LAND AT NORTH CRAY ROAD, ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM

LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (LTVIA)
LTVIA PART 1 OF 5

Prepared for Net Zero Thirty Two Limited
April 2025

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Part 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 RHLA Ltd were instructed by Net Zero Thirty Two Limited to undertake a Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LTVIA) of a new temporary Energy Storage System ('ESS') and associated infrastructure, access and new planting, for a period of up to 40 years ('the Proposed Development') at Land at North Cray Road, Bexley ('the Site').

1.2 With reference to **Figure 1**, the location for the ESS is a low lying single field, located to the south of Manor Farm and adjacent to polytunnels. The proposed access extends along existing grass between the field and Manor Farm and a single lane (North Cray Road), to the A223. The route of the below ground cable corridor is mainly along the A223, to connect with the existing Hurst Grid sub-station.

1.3 **Figure 1** demonstrates that the ESS Site is not covered by any statutory landscape or townscape designations. The ESS Site is within the Green Belt, for which there are spatial and visual aspects associated with the concept of 'openness', as well as whether land is grey belt or not.

1.4 Bexley Local Plan Policy DP31: Energy Infrastructure, supports development of a decentralised energy network infrastructure, with the supporting policy text noting schemes will be expected to demonstrate how they have been sensitively designed to integrate into the local environment, minimising any potential negative impacts.

1.5 The LTVIA therefore sets out the existing landscape, townscape and visual context of the Site via desk-based reviews and fieldwork to inform the iterative design process and the associated mitigation to minimise any adverse landscape, townscape or visual effects.

1.6 The LTVIA includes an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development during the construction and operational stages, as well as whether the Site is Grey Belt or not, and if not, the likely impact to the Green Belt.

1.7 The LTVIA has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects with extensive experience in ESS and Green Belt assessments, as well as schemes in the London Borough of Bexley.

1.8 The LTVIA is based upon the drawings for determination, the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan and technical studies including Highways, Arboriculture and Ecology, all of which should be read in combination with the LTVIA.

2.0 LTVIA METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

2.1 With reference to **Appendix I**, the proposed LTVIA methodology follows the best practice principles for assessing landscape, townscape and visual effects as recommended by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, 2013 (GLVIA 3). The LTVIA methodology is set out in full in **Appendix I** and is summarised below.

2.2 Landscape and townscape matters are assessed together, and separately from visual matters, such that:

- Landscape and Townscape – assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and townscape as a resource (i.e. change to the physical features of the landscape, the built-up area and/or the aesthetic, perceptual and experiential characteristics, that make different landscapes and townscapes distinctive); and
- Visual – assess effects of the Proposed Development on people's views from the change to existing features or the introduction of new elements within the composition of the view.

Landscape and Townscape Effects

2.3 The landscape and townscape effects are assessed by determining the sensitivity of the receptors (i.e. the Site and published landscape character areas). In accordance with GLTVIA 3, the sensitivity of receptors is determined via an assessment of their landscape/townscape value and landscape/townscape susceptibility. With reference to **Appendix I**, the landscape/townscape sensitivity is defined as either very high, high, medium, low or very low.

2.4 The potential landscape/townscape magnitude of impact (change) is informed by judgements about the size and extent of the Proposed Development and the duration and reversibility of the Proposed Development. With reference to **Appendix I**, the magnitude of impact is assessed as either high, medium, low, very low or none.

2.5 The relationship between the landscape/townscape sensitivity and the landscape/townscape magnitude of impact determines a landscape/townscape effect. Landscape/townscape effects may be beneficial or adverse and are assessed as either major, moderate, minor, negligible or neutral as set out below.

Visual Effects

2.6 The visual effects are determined by identifying a representative range of people ('visual receptors') with the potential for views of the Proposed Development.

2.7 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is assessed by determining their value and susceptibility. With reference to **Appendix I**, visual sensitivity is defined as either very high, high, medium, low or very low.

2.8 The visual magnitude of impact (change) is described with reference to the scale of change in the composition of the view and the distance between the visual receptor and the Proposed Development. The magnitude of visual impact is assessed as either high, medium, low, very low or none.

2.9 Like the landscape/townscape assessment, the relationship between the visual sensitivity and visual magnitude of impact establishes a visual effect. Visual effects may be beneficial or adverse and are determined as either major, moderate, minor, minor negligible or neutral, as set out below.

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Effects

2.10 As set out in **Appendix I**, Table 2-1 is used to guide the assessment of landscape, townscape and visual effects, based upon the relationship between the sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of impact. Where the assessment differs from this guide, a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative.

Table 2-1: Guide to the Significance of Landscape, Townscape and Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	**Magnitude of Impact**				
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Very Low**	**None**
Very High	**Major**	**Major**	**Major or Moderate**	**Moderate or Minor**	**Neutral**
High	**Major or Moderate**	**Major or Moderate**	**Moderate or Minor**	**Minor or Negligible**	**Neutral**
Medium	**Major or Moderate**	**Moderate or Minor**	**Minor or Negligible**	**Negligible**	**Neutral**
Low	**Moderate or Minor**	**Minor**	**Minor or Negligible**	**Negligible or Neutral**	**Neutral**
Very Low	**Minor or Negligible**	**Negligible**	**Negligible or Neutral**	**Neutral**	**Neutral**

2.11 Major or moderate effects are considered important in landscape, townscape and visual terms, with minor, negligible and neutral effects considered less important. Where the guide allows for a choice in the effect (i.e. moderate or minor), the decision is based on professional judgement with a reasoned explanation in the assessment narrative for the single predicted effect (i.e. minor).

2.12 The LTVIA assessment is undertaken for the following phases:

- Construction, winter, assuming peak construction activity; and
- Operation years 1, 5 and 10 for winter and summer months, assuming the Proposed Development is completed and in use.

Assessment Assumptions

The LTVIA assumptions and limitations are:

- The assessment is based on the drawings for determination and the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan. Whilst it is expected that landscape matters, including a landscape management plan, will be dealt with via condition, the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan illustrates measures to retain and enhance the existing vegetation through positive management and implementation of new planting, which would be expected of a detailed landscape design;
- The 3m high ESS units and 2.4m palisade fence would be rendered a dark green to aid in their integration within the landscape;
- New planting would be up to 3.5 metres (m) in height at year 1, with an assumed growth rate of 1m every 3 years, such that by year 10, new individual trees would be up to 7m in height;
- A landscape management plan would form part of the conditions, but the existing 3m tall hedgerows along the northern and western boundaries of the ESS Site would be positively managed to grow up to 3.5m in height, with the existing retained trees within these hedgerows and along the southern edge of the ESS Site positively managed to ensure their longevity;
- Viewpoints are located on publicly accessible land with impacts to residential receptors assessed via fieldwork and professional judgement;
- The assessment is based on a single point in time to cover the peak construction activity, such that in reality, the construction effects would likely be less, due to phased works; and
- The construction, year 1 and year 5 assessments are temporary, with the year 10 assessment representing the residual effects of the Proposed Development, albeit that the Proposed Development is reversible.

Residential Amenity

2.13 Due to the low lying position of the Site, surrounding polytunnels, vegetation and fields and the distances between the ESS Site and nearest residents, the Proposed Development is assessed as not resulting in landscape or visual effects which would adversely affect residential amenity. The LTVIA does not include an assessment of residential amenity; however, a representative range of residential receptors are included in the visual assessment is respect of the potential changes to their views during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

Character of the Night Sky

2.14 The LTVIA includes a qualitative (non-measured) lighting assessment based upon identifying the existing lighting sources in the study area and a review of published assessments. The LTVIA identifies the existing Environmental Lighting Zones as defined by the Institution of Lighting Professionals, as set out in **Appendix I**.

Green Belt Assessment

2.15 The LTVIA assesses the potential impact of the Proposed Development in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework Green Belt purposes and National Planning Policy Guidance for the Green Belt (2025), drawing upon the conclusions of the landscape and visual assessments given the spatial and visual aspects of 'openness'.

Verifiable Views

2.16 Three verified views have been undertaken in accordance with the Landscape Institutes Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Type 4 Image. These are presented in LTVIA Parts 5, 6, and 7.

Consultation

2.17 The above scope of the LTVIA was issued to the London Borough of Bexley (LBoB) as part of the pre-application in January 2025. The following table sets out the relevant matters from the LBoB pre-application response (ref:25/00139/PREAPM) 11th March 2025, and how they have been addressed in the LTVIA.

Table 2-2: LTVIA Response to LBoB Pre-application Matters

LBoB Pre-Application Matter	LTVIA Response
It is not considered that this site strongly contributes to the purposes of (a), (b) or (d) of Paragraph 143 of the NPPF (e.g. the site does not strongly contribute to these purposes). As assessment for 'grey belt' can only be assessed against (a), (b) and (d), it is considered that there is potential for it to be successfully demonstrated by the applicant that this site can be considered 'grey belt'. The assessment and justification would be that development on this site would not result in unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area (compliance with (a); that the development would not result in the merging with one another (compliance with (b)); and, that any development would not result in harm to the setting and special character of a historic town (compliance with (d)).	The LTVIA includes a Green Belt assessment in respect of paragraph 143 purposes a, b and d, and sets out why the Proposed Development would not result in unrestricted sprawl, nor merging or harm to historic towns.
On this basis, the proposed development would then in turn be assessed against paragraph 155 of the NPPF, development including 'other development in the Green Belt', which this proposal would constitute. The development would need to be assessed against all parts of Paragraph 143, purposes of the Green Belt, including points (c) and (e). With regards to point (c), it is considered that there is potential that the development would result in encroachment into the countryside. The applicant will need to demonstrate that there is no encroachment. Or, if there is some encroachment, that the harm to the Green Belt caused by such encroachment would be negligible.	The LTVIA includes an assessment of the Proposed Development in respect of NPPF paragraph 143 purpose c).
There is a requirement under both London Plan Policy G5 and Bexley Local Plan Policy DP21 for development to achieve a minimum level of greening. The application should be supported by an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) calculation.	A UGF has been undertaken and is included in the Ecological Impact Assessment (submitted with the application). The resulting UGF is >4.
The Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) note states that the visual receptor for 'Viewpoint 10' is road users to the A223. However, due to dense roadside trees and the natural landform on A223, the existing site is not visible to road users. It is recommended to relocate the viewpoint to North Cray Road.	Viewpoint 10 is included so as to assess the potential impact of the access and cable corridor. Additional views along North Cray Road have been included in response to this comment; noting that North Cray Road is a private road. The viewpoint locations have also been reviewed overall since the scoping report,

LBoB Pre-Application Matter	LTVIA Response
	due to changes to the layout and design during the preparation of the application.
With regards to the proposal's impact on the surrounding area, the information provided is currently minimal. The applicant should provide further design details that, given the site location, reflect a sensitive approach to design and consider the experience of residents and visitors to the area. The council will expect to see demonstration of this through, amongst other design considerations, the architectural expression and scale of structures and green sustainable principles integrated into the proposal.	The design details are set out in the mitigation section of the LTVIA and are entirely based upon a sensitive approach to the design and the experience of residents and visitors to the area.
It is acknowledged by the LPA that the type of development proposed would appear functional and utilitarian rather than designed to be 'beautiful'. Nonetheless, efforts should be made to ensure that appropriate landscaping, making use of appropriate species types, is provided to mitigate and, where appropriate, screen the proposed development from general view. It is observed that the BESS would be constructed upon flat land at a lower elevation than the surrounding area, which, depending on proposals for land levels, may result in a form of development particularly prominent from the surrounding area. Landscape screening should consist of appropriate types and species of plants that would relate to the surrounding landscape and complement, support or encourage the return of locally protected or threatened biodiversity. The applicant should also explore if elements of the proposed structure could be housed in low level, agrarian style buildings that would be less impactful than having the most unsightly and utilitarian elements of the proposal open and visible.	The mitigation sections sets out the efforts which have been made to the layout, siting and design of the equipment, as well as the landscaping. The layout has sought to reduce any potential prominence from the surrounding area and the as demonstrated by the Ecological Impact Assessment, the Proposed Development would deliver over 80% in habitat units and 20% in hedgerow units. The applicant has explored if elements of the proposed structure could be housed in low level buildings, but for operational requirements this is not practicable for the sub-station. The ESS containers do provide enclosure and along with the palisade fencing would be rendered dark green, so as to reflect the tonal colours of farm buildings across Honeydale Farm, thereby reducing their perceived impacts.
The majority of the application site is currently fallow agricultural land. It is expected that the application is submitted with an appropriate and robust landscaping plan, which demonstrates appropriate landscaping as set out in relevant local and national policy. Of particular note will be proposed landscaping that will act as a buffer between the development and nearby sensitive receptors, such as residential uses.	The mitigation section sets out the proposed landscape design, which includes a new woodland buffer between the ESS equipment and residential receptors to the north-west and north of the Site.

