m to the southeast of the site. There is a minimum gap of 500m between Titmore Green, Little Wymondley and the Stevenage suburb of Symonds Green.
- 1.5.7 The closest large settlement to the site is the town of Stevenage, located approximately 800m to the southeast at its nearest point, beyond the A1(M). The nearest part of Hitchin lies circa 2.3km to the northwest of the site, resulting in a separation of over 3km between Hitchin and Stevenage. Given the small footprint of the proposed development and the distance between the towns, it is considered that the proposal would not contribute to their coalescence.
- 1.5.8 The proposed development would not result in neighbouring towns or villages merging into one another.

To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 1.5.9 The Green Belt Review identifies parcel 10 and sub-parcel 10e as having a “generally mixed levels of visual openness” due to the “topography and urbanising influences”, which results in a moderate contribution towards this green belt purpose.
- 1.5.10 The site is situated within a semi-rural landscape setting beside Titmore Green village, between Hitchin and Stevenage. It is situated directly below overhead cables that connect to adjacent pylons with other located near due to the proximity of Wymondley National Grid Substation. The site comprises a well-maintained grass field, predominantly enclosed by post and rail fencing, which backs onto areas of woodland, hedgerows, and mature tree lines. Positioned between two key transport routes, the site lies circa 40m from the A602 dual carriageway to the north, which runs parallel to its northern boundary, while Stevenage Road is immediately adjacent to the southern boundary.
- 1.5.11 As noted in the Green Belt review, the surrounding area is already influenced by urban features including key transport routes and energy infrastructure. The A602 dual carriageway and Stevenage Road contribute to the containment of the site, alongside the existing electrical infrastructure. The presence of these infrastructure elements reduces the potential for the development to contribute to further encroachment into the countryside.

To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 1.5.12 The site is not located in, or within the setting of a historic town and therefore does not contribute to this purpose of the Green Belt. This is also confirmed in the Green Belt Review, which analysed sub-parcel 10e as having no relationship with an historic town.
- 1.5.13 The proposed development would have no effect on this Green Belt purpose.

1.6 Summary and Conclusions

- 1.6.1 The site is located within the London Area Green Belt around in North Hertfordshire District. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that this type of development, within a Green Belt, is only approved in very special circumstances.
- 1.6.2 This Green Belt Statement has considered the fundamental aim of the Green Belt, and its five purposes as defined in NPPF paragraph 143. It is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVApp), which should be read alongside this GBS.

Landscape character

- 1.6.3 The proposed development would be constructed within part of a well-maintained grass field on the outskirts of Titmore Green village. Along the site boundaries, the woodland belt, trees, hedgerows would be retained and enhanced. The proposed development would introduce new built elements within part of the site that is already influenced by energy infrastructure. The wider semi-rural area between Hitchin and Stevenage and key landscape characteristics of would largely be retained. Over time, as the proposed planting establishes, the effects on the landscape would reduce with the proposed development becoming more integrated into the surrounding landscape and its presence softened below the overhead cables.

Visual amenity

- 1.6.4 The visual effects of the proposed development would be contained within close proximity to the site, due to the screening effect of surrounding existing trees, woodland, and vegetation along the site boundaries and within the wider landscape. Any views of the proposed development would be seen in the context of the existing pylons and overhead cables, which already traverse the landscape, passing through and adjacent to the site. The retention and strengthening of boundary trees and vegetation would further aid in integrating the proposed development within views from the surrounding area.

The Site's contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt

- 1.6.5 In relation to the relevant purposes of Green Belt, as defined by NPPF, it is concluded that the proposed development would not contribute towards the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. It would not result in neighbouring towns merging into one another. The site is a well-maintained grass field that is surrounded by established hedgerows, treelines and woodland blocks. The proposed development would occupy part of the small field with the southern half remaining largely unaltered that has urbanising influences and is directly beneath overhead cables that connect to adjacent pylons. The site's containment and presence of existing infrastructure outweighs the potential contribution of the site on the encroachment of development into the countryside. Finally, the site is not located in, or within the setting of a historic town and would therefore have no effect on this Green Belt purpose.

