

Appendix A

Appraisal Methodology

A.1 This appendix sets out the methodology used for the LVA. The objectives of the LVA are to identify and assess the potential for landscape and visual effects arising as a result of the Proposed Project. The identification of landscape and visual effects is the result of applying professional judgement within an evidence-based appraisal process.

Approach to Appraisal

A.2 The methods and approach used to carry out the appraisal were informed by the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition) (GLVIA3)³. LVA is distinct from LVIA in that it is not a requirement of the EIA Regulations. In reference to LVA, GLVIA3 states that:

'The principles and processes of LVIA can also be used to assist in the 'appraisal' of forms of land use change or development that fall outside the requirements of the EIA Directive and Regulations. Applying such an approach in these circumstances can be useful in helping to develop the design of different forms of development or other projects that may bring about change in the landscape and in visual amenity.'

A.3 Although an LVA describes effects, it is not required to determine 'significance', which is a term with specific meaning related to formal EIA processes. Instead, the LVA undertakes the following principal steps for assessing landscape and visual effects as follows:

- the landscape of the 3km study area has been analysed and landscape receptors identified;
- the area over which the Proposed Project will be visible has been established through creation of a Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (SZTV);
- the visual baseline has been recorded in terms of the different groups of people who may experience views of the Proposed Project and the nature of their existing views and visual amenity;
- viewpoints have been selected (including representative viewpoints, specific viewpoints and illustrative viewpoints), in consultation with Cotswolds National Landscape.
- likely levels of effects on landscape and visual resources have been identified; and

- the level of landscape and visual effects have been judged with reference to the sensitivity of the resource/receptor (its susceptibility and value) and magnitude of effect (a combination of the scale of effect, geographical extent and duration/reversibility).

Method for Assessing Landscape Effects

A.4 Judging the landscape effects requires consideration of the nature of the landscape receptors (sensitivity) and the nature of the effect on those receptors (magnitude).

Nature of Receptors (Sensitivity)

A.5 GLVIA3 states that the nature of landscape receptors, commonly referred to as their sensitivity, should be assessed in terms of the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change proposed and the value attached to the receptor.

Susceptibility

A.6 In GLVIA3 susceptibility is defined as:

'the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the Proposed Project without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies' (GLVIA3 para 5.40).

A.7 This appraisal of susceptibility focuses on the landscape's general ability to accommodate and remove large scale electricity infrastructure.

A.8 Table A.1 below sets out indicators of higher and lower susceptibility. These indicators have been used to judge susceptibility in this appraisal.

Table A.1: Indicators of landscape susceptibility

Factor	Indicators of lower landscape susceptibility	Indicators of higher landscape susceptibility
Indicators for assessing susceptibility to large scale electricity infrastructure, including pylons and Sealing End Compounds		
Landform	Smooth, regular and convex, or flat and uniform areas.	Distinctive, dramatic or rugged landform features such as scarps, or areas with strong topographical variety.

Factor	Indicators of lower landscape susceptibility	Indicators of higher landscape susceptibility
Land cover	Simple, uncluttered landscapes with sweeping lines and extensive areas of consistent ground cover such as brownfield sites or arable land	Complex, irregular or intimate landscape patterns, where naturalistic land cover and/or semi-natural habitats are more prominent.
Scale	Large scale landscape, which lacks 'human-scale' features	Small scale landscape with 'human-scale' landscape features.
Skyline	Landscapes that do not form a distinctive skyline or backdrop.	Open uninterrupted skylines which are a distinctive feature.
Prominent landscape features	Landscapes which have few visual foci.	Landscapes with strong visual features and focal points, such as distinctive landforms or man-made landmarks such as hilltop monuments.
Human influences	Landscapes characterised by overt man-made structures or land uses and/or the presence of road or rail infrastructure.	Landscapes that lack human influence (naturalistic landscape) or which are more traditional settled and farmed landscapes with a strong rural character.
Vertical infrastructure	Landscapes which are already affected by vertical built structures such as communication masts or other pylons and other man-made features.	Areas with no or limited vertical built structures, or areas which are affected by visual clutter.