3.0 THE SITE

3.1 With Site ('the red line'), covers the proposed ESS location ('the ESS Site'), the ESS access and the below ground cable corridor route, to the existing Hurst Grid substation. The following section sets out the key features of these parts of the Site.

The ESS Site

3.2 With reference to the following photograph, the ESS Site is an agricultural field, which is broadly square in form and covers c.3.82 hectares (ha). The ESS Site is bound by:

- Fields situated across rising land to the north, forming the remainder of Manor Farm;
- Fields situated across undulating land and Chalk Wood, to the east;
- Polytunnels, horse paddocks and fields to the south; and
- Fields to the west.

Image 3-1: View from the south-east part of the ESS Site looking north-west. The existing trees bordering the southern edge of the Site are visible on the left, with the polytunnels beyond. The vegetated western edge of the Site is visible across the central part of the view, with buildings in Manor Farm visible on the right of the image.

3.3 With reference to the topographical survey, the landform across the ESS Site is gently undulating. Along the northern part of the ESS Site, the landform rises from the north-western edge, at around 26.8 metres (m) Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), to around 35m AOD at the north-eastern edge. The majority of this rise in landform is across the north-east part of the Site. The central part of the ESS Site is situated around 26.5m AOD, from which the landform then rises very gradually to the southern edge of the Site, which is situated between 30.82m AOD on the south-west edge and 31.99m AOD on the south-east edge.

3.4 The ESS Site is not covered by any statutory townscape or landscape designations. The ESS Site is not within, nor adjacent to, a Conservation Area, nor does it contain any listed buildings.

3.5 With reference to on-line mapping[1], the ESS Site is not publicly accessible.

[1] Bexley Council, on-line mapping, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/services/parking-transport-and-streets/public-rights-way/public-rights-way-map

3.6 As a field, the main vegetation patterns within the ESS Site are located around its perimeter. With reference to the Arboricultural Report, the ESS Site consists of:

- A hawthorn, elder, ash and sycamore hedge, up to 3.5m in height, along the north-east edge (H7);
- A couple of hawthorn trees up to 3m in height along the eastern edge (T2);
- Hawthorn and blackthorn scrub (H8 and H9) up to 4m in height, maple, walnut and hybrid black poplar trees, up to 14m in height, along the southern edge (G1); and
- Hawthorn hedging (H10) up to 5m in height, with walnut (T6) up to 12m in height, sycamore (T8 to T10) up to 14m in height and ash (T7) up to 12m in height, along the western edge.

3.7 With reference to on-line mapping, none of the existing vegetation is covered by Tree Preservation Orders, nor is it ancient woodland. With reference to the Ecological Impact Assessment, the field is sown with grass cover and is of negligible botanical value.

3.8 As set out in the introduction, the ESS Site is within the Green Belt, with the relevant matters set out in the following chapters.

3.9 The condition of the boundary vegetation appears to be generally good, with the Tree Survey recording a range of Category A to C vegetation, but there are no rare or distinctive landscape features within the ESS Site. The ESS Site is representative of the wider agricultural land uses and a common feature in the landscape. The perceptual aspects of the ESS Site are varied, with the field and vegetation providing a higher scenic quality. However, there is no sense of remoteness nor wildness, due to the proximity and inter-visibility with surrounding land uses, including polytunnels to the immediate south of the Site. There is also inter-visibility with residential land uses to the south-west of the Site and west of the Site, Manor Farm to the north of the Site and properties on Parsonage Lane and buildings across Park House Farm and The Old Maggot Farm, to the north-east of the Site. There is also inter-visibility with taller buildings adjacent to Chambers Avenue to the south-west of the Site and no.143 to the west of the Site. The landscape value of the Site is therefore assessed as medium.

3.10 As a generally low lying area of land, with a simple pattern and gently undulating landform and where the key vegetation structure is located around the perimeter of the ESS Site, the susceptibility (ability to accommodate change) is assessed as medium.

3.11 The combination of the medium value and medium susceptibility results in a medium sensitivity to the Proposed Development.

The ESS Access

3.12 With reference to **Figure 1**, the proposed access extends to the immediate north of the Site, along a relatively narrow grass track, across part of the existing hardstanding within Manor Farm and then along the existing drive (North Cray Road), to the A223.

Image 3-2: View from Manor Farm, looking west along North Cray Road.

3.13 Like the ESS Site, the access route is not covered by any statutory townscape or landscape designations, nor Conservation Areas. The access is within the Green Belt. The locally listed building at Manor Farm is accounted for in the following Local Townscape Character Areas, given it is not within the geographic extent of the red line.

3.14 The landform across the access route rises from around 28.34m AOD at the edge of the ESS Site, to around 45m AOD within the grounds of Manor Farm, before falling gradually along the alignment of North Cray Road, to around 34.15m AOD at the junction with the A223.

3.15 With reference to on-line mapping, the ESS access is not publicly accessible.

3.16 With reference to the Tree Survey, the vegetation adjacent to the grass track consisting of hawthorn, elder, ash and sycamore hedging (H5), up to 3m in height. The vegetation adjacent to North Cray Road consists of similar species (H2), also up to 3m in height, with Lawson Cypress trees (H1), up to 8m in height, adjacent to the A223. This vegetation is assessed by the Tree Survey as Category A and C vegetation.

3.17 There are no rare of distinctive landscape features across the ESS access, with no sense of remoteness and reduced tranquillity due to audible noise from the A223. The value is assessed as low. As an area of existing hardstanding or a grass, the susceptibility is low. The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a low sensitivity to the Proposed Development.

The Cable Corridor

3.18 With reference to **Figure 1**, the cable corridor extends northwards along the A223, then across part of the A2018 and then along Vicarage Road / Stud Lane, to the existing Hurst Grid sub-station.

3.19 The A223 is characterised by a dual carriageway, bordered by footways, lighting columns, trees and intermittent properties. There is a small scale roundabout, 1.86km to the north-east of the ESS Site, which demarcates the transition into Old Bexley, with predominantly two storey residential properties

bordering the western side of the road. The junction with the A2018 is also via a small roundabout, with two storey properties bordering both sides of the road.

3.20 The cable corridor then extends to the south of the A2018, along Vicarage Road / Stable Lane.

Image 3-3: View from the A2018, looking south along Vicarage Road / Stud Lane.

3.21 With reference to **Figure 1**, the cable corridor crosses North Cray and Old Bexley Conservation Areas.

3.22 With reference to the Tree Survey, Vicarage Road / Stable Lane is bordered by an avenue of lime trees (G10), which are assessed by the Tree Survey as being category B trees. None of the vegetation is ancient woodland, nor is it covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's), but by being in a Conservation Area, there is an afforded level of protection.

3.23 With reference to on-line mapping, PRoW (bridleway) BDW250 extends along Vicarage Road / Stable Lane.

3.24 Due to the dominance of the road network along the cable corridor, the landscape and townscape value is inherently low, but with the Conservation Areas, the overall value is assessed as medium. As the cable corridor covers existing road networks, the susceptibility is very low. The combination of the medium value and very low susceptibility results in a low sensitivity to the Proposed Development.

4.0 SITE CONTEXT

STUDY AREA

4.1 With reference to GLVIA 3, the purpose of the LTVIA study area is to identify the geographic area in which effects may occur due to the Proposed Development. The study area is required to be proportionate to the Proposed Development and has been determined through desk-based studies, reviews of aerial mapping, published landscape character assessments and fieldwork.

4.2 With reference to **Figure 1**, the extent of the study area is 2km radius of the ESS Site and a 0.5km radius of the cable corridor. This is assessed as being proportionate to the Proposed Development, given that the cable connection will be underground and the proposed access would be situated along an existing track and road. Any perception of the Proposed Development from beyond the study area is assessed as not resulting in any important landscape, townscape and visual effects, due to the combination of distance and intervening features.

4.3 The following section summarises the key landscape features across the study area, focused upon the ESS Site.

Landform and Hydrology

4.4 With reference to **Figure 2**, the landform rises gradually from the northern edge of the ESS Site (around 30m AOD) to Manor Farm, to around 45m AOD, 270m to the north of the ESS Site. The landform then rises more steeply across residential and equestrian land uses to the north of Manor Farm, to form a localised ridgeline along the alignment of Parsonage Lane, around 55m AOD, 460m to the north of the Site. The landform falls northwards from this ridgeline, across Home Wood and Gattons Plantation, to form the lower slopes of Bunkers Hill and a tract of undulating land between Joyden's Wood and the southern edge of Old Bexley, 1.9km to the north of the ESS Site, situated around 17m AOD. There is also a tract of undulating land around the existing Hurst Grid sub-station, extending up to 45m AOD.

4.5 To the east of the ESS Site, the landform rises from around 35m AOD to the edge of Chalk Wood, at around 50m AOD, 250m to the east of the ESS Site. The landform continues to rise across Chalk Wood, up to 80m AOD at the eastern edge of the woodland, to form a ridgeline. This ridgeline extends to the south of Chalk Wood, across Timbertops Farm, which is situated around 70m AOD, 1.1km to the south-east of the ESS Site. The landform falls to the east of this ridgeline, across Birchwood Golf Centre and Stonehill Farm, to the eastern edge of the study area, around Birchwood Road, situated around 55m AOD.

4.6 To the south of the ESS Site, the landform rises gradually across the grounds of Honeydale Farm, consisting of polytunnels, paddocks and large farm buildings, to the B2173, which is situated across rising landform, between 30m AOD and 70m AOD. The landform continues to rise to the north of

the B2173, across the grounds of Ruxley Manor Nurseries and Ruxley Wood, 650m to the south-west of the ESS Site, to form a ridgeline around 60m AOD. The landform falls to the south of this ridgeline across, across the Orpington Golf Centre and southern part of the study area.

4.7 To the west of the ESS Site, the landform remains at a similar low lying topographic position, extending to the A223, 320m to the west of the ESS Site. The landform continues to fall very gradually to the west of the A223, towards the River Cray, which flows around 20m AOD, 975m to the west of the Site. The landform rises to the west of the River Cray, to form a ridgeline around 50m AOD, 1.7km to the west of the ESS Site, at the eastern edge of Sidcup.

4.8 The ESS Site is therefore in a low lying position within the landscape/townscape, forming part of the valley floor, which extends west to east between the A223 and Chalk Wood, such that the more elevated ridgelines are to the north of the ESS Site, along Parsonage Lane, the east of the ESS Site across Chalk Wood and to the south of the ESS Site, across the B2173 and Ruxley Wood. The ESS Site is in a part of the landscape where a range of land uses are located at similar topographic positions, including polytunnels and large scale farm buildings to the immediate south of the ESS Site and residential and transport land uses to the west.

Vegetation Patterns

4.9 With reference to **Figure 1**, the north-west edge of the ESS Site is bordered by a small rectangular block of trees, along with established hedgerows and trees adjacent to the existing track between the ESS Site and Manor Farm. Other vegetation patterns include several hedgerows, orientated north to south across the fields and adjacent to North Cray Road (between Manor Farm and the A223). To the north of Manor Farm there is a greater degree of vegetation cover across residential gardens and bordering equestrian land use, with several woodlands and plantations to the north of Parsonage Lane, including Home Wood, Gattons Plantation and Joyden's Wood; all of which include some areas of ancient woodland. The other main tracts of vegetation are adjacent to the River Cray and residential land uses in the southern part of Old Bexley, adjacent to Vicarage Road and bordering the existing Hurst Grid substation.

4.10 To the east of the ESS Site, the agricultural land uses results in an open character to the landscape, except for several field boundaries, which provide narrow belts of vegetation between the southern edge of the ESS Site and Chalk Wood. Chalk Wood is an extensive area of woodland, covering more elevated land to the east of the ESS Site, with most of it being ancient woodland. Chalk Wood also physically and visually encloses Woodland Park caravan park, 885m to the east of the Site. Other notable areas of vegetation across the eastern part of the study area include across Birchwood Golf Course.

4.11 There is a narrow belt of trees to the immediate south of the ESS Site, around a small attenuation pond. The paddocks exhibit low grass cover, until PRoW (footpath) FP141, 330m to the south of the

ESS Site, which is bordered by a tall hedgerow for most of its length. The other main tracts of vegetation to the south of the Site include established trees adjacent to the B2173 and bordering Ruxley Manor Garden Centre. This includes parts of Ruxley Wood, which is ancient woodland.

