The Great Grid Upgrade

Eastern Green Link 5 (EGL 5)

Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Volume 2
Part 2
Appendix 8.B Landscape Character Baseline

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nationalgrid

Contents

8.B. Appendix 8B: Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment

8.B.1 Introduction

8.B.1.1 This Appendix presents the landscape character baseline alongside assessments of landscape receptors that have not been significantly affected by the Eastern Green Link (EGL) 5 English Onshore Scheme. The assessment of landscape receptors identified as significant in any phase of the Projects has been included in the main report.

8.B.1.2 This Appendix should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- **Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Amenity;**
- **Volume 2, Part 2, Appendix 8.A: Landscape and Visual;** and
- **Volume 2, Part 2, Appendix 8.C: Visual Baseline and Assessment.**

8.B.1.3 As recognised in **Volume 1, Part 1, Chapter 4: Description of the Project**, a degree of flexibility has been retained within the draft Order Limits through the provision of several development zones. These include the Indicative zone for underground cable assets which identifies the areas within which the permanent cable assets would be constructed, comprising the trench (or installation area) and the associated temporary working width which would be required for cable installation. This zone and the Indicative Cable Route are shown in **Volume 3, Part 1, Figures 4-1 to 4-4**. Consideration has been given to the potential for effects to be of greater significance should any of the components of the English Onshore Scheme be moved within the development zone identified. The assumptions made regarding the use of flexibility for the assessment and any alternative assumptions are set out in **Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Amenity.**

8.B.1.4 This Appendix has been structured to present the landscape character baseline covering primarily published Landscape Character Assessments followed by the assessment of the effects on landscape character. Where the effects on landscape receptors have been assessed as significant, they have been referenced in the main **Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Amenity**, where also some landscape character baseline is presented. **Volume 3, Part 2, Figure 8-1** illustrates the National Character Areas and Landscape designations, whilst **Volume 3, Part 2, Figure 8-2** illustrates the Local Landscape Character Areas.

8.B.2 Landscape character baseline

National level - National Character Area (NCA) Profiles

Table 8.B-1 National Character Area Profiles

NCA Profile	Key Landscape Characteristics
Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes NCA 42	• Consists of three distinctly different but interconnected regions; middle marsh to the west, the outmarsh to the east and the coast itself; • Dispersed settlement pattern throughout with nucleated patterns in areas of higher ground. Larger settlements are concentrated around coastal resorts. • Flat coastal plains to the east rising towards the west, with more undulating land at the foot of the Lincolnshire Wolds. • A complex series of natural and manmade rivers, streams, watercourses and ditches drain eastwards towards the sea. • Predominantly agricultural landscape in arable and pastoral land use, with traditional grazing marshes, a nationally threatened habitat, scattered throughout the NCA area. • Woodland and hedge cover is typically sparse but intensifies towards the west where the area borders the Lincolnshire Wolds. There are significant Ancient Woodlands within the NCA section of the Landscape Character Area (LCA). • Archaeologically, evidence of medieval villages, ridge and furrow, medieval or later industry.
Lincolnshire Wolds NCA 43	• Rolling hills with an escarpment to the north and west coupled with a predominantly agricultural landscape. • Mainly arable agricultural use with rectilinear pasture fields formed by clipped hawthorn hedgerows. • Limited woodland across the area, but clumps of beech, shelterbelts, and hedgerow trees are present throughout. In some of the south-west valleys, alder carr woodlands are widely present. • 62 per cent of the area lies within the Lincolnshire Wolds and is characterised by its natural beauty, expansive views and tranquil atmosphere. • Springs and chalk streams are prevalent, and the headwaters of several rivers are found within the area. • Sparse settlement pattern, with scattered farmsteads, market towns and some small, nucleated villages. • Wide grass verges extending up to 20m run alongside some roads and historical tracks and provide a species rich linear habitat throughout.

Regional level – County Landscape Character Assessments

8.B.2.2 At the county scale, the study area falls within the administrative boundary of Lincolnshire County Council. There is no specific County Landscape Character Assessment available at the County level within Lincolnshire.

8.B.2.3 However, Natural England published East Midlands Region Landscape Character Assessments (Ref 8.B.1). The regional level of assessment adds a regional layer to the NCA Profiles identified by Natural England and provides a strategic context and framework for more detailed landscape assessments at the county, district and local scales. This assessment identifies Landscape Character Types (LCT's), which are generic and may occur in different localities throughout the region. They share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic and current land uses and settlement patterns. The key attributes of these Landscape Character Types are listed below.

Table 8.B-2 Regional Character Area Profiles

Landscape Character Types	Key Landscape Characteristics
Coastal Dunes, Beach and Intertidal Sand Flats (1B)	• Dynamic landscape of sandy beaches, rolling dunes, saltmarshes and intertidal sand flats. • Tapestry of low-level, fragile vegetation ranging from pioneer species on the shoreline to scrub and grassland communities on the dunes. • Settlement is evidenced through fencing, viewpoints and tracks with increased activity during summer months. • Complex landform linked to an array of natural processes with dynamic development in tandem with shoreline evolution.
Settled Fens and Marshes (2a)	• Flat, open and low-lying landscape throughout with a juxtaposition of character between the coastal seaside resorts and the expansive farmlands inland. • Vast skies and wide featureless horizons provide panoramic views out to sea and inland towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. • Mixture of organic and geometric field patterns bordered predominantly by wet dykes, sea walls and canalised rivers, with few hedgerows, hedgerow trees and shelter belt plantation woodland. • Predominantly arable farming, with some pasture within smaller hedged fields within proximity to villages and along the sea banks. • Tree cover is overall quite sparse, however there is increased woodland cover on the fringes of the Lincolnshire Wolds.

