



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

Proposed Sub-Station Development, Alton, Hampshire

On behalf of SE.

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Where field investigations have been carried out, these have been restricted to a level of detail required to achieve the stated objectives of the work.

This work has been undertaken in accordance with the quality management system of RSK ADAS Ltd.

Version History

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. ADAS Landscape was commissioned by Southern Electric Power Distribution (SEPD) to conduct a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) to support a planning application for the implementation of a new electricity substation on land south-east of Alton, Hampshire. The location of the site is shown on Figure 1: Designations, contained within Appendix 1: Illustrative material. All illustrative material including Figures and Viewpoint Photography is contained within Appendix 1: Illustrative material.
- 1.1.2. The proposed development comprises an area of sub-station equipment with associated security fencing, and an access track that follows an existing farm access from Blanket Street south of the site. The majority of elements within the proposed development will be 5m in height, with some parts of the equipment extending to 10m and the switch house in the north-western corner of the site extending to 17.5m above ground level.

1.2. Scope of this report

- 1.2.1. This LVA considers the effects on landscape elements, character, and visual amenity, upon the site and the surrounding area. It was undertaken with regard to best practice guidance within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) that states in Paragraph 1.1 that ***“Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and amenity”.***
- 1.2.2. GLVIA3 also states in Paragraph 1.17 that when identifying landscape and visual effects there is a ***“need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional”.***
- 1.2.3. The LVA of the proposed development has been undertaken to establish the landscape and visual sensitivity of the site and to identify likely landscape and visual effects that may arise as a result of the proposed development.

1.3. Objectives of the report

- 1.3.1. The objectives of this LVA report are to:
- Appraise the landscape character and quality of the site and its context and the function of the site within the wider landscape, particularly in relation to existing landscape designations and policies;
 - Appraise the visibility of the site and the nature and quality of existing views towards the site;
 - Appraise the likely effects upon landscape character and visual amenity that will arise as a result of the proposed development on the site; and

- Identify landscape and visual opportunities and constraints to the type of development proposed within the site and appropriate landscape enhancements to facilitate delivery of development on the site.

1.4. Author of the report

- 1.4.1. This report was written by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI), who is trained and experienced in undertaking landscape and visual appraisals. ADAS is a Landscape Institute registered practice and all work is subject to peer review.

2. Methodology

2.1. Assessment of landscape and visual effects

Appraisal of landscape and visual characteristics

2.1.1. For the purposes of this report, the methodology used takes account of and is based upon recommendations given in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) (Third Edition 2013) (Ref.1), produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. Terminology used within this report can be found in Appendix 2: Glossary, and is primarily based upon that found in GLVIA3 but also references other documents.

2.1.2. A proportional approach has been taken to the LVA as directed by GLVIA3 (Ref.1):

"...need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional". (Ref.1, page 9, para.1.17.

2.1.3. The purpose of LVIA's is to identify the potential for, and assess the likely effects of, change resulting from development. Landscape and visual assessments are a separate, although linked, processes. A distinction is made between:

- Landscape - landscape character and the elements and features that contribute to it (landscape receptors); and
- Visual - people who experience views within the landscape (visual receptors).

2.1.4. Landscape encompasses the whole of the external environment, whether within towns, villages or countryside. It is not only the perception of a combination of landform, vegetation cover and buildings, but also embodies the history, land use, human culture, wildlife and seasonal changes of an area. The landscape can be considered as a resource in its own right (providing food, cultural heritage, clean air etc.). A visual appraisal considers visual receptors, that is people who experience views within the landscape, and often include locations such as residential or business properties, Public Rights of Way (PRoW), public open space, and transport corridors. As a result, landscape and visual effects are considered separately.

2.1.5. A baseline study is undertaken to record the existing landscape features, characteristics, the way the landscape is experienced and existing views experienced by visual receptors likely to be affected by the Proposed Development. This is done through the examination of Ordnance Survey Maps, aerial photography and various scales of landscape character assessment. The desk and field surveys (undertaken from within the Site and publicly accessible locations) enable a study area to be derived in order to focus the assessment on likely significant effects. The study area is determined through consideration of

landform, vegetation and likely extent of visibility, beyond which the proposed development would be unlikely to give rise to any significant effects.

- 2.1.6. The full Landscape and Visual Appraisal Methodology is set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology.

Landscape Assessment

- 2.1.7. The capacity (or susceptibility) of a landscape relates to the ability to accept change of the type and scale proposed and will be influenced by the likely ability of the landscape to accommodate the introduction of new features while retaining the essential characteristics that define it.
- 2.1.8. Landscape susceptibility is categorised as Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology). The following criteria are taken into consideration in the assessment of landscape susceptibility: landform, pattern/complexity, composition, land-cover and relationship to existing settlements or developments. However, not all criteria are equally applicable or important within a given landscape / type of development proposed.
- 2.1.9. The assessment of value is based on a combination of the importance of landscape-related planning designations and, as appropriate, such attributes as scenic quality, perceptual aspects, rarity, representativeness, recreation and association. The overall value for each landscape receptor is categorised as Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).
- 2.1.10. Based on the combination of value and susceptibility, an assessment of landscape sensitivity with regards to accommodating the type of development proposed is reached, and categorised as Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).
- 2.1.11. The magnitude of effect (change) affecting landscape receptors depends upon the nature, scale, geographical extent, the duration and the reversibility of the particular change within the landscape and any loss of, or change to, important features or characteristics. The magnitude of effect for each landscape receptor is categorised as Large, Medium, Small, Very Small or None (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).

Visual Assessment

- 2.1.12. Visual susceptibility to the type of change proposed is based upon the activity or expectation of the viewer. It is categorised as Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology). Where people are in their homes or engaged in outdoor recreation focussed on the landscape visual receptors may have a high susceptibility, whilst it may be low for those engaged in work or travelling on major roads.

- 2.1.13. The assessment of value is based upon the importance of the location of the view, its designations, cultural associations and the amount to which the view forms part of the experience in the location. The overall value for each visual receptor is categorised as Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).
- 2.1.14. Based on the combination of value and susceptibility, an assessment of visual sensitivity with regards to accommodating the type of development proposed is reached, and categorised as Very High, High, Medium, Low or Very Low (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).
- 2.1.15. The magnitude of effect (change) affecting visual receptors depends on the location of the viewer and the overall change to the composition of the view experienced. The scale of change, angle of the view, duration of view, distance from the type of development proposed and the character of the existing view, as well as the duration and reversibility all influence the magnitude of effect. The magnitude of effect for visual receptors is categorised as Large, Medium, Small, Very Small or None (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).

Significance of Effect

- 2.1.16. In order to arrive at a measure of the significance of the overall effect, which can be beneficial or adverse, the sensitivity is combined with the magnitude of effect for each landscape or visual receptor and is rated on a scale of Nil to Major, with effects of Moderate or Major significance deemed 'significant' (full definitions are set out in Appendix 3: Appraisal guidance and methodology).

2.2. Limitations and assumptions

- 2.2.1. The approach to the assessment of effects takes two stages:
- At 'completion' of the proposed development comparing the existing site and proposed development at year 0 in the winter when any proposed landscape mitigation has little effect; and
 - At the 'residual' stage comparing the existing site and proposed development at year 15 in the summer when any proposed landscape mitigation has a full effect.
- 2.2.2. It has not been possible to enter the curtilage of private dwellings to check views as part of this assessment. In such cases, a reasonable worst-case assumption has been made in dealing with potential views from a publicly accessible point.
- 2.2.3. As this report is not a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) construction phase effects are not considered in large amounts of detail as the construction will be completed in a relatively short time span.

2.3. Site survey

- 2.3.1. The assessment contained in this report is based on field observations made during a visit to the site and surrounding landscape undertaken on 1st September 2023.

2.4. Spatial scope

The spatial scope for all the baseline studies including topography, landscape designations is defined on Figure 1: Designations. Professional judgement has been exercised alongside interrogation of the landform, landscape features, quality and condition of the landscape and visual resource and type of development proposed, in order to define the Study Area, beyond which significant effects are considered unlikely to occur.

2.5. Mapping visibility

- 2.5.1. To establish the potential extent of visibility of the proposed development a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) model was produced, based on the height of the equipment within the proposed substation with the different heights of the different components illustrated in Figure 5: Visibility and viewpoints.
- 2.5.2. This ZTV was produced based on OS Terrain 50 data creating a Digital Surface Model which includes large blocks of vegetation and gives a representation of likely locations where the proposed development may be visible from, representing a worst case scenario. The areas of woodland as shown in the National Forest Inventory have also been added to the ZTV model to give an understanding of how the woodland influences potential visibility but smaller blocks of vegetation and hedgerows have not been included.
- 2.5.3. The map indicates theoretical visibility only - that is, the areas within which there may be a line of sight. However, the proposal may exhibit lower visibility due to localised screening which is not represented by the Digital Surface Model. As such a ZTV is a guide only and has been supported by field survey.
- 2.5.4. This ZTV conveys how much of the proposed development may be visible from the areas shown. Receptors in the areas covered by red may see a greater proportion of the proposed development, such as the whole site, whilst from yellow areas receptors may see a small part of the proposed development.
- 2.5.5. Utilisation of ZTV mapping allows the scope of the assessment to be reduced to areas where potential effects are likely to arise through consideration of receptors that are coincident with the ZTV. As such, this LVA considers landscape receptors and visual receptors that are coincident with areas shown as having potential for visibility of the proposed development on Figure 5.