4.12 To the west of the ESS Site, there are intermittent trees within the fields extending towards the A223, with established trees across the grounds of Cray Hall and bordering residential property 142 , 115m to the west of the Site. There are small scale woodlands bordering residential land uses adjacent Cornell Close, 342m to the south-west of the Site. The A223 is bordered by established trees between Parsonage Lane (to the north-west of the ESS Site) and Honeyden Road (to the south-west of the ESS Site). The extent of vegetation cover varies across residential land uses to the west of the A223, although there are notable tracts of vegetation across the plains of the River Cray and rising land across the western part of the study area, including within the grounds of Foots Cray Place.

4.13 From the above, there is a high degree of vegetation cover across more elevated land within the study area, characterised by established and often ancient woodlands along the northern, eastern, southern and western ridgelines across the study area. In contrast, the agricultural land use results in a generally open character to the fields surrounding the ESS Site and the density and extent of vegetation across residential areas is varied. With reference to the following visual appraisal, the extent of this vegetation influences the visibility of the ESS Site.

Settlement Pattern and Land Use

4.14 With reference to **Figure 1**, the ESS Site forms part of a 1km tract of agricultural, horticultural and horsiculture land which extends from Manor Farm (to the north of the ESS Site) to the B2173 (to the south of the ESS Site).

4.15 Residential land uses are concentrated adjacent to Parsonage Lane, to the north of the ESS Site, in a ribbon alignment, predominantly along the southern side of the lane. The properties are generally large in scale, detached and two storeys in height, and often set within well vegetated grounds. The eastern part of Parsonage Lane consists of contemporary single storey detached dwellings.

4.16 Residential land uses also extend to the west of the ESS Site, adjacent to the A223, characterised by a smaller density of detached dwellings to the west of the ESS Site, set within well vegetated grounds, which transition to a denser arrangement of semi-detached bungalow adjacent to Honeyden Road and Baron Road, two and three storey apartments adjacent to Honeyden Road and Cornell Close and two storey detached properties adjacent to the B2173.

4.17 To the west of the A223, the density of residential land uses is generally higher, along with employment and educational land uses.

4.18 There are paddocks and polytunnels to the immediate south of the ESS Site. The polytunnels are approximately 3.7m in height at their apex and form part of Honeydale Farm, which consists of several

farm buildings, also to the south of the ESS Site and a garden centre and car-park adjacent to the B21733. The farm is one of several garden / horticultural land uses in the study area, along with Ruxley Manor Garden Centre, which extends to the south of the B2173, characterised by extensive areas of polytunnels, greenhouses and external car-parking.

4.19 The ESS Site therefore forms part of a landscape / townscape of a range of land uses and is consolidated adjacent to existing polytunnels and in closer proximity to residential, agricultural and transport land uses in comparison to the wider field pattern between Parsonage Lane and the B2173.

Public Rights of Way and Access

4.20 With reference to **Figure 1** and on-line mapping, the following PRoW are within the study area and relevant to the LTVIA:

- PRoW (bridleway) BDW139, along the eastern part of Parsonage Lane, to the north-east of the ESS Site;
- PRoW (footpath) FP141, extending between Chalk Wood and the B2173, to the south of the ESS Site;
- PRoW (BOAT) BY143, extending from the B2173 to the south of Timber Tops Farm, to the south-east of the ESS Site;
- PRoW (footpath) FP241, along Woodland Way, to the east of the ESS Site;
- PRoW (footpath) FP171, extending between the A223 and the B2173, to the south-west of the ESS Site;
- PRoW (bridleway) BDW250, along Vicarage Road / Stable Lane; and
- PRoW (footpath) FP133, to the north-east of the Hurst Grid sub-station.

4.21 Other publicly accessible locations in the study area are the footway adjacent to the B2173 and parts of the A223.

Designations

4.22 With reference to **Figure 1**, neither the Site, nor the study area is covered by any statutory landscape or townscape designations (e.g. National Landscape).

4.23 The Old Bexley Conservation Area (CA) covers part of the cable corridor route, along Vicarage Road. With reference to the following visual appraisal and the CA Appraisal and Management Plan[2], none of the '*significant views'* are orientated towards the ESS Site, nor the proposed access route. The trees along Vicarage Road are noted as '*significant trees/tree group'*.

[2] London Borough of Bexley, Old Bexley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-01/Old-Bexley-Conservation-Area-Appraisal-and-Management-Plan.pdf

4.24 High Beeches CA is to the west of the ESS Site, covering a small scale residential area to the west of the A223. The CA Appraisal[3] does not identify any significant views towards the ESS Site, nor the A223. The existing vegetation adjacent to the A223 is notes as an area of 'significant trees'.

4.25 The North Cray CA is to the north-west of the ESS Site, and is mostly located to the west of the A223. The CA Appraisal[4] does not identify any significant views towards the ESS Site.

4.26 With reference to **Figure 1**, the closest listed building is Cray Hall (Grade II), 240m to the west of the Site. With reference to the on-line listing[5], this relates to the form of the building, rather than any relationship with the ESS Site. As set out above, there is established vegetation within the grounds and around the perimeter of the property.

4.27 Foots Cray Place Registered Park and Garden (Grade II) is 640m to the west of the ESS Site at its closest point, beyond the A223. The Garden is 40m to the west of the cable corridor at its closest point. The listing[6] notes the park is bound by a range of land uses.

4.28 Manor Farm Farmhouse is a locally listed building, 270m to the north of the ESS Site and adjacent to the access route.

4.29 Several of the woodlands to the north of Parsonage Lane and Chalk Wood are Sites of Importance Nature Conservation.

4.30 The Site is within the Green Belt, with the relevant matters set out in the following chapters.

Character of the Night Sky

4.31 The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) have mapped the level of radiance (night lights) shining up into the night sky. With reference to the following extract of the published mapping[7], the ESS Site is within an area of lower tier 'brightness', illustrated via the green and yellow hatching. The brighter night skies are to the west of the Site, via the orange to red hatching, reflecting the greater density of residential land uses and sources of lighting.

4.32 The ESS Site is not lit, nor are the surrounding fields, therefore, the radiance illustrated by the published study reflects the influence of surrounding land uses. The access route (North Cray Road) is also not lit, but the alignment of the underground cable connective along the A223 and A2018 are lit by lighting columns.

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[3] London Borough of Bexley, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/High-Beeches-Conservation-Area-Appraisal-and-Management-Plan.pdf
[4] London Borough of Bexley, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/North-Cray-village-Conservation-Area-Appraisal-and-Management-Plan.pdf
[5] Historic England, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1064240
[6] Historic England, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000288
[7] Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, https://www.cpre.org.uk/light-pollution-dark-skies-map/

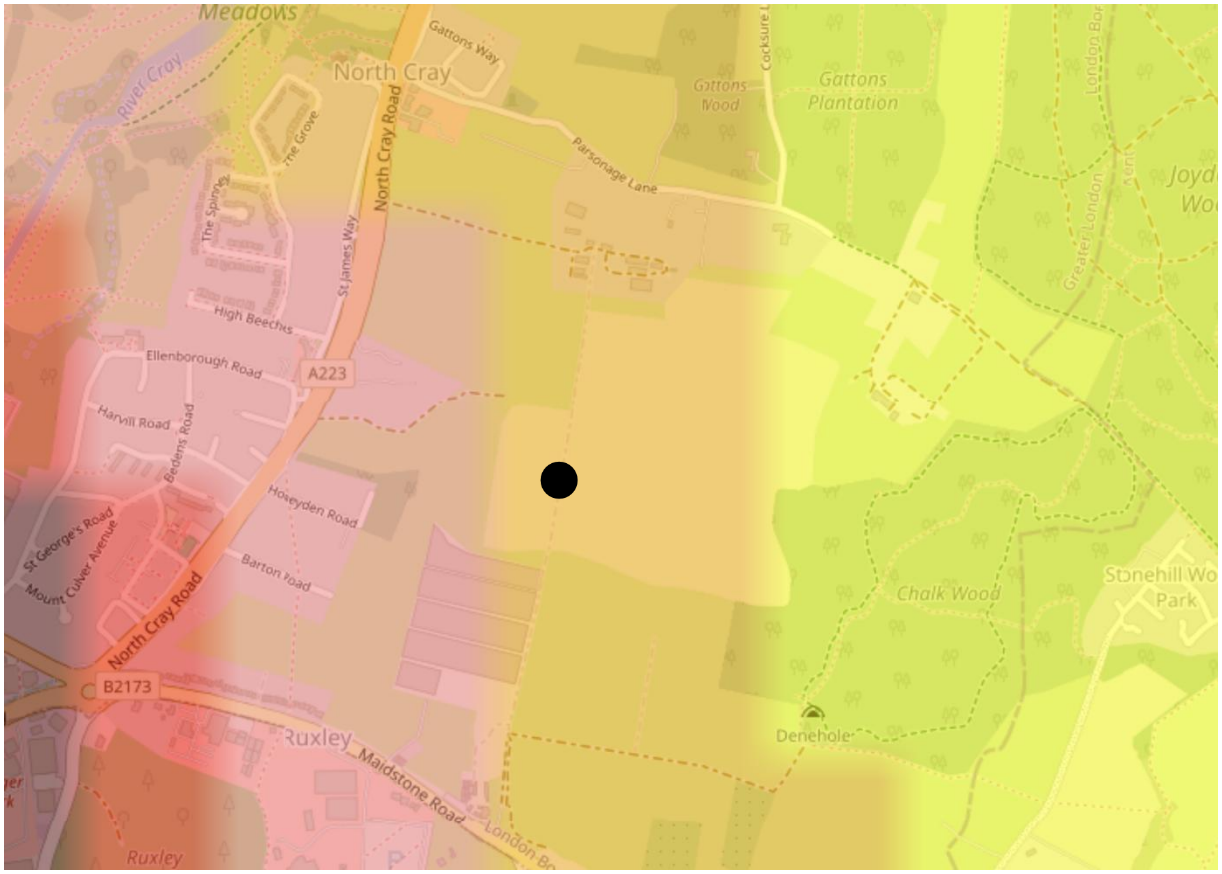

Image 4-1: Extract of the CPRE light pollution mapping, with the centre of the ESS Site schematically illustrated by a black dot.

4.33 From the combination of the varying light sources across the study area, the character of the night sky is assessed as consisting of E3: Suburban and E4: Urban categories, with the ESS Site within the E3 zone.

5.0 PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS AND RELATED STUDIES

5.1 The Site and study area are covered by several published landscape character assessments and related studies, with the relevant aspects summarised below and set out in full in **Appendix II**.

National

Natural England National Character 113: North Kent Plain[8] (NCA 113)

5.2 The Site is located within NCA 113, which is an extensive tract of land, extending from Sidcup to Ramsgate. Stated key characteristics relevant to the Site and study area are:

- *"An open, low and gently undulating landscape, characterised by high quality, fertile, loamy soils dominated by agricultural land uses;*
- *Large arable/horticultural fields with regular patterns and rectangular shapes predominating, and a sparse hedgerow pattern; and*
- *Large settlements and urban infrastructure (including lines of pylons) are often visually dominant in the landscape, with significant development around Greater London and the Medway Towns, as well as around towns further east and along the coast. Major rail and road links connect the towns with London."*

5.3 Relevant Statements of Environmental Opportunity are:

- *"Protect the distinct wooded areas of the landscape, particularly through the management of nationally important, ancient semi-natural woodlands, increasing the area of broadleaved woodland where appropriate, while increasing the connectivity of the mosaic of associated habitats notably wooded heath and semi-improved grassland while enhancing the recreational resource (SEO 3); and*
- *Protect and enhance the strong character and heritage of the urban areas. Plan for the creation of significant new areas of green space and green corridors to provide a framework for new and existing development in urban areas and along major transport routes (SEO 4)."*

London

5.4 The Site is not within any of the views identified by the London View Management Framework[9].

[8] Natural England, https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/north-kent-plain/
[9] Mayor of London, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/LVMF%20March%202012%20part%201.pdf?token=YJoKa7uK

Borough

Bexley Local Character Study[10] (LCS), 2021

5.5 The defined spatial qualities within the borough and the qualities which should be protected and enhanced through new development. The LCS defines the Cray Valley across the south-east of the borough. The published study notes the garden centres and main roads across the Cray Valley, along with the Cray river path ('the London Loop') being disrupted by the '*significant barrier of a major road and rail crossing*.'