Landscape Character Types	Key Landscape Characteristics
	• Settlement pattern matches the contrasting characters of the coastal and inland areas with seaside resorts having denser concentrations of build-up and inland consisting of remote isolated farmsteads. • Geological, the underlying build up is largely Quaternary deposits of clay and silt which give rise to wet, fertile, loamy and clayey soils above.
Fen and Marsh Margin Farmlands (2c)	• Transitional landscape demonstrating properties characteristic of both elevated regions to the west and lowland regions to the east but not wholly typical of either. • Patchwork of medium sized fields, enclosed by hedgerows and ditches, with interspersed woodlands, copses and plantations. • Mixed agricultural use for the most part, with permanent pasture along valley bottoms. • Coherent pattern and matrix of streams and field drains running west to east give an element of geometric structure to the landscape. • An ancient pattern of country roads and tracks winds across the landscape with scattered, nucleated villages typically found at the junction of north south and east west routes. • Medieval moated sites and relict ridge and furrow present provide notable interest. • The underlying geology is predominantly Jurassic mudstones, sandstones, limestones, and Cretaceous chalk, however it has limited surface expression due to widespread deposits of till.
Chalk Wolds (7a)	• Expansive, elevated, and gently sloping chalk plateau bisected by a system of valleys forming a pronounced undulating landform. • Extensive views across the vast spreads of field and sky from atop the plateau emphasise the grand scale of the regions landscape. • Large scale rectilinear fields bounded by hedgerows dominate the plateau with occasional shelter belts and clusters of beech providing minimal woodland cover. • Changing crop patterns create a dynamic change in views compared to lush pastures and wooded slopes. • Valleys provide a stark contrast to the plateau, with woodland on the slopes and rich fertile pastures hidden at the bottom. • Sparse settlement pattern across the plateau itself, with dispersed, pockets of nucleated villages sheltered within the valleys or located along spring lines.

Landscape Character Types	Key Landscape Characteristics
	• Prehistoric archaeological elements such as west east salters' roads, long and round barrows and medieval villages can be found in the area as well as historic ridge top trackways and ancient roads. • The chalk that underlies is more than 100m depth and heavily influences the soil geology of the region with shallow, lime rich soils prevalent across the plateau and lime rich loamy soils evident in the valley bottoms.

Regional level – Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

8.B.2.4 English Heritage provide Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) (Ref 8.B.2), which reveals historic patterns and connections within the landscape. The Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for Lincolnshire divides the county of Lincolnshire into ten different Historic Landscape Character Areas, two of which, The Grazing Marshes, and The Wolds, are traversed by the draft Order Limits.

Table 8.B-3 Historic Landscape Characterisation

Historic Landscape Character Area	Key Landscape characteristics
The Grazing Marshes	• Consists of two broad areas: The Outmarsh & The Middle Marsh. • Two areas are keenly connected by historical land use, and agricultural practices were formed by distinctly different processes. • Middle Marsh is higher than Outmarsh and consists of greater proportion of historic settlements • Outmarsh formed by phases of drainage and reclamation over centuries. First was medieval salt making which resulted in mounds of spoil consisting of sand and silt, then as mounds increased in size and number the sea receded. • Middle Marsh formed by parliamentary acts and private agreements which resulted in planned drainage and enclosure to establish farmsteads. • Also, evidence of land loss due to erosion during medieval period. • Coastal settlements built on reclaimed land but have grown as a result from tourism.
The Wolds	• The result of enclosure of a largely typical open field farming regime. • Earliest enclosures found in close proximity to historic settlements, whether deserted or surviving.

Historic Landscape Character Area	Key Landscape characteristics
	• Represents the transition from arable to livestock farming, predominantly for wool farming. • Enclosures in the Wolds are typically more extensive and widespread than in the rest of the county. • Whilst different to the surrounding lowlands the Wolds is closely connected to them all the same. The many drove roads were formed to allow Wold farmers to access the fertile lowlands for grazing to fatten their stock. • In more recent years land has reverted back to arable farming, with larger fields in order to accommodate modern machinery

Local Level – District Landscape Character Assessments

8.B.2.5 At the local level, the study area falls entirely within the administrative boundaries of the East Lindsey District Council. Where the study area partially overlaps with the boundary of Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, the Landscape Character Units defined within Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (Ref 8.B.3) have been included both in the baseline and assessment section. **Table 8.B-4** below identifies the key characteristics of the landscape within East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment (Ref 8.B.4).

Table 8.B-4 East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Character Areas	Key Landscape characteristics
K1: Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA	• Flat tidal strip with some stretches of long sandy beaches and mud flats with areas of saltmarsh. • Wide, open, panoramic views extending out to sea with inland view being contained by promenades, sea banks or sand dunes. • Protected by international, national and local nature conservation designations. • Drains flowing onto the tidal marshes create dendritic patterns emphasised by vegetation. • Large areas used by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and designated MOD danger areas. • Void of settlements but some development and small-scale structures in MOD areas.
J1: Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA	• Low-lying, predominantly flat, drained coastal plain contained to the east by sea embankments, sand dunes, and sea defences. • Extensive network of drains, ditches and dykes with a strong geometric pattern in the northern and central parts of the area.