2.6. Photography and visualisations

- 2.6.1. The production of photographs used as part of the report is proportionate to the level of appraisal and has been guided by the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 06/19 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (2019) (Ref.2), produced by the Landscape Institute. The methodology used to produce the viewpoint photographs can be found in Appendix 4: Photography methodology. TGN 06/19 identifies the four types of visualisation and an indication of their appropriate use on page 9.

All the viewpoint photographs are presented as Type 1: Annotated Viewpoint Photographs, the aim of which is to represent context and extent of development and of key features. Photographs are reproduced at a size which aids clear understanding of the view and context, with annotations of key features that illustrate the extent of the site within the view. The viewpoints can be found in Appendix 1: Illustrative material.

3. Planning policy context

3.1. National planning policy and guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

3.1.1. The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) (Ref.3) aims to provide one concise document which sets out the Government's planning policies for England by replacing previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). It aims to provide a planning framework within which the local community and local authorities can produce distinctive local plans which respond to local needs and priorities.

3.1.2. The NPPF promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, providing it is in accordance with the relevant up-to-date Local Plan, and policies set out in the NPPF including those identifying restrictions with regard to designated areas, such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Green Belt. Sustainable development is defined in paragraph 7 as:

"...meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

3.1.3. The NPPF also clarifies that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF states that the planning system has three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. The environmental objective is described in paragraph 8 as follows:

"to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."

3.1.4. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF also notes that the objectives should be delivered through the planning process but recognises that planning policies and decisions should ***"take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area"***.

3.1.5. Section 11 is concerned with making effective use of land, with Paragraph 123 stating:

"Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions..."

3.1.6. Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should:

“Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;

and

recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production...”

3.1.7. Paragraphs 131-141 in Section 12, focus on achieving well-designed places and promote good design of the built environment. This approach is enshrined in Paragraph 135, which states:

“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

3.1.8. Section 15 also notes at paragraph 181:

“Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework...”

3.1.9. As well as at paragraph 182:

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.

.....

“The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.”

3.1.10. Section 15 also states at paragraph 191:

“Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and*
- c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”*

National Planning Practice Guidance, 2021

- 3.1.11. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) supports the NPPF. Under the Natural Environment PPG (July 2019), the sub-section ‘Landscape’ in Paragraph 037 supports the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for understanding the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identifying the features that give it a sense of place, as a means to informing, planning and managing change. The Natural Environment PPG makes reference to Natural England guidance on landscape character assessment.
- 3.1.12. Under the sub-section ‘Green Infrastructure’, the Natural Environment PPG’s Paragraph 006 recognises that well-designed green infrastructure can help to create a sense of place and contribute to place-making, and that green infrastructure can help create safe and accessible environments.
- 3.1.13. Within the Design: process and tools PPG (October 2019), in the sub-section ‘Planning for well-designed places’, Paragraph 001 notes that well-designed places can be achieved through active input at all stages of the planning process. The Design PPG goes on to note that permission ought to be refused for poorly designed development failing to utilise opportunities to improve the character, quality and function of a place.
- 3.1.14. The guidance also notes the importance of the need to consider any potential for glint and glare effects, as well as the need to consider the impact of security measures. The

guidance notes the high potential for hedgerow screening to mitigate landscape and visual impacts.

National Design Guide

3.1.15. The National Design Guide identifies the key influencing factors for good design and aims to influence the production of local plans, guidance and the determination of planning applications through the consideration of ten characteristics:

- Context,
- Identity,
- Built Form,
- Movement,
- Nature,
- Public Space,
- Uses,
- Homes and Buildings,
- Resources, and
- Lifespan.

3.2. Local planning policy

East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1), 2014

3.2.1. The East Hampshire Local Plan is split into two parts, with the Joint Core Strategy forming Part 1, and covering all of East Hampshire, although is now superseded within the area covered by the South Downs National Park. The Joint Core Strategy sets out how the council and South Downs National Park aim to address future needs of the district.

3.2.2. The policies of the Joint Core Strategy that are relevant to the site and proposed development are set out below:

3.2.3. Policy CP20: Landscape, states:

“The special characteristics of the district’s natural environment will be conserved and enhanced. New development will be required to:

- a) conserve and enhance the natural beauty, tranquillity, wildlife and cultural heritage of the South Downs National Park and its setting, and promote the opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities, and be in accordance with the ambitions within the emerging South Downs Management Plan;***
- b) protect and enhance local distinctiveness sense of place and tranquility by applying the principles set out in the district’s Landscape Character Assessments, including the Community/Parish Landscape Character Assessments;***

- c) *protect and enhance settlements in the wider landscape, land at the urban edge and green corridors extending into settlements;*
- d) *protect and enhance natural and historic features which contribute to the distinctive character of the district's landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, soils, rivers, river corridors, ditches, ponds, ancient sunken lanes, ancient tracks, rural buildings and open areas;*
- e) *incorporate appropriate new planting to enhance the landscape setting of the new development which uses local materials, native species and enhances biodiversity;*
- f) *maintain, manage and enhance the green infrastructure networks (see Policy CP28 Green Infrastructure).*

Priority will be given to working with landowners and others in order to ensure that land management practices improve public access to the countryside, conserve and enhance valued landscapes of major importance for wild flora and fauna, and restore landscapes where valued features have been lost or degraded."

3.2.4. Policy CP28: Green Infrastructure, states:

"Development will be permitted provided that it maintains, manages and enhances the network of new and existing green infrastructure. Development will need to take forward the objectives and priorities presented in the District's Green Infrastructure Study and Strategy, the South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and its Implementation Framework and the avoidance and mitigation measures set out in the Joint Core Strategy's Habitats Regulations Assessment. Account will also need to be taken of other relevant joint core strategy policies such as landscape, historic environment, biodiversity, flood risk and design. New green infrastructure must be provided either through on-site provision or financial contributions. The size of contribution will be linked to the scale of the development and the resulting new green infrastructure must be located as close as possible to the development it is intended to serve."

East Hampshire Local Plan Second Review (adopted 2006)

- 3.2.5. A number of Policies from the Local Plan second review, remain relevant. Those which are relevant to the site or proposed development are set out below.

3.2.6. Policy HE19: Ancient Tracks and Lanes, states:

“Development will not be permitted where it would adversely affect the character, setting or historical, ecological and archaeological value of ancient tracks and lanes.”

4. Existing landscape and visual context

4.1. Study area

Designations

- 4.1.1. Although the site itself is not situated within any landscape designations, the main part of the site lies approximately 417m west of the South Downs National Park at its closest point, with the access track for the proposed development located immediately adjacent to the boundary of the South Downs National Park.
- 4.1.2. There are a number of listed buildings located within the Study Area, including Alton (Town Centre), and Alton (The Butts), located approximately 2.5km north-west of the site.
- 4.1.3. The closest Listed Buildings to the site include the Grade II Manor Farmhouse approximately 630m to the south-east of the site, and the Grade II Truncheaunts approximately 945m north-west of the site.
- 4.1.4. The closest Scheduled Monument is the Medieval settlement at Hartley Manor approximately 1.2km south of the site.
- 4.1.5. Chawton House Grade II Registered Park and Garden lies approximately 2.3km south-west of the site and does not coincide with the ZTV

Topography

- 4.1.6. The site sits within an area of gently undulating land at the foot of the South Downs National Park, as shown on Figure 2: Topography. Land within the Study Area is generally comprised of a low lying valley west of the site that follows the Caker Stream with a low point of approximately 100m AOD. The land slopes gently up from the valley to a ridge of higher ground east of the site, before dropping sharply back down.
- 4.1.7. Isolated pockets of higher land at Neatham Down north of the site and Windmill Hill on the edge of Alton, west of the site from islands in the Caker valley, rising to approximately 150m AOD and disrupting any coherent sense of valley.

Vegetation and land use

- 4.1.8. Land within the Study Area is predominantly in active agricultural use, primarily in arable production with pockets of pasture associated with the river valley floodplains. The farmland and fields are bounded by often fragmented hedgerows, with occasional hedgerow trees. Vegetation in the Study Area is limited to small pockets of woodland with little connectivity beyond the hedgerows that line roads and fragmented hedgerows lining field boundaries.
- 4.1.9. The closest area of woodland to the site is Hamble Pits Copse, an area of isolated Ancient Woodland approximately 550m west of the site. Other areas of fragmented Ancient Woodland at Wild Duck Copse and Copse Close lie further to the south-west of the site, either side of Selbourne Road. Within the South Downs National Park to the east of the

site, woodland cover is more extensive east of the ridgeline where the steep slopes are covered with Hangar woodlands and large areas of Ancient woodland occupy the flatter land.