Factor	Indicators of lower landscape susceptibility	Indicators of higher landscape susceptibility
Perceptual aspects and tranquillity	Vibrant / active landscape with over man-made features, and presence of visual and audible factors.	Remote and tranquil landscapes or areas that provide opportunities to experience a sense of relative wildness or perceived naturalness.

- A review of designations and the level of policy importance that they signify (such as landscapes designated at international, national, or local level); and
- Application of criteria that indicate value (such as landscape quality, scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects, associations e.g. with artists or writers).

A.11 Judgements on value are recorded as of national value, local value and community value according to Table A.3.

Table A.3: Definitions of Landscape Value

Value	Definition
National Value	Areas or features designated at a national level e.g. National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty/National Scenic Areas, or important features of these with national policy level protection. and/ or Landscapes that have national significance against the value criteria set out in Para A10.
Regional/District Value	Areas or features designated at a county or local level e.g. local authority designated landscapes or important features of designated landscapes. and/ or Landscapes that have Regional/ District-wide significance against the value criteria set out in Para A10.
Community Value	Areas or features that are not formally designated but are nevertheless locally valued by the local community. and/ or Landscapes that have local significance against the value criteria set out in Para A10.

A.9 Judgements on susceptibility of receptors (which may include individual features or areas) are recorded as **high, medium or low** according to Table A.2.

Table A.2: Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors

Susceptibility	Definition
High	The landscape receptor is less able to accommodate large scale electricity infrastructure, such as pylons and Sealing End Compounds, without undue negative consequences for landscape character. Attributes that make up the character of the landscape offer limited opportunities for accommodating such features.
Medium	The landscape receptor has some ability to accommodate large scale electricity infrastructure, such as pylons and Sealing End Compounds, without undue negative consequences for landscape character. Attributes that make up the character of the landscape offer some opportunities for accommodating such features.
Low	The landscape receptor is more able to accommodate large scale electricity infrastructure, such as pylons and Sealing End Compounds, without undue negative consequences for landscape character. Attributes that make up the character of the landscape are more resilient to being changed by these features.

Value

A.10 Value of receptors is determined with reference to:

A.12 It should be noted that whilst landscape designations at a national level are likely to be accorded the highest value, it does not necessarily follow that such landscapes all have a high susceptibility to all types of change. There may be a complex relationship between the value attached to a landscape and its susceptibility to change. Therefore, the rationale for judgements is clearly set out for each receptor based on the principles established in Tables A.1-A.3.

Nature of Effects (Magnitude)

A.13 The nature of the effect on each landscape receptor (magnitude) is reported in terms of its size and scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility.

Size and Scale

A.14 For landscape character areas/types, the size/scale of change depends on the degree to which the character of the landscape is changed through removal of existing landscape components or addition of new ones. Of particular concern is how the changes affect the 'key characteristics' of the landscape.

A.15 In this appraisal size/scale is described as being imperceptible, small, medium or large, with reference to the definitions set out in Table A.4.

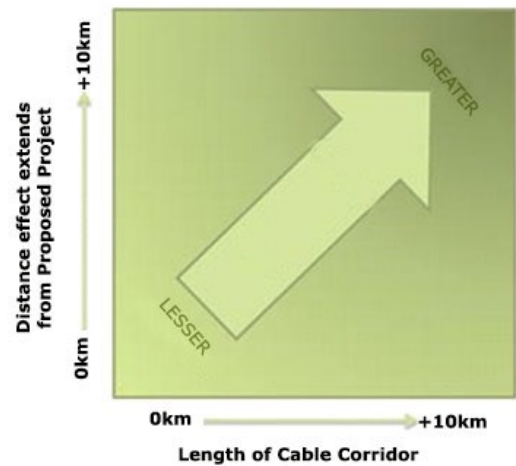
Table A.4: Scale of Landscape Change

Size/Scale	Definition
Large	Loss of landscape elements and features or addition of new ones which result in obvious changes to landscape characteristics and character.
Medium	Loss of landscape elements and features or addition of new ones which result in discernible and distinct changes to landscape characteristics and character.
Small	A perceptible but small change to landscape characteristics and character as a result of the loss of landscape elements and features or addition of new ones.
Imperceptible	A barely perceptible/imperceptible change to landscape character and characteristics.