Landscape Character Areas	Key Landscape characteristics
	• Rivers and the historic Louth Canal cross from the Lincolnshire Wolds in the west towards the coast. • Predominantly mixed agricultural land use with both arable and pasture, and some remnants of ridge and furrow. • Sparse tree cover, with occasional ornamental trees and hedgerows around settlements. • Several important coastal nature reserves with a high level of nature conservation designation. • Sparsely scattered settlements inland with more densely nucleated resorts found on the coast.
I1: Holten le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh LCA	• Gently undulating foothills rising towards the Lincolnshire Wolds. • Predominantly arable farmland, with some pastural fields bounded by ditches and dykes. • Blocks of deciduous woodland are scattered throughout, with a greater concentration found in the southwest. • Meandering rivers and streams, and the embanked Louth Canal flow eastwards towards the coast. • Nucleated settlements are scattered throughout, with a linear merging of villages around the foot of the Wolds.
G2: Little Cawthorpe to Skendleby Wolds Farmland LCA	• Elevated rolling landscape of ridges and valleys with a gradual overall descent to the east, west and south. • Mosaic of arable and pastural farmland, with frequent woodland blocks, hedgerows and ancient and semi-ancient woodlands. • Network of streams and rivers draining east and south. • High level of landscape and nature conservation designations and lies within the Lincolnshire Wolds. • Range of heritage features, including historical and archaeological remains. • Dispersed nucleated settlement pattern with villages typically nestled within valleys.

Local Level – Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape

8.B.2.6 A small portion of the study area associated with the English Onshore Scheme encroaches into the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape. **Table 8.B-5** below details key qualities of the South - Eastern Claylands Landscape Character Area as identified within the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (Ref 8.B.3).

Table 8.B-5 Key qualities of relevant Landscape Character Areas within the National Landscape

National Landscape	Landscape Character Units	Key Landscape Characteristics
Lincolnshire Wolds	The South - Eastern Claylands Landscape Character Areas (LCA's)	**Common characteristic:** • **Scenic beauty & rural charm:** Undulating landscape with strong cohesive identity throughout and agriculture as a core underlying feature. • **Expansive, sweeping views:** Panoramic, dramatic vistas from peaks and elevated plateaus looking out across the surrounding landscapes. • **Peace & tranquillity:** General sense of remoteness and rural isolation away from main roads enhanced by raised plateaus and secluded valleys. • **Farmed land:** Rectilinear fields of agricultural cultivation cover most of the area with additional areas of permanent grassland. • **Chalk upland – plateau & valley landscape:** Series of sandstones, ironstones and clay underlie the chalk capping and form the essential character of the Wolds. • **Woodlands:** woodlands planted in 18th and 19th-century woodlands are frequently present along rivers, streams and ponds. • **Roadside verges and green lanes:** frequent in both LCA's. • **Village character, including churches:** Traditional villages and market towns add to the charm of landscape.
	The South - Eastern Claylands Landscape Character Area (LCA)	**Differentiating characteristics:** • Calcareous, meadow, pasture & wet grasslands. • Ancient woodlands comprising of Oak and Ash. • Ancient route-ways e.g. Barton Street.

Local Level – Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape

8.B.2.7 A small portion of the study area associated with the English Onshore Scheme encroaches into the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape. **Table 8.B-6** below details key qualities of the South - Eastern Claylands Landscape Character Area as identified within the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (Ref 8.B.3).

Table 8.B-6 Key qualities of relevant Landscape Character Areas within the National Landscape

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	The South - Eastern Claylands Landscape Character Area (LCA)	**Differentiating characteristics:** • Calcareous, meadow, pasture & wet grasslands. • Ancient woodlands comprising of Oak and Ash. • Ancient route-ways e.g. Barton Street.

8.B.3 Landscape character assessment

8.B.3.1 The section below presents an assessment of the effects of landscape in accordance with the criteria and definitions on the identified landscape designations, Landscape Character Units (LCUs), at the national and local levels as defined within **Volume 2, Part 2, Appendix 8.A: Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology**.

Effects on Landscape Designations

Table 8.B-7 Landscape effects on the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape

Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape
Sensitivity
Value: The sensitivity of the Lincolnshire Wolds has been recognised through its designation as a National Landscape, with the main purpose of "*conserving and protecting natural beauty*" and therefore is of high sensitivity. The special qualities of this designated landscape are detailed within the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 (Ref 8.B.3). It is worth noting that although the sensitivity of the entire designation is high, although the degree to which the unique qualities are represented in parts of the designated area varies. **Susceptibility:** The Lincolnshire Wolds landscape is generally more susceptible due to a unique combination of landscape, ecological, heritage, and geodiversity qualities, which together increase susceptibility to change. The scenic quality, sense of wildness, tranquillity, and cultural characteristics are more susceptible. The susceptibility of openness and enclosure varies. The landscape of the Lincolnshire Wolds will not be affected directly. **Sensitivity**: Overall, a combined high value with high susceptibility would result in **high** sensitivity.
Magnitude
Construction: As the main construction works will be located in excess of 5 km from the boundary of Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, with the draft Order Limits associated with the construction compound and construction access route north of Alford located approximately 640 m away, the effects will be indirect and restricted to changes in the views, perceptual and aesthetic qualities such as tranquillity and sense of wildness. The views of construction associated with the converter station would be restricted to very small areas within the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, although crane working on the converter station are likely to be temporarily visible from more extensive areas. Restricted views of the construction compound along the movement of construction traffic would be available from the restricted area of Lincolnshire Wolds, occupying generally a very small proportion of the designated area. Construction within the indicative zone of the underground cable

Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape

assets will be almost entirely screened by intervening vegetation and landform. The change to tranquillity would be restricted to areas close to the construction compound and Alford Construction Route and / or Shared Grimsby to Walpole Haul Route. The construction would be medium term, affecting perceptual and aesthetic qualities and views to a limited extent. Therefore, a scale of change and geographical extent would be low within a very small area of Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, resulting in a low magnitude of change affecting a very small area of Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape.