Conclusion

- 1.6.6 Taking all the above points into account, this Green Belt Statement concludes that the proposed development could be accommodated within the Green Belt without unacceptably impacting the openness of the Green Belt or conflicting with the purposes of the Green Belt.

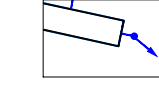
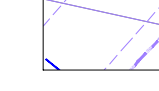
Appendix 5 – Landscape Strategy

Wymondley BESS

Landscape Strategy

L100
Rev A

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Hertfordshire Way Long-distance Footpath to the west of the site
-  Existing trees and woodland to be retained and Root Protection Areas (black), refer to Tree survey
-  Proposed trees refer to drawing L101 for planting schedule
-  Proposed native hedge, mix of 7 species, refer to drawing L101 for planting schedule
-  Proposed native shrub planting mix, refer to drawing L101 for planting schedule
-  Proposed native specimen shrubs to fill gaps refer to drawing L101 for planting schedule
-  Proposed species-rich grass, Emorsgate EM1: General Purpose Meadow Mix, refer to drawing L101
-  Proposed species-rich grass mix in SuDS feature, Emorsgate EM8: Meadow Mixture for Wetlands, refer to drawing L101
-  Proposed drainage feature, refer to drainage plans
-  Existing services/ overhead lines / easements

Notes

- Refer to site layout plans for battery storage proposals, including fencing and access routes.
- Refer to the Tree Survey for existing and retained trees.

0 10 20 30 40 50m
Scale 1:500 @ A1



TC24243_L100[A].dwg

03 April 2025

Planting Schedules

Trees						
Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Girth	Specification	Density
7	Ac ca	Acer campestre	350-425cm	12-14cm	Heavy Standard: 5 brks: 3x: RB: Clear Stem min. 200cm	Counted
7	Cr mo	Crataegus monogyna	350-425cm	12-14cm	Heavy Standard: 5 brks: 3x: RB: Clear Stem 175-200cm	Counted
12	Qu ro	Quercus robur	350-425cm	12-14cm	Heavy Standard: 5 brks: 3x: RB: Clear Stem 175-200cm	Counted
2	Sa ca	Salix caprea	350-425cm	12-14cm	Heavy Standard: 5 brks: 3x: RB: Clear Stem 175-200cm	Counted
8	So au	Sorbus aucuparia	350-425cm	12-14cm	Heavy Standard: 5 brks: 3x: RB: Clear Stem 175-200cm	Counted
7	Ti co	Tilia cordata	350-425cm	12-14cm	Heavy Standard: 5 brks: 3x: RB: Clear Stem 175-200cm	Counted

Shrubs					
Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Specification	Density
36	Co av	Corylus avellana	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	Counted
34	Cr mo	Crataegus monogyna	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	Counted
12	Eu eu	Euonymus europaeus	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 5 brks: B	Counted
30	Il aq	Ilex aquifolium	40-60cm	Leader with Lateral: C	Counted
5	Lo pe	Lonicera periclymenum	60-80cm	Caned: Several Shoots: 2 brks: C	Counted
8	Ro ca	Rosa canina	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	Counted
8	Sa ci	Salix cinerea	60-80cm	0/1: Cutting: Branched: 2 brks: B	Counted

Hedgerow						
Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Specification	Density	Percentage
333	Co av	Corylus avellana	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	20%
498	Cr mo	Crataegus monogyna	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	30%
167	Eu eu	Euonymus europaeus	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 5 brks: B	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	10%
118	Il aq	Ilex aquifolium	40-60cm	Leader with Lateral: C	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	7%
233	Pr sp	Prunus spinosa	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 2 brks: B	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	14%
201	Sa ni	Sambucus nigra	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	12%
118	Vi op	Viburnum opulus	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	0.3Ctr Double Staggered at 0.4m offset	7%
Total :1668						