Geographical Extent

A.16 Geographical extent is the extent over which the landscape effect will be felt and is often influenced by sense of enclosure. For the purposes of this appraisal, it is described as where changes are perceived only locally, with limited effects on wider landscape character (small extent), where changes are perceived across a wider area (medium extent) or where changes have a widespread influence on perception

of the landscape, and perceived across a wide area (large extent). This is judged on both the length of the undergrounding and the distance the effect extends from the proposal, as shown in the diagram below.



Assessing geographical extent of effect on landscape

Duration

A.17 Duration is reported as short term (0-3 years), medium term (3-15 years) or long term (over 15 years). Longer term effects will result in higher overall effects.

Reversibility

A.18 Reversibility is reported as reversible, partially reversible or not reversible, and is related to whether the change is likely to be reversed in, for example, a generation³. For example, effects arising from presence of construction traffic will cease at the end of construction and are therefore classed as reversible, while restoration of a landscape to something similar to but not the same as the original may be recorded as 'partially reversible' and the presence or removal of built structures is not likely to be reversed in the long term and are therefore classed as 'not reversible'.

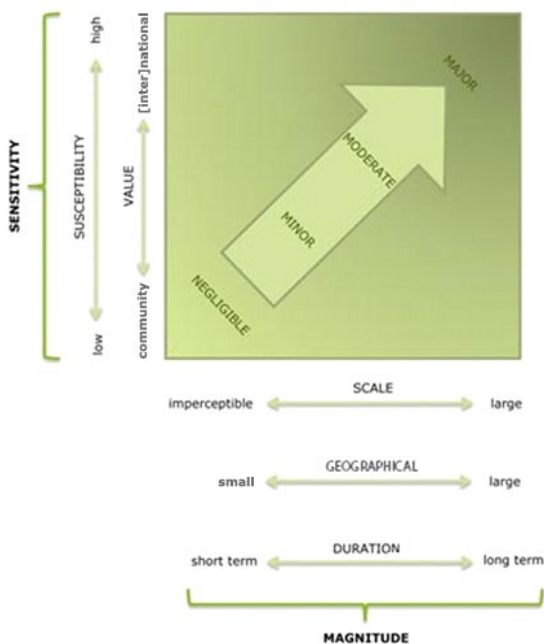
Judging the Levels of Effect

A.19 The evaluations of the individual aspects set out above (susceptibility, value, size and scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility) were considered together to provide an overall profile of each identified effect. An overview was then taken of the distribution of judgements for each aspect to

³ The term of years, roughly 30 among human beings, accepted as the average period between the birth of parents and the birth of their offspring [http://www.dictionary.com/browse/generation]

make an informed professional appraisal of the overall level of each effect, drawing on guidance provided in GLVIA3. A numerical or formal weighting system was not applied. Instead, consideration of the relative importance of each aspect was made to feed into the overall decision.

A.20 Levels of effect were identified as negligible, minor, moderate or major moderate or major (or intermediate levels such as minor-moderate and moderate-major). The following diagram indicates how these various components are combined to inform the overall level of effect.



A.21 The main levels of effect may be defined as shown in Table A.5.

Table A.5: Levels of Landscape Effect

Level	Effect Description
Major	The Proposed Project will result in an obvious change in landscape characteristics and character, likely affecting a landscape with a moderate or high susceptibility to that type of change, and/ or affecting a nationally valued landscape. The effect is likely to be long term and affect a relatively large area.
Major-Moderate	An intermediate category between the major and moderate levels.