Year 0: After completion, there will be very few signs of development above ground except for marker posts within the cable corridor. The land will be returned to its pre-development use, focused on farming, while crops may not be fully restored. Although replacement planting will be completed, it will not be fully matured, and some loss of vegetation may be evident. The converter station would be perceptible within distant views from a limited range of locations. Overall, the magnitude of change will reduce to a **negligible.**

Year 15: Farmland land use and hedgerows will be fully restored by year 15. Although some changes in vegetation pattern will be noticeable, as the replacement trees may be repositioned and not fully matured, the key characteristics of the landscape, the pattern of hedgerows, and land use will be maintained, with the magnitude of change reducing to **negligible**.

Significance

Construction: Combined high sensitivity with low magnitude of change would result in **moderate** adverse **(not significant)** effects for a very small area within Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape.

Year 0: Combined high sensitivity with negligible magnitude of change would result in **minor** adverse **(not significant)** effects for a very small area within Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape.

Operation (Year 15): Combined high sensitivity with negligible magnitude of change would result in **minor** adverse **(not significant)** effects for a very small area within Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape.

8.B.3.2 The setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape is not specifically defined in the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Management Plan (2013-2018) (Ref 8.B.3). However, it is typically referred to as an adjacent area and, as defined by some, extends as far as the visibility from the designated area or the surrounding landscape, and is visually or functionally linked to the designated landscape. The setting of this designation varies and comprises a transitional landscape to the east, where the English Onshore Scheme is proposed.

8.B.3.3 As the English Onshore Scheme is located wholly within the NCA Profile: 42 Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes, the key characteristic of this NCA, alongside Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middlemarsh Landscape Character Type, as defined within East Lindsey District Council Landscape Character Assessment (Ref 8.B.4). The key characteristic of these Landscape Character Units is detailed in this appendix (**Volume 2, Part 2, Appendix 8.B: Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment**). The assessment of effects on the landscape setting is presented below, with reference to development phases.

Table 8.B-8 Landscape effects on the Setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape

Landscape effects on the Setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape
Sensitivity
Value: The setting of Lincolnshire Wolds has a generally transitional character. Although features of ecological and heritage interest are present there are fewer of them in comparison to the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape or coastal areas along the North Sea. The recreational value of the area is generally high, with PRoW and other recreational routes such as Lindsay Loop LDP linked to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB. Overall, the landscape is generally in good condition. The scenic qualities are generally high offering the views both to the west towards designated area, but also towards the North Sea. The tranquillity varies but is generally medium, with pockets of high tranquillity. Similarly, the sense of wildness is generally at a medium level. Overall, the landscape value of the setting Lincolnshire Wolds is **high** with sizeable areas of medium value.
Susceptibility: The lower lying or gently undulating landform is typically of medium susceptibility to the proposed change; however, of higher susceptibility in locally raised areas. Dominant agricultural land use is less susceptible to the proposed change, as the existing land use will be restored, apart from localised change associated with the introduction of the converter station. Outside of ecological designations, which are highly susceptible, vegetation is generally of a lower susceptibility with relatively sparse cover and a greater occurrence around settlements as opposed to field boundaries. The open views both to the west and east are of higher susceptibility. The landscape of the Lincolnshire Wolds setting is likely to be affected directly. Overall, the landscape susceptibility of Lincolnshire Wolds setting is **high** with sizeable areas of medium susceptibility.
Sensitivity: Overall, a combined high value with high susceptibility would result in **high** sensitivity.
Magnitude
Construction: The boundary of draft Order Limits would be located at the closest point approximately 630 m from the boundary of Lincolnshire Wolds to include the construction compound and provide a construction access route to the main area of works associated with the converter station and an indicative zone for underground cable assets located approximately 5.3 km away. As the designated area of Lincolnshire Wolds would not be affected directly, the English Onshore Scheme will directly affect the setting of Lincolnshire Wolds.

Landscape effects on the Setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape

The key changes would relate to views and other, as construction traffic would be visible, whilst ground-level construction activity would be largely screened, with construction within the corridor available predominantly from adjacent areas, restricted in places by field boundary vegetation and sporadic woodland blocks. Construction would alter the landscape pattern by introducing uncharacteristic features into a rural landscape. Formation of topsoil and subsoil stockpiles would locally alter the landform that will be restored at the end of construction. Construction activity will be screened from settlements by partially enclosed settlements sheltered by trees, woodland blocks, hedgerows and landform.

The presence of sand dunes along the coast, raised embankments along the drains and field boundary vegetation, gently raising landform towards Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, combine to restrict the views towards the corridor and disconnecting longer distance views across the construction within the corridor, therefore reducing impact on scenic qualities. Construction would be introduced into a strongly rural landscape with many small historic villages and a patchwork of arable and pastoral fields. The scale of change alongside extent of change would be medium in areas close to draft Order Limits, but diminishing further away from the English Onshore scheme, with views being fully screened further away. Overall, the magnitude of change would be **medium**, for the areas close to draft Order Limits.