5.6 The published study notes that the Cray Valley is part of the urban fringe area and has the following stated landscape qualities:

- *"Meandering river channel with riffles and pools along the profile;*
- *Willow and alder wet woodland;*
- *Floodplain meadows backed by woodland;*
- *Curving hedgerows defining the outer margins of the floodplain;*
- *Reedbeds and cressbeds alongside the river;*
- *Riverside walks and bridges; and*
- *Remnant parkland landscapes – specimen trees and composed views."*

5.7 The published study notes future pressures from increased recreational requirements and that the intensity of agriculture, including large areas of polytunnels is particularly insensitive.

5.8 The Site is not identified as one of the natural and semi-natural urban greenspaces in the Borough.

Urban Morphology Study[11], 2019

5.9 The study sets out relevant characteristics of the Borough, mainly focused upon existing building heights and typologies.

5.10 The Site is not identified as a specific land type (other than Green Belt), although detached and semi-detached and residential land uses are illustrated to the north and flats, semi-detached and terraced residential land uses to the south-west of the Site.

Green Infrastructure Study[12], 2020

5.11 The Site is not identified as part of the strategic green corridor.

[10] London Borough of Bexley, Local Character Study, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/Bexley-local-character-study.pdf
[11] London Borough of Bexley Urban Morphology Study, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-05/Urban-morphology-study-2019.pdf
[12] London Borough of Bexley https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/Green-infrastructure-study-april-2020-part-1.pdf

5.12 Chapter 8 of the published study sets out the Metropolitan Open Land designation review; however the Site was not included.

Bexley Sustainable Design & Construction Guide[13], 2007

5.13 This guide is focused upon residential development.

Local Townscape Character Areas

5.14 To add a finer level of detail to the published studies and with reference to **Figure 1** and **Figure 3**, the LTVIA has identified the following local townscape character areas (LTCA):

- LTCA 1: Parsonage Lane Residential, covering the ribbon pattern of residential land uses along the southern side of Parsonage Lane, which are predominantly two storey in height, detached properties, set within well vegetated grounds. There is an equestrian stable at the western end of Parsonage Lane and residential land uses at the eastern end of the lane are detached bungalows;
- LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (covers the ESS Site and most of the access), which extends between Parsonage Lane and the B2173. The area is characterised by a range of field sizes, divided by intermittent hedgerows, set across an undulating valley landform, which falls towards the ESS Site. There is no public access and the perception of surrounding horticultural and transport networks reduces any sense of remoteness or tranquillity. Manor Farm is within LTCA 2 and is a locally listed building;
- LTCA 3: Cray Hall Residential, covering a small group of residential dwellings 113m to the west of the ESS Site at its closers point, with Cray Hall (a listed building) set within well vegetated grounds;
- LTCA 4: A223 (covers most of the below ground cable corridor and a small part of the access), consisting of mainly a dual carriageway and a high degree of vehicle movement and of no scenic quality or landscape value;
- LTCA 5: North Cray Residential, covering residential land uses to the west of the A223, consisting of mainly two storey and bungalow properties, with localised areas of taller buildings. There is a dense arrangement to the built form and a clear delineation of the elongated settlement pattern, due to being located between the A223 and the plains of the River Cray;
- LTCA 6: Barton Road Residential covering residential land uses across Honeyden Road, Barton Road, Cornell Close and adjacent to the B2137;
- LTCA 7: Cray Valley Horticultural, covering the polytunnels, buildings, car-parking across Honeydale Farm, to the south of the ESS Site. The land uses result in the perception of an

[13] London Borough of Bexley, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/Bexley-sustainable-design-and-construction-guide-adopted.pdf

'active' landscape with structures and activity, such that the character is more of a developed landscape than the arable landscape of LTCA 2;

- LTCA 8: Cray Valley Paddocks, covering the paddocks to the south of the ESS Site, consisting of small to medium scale rectangular fields divided by low post and rail fencing, resulting in a settlement fringe character to the landscape;
- LTCA 9: Chalk Wood, covering the established woodland to the east of the ESS Site, consisting of extensive areas of established woodland with limited public access;
- LTCA 10: Old Bexley Conservation Area, covering the designated area (part of the cable corridor), consisting of mainly two storey residential land uses; and
- LTCA 11: Vicarage Road (covering part of the below ground cable route), characterised by a narrow road, bordered by an avenue of trees. There is a developed character to the road due to the low safety barriers and inter-visibility with adjacent residential development.

Landscape / Townscape Receptor Summary

5.15 From the above reviews and with reference to **Appendix IV**, the following table summarises the landscape/townscape receptors included in the assessment and their sensitivity to the Proposed Development.

Table 5-1: Landscape/Townscape Receptor Summary

Landscape / Townscape Receptor	**Landscape Sensitivity**
The Site (ESS location)	Medium
The Site (ESS access)	Low
The Site (cable corridor)	Low
Published Landscape Character Areas	
NCA 113: North Kent Plain	Medium
Bexley Cray Valley	High
Local Townscape Character Areas identified by the LTVIA	
LTCA 1: Parsonage Lane Residential	Low
LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (covers the ESS Site and most of the access)	Medium
LTCA 3: Cray Hall Residential	High
LTCA 4: A223 (covers most of the below ground cable corridor and a small part of the access)	Very Low
LTCA 5: North Cray Residential	Low
LTCA 6: Barton Road Residential	Low
LTCA 7: Cray Valley Horticultural	Low
LTCA 8: Cray Valley Paddocks	Medium
LTCA 9: Chalk Wood	Very High

Landscape / Townscape Receptor	Landscape Sensitivity
LTCA 10: Old Bexley Conservation Area (covers part of the below ground cable route)	High
LCA 11: Vicarage Road (covers part of the below ground cable route)	Medium

5.16 From the above table, the higher sensitivity character areas reflect ancient woodlands and Conservation Areas. Most of the character areas are of low sensitivity, due to either being developed areas, e.g. residential areas of low architectural quality and few designations, or main road networks. The ESS Site is one of several medium sensitivity areas, reflecting the undeveloped character of the ESS Site, functional value of boundary vegetation and undulating landform as part of the wider Cray Valley, as well as the locally listed building of Manor Farm.

6.0 VISUAL AMENITY

6.1 As set out in the methodology, the LTVIA includes an assessment of the likely changes to people's views (visual receptors) due to the Proposed Development. The identification of people's views is based upon a representative range of differing groups, e.g. residents, recreational users or road users.

6.2 The identification of representative views is a two stage process, which as set out below includes desk-based reviews and fieldwork from publicly accessible locations ('viewpoints').

Stage 1: Desk-based reviews and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Mapping

6.3 The following section sets out the relevant published studies and the ZTV mapping, which constitute the desk-based review.

Locally Significant Views Technical Paper[14], 2021

6.4 The Technical Paper identifies local views which are considered important and form part of the process of managing development. The Site is not within any of the identified views.

Old Bexley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

6.5 With reference to the published study, there are no '*significant views'* to and from Vicarage Road, part of the route of the proposed underground access corridor.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Analysis

6.6 To aid the fieldwork and with reference ZTV's have been generated based upon both the tallest equipment at 7m in height and the majority of the remaining equipment at 3m in height. The ZTV's do not include the proposed planting nor fencing within the ESS Site.

6.7 With reference to **Figure 4A**, which depicts the proposed ESS equipment in relation to only the surrounding landform ('bare-earth'), the theoretical visibility (illustrated by the green and blue hatching) is concentrated across the south-east and south-west parts of the study area. This reflects the local valley landform in which the ESS Site is located and rising land to the west of the River Cray.

6.8 However, to illustrate a more realistic '*theoretical*' modelling, the following extract of **Figure 4B** includes the existing vegetation and buildings surrounding the ESS Site, derived from on-line data sources ('screened ZTV').

[14] London Borough of Bexley, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/SD18-locally-significant-views-technical-paper.pdf

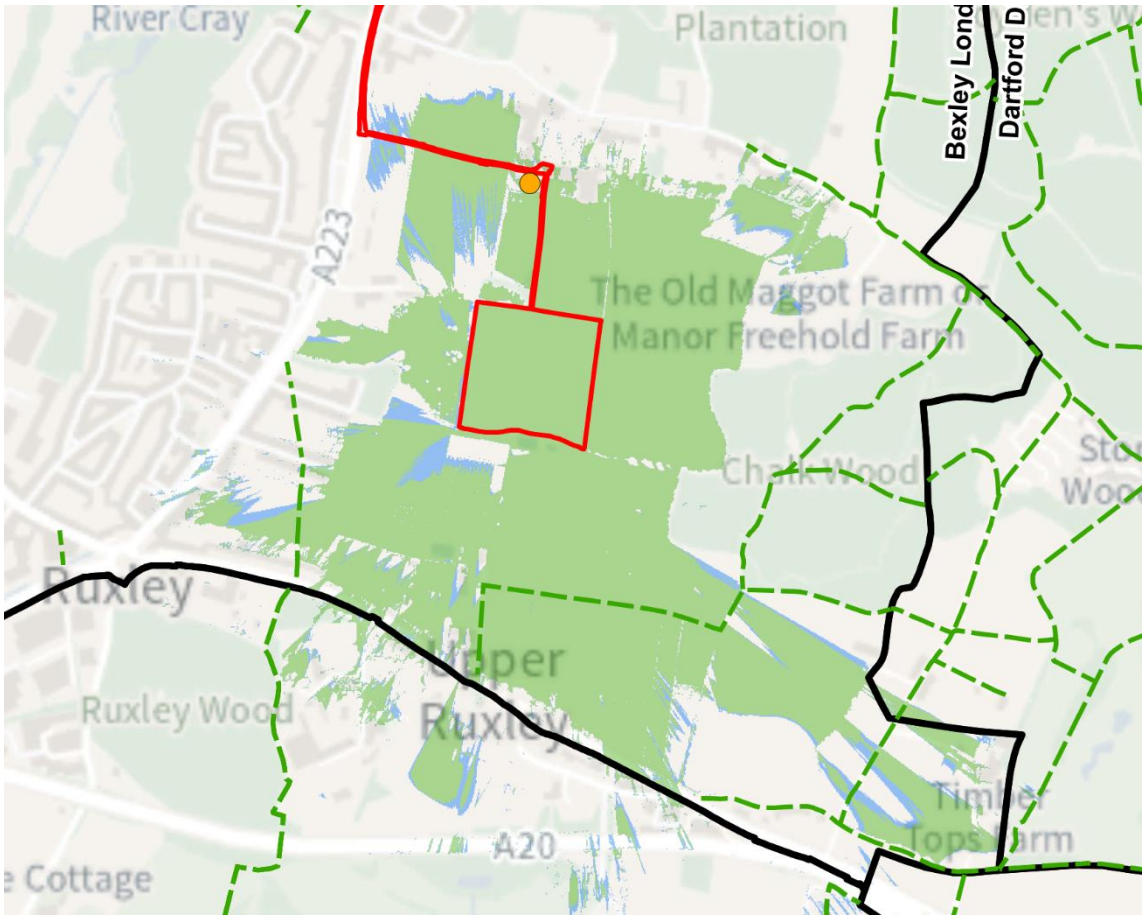

Image 6-1: Extract of Figure 4B: Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility of 3m high equipment via the green hatching and 7m high equipment via the blue hatching.

6.9 The screened ZTV demonstrates that the theoretical visibility of the ESS equipment is consolidated to within even closer proximity of the ESS Site in comparison to the 'bare-earth' ZTV. Like the 'bare-earth' ZTV, the consolidated theoretical visibility of the ESS equipment is due to the relatively low lying position of the ESS Site, with more elevated land to the north, east and south. The density of residential land uses and vegetation between the ESS Site and the A223 largely negates the theoretical visibility from the west of the A223.

Stage 2: Fieldwork

6.10 Fieldwork has been undertaken in February 2025 to review the ZTVs and identify the likely visibility of the Proposed Development and visual receptors ('people's views') from publicly accessible locations ('viewpoints'). As the fieldwork was undertaken in February, the deciduous vegetation was not in leaf, thereby enabling a 'worse-case' visibility to be considered. The following section should be read in combination with the viewpoint locations illustrated on **Figure 5** and the photographs on **Figures 6 to 11 (Part 3 of the LTVIA)**.

6.11 The following description of the existing views accounts for summer conditions as well (i.e. when deciduous vegetation is in leaf), so as to support the following visual assessment which considers winter and summer seasons.