- 4.1.10. Settlement is concentrated in the north-west of the Study Area at Alton, approximately 1.6km from the site. In the wider Study Area, settlement is sparse, with small pockets of residential development at East Worldham, approximately 850m north-east of the site, and West Worldham approximately 580m south of the site. A small number of isolated properties line roads within the Study Area with some larger farmsteads and other built form located in proximity to the A31.
- 4.1.11. Other land uses within the Study Area include Worldham Golf Course approximately 420m north-west of the site, where vegetation levels are more pronounced, providing a greater degree of enclosure.
- 4.1.12. Two small areas of solar development occupy land within the Study Area, both situated on the flatter and lower lying land of the Caker valley, sitting within the existing field pattern.

4.2. Landscape character

- 4.2.1. The landscape character assessment approach is a descriptive approach that seeks to identify and define the distinct character of landscapes that make up the country. This approach recognises the intrinsic value of all landscapes, not just 'special' landscapes, as contributing factors in people's quality of life, in accordance with the European Landscape Convention. It also ensures that account is taken of the different roles and character of different areas, in accordance with the NPPF Core Principles. The description of each landscape is used as a basis for evaluation in order to make judgements to guide, for example, development or landscape management. The various levels of Landscape Character Assessment are shown on Figure 3 and Figure 4.

National character assessment

- 4.2.2. As part of Natural England's responsibilities in delivering the Natural Environment White Paper, Biodiversity 2020 and the European Landscape Convention, Natural England has developed a series of National Character Area (NCA) profiles. These NCA profiles provide a broad range of information including an outline of the key characteristics of a given area; a description of the ecosystem services provided and how these relate to people, wildlife and the economy; and an array of opportunities for positive environmental change.
- 4.2.3. The site lies within National Character Area 120: Wealdon Greensand, the key characteristics of which are:

- ***"A long, narrow belt of Greensand, typified by scarp-and-dip slope topography, including outcrops of Upper Greensand, Gault Clay and Lower Greensand. The Greensand forms escarpments separated by a clay vale: the overall undulating and organic landform - particularly in the west - gives a sense of intimacy to***

the landscape. Leith Hill in Surrey is the highest point in south-east England.

- *There are extensive areas of ancient mixed woodland of hazel, oak and birch, with some areas having been converted to sweet chestnut coppice in past centuries. These areas reflect the diverse geology, including the distinctive chalk grassland elements within the East Hampshire Hangers Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the wooded commons ('charts') of East Surrey and West Kent, and conifer plantations.*
- *Semi-natural habitats include: remnant lowland heathland, mostly concentrated in West Sussex, Hampshire and West Surrey; the wetlands associated with the River Arun in West Sussex; and unimproved acid grasslands found in commons, parklands, heathland and other areas of unimproved pasture.*
- *Fields are predominantly small or medium, in irregular patterns derived from medieval enclosure. Boundaries are formed by hedgerows and shaws, with character and species reflecting the underlying soils. On the clay, hedgerows are dense and species-rich, with occasional standard oaks. On more acidic soils they generally consist of hawthorn and blackthorn, also with occasional oak trees, and often trimmed low. Apple harvest at Blackmoor Estate, Hampshire.*
- *Agricultural land comprises a mosaic of mixed farming, with pasture and arable land set within a wooded framework. There is a fruit-growing orchard belt in Kent and also around Selborne in Hampshire.*
- *The rural settlement pattern is a mixture of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets and some nucleated villages. Large houses set within extensive parks and gardens are found throughout the area.*
- *In the east of Kent, the Wealden Greensand has a gentler and more open aspect than in the wooded west. This part of the area is also more marked by development, with the presence of major towns and communication corridors such as the M26, M25 and M20 motorways and railway lines including the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (High Speed 1).*
- *The local built vernacular includes the use of Greensand, ragstone and, in the west, malmstone, bargate stone, plus dark carrstone patterned in the mortar between stones ('galleting') in Surrey, as well as timber-framing and weatherboarding.*
- *There are a range of historic landscape features, including field monuments, old military defences, prehistoric tumuli, iron-age hill forts, Roman forts, the Royal Military Canal, small quarries and relics of the iron industry (including hammer ponds). Sunken lanes*

cut into the sandstone are a historic and characteristic feature, as are older deer parks and more recent 18th-century parklands.

- *Surface water is an important feature across the Greensand, with many streams and rivers passing through the NCA: the Western Rother, Wey, Arun, Medway and the Great and East Stour.*
- *The Greensand ridge meets the coast of Kent between Folkestone Warren and Hythe. While most of the coastal strip is now built up and protected by sea defences, the undeveloped sea cliffs at Copt Point provide important geological exposures, are designated for their nature conservation interest and fall within the Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coast.”*

4.2.4. NCA 120 identifies four Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) in order to guide sustainable growth, two of which are relevant to the site and proposed development:

4.2.5. SEO 1, states:

“Protect and manage the nationally recognised and distinctive character of the landscape, conserving and enhancing historic landscape character, tranquillity, sense of place, and the rich historical and geological heritage of the Wealden Greensand. Enhance access provision where appropriate, to maintain public benefit from and enjoyment of the area.”

4.2.6. SEO 2, states:

“Protect, manage and significantly enhance the mosaic and connectivity of semi-natural habitats within the mixed farmed landscape – particularly the internationally important woodland and heathland habitats – for the benefit of biodiversity, pollination, soil and water regulation, landscape character and enhanced adaptation to climate change.”

4.2.7. The broad NCA 120: Wealdon Greensand, is considered to have a Medium value, as although a large proportion of the wider area of the NCA covers part of the nationally designated landscape of the South Downs National Park, Kent Downs AONB and Surrey Hills AONB and includes high levels of historic interest including numerous Scheduled Monuments, military site, deer parks 18th century parklands, the NCA contains some large built up areas including settlements of Guildford and Maidstone which do not exhibit any key characteristics of the wider NCA. Additionally, the major transport corridors of the M25, M20 and M26 combine with rail infrastructure to detract from the more rural designated parts where recreational opportunities are higher. The large-scale landscape is considered to have a Low susceptibility to the type of change proposed due to the scale and location of the site and that it will occupy a very small part of land in a broad and wide-ranging landscape where existing electricity infrastructure is present. As a result, the NCA

is considered to have a Medium sensitivity to development of a substation on agricultural land outside the designated parts of the NCA.

County character assessment

Hampshire Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2010)

4.2.8. The site is situated within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 3F: Wey Valley, and within that, Landscape Character Type Greensand Terrace. The key characteristics of LCA 3F: Wey Valley, that are relevant to the site and proposed development include:

- *“Broad valley with smooth undulating valley sides through which the River Wey flows.*
- *Distinct flat valley floor with permanent pasture, wet woodland, water meadows and open water. - Large to medium scaled arable fields cloak the open valley sides.*
- *Woodland in the upper valley slopes form wooded skylines in places.*
- *Valley is and has historically been an important routeway and transport corridor containing the A31 and main rail line.*
- *St Swithun’s Way long distance route, part of the Pilgrim’s way which connected Winchester with the North Downs.*
- *Many historic features associated with the river Wey e.g. mills, weirs, watercress beds.*
- *Nucleated settlement pattern of a string of villages on the gravel terrace on the north side of the valley floor less development on the slightly steeper southern valley side.”*

4.2.9. LCA 3F, is considered to have a High value, as it includes part of the South Downs National Park and exhibits some rural characteristics, with woodland forming the skyline on the undulating land of the character area. The A31 and railway form detracting elements which contribute to movement and audible intrusion, however, a number of historic movement corridors are also present in the form of long distance trails. LCA 3F is considered to have a Low susceptibility to the type of change proposed due to the existing presence of electricity transmission infrastructure, particularly in the vicinity of the site. As a result, LCA 3F is considered to have a Medium sensitivity to development of a substation on agricultural land.

Local character assessment

East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment (2006)

4.2.10. The site is situated within Landscape Character Type (LCT) 6: Greensand Terrace, as identified within the East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment. The Greensand

Terrace is formed by an outcrop of chalk scarps, the key characteristics of which are identified as:

- *“A distinct terrace formed from Upper Greensand with a locally prominent escarpment defining its outer edge.*
- *Cut by a series of small streams that rise from springs near the foot of the chalk escarpment, and have eroded narrow, deep valleys as they cross the Greensand terrace.*
- *Deeply sunken lanes have eroded downwards to reveal exposures of the Greensand geology and gnarled tree roots. - Fertile soils supporting large fields of arable, interspersed with pasture, woodland and orchards. Road verges with botanical interest.*
- *Distinctive hanger woodlands, remnants of ancient woodland, cling to the steepest slopes.*
- *Areas of former hop gardens are marked by poplar shelter belts.*
- *Villages are located at regular intervals along the springline, often associated with artificially dammed mill ponds and mills. The chalk scarp often forms a dramatic backdrop.*
- *Buildings constructed from local ‘Malmstone’, with red and yellow brick detailing, and clay tile roofs. - A strong sense of rural tranquillity resulting from the absence of overt human impact and a low density of settlement.*
- *Dominated by the adjacent steep chalk escarpment, with views over the adjacent lowlands from the edge of the Greensand scarp.”*

4.2.11. More specifically, the site is situated within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 6C: Worldham Greensand Terrace. LCA 6C is in the north of the district and with the southern edge of the LCA being formed by the South Downs National Park. The key characteristics of the LCA are identified as:

- *“A flat to gently sloping landform of Upper Greensand contained to the west by chalk hills.*
- *An open landscape dominated by medium to large fields of pasture and arable agriculture.*
- *Drained by a number of small tributaries of the Wey (e.g. Caker Stream).*
- *Poplar shelter belts indicate where hops were formerly grown. Old hop kilns have frequently been converted to residential use.*
- *Oak hedgerow trees are distinctive landscape features, plus willow pollards alongside the stream and ditches.*
- *Generally an absence of woodland with a single block of ancient woodland occurring at Monk Wood.*

- *Ditches as well as hedgerows are a common boundary feature.*
- *A landscape of early enclosure with a small block of recent planned enclosure of 18th-19th century date between East Worldham and Alton (now partly occupied by Worldham Golf Course).*
- *Absence of settlement with no villages and only a scattering of isolated farmsteads set within early enclosures. The villages of East and West Worldham are located on the boundary of the character area on the edge of the Rother Valley.*
- *No open access land but the area is crossed by a number of footpaths including the Hangers Way. Worldham Golf Course is a prominent recreational feature.*
- *From the chalk hills to the north, at Neatham there are views across the Wey Valley. Otherwise there are open views across arable farmland. The wooded escarpment at Selborne is a prominent backdrop feature to the south.*
- *Crossed by a number of rural lanes some of which are sunken.*
- *A peaceful landscape, interrupted by visually prominent pylon lines.”*

4.2.12. The Perceptual/Experiential aspects of the landscape within LCA 6C is identified as:

“a smooth, simple and open landscape allowing long views across arable fields.”

4.2.13. Although the assessment notes that the landscape is peaceful with a virtual absence of settlement, it notes:

“The sense of tranquillity is reduced by the pylons which are visually prominent in the open landscape and by the presence of prominent farm buildings, some of which have been converted to industrial uses. The B roads - Selborne Road and Caker’s Lane are a source of noise and movement within the landscape.”

4.2.14. The Biodiversity aspects of the landscape within LCA 6C are identified as being dominated by fields in active agricultural use, and it is noted that:

“The landscape is poorly wooded, with only occasional small blocks of planted woodland, that includes poplar shelterbelts.”

4.2.15. Also noting:

“Hedgerows boundaries are present throughout, and are characterised by occasional mature standard oak trees.”

4.2.16. The Landscape and Visual Sensitivities of LCA 6C are identified as including:

- *“The single block of ancient woodland at Monk Wood.*
- *The small tributaries and ditches which drain the landscape.*
- *Characteristic lines of poplars (which are indicative of past land use) and oak hedgerow trees.*
- *Open views across farmland and the Wey Valley.*
- *Sunken lanes which reveal the bedrock geology.*
- *The unsettled and empty character of the landscape.”*

4.2.17. The overarching Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA 6C is identified as:

“Conserve the open, unsettled character of the landscape which allows broad views across predominantly fields bound by hedgerows and ditches.”

4.2.18. With the Landscape Management Considerations relevant to the site and proposed development:

- *“Encourage management and restoration of hedgerows and monitor regeneration of hedgerow trees, planting new trees where necessary. Conserve and manage ditches where these form field boundaries.*
- *Maintain distinctive tree lines of poplars and shelterbelts.*
- *Manage isolated blocks of woodland for long-term woodland regeneration. Consider linking woodland and hedgerows to improve visual unity and to create wildlife corridors.*
- *Consider opportunities to enhance the land use of the chalk outlier including options for chalk grassland restoration.”*

4.2.19. LCA 6C, is considered to have a Medium value, as although it lies immediately adjacent to part of the nationally designated landscape of the South Downs National Park, and exhibits some rural characteristics, it has limited historic and cultural associations and provides a limited contribution to recreation due to the low public accessibility. Furthermore, the presence of the A31 and existing transmission lines are noted as contributing to movement and disturbance. LCA 6C is considered to have a Low susceptibility to the type of change proposed due to the existing presence of electricity transmission infrastructure, the location of the site adjacent to existing hedgerows and the limited influence over the wider open views that the proposed development could have. As a result, LCA 6C is considered to have a Medium sensitivity to development of a substation on agricultural land.

Character of the site

4.2.20. The site is formed by an area of land within an existing field on the north-western facing slope of land between the south-eastern edge of Alton and the western boundary of the South Downs National Park. The site itself occupies part of the valley slope with a gentle gradient falling from a high point in the eastern corner of the site, down to a low point in

the western corner of the site. The field that the site lies within is currently in active arable production and is enclosed on all sides by mature boundary vegetation.

- 4.2.21. The north-eastern boundary of the main part of the site is formed by part of an existing mature hedgerow that separates the site from the existing access track. The south-eastern boundary of the site is formed by an existing fragmented hedgerow which partially divides two arable fields. The south-western boundary of the site is open to the wider agricultural field with no discernible boundary on the ground, albeit that the vegetation lining both sides of Water Lane lines the south-western boundary of the field itself. The north-western boundary of the site is also open to the wider field with no discernible boundary on the ground.
- 4.2.22. The linear access track part of the proposed development which will connect the main part of the site to Blanket Street on the boundary of the South Downs National Park, is currently grassland, following the route of overhead electricity cables carried by pylons. The broad swathe of land that the proposed access track passes through is lined on both sides by fragmented hedgerow vegetation, with some overgrown hedgerow species.
- 4.2.23. The site itself is not subject to any natural heritage designations and does not exhibit any heritage assets or cultural associations. The condition of the landscape within the site is neither declining nor well managed as it is in active arable use and the fragment of hedgerow within the site is maintained through cutting. Although the site is situated in close proximity to the South Downs National Park, it is not subject to any landscape designations itself and is private land that does not contribute to any recreational opportunities of the wider landscape. The site is not visible from the South Downs and only partially visible in views towards the South Downs from Windmill Hill. The site does not contain any rare or irreplaceable landscape features and is not part of a connected green infrastructure network.
- 4.2.24. As such, the site is not considered to be a valued landscape in terms of Box 5.1 in GLVIA 3, and is considered to have a Low value.
- 4.2.25. The site is considered to have a high susceptibility to the type of change proposed as it is currently undeveloped land and part of a wider area of open field, and although is not in particularly poor condition, is only partially influenced by the adjacent electricity transmission lines. As such, the site itself is considered to have a Medium sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

4.3. Visual character

- 4.3.1. Views in the vicinity of the site are generally characterised by the gently undulating landscape of the Greensand Terrace where the hedgerows and other foreground elements including the gently undulating topography curtail many views along the Caker valley.
- 4.3.2. Where more open views are available within the large fields, they are characterised by the rural farmland where vegetation marking field boundaries encloses the fields and coupled with the undulating topography, often limits longer distance views. Views from within the

field where the site is situated are represented by Viewpoint 1 and Viewpoint 2, which are representative of views gained along the route of PRow 253/43/2, running parallel to Writer's Way Long Distance Trail, which passes along a sunken land that is lined on both sides by ancient hedgerow vegetation, preventing any views into the wider landscape.

- 4.3.3. In this gently undulating landscape, some longer views are available from the valley slopes, extending across the Caker valley where the agricultural landscape is visibly divided by hedgerow vegetation and intersected by small pockets of development. Large agricultural units are set into vegetation which limits their visibility and reduces the potential for prominence on skylines. Some visual influences associated with the urban edge of Alton are perceptible, including the A31 corridor that utilises the lower lying land, partially enclosed between belts of vegetation that line the route. Views gained by receptors within this lower area are limited in extent with rising topography and foreground vegetation curtailing views and containing them to short distance.
- 4.3.4. Non-native vegetation including lines of Lombardy poplar trees at The Hampshire Equine Clinic immediately south of the A31, and Worldham Golf Course, also adjacent to the A31. The transmission lines that traverse the north facing valley slope add point features to the views, breaking the skylines across the wide-ranging views where they are available. Two transmission lines carried by pylons are present in close proximity to the site, one travels along the route of the access track north-west from Blanket Street, parallel to the hedgerow north of the site. An additional transmission line travels perpendicular to that, west of the site.
- 4.3.5. Longer range views are available from within the Study Area, towards the site from the north-west, although are primarily limited to those available from Windmill Hill on the south-east edge of Alton, where the land rises to approximately 150m AOD.
- 4.3.6. The visual baseline is supported by Figure 6: Viewpoints and Visibility, as well as Viewpoints 1 – 7, contained within Appendix 1: Illustrative Material.

Visual receptors at residential properties

Manor Farm and Manor Farm Cottages (approximately 610m south-east of the site)

- 4.3.7. Views gained by visual receptors at Manor Farm are heavily contained by the vegetation that surrounds the residential curtilage and provides a strong visual enclosure, curtailing views into the wider landscape. The residential property is orientated to the south where it is accessed from Blanket Street, with other farm buildings including barns also located within the vegetated boundary to the residential curtilage. Views for visual receptors at Manor Farm are short in extent and focused on the farm yard.
- 4.3.8. Views gained by visual receptors at Manor Farm Cottages to the north-east of Manor Farm, are orientated to face north-west onto Blanket Street, where vegetation on the opposite side of the road is situated on the top of the hedge bank and limits views from the property into the land as it falls away towards the site to the north-west. Visual receptors at the

cottages are afforded some oblique views north along Blanket Street, towards the southern end of the access track for the site, where it meets Blanket Street.