Shrub						
Number	Abbreviation	Species	Height	Specification	Density	Percentage
506	Co av	Corylus avellana	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	1Ctr	25%
406	Cr mo	Crataegus monogyna	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: B	1Ctr	20%
406	Eu eu	Euonymus europaeus	60-80cm	1+2: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 5 brks: B	1Ctr	20%
104	Lo pe	Lonicera periclymenum	60-80cm	Caned: Several Shoots: 2 brks: C	1Ctr	5%
406	Rh ca	Rhamnus cathartica	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Leader with Lateral: 3 brks: B	1Ctr	20%
206	Ro ca	Rosa canina	60-80cm	1+1: Transplant - seed raised: Branched: 3 brks: B	1Ctr	10%
Total :2034						

Planting Notes

The handling of plants to be in accordance with National Plant Specification 'Handling and Establishing Landscape Plants'. All plants and planting operations are to comply with the requirements and recommendations of all current relevant British Standard specification including but not limited to:

- BS 8545. Trees: From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape
- BS 3936-1:1992. Nursery stock. Specification for trees and shrubs
- BS 3882:2015 - Specification for topsoil
- BS 4428:1989. Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces) (AMD 6784)
- BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations

All planting to be carried out during appropriate climatic conditions from mid-November to mid-March. Existing topsoil and/or imported, clean/inert horticultural ameliorants from sustainable sources. Contractor to satisfy themselves with measurements on site and the full extent of works before pricing.

Clearance
For construction and/or temporary facilities only:

Cut back grass and all other vegetation to an initial height of 150mm and then, following a period of 24 hour period, cut back to ground. Refer also to the recommendations provided in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Vegetation clearance shall be undertaken in a directional manner towards areas of retained vegetation.

For areas of proposed seeding, clear all grass and perennial vegetation including brambles, suckering and epicormic growth to ground level, apply herbicide and cultivate to a fine tilth in preparation of seeding. All rubbish, debris and existing **redundant** infrastructure to be removed. Stone picking of all stones and debris over 25mm to be undertaken. All trees and shrubs to be retained to be protected during works in line with BS5837:2012.

Topsoil
Existing topsoil must be cultivated in accordance with BS 3882:2015 outside RPAs of existing trees. No cultivation should take place in wet/ waterlogged conditions and within the RPAs of existing trees.

Trees
Excavate planting pits to the following dimensions:
Feathered Trees: 500 x 500 x 500mm depth
Selected Standard Trees: 1000 x 1000 x 500mm depth

Supply and plant, incorporating slow release fertiliser N:P:K - 4:19:10 ENMAG or similar approved at the following rates:
Feathered Trees: 100g / tree pit
Selected Standard Trees: 100g / tree pit
Shrubs: 70g / m²

Provide and fix tree stakes and ties to the following dimensions:
Feathered Trees: overall length 1250mm; height above ground: 600mm
Selected Standard Trees: overall length 1500; height above ground: 750mm

Emorsgate Seeds EM8: Meadow Mixture for Wetlands



Suggested Sowing Rates
40kg/ha 16kg/acre 4g/m2

Description
EM8 contains species suitable for seasonally wet soils and is based on the vegetation of traditional floodplain and water meadows. Soils in wet meadows may flood for short periods in winter, but are usually well drained in summer.

Ground Preparation
Endeavour to select ground that is not highly fertile and does not have a problem with perennial weeds. Good preparation is essential to success so aim to control weeds and produce a good quality seed bed before sowing.

To prepare a seed bed first remove weeds using repeated cultivation. Then plough or dig to bury the surface vegetation, harrow or rake to produce a medium tilth, and roll, or tread, to produce a firm surface.

Sowing
Sowings on ground prone to winter flooding are safest either in the early autumn or in spring once the land has drained. Most plants need time to grow mature enough to withstand flooding.

The seed must be surface sown and can be applied by machine or broadcast by hand. To get an even distribution and avoid running out, divide the seed into two or more parts and sow in overlapping sections. Do not incorporate or cover the seed but firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil/seed contact.

First Year Management
Most of the sown meadow species are perennial and are slow to establish. Soon after sowing there will be a flush of annual weeds, arising from the soil seed bank. These weeds can look unsightly, but they will offer shelter to the sown seedlings, are great for bugs, and they will die before the year is out. So resist cutting the annual weeds until mid to late summer, especially if the mixture contains Yellow Rattle, or has been sown with a nurse of cornfield annuals. Then cut, remove and compost. Early August is a good time. This will reveal the young meadow, which can then be kept short by grazing or mowing through to the end of March of the following year. Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks.