6.12 **Viewpoint 1** is taken from the B2173, 700m to the south-east of the ESS Site. The view is representative of road users, pedestrians and residents adjacent to the road. The photograph demonstrates that in winter, the field of the ESS Site is not visible, due to is low lying position. The larger barns and polytunnels within Honeydale Farm are visible, seen beyond intervening paddocks, such that there is the potential for taller equipment within the Site to be visible, although seen in a developed context and against a well vegetated skyline. In summer conditions, the overall composition of the view would be similar to that in winter, but with some reduction in visibility across the middle ground and background of the view, due to intervening vegetation being in leaf.

6.13 From elevated land in the south-east part of the study area, **Viewpoint 2** is taken from PRoW (footpath) FP241, along Woodland Way, 865m to the south-east of the ESS Site. The view is representative of road users and recreational users and demonstrates that the ESS field is not visible, due to its low lying position, but parts of the larger barns and polytunnels within Honeydale Farm are visible. There is the potential for taller ESS equipment to be visible in winter conditions. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the overall extent of views, including towards the ESS Site would reduce.

6.14 Moving to within closer proximity of the ESS Site, **Viewpoints 3 and 4** are taken from PRoW (footpath) FP141, 450m and 340m to the south-east of the ESS Site. The views are representative of recreational users and demonstrates that the ESS field is visible, although slightly softened by intervening vegetation. The ESS Site is seen as part of the agricultural and horse paddocks (i.e. undeveloped land) across the foreground and middle ground of the view, set in the context of adjacent polytunnels and residential land situated across more elevated land. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, specifically the trees along the southern edge of the ESS Site, the visibility of the ESS Site would reduce.

6.15 **Viewpoints 5 and 6** are taken from the footway adjacent to the B2173, 475m and 450m to the south-west of the ESS Site and are representative of road users, pedestrians and residents. The views demonstrate the relatively elevated position of receptors to the south of the ESS Site, along the ridgeline. This enables views across parts of Honeydale Farm, the ESS Site and towards a vegetated skyline extending along Parsonage Lane. The ESS Site is seen in the context of a partly developed valley floor, consisting of larger scale agricultural barns with solar panels on the roof and polytunnels. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, specifically the roadside hedgerows, the visibility of the ESS Site would reduce.

6.16 **Viewpoint 7** is taken from PRoW (footpath) FP171, 400m to the south-west of the ESS Site, as it crossed between residential land uses. The view is representative of recreational users and residents. The view demonstrates that the ESS field is partly visible, seen in the context of the intervening polytunnels and barns. Views extend across the ESS Site to a generally wooded skyline, interspersed with residential properties. In summer, the composition of the view is considered to be similar, with some reduction of views of the ESS Site due to the intervening trees being in leaf.

6.17 **Viewpoints 8** is taken from the A223 footway, 355m to the west of the ESS Site. The view is representative of recreational users, pedestrians and road users. The view demonstrates the high degree of softening of views due to the density of the road side vegetation, although the ESS Site is discernible, seen as part of a tract of undeveloped land. In summer, with the roadside vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the ESS Site would not be visible. From the west side of the A223, the fieldwork also demonstrates that the ESS Site would not be visible, due to the additional roadside vegetation. The exception was from the upper storeys of flats adjacent to Chambers Avenue.

6.18 **Viewpoint 9** is taken from the A223, opposite North Cray Road, 5m from the Site and the proposed access and part of the cable corridor route. The view is representative of road users and demonstrates that the ESS Site is not visible due to the density of intervening vegetation. The access route forms a very small part of the composition of the view, due to the oblique orientation of views and the density. In summer, the composition of the view is considered to be similar overall, but with a notably reduced extent of visibility due to the roadside vegetation being in leaf.

6.19 **Viewpoint 10** is taken from North Cray Road, along the proposed access route. The view is representative of residents and visitors to Manor Farm. The view demonstrates that the ESS Site is visible, due to gaps in the intervening vegetation, and is seen in the context of the polytunnels to the south of the ESS Site, as well as larger scale buildings on the ridge line at Ruxley Manor. In summer, with the foreground hedgerow and middle ground vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the ESS Site would be substantially reduced.

6.20 **Viewpoint 11** is also taken from adjacent to Manor Farm Cottage, 285m to the north of the ESS Site. The view is representative or residents and demonstrates that views extend along the proposed access track to the central and eastern parts of the ESS Site, whilst the western part of the ESS Site is largely softened by the density of intervening vegetation and buildings. The ESS Site is seen as part of the tract of undeveloped land across the foreground and middle ground of the view, although in the immediate context of polytunnels. In summer, the composition of the view is considered to be similar, although with a reduced visibility of the polytunnels, due to the vegetation along the southern edge of the Site being in leaf.

6.21 **Viewpoint 12** is taken from the western part of Parsonage Lane, 515m to the north of the ESS Site and is representative of road users and visitors to the stables. The view demonstrates that the ESS Site is not visible due to the intervening buildings. The composition of the view would remain similar in summer conditions.

6.22 **Viewpoint 13** is taken from the eastern part of Parsonage Lane, 490m to the north-west of the ESS Site and is representative of road users. The view similarly demonstrates that the ESS Site is not visible, due to the density of intervening vegetation, fencing and buildings. In summer conditions, the extent of views would reduce, due to the roadside vegetation being in leaf.

6.23 **Viewpoint 14** is taken from the A2018, adjacent to the proposed underground cable route. The view is representative of road users and residents and demonstrates that views are channelled along Vicarage Road, which is seen in a developed context. In summer, the extent of views would reduce due to the vegetation adjacent to Vicarage Road being in leaf.

6.24 **Viewpoint 15** is taken from PRoW (footpath) FP133 and is representative of recreational users and residents 60m to the east of Vicarage Road. The view demonstrates that the overall extent of views is short in range, with views towards Vicarage Road being seen in the context of intervening buildings. In summer, with the vegetation adjacent to Vicarage Road in leaf, the overall extent of the view would reduce.

6.25 **Viewpoint 16** is taken from PRoW (footpath) FP133. The view is representative of recreational users, 285m to the east of Vicarage Road. The view demonstrates that the receptors are in a relatively elevated position within the landscape, although views of Vicarage Road itself are largely screened by intervening buildings, such that the alignment of the road is demarcated by the avenue of trees. Views extend across to Bexley. In summer, the composition of the view would be similar, with some reduction in the overall extent of visibility due to intervening vegetation being in leaf.

Visual Summary

6.26 From the fieldwork, the visibility of the Proposed Development is broadly reflective of that suggested by the screened ZTV. This is due to the ESS Site being in low lying position, such that the more elevated and wooded land to the north, adjacent to Parsonage Lane and across Chalk Wood limits the extent of visibility in relation to the wider landscape/townscape to the north and east. There is inter-visibility between the ESS Site and Manor Farm, as well as several properties adjacent to Parsonage Lane.

6.27 In relation to the south of the ESS Site, the ESS Site is visible from PRoW (footpath) FP 141 and parts of the B2173. Within these views, the ESS Site is seen beyond intervening polytunnels and farm buildings, such that it is evidently visually consolidated to developed parts of the landscape. From the south of the B2173, the combination of rising landform and woodland negates views of the ESS Site, such that the visibility is less than suggested by the ZTV.

6.28 From the west of the ESS Site, there is inter-visibility with residential property no.143 and the upper storey of flats adjacent to Chambers Avenue. However, the combination of rising landform, properties and roadside vegetation negates views of the ESS Site from the wider study area to the west of the A223, including from across the grounds of Foots Cray Place.

6.29 The proposed access is only visible from the grounds of Manor Farm and for road users on the A223 when adjacent to North Cray Road.

6.30 The route of the underground cable route (during the construction phase) is visible for road users on the A223, road users and residents adjacent to the route, including within parts of Old Bexley Conservation Area. The route is also visible for recreational users on Vicarage Road and more elevated land bordering the existing Hurst Grid sub-station (during the construction phase).

6.31 The following table sets out the visual receptors identified for the visual assessment in relation to the viewpoints (where public views are available) and their sensitivity, which is set out in full in **Appendix V**.

Table 6-1: Viewpoint (VP) and Visual Receptor Summary

VP	Visual Receptor	Sensitivity
1	1A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Low
	1B. Residents adjacent to the B2173	Medium
2	2. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP241	High
3	3A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141	High
	3B. Horse riders /visitors to the paddocks	Medium
4	4A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141	High
	4B. Employment users at Honeydale Farm	Low
5	5A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Low
	5B. Residents adjacent to the B2173 at Glebe Cottages	High
6	6A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Low
	6B. Residents adjacent to the B2173	High
7	7A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP171	High
	7B. Residents adjacent to the eastern end of Barton Road	High
8	8A. Road users on the A223 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Low
	8B. Residents at 141 to 143 North Cray Road	High
	8C. Residents in Chambers Avenue	High
9	9. Road users on the A223	Low
10	10. Road users on North Cray Road	Medium
11	11. Residents at Manor Farm Cottage	High
12	12A. Road users on Parsonage Lane	Medium
	12B. Residents adjacent to the south side of Parsonage Lane (north of Manor Farm)	High
13	13A. Road users on Parsonage Lane	Medium
	13B. Residents adjacent to Parsonage Lane (east of Cocksure Lane)	High
14.	14A. Road users on the A2018 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Low
	14B. Residents adjacent to the A2018	Low
15	15A. Recreational users on Vicarage Road	Medium

VP	Visual Receptor	Sensitivity
	15B. Residents adjacent to Vicarage Road	Medium
16	16. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP133	High

6.32 From the above table, the high sensitivity receptors reflect recreational users on routes where there is an expectation of views contributing to their experience, or residents, with fixed views from their homes. The medium sensitivity receptors either reflect road users on secondary routes or where the view may be valued locally but is not the specific reason for receptors being present. The low sensitivity receptors reflect main road users, whom are either highly transient or where the view is notably influenced by existing features.

7.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

7.1 The following section summarises the policies relevant to landscape and visual matters, with the policies set out in full in **Appendix III**. Green Belt matters are set out in the following chapters.

National Policy Statements (NPS)

7.2 Whilst NPS EN-1[15] (updated 2024) relates to National Significant Infrastructure Projects, there are references to landscape and visual matters, particularly regarding mitigation and design, which are considered relevant for context of the Proposed Development. Relevant paragraphs of NPS EN-1 are:

- 4.7, which outlines the requirements of high-quality design include the aesthetic, functionality, fitness for purpose and sustainability;
- 5.10 onwards, which set out the requirements for a landscape and visual impact assessment and that schemes are likely to have adverse landscape and visual effects; and
- 5.10.26 onwards which outlines methods for minimising adverse effects, including siting of infrastructure, colours and materials and landscaping schemes.

7.3 NPS EN-3[16] (updated 2024) section 2.5, which sets out matters in relation to good design for landscape and visual amenity.

7.4 NPS EN-5[17] (updated 2024) sets out matters in relation to the location and landscape considerations of schemes, with LTVIA matters set out in paragraph 2.9.7 onwards.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

7.5 The following PPG are relevant:

- Climate Change (2019)[18], which includes providing opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy technologies as an example of mitigating climate change, along with the benefits of green infrastructure for improving adaption and biodiversity;

[15] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65bbfbdc709fe1000f637052/overarching-nps-for-energy-en1.pdf
[16] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a7889996a5ec000d731aba/nps-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en3.pdf
[17] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a78a5496a5ec000d731abb/nps-electricity-networks-infrastructure-en5.pdf
[18] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change

- Design: process and tools (2019)[19], which supports the National Design Guide, with related matters being integrating development into its context;
- Light Pollution (2019)[20], which sets out the importance of good design to avoid and reduce impacts from new lighting;
- Natural Environment (2025)[21], which sets out the benefits of green infrastructure and the use of published landscape character assessments; and
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (2023)[22], which identifies the importance of local topography on landscape impacts, the importance of 'buffer' zones.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2024[23]

7.6 The relevant NPPF policies are set out below, with Green Belt matters in the following chapters:

- 8 - outlining that the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development;
- 124 - which outlines that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the needs for other uses;
- 129 - whereby planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking account of the need to maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting;
- 130 - which sets out area-based character assessments can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently;
- 131 – which sets out the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve;
- 135 – which sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, as well as being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history;
- 136 - in respect of new tree planting;
- 161 – whereby the planning system should support the transition to net zero;
- 165 – which sets out a range of measures to increase the use and supply of renewable energy;
- 168 – whereby local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy; and

[19] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government https://www.gov.uk/guidance/design
[20] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/light-pollution
[21] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment
[22] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy
[23] Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

- 187 - requiring planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

The London Plan, 2021[24]

7.7 The London Plan is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater Lond, setting out a framework for how London will develop. Relevant policies are:

- GG2: Making the best use of land, which includes for protecting and enhancing the Green Belt, and promoting the creation of new green infrastructure;
- GG6: Improving efficiency and resilience, which sets out support for the move towards a low carbon economy;
- D3: Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach, whereby all development must make the best use of land and respond to existing character;
- D4: Delivering good design, which sets out the importance of design scrutiny (although focused upon residential development);
- HC1: Heritage conservation and growth, whereby development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings;
- HC3: Strategic and Local Views, whereby development proposals must be assessed for their impact on a designated view if they fall within the foreground, middle ground or background of that view;
- HC4: London View Management Framework, whereby development proposals should not harm, and should seek to make a positive contribution to, the characteristics and composition of Strategic Views and their landmark element;
- G1: Green Infrastructure, whereby the network of green and open spaces, and green features in the built environment, should be protected and enhanced;
- G2: London's Green Belt, which should be protected from inappropriate development;
- G3: Metropolitan Open Land; which is afforded the same protection as Green Belt;
- G5: Urban Greening, which requires major development to contribute to the greening of London;
- G6: Biodiversity and access to nature, which includes for development proposals managing manage impacts on biodiversity and aiming to secure net biodiversity gain;
- G7: Trees and woodlands, which seeks to protect and maintain urban forests and woodlands and wherever possible existing trees of value are retained; and
- SI2: Minimising greenhouse gas emissions, which includes for maximising opportunities for renewable energy;

[24] London Plan, https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

- SI3: Energy infrastructure, which sets out that Development Plans should identify the need and suitable sites for any necessary energy infrastructure requirements.