- 4.3.9. Views gained by visual receptors at Manor Farm and cottages are considered to have a High value due to the location of the residential properties within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Residential Properties at West Worldham (approximately 800m south-east of the site)

- 4.3.10. Residential properties at the small settlement of West Worldham to the south-east of the site are situated within an intimate settlement which benefits from enclosure provided by mature vegetation lining the rural lane and within the residential curtilages of properties such as Pullens, St Leonards and Hammonds.
- 4.3.11. Views from the rear of properties such as Warmers and Little Pullens on the north-west edge of West Worldham are available from the rear of the properties and their curtilages into the adjacent farmland, albeit short in extent due to the mature hedgerow field boundaries and the gently undulating topography. Views from other properties in the settlement are contained to within the residential curtilage by boundary vegetation.
- 4.3.12. As a result of this existing localised visual screening and enclosure provided by vegetation in the immediate vicinity, no views towards the site are available for any visual receptors at the residential properties of West Worldham.
- 4.3.13. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties in West Worlham are considered to have a High value due to the location of the residential properties within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Westbrook Grange, Lumbry Farm and Little Eastfield Farm (approximately 1.4km west of the site)

- 4.3.14. Residential properties at Westbrook Farm, Lumbry Farm and Little Eastfield Farm are set within the farm yards on the lower lying valley landscape where views gained by visual receptors are generally short in extent. Foreground elements within the valley such as hedgerows that follow the roads, the Lavant Stream and field boundaries and small woodland copses around farms all aid in curtailing views and limiting longer distance views in to the wider landscape. The agricultural buildings within the farm complex that the residential properties are set amongst, form the focus of views, and further contain visibility to the foreground.

- 4.3.15. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties at Westbrook Farm, Lumby Farm and Little Eastfield Farm are considered to have a High value due to the location of the residential properties within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Trunceaunts Farm (approximately 1km west of the site)

- 4.3.16. The residential properties at Trunceaunts Farm are situated on the lower lying land of the valley, where vegetation and rising topography to the east form the extent of views. The immediate foreground is characterised by the small pastures that are enclosed by hedgerow vegetation, as shown in Viewpoint 4. Transmission lines and poles traverse the view in the foreground, with post and rail fences associated with horse paddocks dividing fields. The hedgerow vegetation on the ridgeline forms the extent of views east, with no views towards the site.

- 4.3.17. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties at Truncheaurds Farm are considered to have a High value as although the property is not located in an area covered by landscape designations, it is Grade II listed and so has strong cultural associations. Visual receptors at the residential property are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at the residential property are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Borovere Farm and 59 Borovere Lane (approximately 2.2km north-west of the site)

- 4.3.18. The residential property at Borovere Farm and properties along Boovere Lane are situated at an elevated location on the southern edge of Widmill Hill, where the views primarily extend over the lower lying land to the south. Views available from Borovere Farm are limited in extent by the agricultural scale building within the farmyard and vegetation adjacent to them. Visual receptors at 59 Borovere Lane are afforded some more open views to the south than other properties with the house orientated to the south limiting any oblique views south-east towards the site.

- 4.3.19. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties at Borovere Farm and Borovere Lane are considered to have a Medium value as although the residential properties are not located within the South Downs National Park, they are afforded some views towards the South Downs. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Residential Properties on Windmill Hill (approximately 1.7km north-west of the site)

- 4.3.20. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties on Windmill Hill are short in extent and are limited by the vegetation, development and topography in the foreground of views. The road is set between two hedge banks with mature hedgerows lining both sides. Ornamental vegetation in the residential curtilages and mature trees along the boundaries of the curtilages provide additional visual enclosure for visual receptors at these residential properties, containing views to the immediate foreground and preventing views towards the South Downs National Park.
- 4.3.21. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties along Windmill Hill are considered to have a Low value as the residential properties are not located within and landscape designations and are not afforded any views towards any designations or cultural associations. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a Medium sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Residential Properties on Wilson Road (approximately 1.5km north-west of the site)

- 4.3.22. Visual receptors at residential properties on Wilson Road in the vicinity of Windmill Lane are orientated to the north-east where some views over Wilson Road are available, although vegetation along the A31 curtails views. Views south-east towards the site are curtailed by vegetation lining Windmill Lane, and the broad swathes of vegetation lining the A31, forming the extent of views. Further north along Wilson Road, visual receptors at residential properties opposite Omega Park have views north-east characterised by the business park while oblique views south-east are curtailed by vegetation in the rear curtilages of the properties and along the field boundary at the back of the houses.
- 4.3.23. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties on Wilson Road are considered to have a Low value as the residential properties are not located within and landscape designations and are not afforded any views towards any designations or cultural associations. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a Medium sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Clay's Farm and Field House (approximately 1.4km north-east of the site)

- 4.3.24. Visual receptors at Clays Farm and Field House have the majority of views into the adjacent landscape contained by the enclosure provided by mature vegetation in the vicinity of the properties. Where gaps in vegetation are present, views west into the arable field are available from Field House, extending across the large field towards the rising topography on the west of the Caker valley. Some oblique views north into the adjacent arable field are available from Clay Farm. Oblique views from the properties towards the

site are limited by foreground vegetation, with gentle undulations on the land south-west of the properties providing additional screening on intervening land.

- 4.3.25. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties at Clays Farm and Field House are considered to have a Low value as the residential properties are not located within and landscape designations and are not afforded any views towards any designations or cultural associations. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a Medium sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Residential Properties at East Worldham (approximately 800m north-east of the site)

- 4.3.26. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties within the small settlement of East Worldham are generally well contained by the vegetation in the vicinity of the settlement, providing enclosure. The plateau location of the settlement and the vegetation on the ridgelines including west of Blanket Street, containing views available to the foreground. The intimacy of the settlement and the secluded nature of the properties set amongst mature vegetation prevents views towards the site for visual receptors within them.
- 4.3.27. Views gained by visual receptors at residential properties in West Worldham are considered to have a High value due to the location of the residential properties within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are in their place of residence, where the visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors at these residential properties are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

Visual receptors on Public Rights of Way

PRoW 259/23/1 (approximately 740m south-east of the site)

- 4.3.28. Views gained by visual receptors on the local route north-east of West Wordlham extend into the open fields that the route passes through, with vegetation along field boundaries forming the extent of views where the route passes through them. Visual receptors on the route are afforded some oblique views to the west, where they extend down the valley slope and across to the rising topography of Windmill Hill at Alton forming the horizon are available, as shown in Viewpoint 3. Vegetation on intervening land limits some views, particularly where it coincides with ridgelines.
- 4.3.29. Views gained by visual receptors using the local PRoW 259/23/1 are considered to have a High value due to the location of the route within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual

receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 259/43/2 (approximately 200m south-west of the site)

4.3.30. Views gained by visual receptors on the local route are channelled along the route by the vegetation that lines the parallel sunken lane which Writers Way passes along immediately adjacent. Visual receptors on the local route have oblique views into the arable field that the route passes along the edge of, where vegetation on the opposite boundary represent the extent of the majority of views. Electricity transmission lines are visible over the vegetation on the opposite boundary, where they form skyline elements, as shown in Viewpoint 1 and Viewpoint 2. Visual receptors passing along the long distance trail of Writers Way have views contained to the route by the sunken lane and vegetation that lines it on both sides, preventing any views towards the site.

4.3.31. Views gained by visual receptors using the local PRoW 259/43/2 are considered to have a High value due to part of the route being located within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 259/20/02 (approximately 750m south-west of the site)

4.3.32. Views gained by visual receptors on the southern section of the local route are focused north along the route where they extend over the Caker Valley towards the rising topography at Windmill Hill. Oblique views into the adjacent farmland are limited by linear vegetation following field boundaries on the valley slope. At the northern end of the route, views are contained to the valley bottom by the steeper sloping land, where oblique views are shorter and influenced by existing transmission lines, as shown in Viewpoint 4.

4.3.33. Views gained by visual receptors using the local PRoW 259/20/02 are considered to have a Medium value as although the route does not pass through the South Downs National Park, views towards the South Downs are available from parts of it. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 259/5/1 and PRoW 002/55/1 (approximately 1.4km west of the site)

4.3.34. Views gained by visual receptors using these local routes are set within the context of the farms that occupy the lower lying valley landscape where views gained by visual receptors are generally short in extent. Foreground elements within the valley such as hedgerows that follow the roads, the Lavant Stream and field boundaries and small woodland copses around farms all aid in curtailing views and limiting longer distance views in to the wider

landscape with the agricultural buildings within the farm complex's further containing visibility to the foreground.

- 4.3.35. Views gained by visual receptors using the local routes are considered to have a High value due to the location of the route within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors using these routes are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using these routes are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 259/21/1 (approximately 600m north of the site)

- 4.3.36. Visual receptors using the local route are afforded some open views where the route passes through fields, allowing some longer views west, towards the facing slope of Windmill Hill. Oblique views south along the eastern valley slope are limited by linear vegetation that follows field boundaries down the slope, preventing views towards the site. Existing transmission lines that traverse the view break the skyline, as shown in Viewpoint 7.