Year 0: Upon completion, the key source of change would be the converter station, as the cable corridor would be largely restored to agricultural use. The converter station would be primarily visible from the nearby areas, although mitigation planting would not provide effective screening in year 0. In many locations, visual receptors would experience the views of the upper sections of the converter station. Although the views are predominantly uncluttered and of an intact rural landscape, in some locations, there are also views of wind farms at Conisholme and offshore from Skegness. The field pattern across an indicative zone for underground cable assets will be fully restored, although mitigation planting will not provide landscape integration at year 0. The scale of change would reduce to low. Overall, the magnitude of change would reduce to **low.**

Year 15: The landscape pattern would be largely restored alongside vegetation, providing a considerable degree of screening and landscape integration. The converter station would remain a notable alteration within the setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds but would be largely integrated into the existing landscape. The scale of change would reduce to very small alongside the geographical extent of change in the views. Overall, the magnitude of change would be **negligible**.

Significance

Construction: Combined high sensitivity with a medium magnitude of change would result in **moderate adverse (significant)** effects for areas of landscape located close to the draft Order Limits.

Significance (year 0): Combined high sensitivity with a low magnitude of change would result in **moderate adverse (not significant)** effects for areas of landscape located close to the draft Order Limits.

Significance (year 15): Combined high sensitivity with a negligible magnitude of change would result in **minor adverse (not significant)** effects for areas close to the converter station.

National level – National Character Area Profiles

8.B.3.4 The section below outlines the effects on Landscape Character Units identified at the national level, based on National Character Area Profiles (Ref 8.B.5) that fall within the study area.

Table 8.B-9 Landscape effects on the Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes NCA

NCA Profile: 42 Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes (NE521). Natural England (2014)
Sensitivity
Value: Most of the Lincolnshire Wolds NL is located within the adjacent Lincolnshire Wolds NCA, with only 3% falling within the Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes NCA; however, the landscape of this NCA forms part of the landscape setting of Lincolnshire Wolds NL. This NCA includes a range of ecological designations, such as Donna Nook National Nature Reserve (NNR), Saltfleetby - Theddlethorpe Dunes National Nature Reserve and Gibraltar Point (NNR). This NCA also includes several archaeological sites of interest, including remnants of former salt workings and ancient settlement sites, thereby enhancing the cultural and historical value of the landscape. The recreational value of the area is generally high, as coastal resorts, a beach along the King Charles III England Coast Path, and a local network of PRoW attract tourists. Further away to the east from the coast, recreational value subsides in the core and increases again closer to the Lincolnshire Wolds. Overall, the landscape is generally in good condition. The Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes offer panoramic views of the North Sea, which are frequently visible across the marshes. The tranquillity varies but is generally medium, with pockets of high tranquillity, such as across marshes, and areas of lower tranquillity closer to key transport corridors or settlements. Similarly, the sense of wildness is generally at a medium level. The coastal landscape is a distinctive feature of this area. Overall, the landscape value of this NCA is **high**.
Susceptibility: The lower lying or gently undulating landform is typically of medium susceptibility to the proposed change; however, of higher susceptibility in localised areas such as coastal dunes or locally raised landform. Dominant agricultural land use is less susceptible to the proposed change, as the existing land use will be restored, apart from localised change associated with the introduction of the converter station. Outside of ecological designations, which are highly susceptible, vegetation is generally of a lower susceptibility with relatively sparse cover and a greater occurrence around settlements as opposed to field boundaries. The open views of the coastline and skylines are characteristic and are more susceptible, but also inland towards raised landform of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape. Further inland from the coast, views are often foreshortened by vegetation or settlements, reducing overall openness and scenic quality of the views. Although distinctive landscape features are present in some areas, most of them can be potentially avoided through the routeing exercise, and, therefore, their presence is of medium susceptibility to the change. This NCA is likely to be affected directly. Overall, the landscape susceptibility of this NCA is **high**.
Sensitivity: Overall, a combined high value with high susceptibility would result in **high** sensitivity.

NCA Profile: 42 Lincolnshire Coast and Marshes (NE521). Natural England (2014)

Magnitude

Approximately 8 km of High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) cable and 1 km of High Voltage Alternating Current (HVAC) cable route within this NCA. This NCA will be directly affected by the proposed changes. The construction will take place between Andreby Creek and just west of Alford, with the construction area occupying a small portion of the NCA. The key sources of change would be construction within landfall areas, along the cable corridor, and activities associated with the converter station, including views of cranes. Construction within the cable corridor will comprise excavation, temporary topsoil and subsoil storage, and backfilling, along with the movement of construction vehicles along temporary haul roads and construction access routes. Trenchless methods will be used in some locations, necessitating the presence of Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) rigs. Construction at the landfall area would affect the coastal landscape, whilst the construction of the converter station would require large scale alteration of the existing landscape pattern, the introduction of uncharacteristic features associated with construction, such as cranes. Some loss of vegetation is expected, albeit on a small scale, as the cable corridor traverses the area with very limited vegetation cover; construction of the substation would require a more substantial loss of field boundary vegetation. Construction will introduce uncharacteristic features associated with construction and activities. Construction within the NCA will be medium-term and reversible. Overall, the magnitude of change will be **medium**, although at a more local scale of the NCA, the change may be perceived as of high magnitude.

Year 0: The land use within the cable corridor and landfall area would be restored to its baseline use, with very few signs of construction being undertaken, visible mainly in marker posts, potential occasional gaps in the existing vegetation and not fully established mitigation planting and agricultural crops. Similarly, within the landfall area, the landform and land use would be restored to their former state. The converter station would entail a substantial change, as large-scale energy infrastructure would be introduced into the rural landscape, altering local patterns and scenic qualities, as well as the sense of tranquillity and wildness, particularly in areas near the converter station. The change would be permanent across a small geographical extent of the LCA. Overall, the magnitude of change will be **low**.