Management Once Established
In the second and subsequent years EM8 sowings can be managed in a number of ways which, in association with soil fertility, will determine the character of the grassland. The best results are usually obtained by traditional meadow management based around a main summer hay cut in combination with autumn and possibly spring mowing or grazing.

Meadow grassland is not cut or grazed from spring through to late July/August to give the sown species an opportunity to flower. After flowering in July or August take a 'hay cut' : cut back with a scythe, petrol strimmer or tractor mower to c 50mm. Leave the 'hay' to dry and shed seed for 1-7 days then remove from site. Mow or graze the re-growth through to late autumn/winter to c 50mm and again in spring if needed.

Wetland habitats are characteristically quite variable in composition, reflecting local drainage and management. Conditions can vary, for instance, between the highs and lows in ridge and furrow grassland. Localized differences may require a targeted approach. For example, boggy areas which remain waterlogged for much of the year may be best sown with pond edge mixture EP1.

Composition
EM8 is a complete mix composed of 20% native wild flowers and 80% slow growing grasses (by weight). The flower and grass components are also available to order separately as EM8F for the flower component and EG8 for the grass component.

Ref: <https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/complete-mixtures/meadow-mixtures-for-specific-soils/meadow-mixture-for-wetlands/>

EM1 Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture



Suggested Sowing Rates
40kg/ha 16kg/acre 4g/m2

Description
EM1 contains wildflower species that are robust and showy, and grass sepecies that are fine and slow growing.

Ground Preparation
Endeavour to select ground that is not highly fertile and does not have a problem with perennial weeds. Good preparation is essential to success so aim to control weeds and produce a good quality seed bed before sowing.

To prepare a seed bed first remove weeds using repeated cultivation. Then plough or dig to bury the surface vegetation, harrow or rake to produce a medium tilth, and roll, or tread, to produce a firm surface.

Sowing
Sowings on ground prone to winter flooding are safest either in the early autumn or in spring once the land has drained. Most plants need time to grow mature enough to withstand flooding.

The seed must be surface sown and can be applied by machine or broadcast by hand. To get an even distribution and avoid running out, divide the seed into two or more parts and sow in overlapping sections. Do not incorporate or cover the seed but firm in with a roll, or by treading, to give good soil/seed contact.

First Year Management
Most of the sown meadow species are perennial and are slow to establish. Soon after sowing there will be a flush of annual weeds, arising from the soil seed bank. These weeds can look unsightly, but they will offer shelter to the sown seedlings, are great for bugs, and they will die before the year is out. So resist cutting the annual weeds until mid to late summer, especially if the mixture contains Yellow Rattle, or has been sown with a nurse of cornfield annuals. Then cut, remove and compost. Early August is a good time. This will reveal the young meadow, which can then be kept short by grazing or mowing through to the end of March of the following year. Dig out any residual perennial weeds such as docks.

Management Once Established
In the second and subsequent years EM1 sowings can be managed in a number of ways which, in association with soil fertility, will determine the character of the grassland. The best results are usually obtained by traditional meadow management based around a main summer hay cut in combination with autumn and possibly spring mowing or grazing.

Meadow grassland is not cut or grazed from spring through to late July/August to give the sown species an opportunity to flower. After flowering in July or August take a 'hay cut' : cut back with a scythe, petrol strimmer or tractor mower to c 50mm. Leave the 'hay' to dry and shed seed for 1-7 days then remove from site. Mow or graze the re-growth through to late autumn/winter to c 50mm and again in spring if needed.

Composition
EM1 is a complete mix composed of 10% native wild flowers and 90% slow growing grasses (by weight). The flower and grass components are also available to order separately as EM1F for the flower component and EG1 for the grass component.

Ref: <https://wildseed.co.uk/product/mixtures/complete-mixtures/general-purpose-meadow-mixtures/basic-general-purpose-meadow-mixture/>



Wymondley BESS

Landscape Specification

L101
Rev A