- 4.3.37. Views gained by visual receptors using the local PRoW 259/21/1 are considered to have a Medium value as although the route does not pass through the South Downs National Park, views towards the South Downs are available from parts of it. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 002/51/1, PRoW 002/53/2, PRoW 002/53/1, PRoW 002/54/1 (approximately 1.7km north-west of the site)

- 4.3.38. Views gained by visual receptors on the elevated land at Windmill Hill where a number of PRoW allow public accessibility, are long and wide ranging views to the south and east, into the South Downs National Park. The elevated location affords views that extend over the lower lying land of the Caker valley and into the facing slopes where farmland in the vicinity of the site is divided by linear hedgerow vegetation and the skyline is broken by transmission lines, as shown in Viewpoint 5.

- 4.3.39. Views gained by visual receptors using the local routes are considered to have a Medium value as although the routes do not pass through the South Downs National Park, views towards the South Downs are available from parts of it. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 259/32/1, PRoW 259/32/2 PRoW 259/35/1 (approximately 1km north of the site)

- 4.3.40. Views gained by visual receptors on these local routes extend across the open fields on the west facing slopes of the undulating topography. Some longer distance views extend across the fields in the foreground towards the rising topography on the west of the Caker valley, with views of Windmill Hill available. Oblique views along the valley towards the site are limited by the undulating terrain and the linear vegetation following field boundaries and Caker Lane, as well as vegetation at Worldham Golf Course, as shown in Viewpoint 6.
- 4.3.41. Views gained by visual receptors using the local routes are considered to have a Medium value as although the routes do not pass through the South Downs National Park, views towards the South Downs are available from parts of it. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

PRoW 259/25/1 (approximately 1km north-east of the site)

- 4.3.42. Views gained by visual receptors using the short local route on the edge of East Worldham are short distance views that extend into the field that the route passes through but longer views are generally well contained by the vegetation in the vicinity of the settlement, including that lining Blanket Street.
- 4.3.43. Views gained by visual receptors using the local PRoW 259/23/1 are considered to have a High value due to the location of the route within the South Downs National Park. Visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High susceptibility to the type of change proposed as they are engaged in outdoor recreation, where visual setting is considered to be an important aspect for the focus of their attention. As such, visual receptors using this route are considered to have a High sensitivity to the type of change proposed.

5. Design Rationale

- 5.1.1. The site is located in the eastern corner of an arable field which is partially enclosed on the north-east and south-east boundaries by existing hedgerow vegetation. The site is situated in proximity to existing electricity transmission lines that travel parallel to the north-east boundary of the site, and parallel to the north-west boundary of the site, providing an existing context for infrastructure development in the immediate and wider vicinity.
- 5.1.2. The proposed development of the site takes account of the following existing characteristics of note:
- Location of existing electricity transmission lines;
 - Partial enclosure by existing vegetation;
 - Limited visibility of the site from the wider landscape; and
 - Physical and visual separation of the site from the South Downs National Park.

5.2. Response to Landscape Character and Policy

- 5.2.1. The Landscape Strategy for the proposed development includes for the provision of a wide range of landscape improvements including the creation of a 10m wide buffer of woodland planting on the south-west and north-west boundaries of the site with a further woodland planting buffer to the south-east of the existing hedgerow on the south-east site boundary, as well as delivering a significant length of native hedgerow along the access track and large areas of wildflower grassland.
- 5.2.2. The proposed development will be located within the existing pattern of landscape where it will retain the existing field boundaries, enhancing the vegetation on the south-eastern boundary and creating new blocks of vegetation on the south-west and north-west boundaries which will serve to integrate the proposed development into longer range views towards the South Downs National Park. This helps to meet the landscape guidelines for NCA 120: Wealden Greensand, where SEO 1 aims to:

“Protect and manage the nationally recognised and distinctive character of the landscape, conserving and enhancing historic landscape character, tranquillity, sense of place, and the rich historical and geological heritage of the Wealden Greensand. Enhance access provision where appropriate, to maintain public benefit from and enjoyment of the area.”

- 5.2.3. The landscape proposals also deliver upon the aspirations of SEO 2, which aims to:

“Protect, manage and significantly enhance the mosaic and connectivity of semi-natural habitats within the mixed farmed landscape – particularly the internationally important woodland and heathland habitats – for the benefit of biodiversity, pollination,

soil and water regulation, landscape character and enhanced adaptation to climate change.”

5.2.4. Creating vegetated buffers around the proposed development will contribute to the overarching Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for East Hampshire LCA 6C, which is identified as:

“Conserve the open, unsettled character of the landscape which allows broad views across predominantly fields bound by hedgerows and ditches.”

5.2.5. With the hedgerow creation, vegetated buffers and wildflower grassland creation all delivering upon the aspirations of the Landscape Management Considerations for LCA 6C, which are relevant to the site and proposed development:

- *“Encourage management and restoration of hedgerows and monitor regeneration of hedgerow trees, planting new trees where necessary. Conserve and manage ditches where these form field boundaries.*
- *Maintain distinctive tree lines of poplars and shelterbelts.*
- *Manage isolated blocks of woodland for long-term woodland regeneration. Consider linking woodland and hedgerows to improve visual unity and to create wildlife corridors.*
- *Consider opportunities to enhance the land use of the chalk outlier including options for chalk grassland restoration.”*

5.2.6. Furthermore, the proposed development and landscape strategy complies with Policy CP20: Landscape of the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy (2004), which states:

- g) incorporate appropriate new planting to enhance the landscape setting of the new development which uses local materials, native species and enhances biodiversity;*
- h) maintain, manage and enhance the green infrastructure networks (see Policy CP28 Green Infrastructure).*

5.2.7. As well as being in compliance with Policy CP28: Green Infrastructure, which states:

“Development will be permitted provided that it maintains, manages and enhances the network of new and existing green infrastructure.

6. Landscape and visual effects of the proposed development

6.1. Landscape appraisal

National character assessment

- 6.1.1. Year 1 – The proposed development will occupy a very small part of the large scale NCA 120: Wealdon Greensand, where it will be located on land outside of the designated landscapes such as the South Downs National Park. The landscape scale of effect is considered to be Compact, as although the physical components of the site will be altered, the proposed development will be contained to a very small area of the NCA. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long as it is a permanent change. As such, the magnitude of effect is considered to be Very Small.
- 6.1.2. The proposed development will not alter any of the characteristic elements of the NCA 120: Wealdon Greensand, due to its limited scale of influence but will provide limited enhancements to a small part of the NCA through the proposed landscape strategy identified on Figure 7: Landscape Strategy. The proposed development will not result in any fundamental changes to the key characteristics of the NCA and on balance is considered to be Neutral. As such, the significance of effect is considered to be Negligible Neutral for the Medium sensitivity NCA.
- 6.1.3. Residual effects – The proposed development will occupy a very small part of the large scale NCA 120: Wealdon Greensand, where it will be located on land outside of the designated landscapes such as the South Downs National Park. The landscape scale of effect is considered to be Compact, as although the physical components of the site will be altered, the proposed development will be contained to a very small area of the NCA. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long as it is a permanent change. As such, the magnitude of effect is considered to be Very Small.
- 6.1.4. The proposed development will not alter any of the characteristic elements of the NCA 120: Wealdon Greensand, due to its limited scale of influence but will provide limited enhancements to a small part of the NCA as the proposed landscape strategy matures. The proposed development will not result in any fundamental changes to the key characteristics of the NCA and on balance is considered to be Neutral. As such, the significance of effect is considered to be Negligible Neutral for the Medium sensitivity NCA.

County character assessment

- 6.1.5. Year 1 – The proposed development will occupy a very small area of farmland within the broad county level character area. Part of a larger agricultural field will be utilised as an electricity substation which will not alter any of the key characteristics of LCA 3F. The landscape scale of change that will result from the proposed development is considered to be Compact as it will occupy a very small area within LCA 3F, outside of the South Downs National Park where it will utilise existing boundary features, introducing new planting on the south-west and north-west boundaries to enclose the site. The proposed

development will be set within the context of existing transmission lines adjacent to the site with the tallest element on the site at 17.5m subsidiary to the existing infrastructure and adjacent hedgerow. The proposed development will cause a barely perceptible change to a small part of the wider LCA 3F. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long, as the substation is a permanent development.

- 6.1.6. The magnitude of effect for the proposed development is considered to be Small as it will not result in any comprehensive changes to the composition of the broad characteristic that define the wider LCA 3F. The proposed development with limited and localised landscape enhancements delivered as part of the landscape strategy will, on balance, represent an Adverse alteration to the Medium sensitivity LCA. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Adverse effect upon LCA 3F.
- 6.1.7. Residual effects – The proposed development will represent an alteration to a very small area of farmland within the broad county level character area. An area within a single agricultural field will be utilised as an electricity substation. This will not alter any of the key characteristics of LCA 3F. The landscape scale of change that will result from the proposed development is considered to be Compact as it will occupy a very small area within LCA 3F, outside of the South Downs National Park where it will utilise existing boundary features, the new planting on the south-west and north-west boundaries will have matured to provide enclosure on all sides of the site, enabling the proposed development to sit within the wider context of the LCA 3F where it will cause a barely perceptible change. The proposed development will be set within the context of existing transmission lines adjacent to the site with the tallest element on the site at 17.5m subsidiary to the existing infrastructure and adjacent hedgerow. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long, as the substation is a permanent development.
- 6.1.8. The magnitude of effect for the proposed development is considered to be Small as it will not result in any comprehensive changes to the composition of the broad characteristic that define the wider LCA 3F. The proposed development with limited and localised landscape enhancements delivered as part of the landscape strategy will, on balance, represent an Adverse alteration to the Medium sensitivity LCA. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Adverse effect upon LCA 3F.