Level	Effect Description
Moderate	The Proposed Project will result in a noticeable change in landscape characteristics and character, likely affecting a landscape with a moderate susceptibility to that type of change. This level of effect may also occur for example when a smaller scale of effect acts on a more highly susceptible or widely valued landscape, or a larger scale of effect acting on lower susceptibility or more locally valued landscape. This level of effect may also occur when a large scale of effect occurs over a relatively short period or over a small area.
Moderate-Minor	An intermediate category between the moderate and minor levels.
Minor	The Proposed Project will result in a small change in landscape characteristics and character, likely affecting a low or medium susceptibility landscape or landscape valued at a community/ local level over a long term. This level of effect may also occur for example when a medium scale of effect is of short duration or confined to a small area.
Negligible	The Proposed Project will not result in a noticeable change in landscape characteristics/character.

Direction of Effect

A.22 The direction of effect (positive, negative, or neutral) is determined in relation to the degree to which the proposal fits with landscape character and the contribution to the landscape that the development makes. Effects are assumed to be adverse unless stated otherwise.

Assessing Visual Effects

A.23 Visual effects are experienced by people at different locations around the 3km study area. Visual receptors are the people who will be affected by changes in views of visual amenity at different places, and they are usually grouped by what they are doing at that place (residents, motorists, recreational users etc.).

A.24 Judging the significance of visual effects requires consideration of the nature of the visual receptors (sensitivity) and the nature of the effect on those receptors (magnitude).

Nature of Receptors (Sensitivity)

A.25 GLVIA3 states that the nature of visual receptors, commonly referred to as their sensitivity, should be assessed in terms of the susceptibility of the receptor to change in views/visual amenity and the value attached to particular views.

Susceptibility

A.26 The susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views/visual amenity is a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view and the extent to which their attention is focussed on views (GLVIA3, para 6.32). This is recorded as high, medium or low according to Table A.6.

Table A.6: Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

Susceptibility	Receptor Group
High	Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents; people engaged in outdoor recreation (including users of public rights of way (PRoW) and National Cycle Routes whose interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape); visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of surroundings are an important contributor to experience.
Medium	Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes.
Low	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape; people at their place of work whose attention is not on their surroundings.

Value

A.27 Recognition of the value of a view is determined with reference to:

- planning designations;
- recorded as important in relation to heritage assets (such as designed views recorded in citations of Registered Parks and Gardens or views recorded as of importance in Conservation Area Appraisals); and
- the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment and references to them in literature and art.

A.28 Judgements on value of views are recorded as of national value, local value and community value according to **Error! Reference source not found..**

Table A.7: Definitions of Value Attached to Views

Size/Scale	Definition
National Value	Views identified in the Cotswolds National Landscape management plan or National landscape character assessments. Designed views recorded in citations for historic parks and gardens or views from historic landscape features (e.g. scheduled monuments). Views from National Trails, Long Distance Trails, Recreational Routes, National Cycle Network (NCN), used in guidebooks to the UK, or marked on OS maps (as a blue viewpoint symbol).
Local Value	Views identified in local designation documents or local authority landscape/townscape assessments. Views recorded as of importance in Conservation Area Appraisals. Views from the District's PRoW (that are not National Trails, 'Recreational Routes' or NCN).
Community Value	Views that are not documented as important in national or local documents but nevertheless are valued at a community level. This might include views from local green spaces, informal local footpaths or roads.

Nature of Effects (Magnitude)

A.29 The nature of the effect on visual receptors (magnitude) is reported in terms of its size and scale, geographical extent, and duration/reversibility.

Size and Scale

A.30 The size/scale of change depends on:

- the scale of the change in view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the Proposed Project;
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in

terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;

- the nature of the view of the Proposed Project, in terms of whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.