Year 15: Agricultural land will be fully restored alongside a network of hedgerows, with replacement trees providing effective landscape integration, although of slightly different configuration in comparison to the baseline scenario, to maintain the required easements. Similarly, the baseline landscape characteristics would be largely restored at the landfall area. Mitigation planting around the converter station would mature to provide successful landscape integration and a considerable degree of screening. The magnitude of change will reduce to **negligible**.

Significance

Construction: Combined high sensitivity with a medium magnitude of change will result in **major adverse and significant effects**.

Year 0: Combined high sensitivity with a low magnitude of change will result in **moderate adverse effects and not be significant** as the change in landscape will have a limited impact on the key qualities of the landscape within the scale of NCA.

Year 15: Combined high sensitivity with a negligible magnitude of change will result in **minor adverse and not significant effects**.

Table 8.B-10 Landscape effects on the Lincolnshire Wolds NCA

NCA Profile: 43 Lincolnshire Wolds (NE440). Natural England (2014)
Sensitivity
Value: The majority of this NCA falls within the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape (NL). This area combines high levels of historical and archaeological interest, as well as ecological interest, and has inspired works of art and literature. Recreational value is generally high, with the combination of historic market towns and walking/cycling paths across the elevated landscape and plateaus continuing to attract tourists and visitors. The landscape is generally in good condition. Tranquillity and sense of wildness are generally high. The panoramic, far-reaching views of the surrounding landscape are a key and distinctive feature of this area. Overall, the value of this NCA is **high**.
Susceptibility: The landform of rolling hills is typically of medium susceptibility to proposed change, whilst some locations, such as elevated plateaus and the pronounced scarps to the north and west, are of higher susceptibility. Primarily, agricultural land use is less susceptible to the proposed change due to greater opportunities for restoration. Despite most of the NCA falling within the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, which by nature is highly susceptible, the vegetation is generally of lower susceptibility, due to the relatively open and exposed character. Restricted and small woodland areas and shelterbelts, frequently located along the streams, with hedgerows along field boundaries dominating elsewhere. The open views across the rural landscape are of higher susceptibility, whilst more enclosed, lower lying areas and valleys are of lower susceptibility to proposed change. This NCA will be affected indirectly. Overall, the susceptibility of this NCA would be **high.**
Sensitivity: Overall, the sensitivity of this NCA would be **high**.
Magnitude
Construction: As no construction will be undertaken within the boundary of the NCA, key changes would be associated with perceptual qualities of landscape such as remoteness, sense of wildness, tranquillity, and scenic qualities. The key construction activity would be located approximately 6.3 km to the east of the NCA boundary; however, the Alford Construction Route or shared Grimsby to Walpole Haul Route is located at the closest point, approximately 1.7 km to the east, which would locally affect scenic qualities from a restricted area of the NCA. Similarly, heavily restricted views of works at the upper sections of the converter station, including cranes, would be visible from a very small proportion of the NCA. The scale of change would be low alongside the geographical extent. Overall, the magnitude of change would be **low**.
Year 0: As the English Onshore Scheme is completed, the key source of change would be associated with the permanent introduction of the converter station; however, as the change would be restricted to scenic qualities, limited to a very small proportion of the NCA, resulting in a very small scale of change. Overall, the magnitude of change would reduce to **negligible**.
Year 15: Potential mitigation planting is likely to have a beneficial impact locally; however, from distant locations within the NCA, the visibility would be restricted to a very small proportion of the NCA and would include the upper sections of the converter station. Overall, the magnitude of change will remain **negligible**.

NCA Profile: 43 Lincolnshire Wolds (NE440). Natural England (2014)
Significance
Construction: Combined high sensitivity with a low magnitude of change would result in **moderate adverse effects (not statistically significant)** due to indirect and geographically heavily restricted impacts. **Year 0:** Combined high sensitivity with negligible magnitude of change would result in minor adverse (not significant) effects. **Year 15:** Combined high sensitivity with negligible magnitude of change would result in minor adverse (not significant) effects.

8.B.4 Local level – Landscape Character Areas (LCA's)

Landscape Character Areas (LCA's)

8.B.4.1 The section below outlines the effects on the Landscape Character Areas (LCA's) identified at the local level, based on the East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment (Ref 8.B.4), that fall within the study area alongside Landscape Character Areas (LCA's) identified within the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (Ref 8.B.3), that fall within the draft Order Limits.

Table 8.B-11 Landscape effects on Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA

Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment (July 2009)
Sensitivity
Value: This LCA is an ecologically important landscape with the coastline including a range of ecological designations, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), such as Chapel Point - Wolla Bank SSSI and Sea Bank Clay Pits SSSI near Anderby Creek with other ecological designations such as Gibraltar Point, and Donna Nook NNR located further away. Heritage features include World War II defences, such as pillboxes, which are scattered infrequently along the coast. The absence of formal roads and limited rights of way creates a strong sense of remoteness and wildness, though the nature reserves and shoreline are well-used by walkers, horse riders and birdwatchers. The landscape is generally intact and scenically distinctive, characterised by natural dune systems, tidal flats, salt marshes, and coastal grazing marshes. Largely undeveloped views, expansive skies, and strong natural character create a scenic, tranquil, and remote landscape. Views inland are

Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA
East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment (July 2009)

occasionally disrupted by recreational development, and the tranquil and unspoilt nature of the LCA is under pressure from considerable recreational use. Overall, the value of this LCA is **high**.