Bexley Local Plan, adopted 2023[25]

7.8 With reference to on-line mapping[26], the relevant policies of the new Local Plan are:

- SP1: Achieving sustainable development, which focuses new development on urban land in accessible locations;
- SP5: Placemaking through good design, which sets out the requirements for high quality design;
- SP6: Managing Bexley's heritage assets; which includes for conserving and enhancing heritage assets;
- SP8: Green Infrastructure including designated Green Belt, which sets out MGB will be protected from inappropriate development, with beneficial uses including enhancing landscapes, visual amenity or to improve damaged or derelict land;
- SP9: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological assets, whereby development should recognise the value of landforms and landscapes. SP9(h) states that landscape schemes should use native plant species of local provenance;
- SP14: Mitigating and adapting to climate change, which sets out the Council will support development that drive down greenhouse gas emissions to net zero;
- DP11: Achieving high-quality design, whereby development should protect or enhance an area's character and that the height and massing contribute positively to the street scene. DP11(b) landscaping requires a high standard of landscape design, appropriate to the proposal and with regard to the character of the surrounding area;
- DP13: Protecting local views, which sets out development criteria in respect of the identified views across the borough;
- DP20: Biodiversity and geodiversity in developments, which includes for a measurable long-term benefit for biodiversity;
- DP21: Greening of development sites, requiring developments to provide a high standard of landscape design; and
- DP31: Energy Infrastructure, which supports development of decentralised energy network infrastructure, with the supporting policy text noting schemes will be expected to demonstrate how they have been sensitively designed to integrate into the local environment, minimising any potential negative impacts.

[25] London Borough of Bexley, Local Plan, https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-07/bexley-local-plan-adopted-26-april-2023.pdf
[26] London Borough of Bexley, https://bexleycouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/sidebar/index.html?appid=47d8febb1093429f964cf6500d0c691e

Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements

7.9 At the time of undertaking this LTVIA there are no relevant Neighbourhood Plans or Village Design Statements in relation to the Site and study area.

8.0 EMBEDDED MITIGATION

8.1 As part of the iterative design process, the following design measures are included in the Proposed Development to avoid or reduce the potential landscape, townscape and visual effect and ensure that the ESS equipment is sensitively located and with regard to its context.

Siting

8.2 The cable corridor has been sited below ground, so as to avoid any operational impacts. The ESS equipment has been sited in the southern part of the field, so as to be as close as practicable to the polytunnels, thereby concentrating new equipment in a part of the landscape where there are existing structures of a similar height to the ESS containers.

8.3 By siting the ESS equipment in the southern part of the field, it avoids any new equipment across the more elevated north-east part of the field and locates the equipment in low lying part of the landscape. The sub-station has also been positioned in-line with existing tall trees (up to 12m) in height, so as to benefit from immediate softening of views.

8.4 By siting the ESS equipment in the southern part of the field it is positioned as far as practicable from residential land uses to the west and the north of the ESS Site. As demonstrated by the following extract of the block model for **Viewpoint 6**, siting the ESS equipment in the northern part of the field, so that it is in a low lying position and in close proximity to the polytunnels results in most of the ESS equipment being screened immediately from more elevated land to the south, with views across the remainder of the ESS Site and wider landscape retained, thereby retaining a visual openness across the Site.

Image 8-1: Extract of block model for Photomontage Viewpoint 6, demonstrating how siting the equipment in the southern part of the Site and close to the polytunnels enables immediate screening of most of the equipment, due to it being located beyond the intervening vegetation (in winter) and retains open views across the remainder of the Site.

Equipment Design

8.5 Whilst the equipment is inherently utilitarian in form and functional, the design includes a number of measures:

- Limiting the height of the substation to 7m, in contrast to potential taller equipment;

- Rendering the ESS containers dark green in tone, so as to aid their integration within the tonal colours of the landscape and the back-drop of existing vegetation in views from the south and north of the Site. The colour tone also reflects that of larger scale agricultural buildings to the south of the ESS Site, so as to form a visually related structures; and
- Rendering the palisade fencing dark green, to match that of the ESS containers, thereby avoiding additional colour tones.

Landscape Design

8.6 With reference to the following extract of the Illustrative landscape Masterplan, extensive new native planting, with plants sourced locally where practicable, has been included in the layout, so as to accord with Local Plan Policy SP9(h).

8.7 The landscape design includes retaining and enhancing the existing vegetation around the boundary of the ESS Site. This includes the existing 3m tall hedgerow along the western edge of the ESS Site, which would be positively managed, so as to increase its height to 3.5m (taller than the ESS containers). This is also in respect of residential land uses to the west of the Site, to ensure a continuous visual and physical boundary between them and the intervening fields.

8.8 A new native hedgerow with trees would be implemented along the eastern edge of the ESS Site, so as to provide a more defined field boundary to the wider field pattern to the east of the Site. This would enable a clearer perception between the ESS equipment on the lower lying parts of the valley, being physically and visually contained by the hedgerow and trees, in contrast to the more open character of the remaining undeveloped land across rising landform towards Chalk Wood. The new trees within the hedgerow would also provide visual softening and screening to residents to the north-east of the ESS Site.

8.9 New native scrub is proposed along the southern edge of the ESS Site, to form an understorey layer of planting in relation to the existing trees. This would provide physical and visual enclosure beneath the existing tree canopies. The scrub mix includes species which are capable of growing to around 7m in height once established, reflecting the same height as the sub-station. Existing gaps in the existing tree line would be addressed by new native tree planting, specifically in relation to views from PRoW (footpath) FP141 to the south of the Site.

8.10 A new woodland belt would be located across the central part of the ESS Site, so as to physically and visually enclose the ESS equipment, including the sub-station from the wider landscape to the north and provide a future high degree of visual softening for residents to the north of the ESS Site. The woodland belt would also provide new west to east functional connectivity across the Site, aligned with small woodlands to the west of the Site.

8.11 The northern part of the ESS Site would be undeveloped, with the existing grass replaced with a new wildflower mix. This would provide a higher species diversity and scenic quality in comparison to the

existing grass. Several new fruit trees are also included in the north-west part of the Site in response to the local badger sett. With reference to the Ecological Impact Assessment, the new planting would result in a net gain of over 80% in habitat units and 20% in hedgerow units.

Image 8-2: Extract of the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (LTVIA Part 4)

8.12 As noted above, as these design measures are embedded in the drawings for determination and the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan, they are accounted for in the following assessments.

9.0 LIKELY LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

9.1 As set out in the introduction, the likely landscape, townscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development are predicted for the construction and operational phases (years 1, 5 and 10), based upon the drawings for determination, the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan, as well as technical studies including Highways, Heritage and Ecology.

9.2 In accordance with the GLVIA 3, the impact (change) and effects of the Proposed Development considers the potential adverse changes, e.g. reduction in existing vegetation, change in land use or channelling of views, as well as the potential beneficial changes, e.g. new planting and improved vegetation cover.

9.3 The following section summarises these effects and should be read in combination with **Appendices IV and V**, which set out the effects in full.

LANDSCPAE AND TOWNSCSAPE EFFECTS

ESS Site Character

9.4 The construction activity for the ESS would result in a high degree of change to the ESS Site character, via the extent of construction activity, the requirements of localised topsoil stripping, localised re-grading of landform and the resulting unsettled character. The impact would therefore be high and in relation to the medium sensitivity of the ESS Site, the effect would be major adverse, but temporary.

9.5 At year 1, the ESS would result in an obvious change in land use, from the agricultural character of the ESS Site to one of energy storage and renewable infrastructure. The proposed ESS equipment would be offset from the boundary vegetation and consolidated to the southern part of the field, thereby retaining the simple geometric field pattern and functional value of the existing vegetation.

9.6 The alterations to landform would be limited due to the generally flat terrain across the southern part of the ESS Site and avoiding the locally steeper terrain in the north-east part of the Site, such that the underlying pattern of generally flat and undulating landform across the ESS Site would be retained. The new planting would be low in height and not fully established at year 1 and therefore in combination with the change in land use, the impact would be high in winter and summer months. In relation to the medium sensitivity of the ESS Site, the effect at year 1 would be major adverse.

9.7 By year 5, the proposed grassland and wildflower areas would have established to a greater degree, providing a near continuous sward in summer conditions. The positive management of the existing boundary vegetation would retain the existing vegetation structure, with the western field boundary being taller in height and denser in winter conditions that at year 1. The proposed hedgerow with trees along the eastern edge would also be taller and more established, reinforcing the geometric shape of the Site. The proposed woodland belt would also be taller in height, forming part a physical

and in part visual boundary to the ESS equipment and buffer from the remainder of the field. Due to the change in land use remaining and the additional planting, the impact would remain high in winter and summer months at year 5.

9.8 By year 10, the high level of impact would remain at the ESS Site level, due to the continued change in land use from the ESS equipment and the increase in the vegetation cover. The greater height and establishment of the proposed planting, in both winter and summer conditions, would result in a greater physical and visual enclosure to the ESS equipment such that it would be set within more defined boundaries. The change at year 10 would remain high at the ESS Site level, due to the combination of the continued change in land use (although reversible), the more settled character and the beneficial changes to vegetation cover and opportunities for biodiversity. However, in comparison to the year 1 and 5 assessments, the predicted effects would reduce to moderate adverse in winter and summer months.

ESS Access

9.9 The construction for the proposed access between the ESS Site and the A223 would result in very localised alteration to landform and vegetation and the junction between North Cray Road and the A223, due to the requirements of future visibility splays. The type of construction machinery required for this part of the Proposed Development would be of a smaller scale to that associated with general farming activity. The impact would be high and in relation to the low sensitivity of this part of the Site, the effect would be minor adverse in construction.

9.10 During the operational years, the new access would reflect the existing spatial arrangement of routes and access, with the key boundary vegetation retained. In both summer and winter months, the change to the character of this part of the Site would be very low and mainly due to a more developed character than the existing grass track and lane. In relation to the low sensitivity of this part of the Site, the effects during the operational phases would be negligible adverse.

ESS Cable Corridor

9.11 The construction activity would require localised excavation to implement the below ground cable corridor beneath parts of the A223, A2018 and Vicarage Road / Stubbs Lane. The type and scale of the construction activity would be small and as it would be located within the existing road corridors, the roadside vegetation would be retained, including that adjacent to Vicarage Road. Given the existing movement, noise and activity along the road corridor, the change from the temporary construction activity would be low. In relation to the low sensitivity of this part of the Site, the effect during construction would be minor adverse.

9.12 In the operational phases, there would be no change to the character of the cable corridor route, due to the proposed cable being below ground and the effects would be neutral.

Published Landscape Character Areas

National Character Area 113: North Kent Plain (NCA 113)

9.13 With reference to **Appendix IV**, the impacts would reflect those stated above at the Site level for the construction and operational phases. The Proposed Development would introduce additional renewable energy infrastructure within the NCA, located adjacent to polytunnels and in a part of the landscape where there are variety of land uses.

9.14 The Proposed Development would therefore be fairly well located in relation to existing development patterns, which have already altered the overall pattern of arable land uses, and in an 'active' part of the NCA.