A.31 The appraisal of effects assumes winter conditions, this revealing greatest visibility with minimal screening by vegetation and deciduous trees.

A.32 In this appraisal size/scale is described as being imperceptible, small, medium or large, with reference to the definitions set out in Table A.8.

Table A.8: Scale of Visual Change

Size/Scale	Definition
Large	Large change in view, perhaps where the Proposed Project is in close proximity in a direct line of vision, or affecting a substantial part of the view, or providing contrast with the existing view.
Medium	Clearly perceptible change in view, perhaps where the Proposed Project is relatively close but at an oblique angle or further away in the direct line of vision, creating a noticeable change to baseline conditions.
Small	Small change in view, perhaps where the Proposed Project is at a distance or oblique angle, or where there is little change to baseline conditions.
Imperceptible	Change in view which is barely perceptible.

Geographical Extent

A.33 This records the extent to which the changes will be visible from each receptor e.g. whether there are only a few locations from where the Proposed Project can be glimpsed, or changes are experienced by few people (small extent), whether there are several locations where similar views can be gained, or changes are experienced by a moderate number of people (medium extent), or whether there are many locations where similar views can be gained, or changes are experienced by a large number of people (large extent).

Duration

A.34 The duration is reported as short term (0-3 years), medium term (3-15 years) or long term (over 15 years). Longer term effects will generally result in higher overall effects.

Reversibility

A.35 Reversibility is reported as reversible, partially reversible or not reversible, and is related to whether the change is likely to be reversed in, for example, a generation⁴. For example, effects arising from presence of construction traffic will cease at the end of construction and are therefore classed as reversible, while restoration of a landscape to something similar to but not the same as the original may be recorded as 'partially reversible' and the presence or removal of built structures are not likely to be reversed in the long term and are therefore classed as 'not reversible'.

Judging the Levels of Effect

A.36 As for landscape effects, the evaluations of the individual aspects set out above (susceptibility, value, size and scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility) were considered together to provide an overall profile of each identified effect. An overview was then taken of the distribution of judgements for each aspect to make an informed professional appraisal of the overall level of effect, drawing on guidance provided in GLVIA3.

A.37 A numerical or formal weighting system was not applied, instead consideration of the relative importance of each aspect was made to feed into the overall decision. Levels of effect were identified as negligible, minor, moderate or major (or intermediate levels such as minor-moderate and moderate-major).

A.38 The matrix diagram above indicates how these various components are combined to inform the overall level of effect.

A.39 The main levels of effect may be defined as shown in Table A.9.

Table A.9: Levels of Visual Effect

Level	Effect Description
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⁴ The term of years, roughly 30 among human beings, accepted as the average period between the birth of parents and the birth of their offspring [http://www.dictionary.com/browse/generation]

Major	The Proposed Project will result in an obvious change in the view, likely affecting a visual receptor with a high susceptibility to that type of change, and/or affecting a valued view. The effect is likely to be long term and affect a relatively large part of the receptor or affect a large number of people.
Major-Moderate	An intermediate category between major and moderate levels.
Moderate	The Proposed Project will result in a noticeable change in the view, likely affecting a visual receptor with a moderate susceptibility to that type of change, or locally valued. This level of effect may also occur when a smaller scale of effect acts on a more widely valued view, or a larger scale of effect acting on a view valued at a more local level. This level of effect may also occur when a large scale of effect occurs over a relatively short period or over a small area.
Moderate-Minor	An intermediate category between moderate and minor levels.
Minor	The Proposed Project will result in a small change in a relatively lower value view, or one with lower susceptibility to change. This level of effect may also occur when a larger scale of effect is of short duration or affects a small part of the visual receptor/ affects few people.
Negligible	The Proposed Project will not result in a noticeable change in views.

Direction of effect

A.40 The direction of effect (beneficial, adverse or neutral) is determined in relation to the contribution to the view that the Proposed Project makes, even if it is in contrast to the existing character of the view. Effects are assumed to be adverse unless stated otherwise.