Susceptibility: Within this LCA, susceptibility is driven by the intrinsic sensitivity of the coastal landform, ecological habitats, and perceptual qualities, which contribute to the LCA's distinctive character. The dunes, flats, and salt marshes with their varied topography are inherently fragile and easily disturbed. Vegetation is also highly susceptible due to the presence of protected habitats and ecological designations. Distinctive features across the landscape and the openness of the coastline increase susceptibility to the introduction of construction activity and to permanent change resulting from construction. The LCA will be affected directly, as its geographical extent coincides with the proposed landfall area. Overall, the susceptibility of this LCA is **high**.

Sensitivity: Overall, the sensitivity of this LCA to the English Onshore Scheme is **high**.

Magnitude

Construction: Construction will require site clearance and minor grading to enable the installation of a connection between the English Onshore and Offshore Scheme. Although site clearance will be required, the works would occupy a small section of the beach that falls within this LCA, with more prominent construction activity taking place within the adjacent Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA. Therefore, construction would alter only a very small proportion of this LCA, and, as the connection would utilise Horizontal Directional Drilling, the scale of change would be minimal. The change in the landscape would be limited, affecting scenic qualities, tranquillity, and wildness primarily in the vicinity of the works area. Construction within the LCA will be medium-term, reversible, and of very small extent. Overall, the magnitude of change will be **high**.

Year 0: There will be no perceptible changes in year one above the ground level, as the cable will be buried underground. The only signs within this LCA would be a minor landform alteration within dunes and gaps in vegetation within the adjacent Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA. The change within this LCA would be of very low scale. The magnitude of change would reduce to **negligible**.

Year 15: There will be no proposed mitigation planting at the beach area as mitigation would be completed at the end of construction through restoration of the landform and localised changes to landform and restoration of agricultural use along the beach. The magnitude of change would remain **negligible**.

Significance

Construction: Combined high sensitivity with high magnitude of change would result in **major adverse (significant) effects**.

Year 0: Combined high sensitivity with a negligible magnitude of change would result in **negligible adverse (not significant) effects**.

Year 15: Combined high sensitivity with a negligible magnitude of change would result in **negligible adverse (not significant) effects**.

Table 8.B-12 Landscape effects on Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA

Landscape effects on Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA **East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment (July 2009)**
Sensitivity
Value: This LCA forms a distinctive transition between the Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA and the Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh LCA. This LCA includes some ecological designations, such as Sea Bank Clay Pits SSSI, but generally fewer in comparison to the adjacent to the east Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA. Heritage features are represented by very few Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments. The landscape comprises a mosaic of habitats that support wildlife, and its network of drainage ditches and canals reflects the area's long history of agricultural and coastal management. Recreational value is high, particularly around tourist spots, where caravan parks, beach access, and PRoW contribute to local and visitor use. There are long, open views towards the sea and inland to the Lincolnshire Wolds, though these are often interrupted by existing human influences, including caravan parks, and occasional distant views of masts, and wind farms. Overall, the value of this LCA is **medium**. **Susceptibility**: Characterised by flat, low-lying topography with limited vegetation cover, this LCA is of lower susceptibility to the proposed change. Field boundaries are typically formed by drains rather than hedgerows, resulting in greater openness and greater susceptibility to above-ground construction works. Distinct features such as large drains e.g. Main Drain and Boy Grift Drain are usually more pronounced through frequent presence of raised banks. Caravan parks are located near the coast, thereby increasing susceptibility to construction and permanent built form in the landscape. Overall, the susceptibility of this LCA is **medium**. **Sensitivity**: Combined medium value with medium susceptibility would result in **medium** sensitivity.
Magnitude
Construction: Approximately 5.5 km of HVDC cable is to be laid within this LCA, affecting primarily arable land and a small area of pasture. Some vegetation clearance would be required; however, because the cable corridor largely passes through agricultural fields with little field boundary vegetation, the potential loss would be restricted and localised, as trenchless crossings will be used in several locations. The key construction elements throughout the LCA will comprise of excavation, trenchless crossings at several locations temporary storage of topsoil and subsoil and backfilling activities after cables are laid. There will be increased movement of construction vehicles with temporary haul roads and construction access routes. for access required. As the landfall area will utilise the existing field access off Roman Road, and the HVDC cable connection over the drainage ditch along the Roam Road would utilise HDD, there would be very little loss of existing vegetation, with the exception of vegetation along dunes and two drains in the eastern section of the landfall area. The construction compounds with construction machinery and material set-down areas would create an uncharacteristic landscape pattern in an otherwise tranquil landscape. The geographical extent of change would be low, but the scale of change would be medium, although the changes in landscape may be perceived as more substantial over a medium-term duration of construction. Overall, the magnitude of change would be **medium**.

Landscape effects on Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA
East Lindsey District Landscape Character Assessment (July 2009)

Year 0: Post construction, the landscape will be reinstated with no above-ground infrastructure, except for small marker posts, remaining. Agricultural land and vegetation will be restored, but will remain immature within the first year, limiting integration with established habitats. Permanent easements prevent planting of trees directly above the cable, resulting in reinstatement tree planting to be located in the proximity to the cable corridor. The absence of temporary construction works will reduce the size and scale of change to a low level, and the geographical extent of change within the LCA will remain low. Overall, the magnitude of change will reduce to **low**.

Year 15: Agricultural land will be fully restored, and re-vegetation will have matured sufficiently to provide effective integration. Reinstated habitats and hedgerows will be naturalised and in the process of returning to maturity. The agricultural land use and crops would be fully restored. The permanent easement will remain and slightly influence vegetation patterns and configurations. Overall, the magnitude of change would reduce to **negligible**.