9.15 The Proposed Development would respond positively to the Statements of Environmental Opportunity via protecting the vegetation bordering the ESS Site and implementing new planting (although not established at year 1). The scale and extent of the construction and operational activity would be very small in relation to the wider geographic extent of the NCA. Due to this, there would be no change to the character, nor the key characteristics of the NCA, during the construction and operation phases of the Proposed Development and the effects are predicted to be neutral.

Bexley Cray Valley

9.16 With reference to **Appendix IV**, the perception of the construction activity at the ESS Site would be localised, and the scale and extent of the construction activity would be small overall, covering a relatively small extent of the arable land use and road networks in the character area. The change would therefore be very low and in relation to the high sensitivity of the receptor the construction effect would be minor adverse.

9.17 In operation, the impacts would reflect those stated above at the ESS Site level. The Proposed Development would introduce renewable energy equipment within the Cray Valley, in part of the character area which is already perceived as containing a range of land uses, with the Proposed Development adjacent to polytunnels, a settlement fringe character of paddocks and situated in a low lying position within the landscape. The Proposed Development would not alter the overall key characteristics, with a temporary change in land use to a field, which is a common feature of the landscape between Parsonage Lane and the B2173. With localised change the effects during operation are predicted to be negligible adverse.

Local Townscape Character Areas (LLCA)

9.18 With reference to **Appendix IV**, there would be no change to the character of LTCA 1: Parsonage Lane (LTCA 1) during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. This is due to the well enclosed character to LTCA 1 and the dominant character of large scale residential

buildings set within well vegetated grounds. Any perception of the construction or operational phases would be in the context of a range of land uses across the valley floor, beyond Manor Farm, and at distance from the LTCA.

9.19 For LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (which covers the ESS Site and most of the access), the construction activity would result in localised alteration to surface landform and the presence of construction activity. The construction activity would be geographically located only within the Site, with its perception very limited due to a lack of access across the LTCA. However, there would be a more unsettled character in comparison to the agricultural land use at the Site, such that the impact would be high during the construction phase. In relation to the medium sensitivity of the LTCA, the effect would be moderate adverse. At year 1 of operation, the ESS equipment would result in a more developed character to the LTCA, although the perception of the equipment would be reduced by its dark green tonal colours and low lying position in the LTCA. The impact would be high at year 1, given the undeveloped character across the majority of the LTCA, such that in relation to the medium sensitivity, the effect would be moderate adverse in winter and summer conditions. By years 5 and 10, the perception of the ESS equipment would reduce due to the establishment of the proposed planting, particularly that along the eastern edge of the ESS Site and the northern edge of the ESS equipment. Accounting for the continued, but temporary change in land use, the improved vegetation cover across the Site and greater functional value with the remainder of the LTCA, the effects would reduce to negligible adverse by summer year 10.

9.20 There would be no change to the character of LTCA 3: Cray Hall, to the west of the Site, during the construction and operational phases, due to the intervening 100m distance of fields and vegetation. Similarly, there would be no change to the character of the immediate setting of the LTCA, with the wider setting (in landscape terms) continuing to be characterised by a range of land uses (transport, residential, horticultural and the Proposed Development). Therefore, the effects to LTCA 3 are predicted to be neutral during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

9.21 For LTCA 4: A223, covering the below ground cable corridor, the construction activity would result in a low change to the existing character of a busy road network, with a high degree of movement and activity. In relation to the very low sensitivity of LTCA 4, the construction effects would be minor adverse. With the cable below ground in operation, there would be no change to the character of LTCA 4 at years 1, 5 and 10, such that the effects are predicted to be neutral.

9.22 With reference to **Appendix IV**, there would be no change to the character of LTCA 5: North Cray Road Residential and LTCA 6: Barton Road Residential during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. This is due to the distance and intervening features between these character areas and the Site and that any perception of the Proposed Development would not alter their dominant residential character. Therefore, the effects during the construction and operational phases are predicted to be neutral.

9.23 For LTCA 7: Cray Valley Horticultural and LTCA 8: Cray Valley Paddocks, which are located to the south of the ESS Site, the construction phase would result in a more unsettled character within their immediate context and low change to their character; resulting in negligible and minor adverse effects during construction. During the operational phases, the Proposed Development would result in a more developed context to the LTCA's; although, in summer months, the perception of the ESS equipment and change in context would reduce, such that the effects are predicted to decrease from negligible adverse at years 1 and 5, to neutral at year 10.

9.24 There would be no change to the character of LTCA 9: Chalk Wood, with the Proposed Development located over 215m from the LTCA, such that the effects during the construction and operational phases are predicted to be neutral.

9.25 In relation to LTCA 10: Old Bexley Conservation Area, part of the construction activity would be located along the A2018 and Vicarage Road. This activity would be in the context of existing road networks, where there is already the perception of movement, activity and noise, such that the change to the character would be low, with the effects predicted to be minor adverse. In operation, with the proposed cable below ground, there would be no change to the character of LTCA 10, and the effects are predicted to be neutral.

9.26 Similarly, for LTCA 11: Vicarage Road, the change to the existing character would only occur during the construction phase, due to the presence of construction activity and a more unsettled character in comparison to the less active road corridor. The impact would be medium and in relation to the medium sensitivity of the LTCA, the effect during construction would be moderate adverse. In operation, there would be no change to the character of the LTCA, due to the cable corridor being below ground, such that the effects are predicted to be neutral.

Landscape and Townscape Effects Summary

9.27 From the above and with reference to **Appendix IV**, the following table summarises the predicted effects to the landscape and townscape receptors during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

Table 9-1: Landscape and Townscape Effect Summary

Landscape and Townscape Receptor	Construction (winter)	Year 1 (winter/summer)	Year 5 (winter /summer)	Year 10 (winter/summer)
The Site (ESS location)	Major adverse	Major adverse / Major adverse	Major adverse / Major adverse	Moderate adverse / Moderate adverse
The Site (ESS access)	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse
The Site (cable corridor)	Minor adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
Published Landscape Character Areas				

Landscape and Townscape Receptor	Construction (winter)	Year 1 (winter/summer)	Year 5 (winter /summer)	Year 10 (winter/summer)
NCA 113: North Kent Plain	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
Bexley Cray Valley	Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse
Local Townscape Character Areas (LTCA)				
LTCA 1: Parsonage Lane Residential	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (covers the ESS Site and most of the access)	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
LTCA 3: Cray Hall Residential	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 4: A223 (covers most of the below ground cable corridor and a small part of the access)	Minor adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 5: North Cray Residential	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 6: Barton Road Residential	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 7: Cray Valley Horticultural	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 8: Cray Valley Paddocks	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 9: Chalk Wood	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 10: Old Bexley Conservation Area (covers part of the underground cable)	Minor adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 11: Vicarage Road	Moderate adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral

9.28 From the above table, there would be high tiers of adverse landscape effects (major adverse) at the ESS Site scale, due to the presence of machinery and the work required to construction the ESS equipment. The scale of machinery and type of construction activity would be an evident change in character from general farming. The ESS access and below ground cable corridor would result in lower tiers of adverse landscape effects (minor adverse) during the construction phase, due to either being smaller scale construction works, or located along existing busy roads.

9.29 In operation, there would be high tiers of adverse landscape effects (major adverse) at the ESS Site scale, due to the obvious change in character, from a field to an area of renewable energy storage. The potential impacts to the ESS Site character are reduced by the proposed equipment being offset from boundary vegetation and the extent of new planting, which once established would result in an

improved vegetation cover across the ESS Site and opportunities for biodiversity. By year 10 of operation, whilst the change in land use and character would remain at the ESS Site level, the greater height and establishment of the proposed planting, in both winter and summer conditions, would result in a greater physical and visual enclosure to the ESS equipment such that it would be set within more defined boundaries. The more settled character and the beneficial changes to vegetation cover and opportunities for biodiversity and increased enclosure would result in the predicted effects at the ESS Site reducing from major adverse to moderate adverse.

9.30 In operation, there would be no change to the character of the landscape/townscape related to the cable corridor route, due to it being below ground. The change in character from the proposed access would relate to very localised reductions in roadside vegetation and increased hardsurfacing, but would be very small in extent such that the effects would be negligible adverse.

9.31 In relation to the published landscape character areas, the Proposed Development would be too small in scale and extent to result in any high tiers of landscape or townscape effects. The change in character would only be perceived at a very local scale, and from few publicly accessible locations. Therefore at the local scale of LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (which covers the ESS Site and most of the access), the ESS equipment would result in a more developed character to the LTCA and moderate adverse effects in winter and summer conditions at year 1. By years 5 and 10, the perception of the ESS equipment would reduce due to the establishment of the proposed planting, particularly that along the eastern edge of the ESS Site and the northern edge of the ESS equipment. Accounting for the continued, but temporary change in land use, by year 10 of operation the improved vegetation cover across the Site, the higher degree of physical and visual enclosure and the reduced perception of the ESS equipment would result in the effects reducing to negligible adverse in summer.

VISUAL ASSESSMENT

9.32 The following section summarises the likely visual effects in relation to the identified viewpoints and should be read in combination with **Appendix V**, which sets out the effects in full.

9.33 For road users on the B2173 (**Viewpoint 1**), the lower height construction activity at the ESS Site would be screened by the combination of the intervening roadside hedgerows, sheds and the low lying position of the ESS Site. The taller construction machinery would be visible, seen in the context of the above features, resulting in a small change to the overall composition of the view, given the distance from the receptor. There would be no change to the composition of the view relating to the construction of the access or below ground cable corridor. In operation, the ESS containers would not be visible due to their low lying position, the intervening vegetation and distance. The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible, although softened by the intervening trees adjacent to the southern edge of the Site in winter. The change to the composition of the view would be small in winter conditions. In summer, with the existing vegetation in leaf, including the taller height of the roadside hedgerow, the upper-parts of the sub-station would not be visible.

9.34 For recreational users on elevated land in the eastern part of the study area (**Viewpoint 2**), the taller construction machinery would be visible, along with the construction of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station. The lower level construction activity would not be visible due to the intervening landform and vegetation (even in winter), along with the low lying position of the ESS Site. The access and below ground cable construction would not be visible due to the intervening distance and features. The overall change to the composition of the view during the construction phase would be small. There would be no change to the composition of the view relating to the construction of the access or below ground cable corridor. In operation, the majority of the ESS equipment would not be visible, due to the low lying position of the ESS Site, the intervening landform and vegetation (even in winter). The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be largely softened by the density of intervening vegetation as well, forming a very small change to the composition of the view, as well as being seen in the context of the polytunnels and agricultural barns. With the establishment of the proposed planting by year 10, the Proposed Development would not be visible in winter conditions. In summer conditions, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the Proposed Development would not be visible between years 1 and 10.

9.35 For recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141, to the south-east of the ESS Site, (**Viewpoint 3**) and also in a relatively elevated position in the landscape, the construction across the ESS Site would be visible, introducing a greater degree of movement, activity and machinery of a generally larger scale than general farming and horticultural practices. The construction activity relating to the access and below ground cable corridor would not be visible due to the density of the intervening vegetation and distance. In operation, the upper parts of the proposed sub-station and ESS units in the western part of the ESS Site would be visible, whilst the visibility of the ESS units in the eastern part of the Site would be reduced by the intervening undulating landform. The perceived massing and scale of the ESS units and palisade fencing would be reduced by their dark green render. The ESS equipment would remain below the overall vegetated skyline, with some softening of views from the intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the ESS Site, such that the Proposed Development would result in a small change to the composition of the view in winter conditions. In summer, the visibility of the sub-station and ESS equipment would reduce due to the existing trees along the southern edge of the ESS Site being in leaf and the continued increase in height of the proposed planting, such that by year 10, the proposed equipment would be screened.

9.36 Continuing along PRoW (footpath) FP141 towards the ESS Site, the construction activity across the ESS Site would be visible for recreational users, (**Viewpoint 4**), where there are gaps in the hedgerow bordering the PRoW. Compared to the existing view of the field, the construction activity would introduce activity and machinery of a generally larger scale than general farming and horticultural practices, along with tonal changes to the composition of the view due to areas of excavated land. Machinery constructing the access between the ESS Site and Manor Farm would also be visible. In operation, at year 1, and with reference to the following extract of the photomontage in winter conditions, the southern side of the palisade fencing and the upper parts of the ESS units and equipment

in the eastern part of the Site would be visible, although the overall mass would be reduced by the dark green rendering. The ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would remain below the height of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site, thereby enabling views to remain across the Site to Manor Farm.