Local character assessment

- 6.1.9. Year 1 – The proposed development will replace a small area of farmland within a wider area of an open field where some of the field boundaries are in a declining condition. The proposed development will introduce new planting along the south-west and north-west boundaries to enclose the proposed development and separate it from the wider field. Although the proposed development will occupy an area of farmland in LCA 6C, the landscape scale of change that will result from the proposed development is considered to be Compact as it will utilise existing boundary features, introducing new planting on the south-west and north-west boundaries and will be set within the context of existing

transmission lines. The height of the proposed development with a maximum of 17.5m will cause a barely perceptible change to a small part of the wider LCA 6C, where the substation will represent a slight consolidation of the context set by the existing transmission lines. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long, as the substation is a permanent development.

- 6.1.10. The magnitude of effect for the proposed development is considered to be Small as it will not result in any comprehensive changes to the fabric or composition of characteristic features within LCA 6C. Landscape enhancements delivered as part of the landscape strategy will help to enclose the proposed development, limiting its influence in the wider LCA but on balance, will represent an Adverse alteration to the Medium sensitivity LCA. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Adverse effect upon LCA 6C.
- 6.1.11. Residual effects - The proposed development will replace a small area of farmland within a wider area of an open field where it will represent a slight consolidation of transmission infrastructure. However, as the planting and grassland delivered as part of the landscape strategy mature, the enclosure provided to the proposed development will increase, providing separation from the wider open field for the substation. The vegetation will mature to a similar height as the tallest element within the proposed development. The landscape scale of change will remain as Compact and the landscape duration and reversibility will remain as Long.
- 6.1.12. The magnitude of effect for the proposed development will remain as Small as it will not result in any comprehensive changes to the fabric or composition of characteristic features within LCA 6C. On balance, the proposed development will represent an Adverse alteration to the Medium sensitivity LCA. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Adverse effect upon LCA 6C.

Character of the site

- 6.1.13. Year 1 - The proposed development will alter the site from farmland to electricity infrastructure where the new elements will be set within the context of the existing farmland that is in active production, partially enclosed on the north-east and south-eastern boundaries by existing vegetation, enhanced by the implementation of the landscape strategy which will deliver planting along the south-west and north-west boundaries of the site that are currently open to the field. The proposed development will have varying heights, with the maximum height of infrastructure on the site being 17.5m
- 6.1.14. The landscape scale of change that will result from the introduction of the proposed development is anticipated to be Ample, as it will occupy a large proportion of the site. The landscape strategy will deliver some planting to enclose the proposed development and cut/fill works will set it into the slope slightly. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long as it a permanent development.
- 6.1.15. The magnitude of effect for the proposed development is therefore considered to be Large, albeit some mitigation is provided by the landscape strategy which will separate the proposed development from the wider open field that it is located within. On balance, the

proposed development will result in an Adverse alteration to the open field which is considered to have a Medium sensitivity. As such, the proposed development will cause a Large Adverse significance of effect.

- 6.1.16. Residual effects – As the landscape strategy matures, the enclosure that the planting provides to the proposed development will increase, further separating the proposed development from the wider area of arable field that it is situated within. The hedgerow planting along the south-west and norther-west boundaries of the site will mature to a similar height to the tallest part of the proposed development.
- 6.1.17. The landscape scale of change that will result from the introduction of the proposed development is anticipated to be Ample, as it will occupy a large proportion of the site. The landscape strategy will mature to provide a limited enclosure to the proposed development. The landscape duration and reversibility of the proposed development is considered to be Long as it a permanent development.
- 6.1.18. The magnitude of effect for the proposed development is therefore considered to be Large, as although the planting delivered as part of the landscape strategy will mature to provide enclosure and grassland creation, there will still be a wholesale change from open field to infrastructure. On balance, the proposed development will result in an Adverse alteration to the open field which is considered to have a Medium sensitivity. As such, the proposed development will remain a Large Adverse significance of effect.

6.2. Visual appraisal

Visual receptors at residential properties

Manor Farm and Manor Farm Cottages (approximately 610m south-east of the site)

- 6.2.1. Year 1 effects – The proposed development is anticipated to be almost entirely screened from view for visual receptors at the residential property of Manor Farm due to the existing visual enclosure that the property is provided by vegetation on the curtilage and the local topographic profile. The limited height of the proposed development and the sloping land will limit visibility of the proposed development which will cause a Limited scale of effect with a duration of Long as it is a permanent development which will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors.
- 6.2.2. Residual effects – As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening for the lower elements on the site and further limit its appreciation in views for visual receptors at Manor Farm and Manor Farm Cottages. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor adverse.

Residential Properties at West Worldham (approximately 800m south-east of the site)

- 6.2.3. Year 1 effects – The proposed development is anticipated to be entirely screened from view for visual receptors at the residential properties in West Worldham due to the existing visual screening provided by vegetation and the local topographic profile. The existing

visual enclosure for views towards the site and the limited visual influence of the proposed development in the vicinity of West Worldham will cause a Limited scale of effect with a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors.

- 6.2.4. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening for the lower elements on the site and further limit its appreciation in views for visual receptors at West Worldham. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

Westbrook Grange, Lumbry Farm and Little Eastfield Farm (approximately 1.4km west of the site)

- 6.2.5. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be entirely screened from view for visual receptors at the residential properties due to the existing visual screening in the foreground where other built form within the farm complex's contain views. The existing visual enclosure for views towards the site and the limited visual influence of the proposed development due to the topography and vegetation of intervening land will cause a Limited scale of effect with a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.

- 6.2.6. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening for the lower elements on the site and further limit its appreciation in views for visual receptors at these properties. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

Trunceaunts Farm (approximately 1km west of the site)

- 6.2.7. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be entirely screened from view for visual receptors at Trunceaunts Farm, where the rising topography and hedgerow vegetation on the ridgeline in the foreground forms the extent of views. The existing visual enclosure and the limited visual influence of the proposed development due to the topography and vegetation of intervening land will cause a Limited scale of effect with a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.

- 6.2.8. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, the woodland buffer will provide additional screening for the lower elements on the site and further limit its appreciation in views for visual receptors at Trunceaunts Farm. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

Borovere Farm and 59 Borovere Lane (approximately 2.2km north-west of the site)

6.2.9. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be partially screened from view for visual receptors at Borovere Farm and Borovere Lane due to existing views being orientated to the south. The proposed development will be partially visible in oblique views to the north-east where it will be seen against the backdrop of the rising topography as the hillside slopes up towards the South Downs National Park. Hedgerow and tree belt vegetation will provide some partial screening of the proposed development where it is visible in the large scale oblique views. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect due to the large scale of views available. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.

6.2.10. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening for the lower elements on the site and further limit its appreciation in oblique views for visual receptors at Borovere Farm and Borovere Lane. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Adverse.

Residential Properties on Windmill Hill (approximately 1.7km north-west of the site)

6.2.11. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be entirely screened from view for visual receptors at properties on Windmill Hill due to existing foreground screening that prevents views towards the site and the South Downs National Park. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect due to the large scale of views available. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Negligible Neutral effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.

6.2.12. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening, however the foreground elements will still prevent views towards the site and proposed development. As such, effects upon the Medium sensitivity visual receptors will remain Negligible Neutral.

Residential Properties on Wilson Road (approximately 1.5km north-west of the site)

6.2.13. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be entirely screened from view for visual receptors at properties on Wilson Road due to existing foreground screening that prevents views towards the site and the South Downs National Park. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect due to the large scale of views available. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Negligible Neutral effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.

6.2.14. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening, however the foreground elements will still prevent views

towards the site and proposed development. As such, effects upon the Medium sensitivity visual receptors will remain Negligible Neutral.

Clay's Farm and Field House (approximately 1.4km north-east of the site)

- 6.2.15. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be partially screened in oblique views south for visual receptors at Clay's Farm and Field House due to existing foreground screening that prevents views towards the site. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect due vegetation lining Caker Lane and the topography of intervening land. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Negligible Neutral effect upon the Medium sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.
- 6.2.16. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening, however the foreground elements will still heavily screen views towards the site and proposed development. As such, effects upon the Medium sensitivity visual receptors will remain Negligible Neutral.

Residential Properties at East Worldham (approximately 800m north-east of the site)

- 6.2.17. Year 1 effects - The proposed development is anticipated to be partially screened from view for visual receptors East Worldham due to hedgerow and tree belt vegetation as well as the topography of intervening land. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect due to the large scale of views available. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors at these residential properties.
- 6.2.18. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening for the lower elements on the site and further limit its any views of the proposed development for visual receptors at residential properties in East Worldham. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral adverse.