Significance

Construction: Combined medium sensitivity with medium magnitude of change would result in **moderate adverse (significant)** effects due to the substantial change introduced by construction.

Year 0: Combined medium sensitivity with a low magnitude of change would result in a **minor adverse (not significant) effect.**

Year 15: Combined medium sensitivity with a negligible magnitude of change would result in a **minor adverse (not significant) effect.**

Table 8.B-13 Landscape effects on Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh LCA

Landscape effects on Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh LCA
Sensitivity
Value: This LCA incorporates the southern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape and provides a wider setting of transitional landscape of undulating farmland and historic drainage pattern between the raised landform of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape to the west and the outmarsh landscape to the east. There is a coherent pattern and presence of woodlands, hedgerows, and drainage channels that contribute to both the local and regional green infrastructure. Predominantly rural, the landscape is generally intact and in good condition. Although the views are foreshortened in places, they have scenic quality due to the localised landform undulation capturing raised landform of the Lincolnshire Wolds in the background of westward views, with sporadic panoramic views eastwards towards coastline. There is a strong sense of tranquillity and wildness, which is enhanced by the proximity of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape. Overall, the value of the LCA is **high**.
Susceptibility: An open landscape of gently undulating farmland of a medium-large scale is of a medium susceptibility to the proposed change. Vegetation is of a lower susceptibility, being relatively sparse, with shelterbelts and garden vegetation creating a dense enclosure around existing settlements. Distinctive features, such as drains, channels, and more frequent shelterbelts are of a higher susceptibility. Skylines are generally open, especially on the slopes leading to the Lincolnshire Wolds, whilst on the lower farmlands, the views can be foreshortened by occasional shelterbelts, farm structures, or settlements, but generally being of higher susceptibility to the proposed change. This LCA will be directly affected by the English Onshore Scheme. Overall, the susceptibility of the LCA is **high**.
Sensitivity: Overall, the sensitivity of this LCA to the Project is **high**.
Magnitude
Construction: Construction within this LCA would include works associated with Converter Station, HVAC cable and a section of the HVDC cable route. Several compounds would be located within this LCA. Whilst the cable corridor would occupy only a small extent of the LCA, the Alford Construction Route or Shared Grimsby to Walpole Haul Route would extend the movement of vehicles along the cable corridor. The construction within the HVDC cable corridor would require maximum vegetation clearance extending up to a maximum of 49 m, whilst the maximum extent of vegetation clearance for HVAC cable corridor is likely to extend to 84 m. Movement of construction vehicles within the cable corridor alongside the presence of temporary topsoil and subsoil storage would be notable alongside presence of construction fencing. The key change during construction would be associated with construction of converter station, requiring loss of some field boundary vegetation, followed by construction introducing uncharacteristic construction elements with temporary presence of cranes used for construction of some of the buildings within converter station. Construction would also require works associated with drainage to accommodate large footprint of substation. The land use would be restored within the cable corridor at the end of construction, alongside restored field boundary vegetation.

Landscape effects on Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh LCA

Mitigation planting would also be introduced to provide landscape and visual integration. The scale of change would be large over a medium extent of the LCA and over a medium-term duration of construction. Overall, the magnitude of change will be **medium**.

Year 0: Temporary construction movement will have ceased, satellite compounds will no longer exist, and agricultural land will have been restored above the HVDC cable. Vegetation will have been reinstated, though due to permanent easements above the cable, trees directly above the route will have been relocated. The converter station will remain as a permanent feature, and mitigation planting will not yet be established. Other restored habitats and planting will still be immature and provide little integration in year one. The scale and size will be reduced to low, whilst the geographical extent will remain at a medium level in the context of the LCA. Overall, the magnitude of change will be **low**.

Year 15: The cable corridor will be fully assimilated as vegetation will be more firmly established and integrated with existing habitats. Mitigation planting will have matured and provide more sufficient screening of permanent features. Agricultural land will have been fully restored alongside hedgerows and replacement trees. Overall, the magnitude of change will be **negligible**.

Significance

Construction: Combined high sensitivity with medium magnitude of change would result in **major adverse (significant) effects**.

Year 0: Combined high sensitivity with medium magnitude of change would result in **moderate adverse (not significant) effects**.

Year 15: Combined high sensitivity with negligible magnitude of change would result in **minor adverse (not significant) effects.**

8.B.5 Summary of landscape effects

8.B.5.1 **Table 8.B-14** below summarises the predicted landscape effects.

Table 8.B-14 Preliminary summary of landscape effects

Landscape Character Units	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change			Significance of landscape effects		
		construction	Operation (Y0, Winter)	Operation (Y15, Summer)	construction	operation (Y0, Winter)	operation (Y15, Summer)
Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape	High	Medium	Low	Negligible	Moderate adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)
Setting of the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape	Medium	Medium	Low	Negligible	Moderate adverse (significant)	Minor adverse (not significant	Minor adverse (not significant
Lincolnshire Coast Marshes NCA	High	Medium	Low	Negligible	Major adverse (significant)	Moderate adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)
Lincolnshire Wolds NCA	High	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Moderate adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)
Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast LCA	High	High	Negligible	Negligible	Major adverse (significant)	Negligible adverse (not significant)	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh LCA	Medium	Medium	Low	Negligible	Moderate adverse (significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)
Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh LCA	High	Medium	Low	Negligible	Major adverse (significant)	Moderate adverse (not significant)	Minor adverse (not significant)

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National Grid plc
National Grid House,
Warwick Technology Park,
Gallows Hill, Warwick.
CV34 6DA United

Registered in England and Wales
No. 4031152
nationalgrid.com