Visual receptors on Public Rights of Way

PRoW 259/23/1 (approximately 740m south-east of the site)

- 6.2.19. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be predominantly screened from view for visual receptors using PRoW 259/23/1 where vegetation and the falling topography on intervening land to the west of the route filter and screen oblique views of the proposed development. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect and a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors using the local route.

- 6.2.20. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening and further limit its any views of the proposed development for visual receptors on PRoW 259/23/1. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

PRoW 259/43/2 (approximately 200m south-west of the site)

- 6.2.21. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be visible at close range for visual receptors on PRoW 259/43/2 where it will appear in the foreground of oblique views over the arable field where it will be seen against the backdrop of the vegetation forming the field boundary. The sub-station will introduce additional built form and electricity infrastructure into the view alongside existing pylons. The proposed development will appear against the skyline in views up the sloping topography of the field in some views and will cause a Modest scale of effect for visual receptors on a short section of the route. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent change. The proposed development will give rise to a Medium magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Moderate Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on this PRoW.

- 6.2.22. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, the woodland planting will provide screening for the lower elements of the proposed development and facilitate it assimilating into oblique views to the north for visual receptors on the PRoW. The mitigation planting will provide an effective visual screen for the proposed development which will cause Limited scale of change for a Long duration. The effect of the proposed development on oblique views will reduce to a Minor Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on this PRoW.

PRoW 259/20/02 (approximately 750m south-west of the site)

- 6.2.23. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be predominantly screened from view for visual receptors on PRoW 259/20/02 where vegetation and topography on intervening land to the north filter and screen oblique views of the proposed development. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect and a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on the route.

- 6.2.24. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening and further limit its any views of the proposed development for visual receptors on PRoW 259/20/02. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

PRoW 259/5/1 and PRoW 002/55/1 (approximately 1.4km west of the site)

- 6.2.25. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be predominantly screened from view for visual receptors on PRoW in the Caker Valley where vegetation and topography on intervening land to the north-east filter and screen oblique views of the proposed

development. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect and a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on the route.

- 6.2.26. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening and further limit its any views of the proposed development for visual receptors on PRow in the Caker Valley. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

PRow 259/21/1 (approximately 600m north of the site)

- 6.2.27. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be partially visible at close range for visual receptors on PRow 259/21/1 where it will appear in the foreground of oblique views over the arable field and will be partially screened by vegetation forming the field boundary. The sub-station will introduce additional built form and electricity infrastructure into the view alongside existing pylons. The proposed development will appear against the vegetation and rising topography of the fields to the southeast of the site, including the belt of vegetation lining Writer's Lane and will cause a Compact scale of effect for visual receptors on the route. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent change. The proposed development will give rise to a Medium magnitude of effect and as such, will cause a Moderate Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on this PRow.

- 6.2.28. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, the woodland planting will increase visual screening of proposed development and facilitate it assimilating into oblique views south-east for visual receptors on the PRow. The mitigation planting will provide an effective visual screen for the proposed development which will cause Limited scale of change for a Long duration. The effect of the proposed development on oblique views will reduce to a Minor Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on this PRow.

PRow 002/51/1, PRow 002/53/2, PRow 002/53/1, PRow 002/54/1 (approximately 1.7km north-west of the site)

- 6.2.29. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be visible at close range for visual receptors on PRow 259/43/2 where it will appear in the foreground of oblique views over the arable field where it will be seen against the backdrop of the vegetation forming the field boundary. The sub-station will introduce additional built form and electricity infrastructure into the view alongside existing pylons. The proposed development will appear against the skyline in views up the sloping topography of the field in some views and will cause a Modest scale of effect for visual receptors on a short section of the route. The proposed development will have a duration of Long as it is a permanent change and will give rise to a Medium magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Moderate Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on this PRow.

- 6.2.30. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, the woodland planting will provide screening for the lower elements of the proposed development and facilitate it assimilating into oblique views to the north for visual receptors on the PRoW. The mitigation planting will provide an effective visual screen for the proposed development which will cause Limited scale of change for a Long duration. The effect of the proposed development on oblique views will reduce to a Minor Adverse effect upon the High sensitivity receptors on this PRoW.

PRoW 259/32/1, PRoW 259/32/2 PRoW 259/35/1 (approximately 1km north of the site)

- 6.2.31. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be predominantly screened from view for visual receptors using these PRoW north-west of the site, where vegetation and topography on intervening land will filter and screen oblique views of the proposed development. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect and a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors using the local route.

- 6.2.32. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening and further limit its any views of the proposed development for visual receptors on these PRoW. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

PRoW 259/25/1 (approximately 1km north-east of the site)

- 6.2.33. Year 1 effects - The proposed development will be predominantly screened from view for visual receptors using PRoW 259/25/1 north-west of the site, where vegetation and topography on intervening land will filter and screen oblique views of the proposed development. The proposed development will cause a Limited scale of effect and a duration of Long as it is a permanent development. The proposed development will give rise to a Very Small magnitude of effect. As such, the proposed development will cause a Minor Neutral effect upon the High sensitivity receptors using the local route.

- 6.2.34. Residual effects - As the landscape scheme for the proposed development matures, it will provide additional screening and further limit its any views of the proposed development for visual receptors on this PRoW. The effects upon the High sensitivity visual receptors will remain Minor Neutral.

7. Summary

- 7.1.1. An LVA has been undertaken by ADAS for the proposed electricity substation on land south-east of Alton. The site is comprised of an area within an agricultural field setting. The site is partially contained by existing vegetation on two sides and its location on a west facing valley slope below the South Downs National Park, as shown on Figure 4: Context in Appendix 1.
- 7.1.2. The site is not subject to any landscape designations, although lies approximately 417m west of the South Downs National Park at its closest point, with the access track for the proposed development located immediately adjacent to the boundary of the South Downs National Park. The site itself is not considered to have a recognised visual unity and presents opportunity for enhancement.
- 7.1.3. The proposed development will have a limited visual envelope, although it will feature in some close range views for visual receptors on 259/43/2 approximately 200m south-west of the site and some longer ranging views from PRoW on Windmill Hill.
- 7.1.4. The proposed development will be located within the existing pattern of landscape where it will retain the existing field boundaries with the design optimisation of the proposed development taking account of the most sensitive visual receptors by enhancing the vegetation on the south-eastern boundary and creating new blocks of vegetation on the south-west and north-west boundaries which will serve to integrate the proposed development into longer range views towards the South Downs National Park. This helps to meet the landscape guidelines for NCA 120: Wealden Greensand, where SEO 1 aims to:

“Protect and manage the nationally recognised and distinctive character of the landscape, conserving and enhancing historic landscape character, tranquillity, sense of place, and the rich historical and geological heritage of the Wealden Greensand. Enhance access provision where appropriate, to maintain public benefit from and enjoyment of the area.”

- 7.1.5. The landscape proposals also deliver upon the aspirations of SEO 2, which aims to:

“Protect, manage and significantly enhance the mosaic and connectivity of semi-natural habitats within the mixed farmed landscape – particularly the internationally important woodland and heathland habitats – for the benefit of biodiversity, pollination, soil and water regulation, landscape character and enhanced adaptation to climate change.”

- 7.1.6. Creating vegetated buffers around the proposed development will contribute to the overarching Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for East Hampshire LCA 6C, which is identified as:

“Conserve the open, unsettled character of the landscape which allows broad views across predominantly fields bound by hedgerows and ditches.”

7.1.7. With the hedgerow creation, vegetated buffers and wildflower grassland creation all delivering upon the aspirations of the Landscape Management Considerations for LCA 6C, which are relevant to the site and proposed development:

- ***“Encourage management and restoration of hedgerows and monitor regeneration of hedgerow trees, planting new trees where necessary. Conserve and manage ditches where these form field boundaries.***
- ***Maintain distinctive tree lines of poplars and shelterbelts.***
- ***Manage isolated blocks of woodland for long-term woodland regeneration. Consider linking woodland and hedgerows to improve visual unity and to create wildlife corridors.***
- ***Consider opportunities to enhance the land use of the chalk outlier including options for chalk grassland restoration.”***

7.1.8. Furthermore, the proposed development and landscape strategy complies with Policy CP20: Landscape of the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy (2004), which states:

- i) incorporate appropriate new planting to enhance the landscape setting of the new development which uses local materials, native species and enhances biodiversity;***
- j) maintain, manage and enhance the green infrastructure networks (see Policy CP28 Green Infrastructure).***

7.1.9. As well as being in compliance with Policy CP28: Green Infrastructure, which states:

“Development will be permitted provided that it maintains, manages and enhances the network of new and existing green infrastructure.

7.1.10. It is considered within the capacity of the site, and wider Hampshire LCA 3F: Wey Valley and East Hampshire LCA 6C: Worldham Greensand Terrace to absorb the proposed development without any unacceptable changes to character or views. The proposed development will not alter the overriding composition of landscape elements, with appropriate mitigation facilitating the assimilation of the proposed development into the visual character of close and longer ranging views.

Appendix 1: Illustrative Materials

Figure 1: Designations

Figure 2: Topography

Figure 3: National and County Character

Figure 4: Local Character

Figure 5: Context

Figure 6: Visibility and Viewpoints

Figure 7: Landscape Strategy Plan



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