Image 9-1: Extract of Viewpoint 4 photomontage (LVIA Part 5) demonstrating the view in winter conditions at year 1 from PRoW (footpath) FP141.

9.37 Most of the ESS equipment in the western part of the Site would be screened by the height of the intervening existing vegetation along the southern edge of the Site. The taller ESS equipment would remain below the height of the polytunnels and their dark green tones would be seen against the backdrop of vegetation. The main change to the composition of the view would be from the sub-station, although views in winter would be softened by the intervening vegetation. In summer, with this vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the sub-station would reduce and equipment would reduce, such that the main change to the composition of the view would relate to the ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site. There would be no change to the composition of the view resulting from the access and underground cable corridor in operation year 1.

9.38 By year 10 and with reference to the following photomontage in winter conditions, the establishment of the proposed planting would result in the proposed ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site being predominantly screened by the taller height of the new planting along the southern edge of the Site. Views would still remain across the ESS Site to the fields beyond and Manor Farm. The visibility of the sub-station would also be reduced, such that there would be largely softened views of the upper parts of the equipment only, which would be back-clothed against the vegetation to the north of the Site. In summer, the proposed ESS equipment and sub-station would be screened, due to the existing and proposed planting being in leaf, with views of the new trees reflecting views of existing trees along the southern edge of the Site.

Image 9-2: Extract of Viewpoint 4 photomontage (LVIA Part 5) demonstrating the view in winter conditions at year 10 from PRoW (footpath) FP141.

9.39 For road users on the B2173 (**Viewpoints 5 and 6**), most of the ground level construction activity within the ESS Site would be screened by the roadside vegetation, distance and the intervening buildings and polytunnels. The taller construction equipment would be visible in the ESS Site, along with that between Manor Farm and the A223, although forming a very small change to the composition of the view although forming a small change to the composition of the view. At year 1 of operation and with reference to the following photomontage of Viewpoint 6 (**LVIA Part 5**), the ESS units and fencing would be predominantly screened by the intervening polytunnels and distance, along with being situated in a lower lying position within the landscape. The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible, although softened by intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the Site. Views would remain across the ESS Site to the well vegetated skyline, such that the overall change to the composition of the view in winter would be small. In summer, with the roadside trees in leaf, the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be barely discernible.

Image 9-3: Extract of Viewpoint 6 Photomontage (LTVIA Part 5), illustrating the view at year 1 winter from the B2173.

9.40 By year 10 winter, the visibility of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be notably reduced by the establishment of the proposed planting, as demonstrated by the following extract of the year 10 photomontage. At year 10 summer, the proposed ESS equipment would not be visible for road users on the B2173, due to the proposed and existing vegetation being in leaf.

Image 9-4: Extract of Photomontage Year 10 from Viewpoint 6 in winter (LTVIA Part 5).

9.41 For recreational users to the south-west of the ESS Site, on PRoW (footpath) FP171, (**Viewpoint 7**), due to the relatively elevated position of the receptor, the taller construction machinery and construction of the upper parts of the sub-station would be visible. The intervening polytunnels would screen the majority of the ground level construction activity. The construction activity would be a noticeable change to the composition of the view, but would be located in a low lying position, such that views across the wider landscape to Chalk Wood and the wooded skyline would remain. Construction activity associated with access and cable corridor would not be visible. At year 1 of operation, winter, the upper parts of the ESS equipment in the western part of the Site and the sub-station would be visible, although the overall mass of the ESS equipment would be reduced by its dark green tone. Views would remain across the landscape to the wooded skyline due to the lower lying position of the Site. In summer year 1, there would be a slight reduction in the visibility of the upper-parts of the sub-station, due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf, but the overall change to the composition of the view would reflect that in winter. With the establishment of the proposed planting along the southern edge of the ESS Site, the visibility of the ESS equipment and upper parts of the sub-station would reduce across winter and summer seasons, such that by year 10, the overall change to the composition of the view from largely softened views of the upper parts of the sub-station would be small.

9.42 For road users on the A223, to the west of the ESS Site, (**Viewpoint 8**), the density of the intervening vegetation would screen the majority of the construction activity, with the exception of taller equipment, which would be seen obliquely. The access and below cable corridor construction would not be visible due to the distance from these parts of the Site. In operation, the Proposed Development would not be visible (in winter or summer) due to the density of the intervening vegetation, as demonstrated by the following wireline extract.

Image 9-5: Extract of Viewpoint 8, at year 1 winter (LVIA Part 5), demonstrating the Proposed Development would not be visible due to the density of the intervening vegetation.

9.43 For road users on the A223, (**Viewpoint 9**), there would be oblique and highly transient views of construction activity between the A223 and Manor Farm, along the existing North Cray Road. There would also be localised views of the construction activity to excavate existing ground and implement the below ground cable corridor. The construction activity would include localised removal of existing vegetation at the junction of North Cray Road and the A223. The construction of the ESS equipment would not be visible due to the intervening landform and vegetation. In operation, the change to the composition of the view would be very small, relating to a reduction in roadside vegetation, with views of the proposed access reflecting existing highly transient and oblique views.

9.44 From along North Cray Road (**Viewpoint 10**), there would be close range views of the construction of the access. The visibility of the construction of the ESS equipment in the western part of the ESS Site would be partially softened by intervening vegetation. The construction in the eastern part of the ESS Site would be largely screened by the density of the vegetation adjacent to access track. In operation, views of the proposed access would reflect the composition of existing views. The ESS equipment in the western part of the ESS Site would be visible, although its perceived mass would be softened by the dark green colour tones. The upper parts of the sub-station would be visible through the intervening vegetation. Views would remain across the wider landscape due to the relatively low lying position of the ESS Site and the height of the ESS containers being lower than the top of the polytunnels. In summer, year 1, with the intervening vegetation along the northern edge of the Site and adjacent to the access track between the ESS Site and Manor Farm in leaf, the visibility of the proposed equipment and sub-station would be notably reduced, becoming screened by year 5.

9.45 For residents at Manor Farm Cottage (**Viewpoint 11**), the construction activity in the eastern part of the Site, including that for the sub-station would be visible. The construction of the access route would also be visible, resulting in a high degree of change (albeit temporary) to the composition of the view. In summer, the ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would be visible, including the sub-station, whilst the equipment in the western part of the Site would be screened in winter by the density of the vegetation bordering the north-west part of the Site. The dark green render to the ESS equipment would aid in reducing the perceived mass, with views remaining across the wider landscape

due to the Proposed Development being in a low lying position, although the sub-station would be a noticeable change to the view. By year 10, with the establishment of the proposed woodland belt across the ESS Site, the ESS equipment would be screened in summer and the change to the composition of the view would relate to the upper part of the sub-station. This would represent a small change to the composition of the view.

9.46 Neither the construction or operational phases of the Proposed Development would be visible for road users along Parsonage Lane (**Viewpoints 12 and 13**), due to the density of intervening vegetation, residential properties and the distance from the ESS Site and proposed access.

9.47 For receptors along the alignment of the proposed underground cable route (**Viewpoints 14 to 16**), there would be a range between close range views to more distant and softened views of the construction activity. The excavation, machinery and general activity would always be seen in the context of vehicles and existing development, such that the overall change to the composition of the view would be small during the construction phase. In operation, with the cable route below ground, there would be no change to the composition of the views.

Visual Summary

9.48 With reference to **Appendix V**, the following table summarises the visual effects during the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development.

Table 9-2: Visual Effects Summary

VP	Visual Receptor	Construction (winter)	Year 1 (winter/summer)	Year 5 (winter/summer)	Year 10 (winter/summer)
1	1A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral	Negligible adverse / Neutral	Negligible adverse / Neutral
	1B. Residents adjacent to the B2173	Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral
2	2. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP241	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral	Negligible adverse / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
3	3A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Neutral
	3B. Horse riders / visitors to the paddocks	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Neutral
4	4A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141	Major adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Neutral

VP	Visual Receptor	Construction (winter)	Year 1 (winter/summer)	Year 5 (winter/summer)	Year 10 (winter/summer)
	4B. Employment users at Honeydale Farm	Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral
5	5A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral
	5B. Residents adjacent to the B2173 at Glebe Cottages	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
6	6A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral	Negligible adverse / Neutral	Negligible adverse / Neutral
	6B. Residents adjacent to the B2173	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse
7	7A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP171	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
	7B. Residents adjacent to the eastern end of Barton Road	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
8	8A. Road users on the A223 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Negligible adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
	8B. Residents at 141 to 143 North Cray Road	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Neutral
	8C. Residents in Chambers Avenue	Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse
9	9. Road users on the A223	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse
10	10. Road users on North Cray Road	Moderate adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse	Minor adverse / Neutral	Negligible adverse / Neutral
11	11. Residents at Manor Farm Cottage	Major adverse	Major adverse / Moderate adverse	Major adverse / Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse
12	12A. Road users on Parsonage Lane	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
	12B. Residents adjacent to the south side of Parsonage Lane	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse

VP	Visual Receptor	Construction (winter)	Year 1 (winter/summer)	Year 5 (winter/summer)	Year 10 (winter/summer)
	(north of Manor Farm)				
13	13A. Road users on Parsonage Lane	Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
	13B. Residents adjacent to Parsonage Lane (east of Cocksure Lane)	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Moderate adverse / Minor adverse	Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
14	14A. Road users on the A2018 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Negligible adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
	14B. Residents adjacent to the A2018	Minor adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
15	15A. Recreational users on Vicarage Road	Minor adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
	15B. Residents adjacent to Vicarage Road	Minor adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral
16	16. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP133	Negligible adverse	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral	Neutral / Neutral

9.49 From the above table, the higher tier construction effects (major and moderate adverse) would be localised to receptors in close proximity to the ESS Site, including recreational receptors along PRoW (footpath) FP141, to the south of the ESS Site, and residents in a more elevated position within the landscape to the north and south of the ESS Site. The higher tiers of visual effects are due to the construction activity representing a notable change to the composition of views in comparison to general farming and horticultural activities. At greater distance from the ESS Site, the construction activity would either not be visible or only the upper parts of taller machinery would be visible, such that the tiers of effects are lower. In all instances, the visual construction effects are temporary.

9.50 In operation, there would be close range views of the ESS equipment from PRoW (footpath) FP141, resulting in moderate adverse effects, although the overall mass of the equipment would be reduced by the dark green rendering and it would remain below the height of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site. This would enable views to remain across the Site to Manor Farm and the wider landscape, retaining a visual openness within the view.

9.51 The main change to the composition of the view for recreational receptors on PRoW (footpath) FP141 and residents at a greater distance to the north and south of the ESS Site, would be from the upper parts of the sub-station, due to its height above the existing polytunnels. However, in views from the north, the sub-station would be softened by the intervening taller trees and partially screened in summer at year 1, again by the existing vegetation. By year 10, with the proposed planting established, the visibility of the proposed ESS equipment and sub-station would be substantially reduced from PRoW (footpath) FP141 and residents to the north and south of the ESS Site, such that the visual effects are predicted to range between minor adverse and neutral.

9.52 Visual effects from the access and cable corridor would only occur during the construction phase, and are therefore temporary. In operation, with the cable corridor below ground, views would remain as existing.

CHARACTER OF THE NIGHT SKY

9.53 During the construction phase, any lighting associated with the construction of the ESS equipment would be temporary, localised and very small in scale, such that any glare of light trespass would not alter the character of the night sky.

9.54 In operation, the Proposed Development would not be lit, and therefore there would be no change to the character of the night sky, which would remain an E3 and E4: high brightness district.

RESPONSE TO POLICY

9.55 The following section sets out the Proposed Developments response to policies relevant to landscape and visual matters. Green Belt matters are addressed in the following chapter.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2024

9.56 The Proposed Development is considered to respond positively to the NPPF requirements of making an efficient use of land and supporting the transition to net zero. The Proposed Development has been informed by area-based character assessment in accordance with paragraph 130, so as to ensure the land is used efficiently and that it responds positively to the identified landscape and visual constraints of the Site. The Proposed Development would implement new tree planting in accordance with paragraph 136 and the extent of landscape, townscape and visual effects would be localised and moderated.

The London Plan, 2021

9.57 The Proposed Development would implement new planting within the Site, as a positive response to Policy G1 and G7. With the Site being located adjacent to polytunnels, in a low lying position and existing vegetation, the Site is considered a suitable site for the Proposed Development in landscape, townscape and visual terms, in response to policy S13.

Bexley Local Plan, adopted 2023

9.58 The Proposed Development is considered to achieve a high-quality design via the embedded mitigation measures, which focus upon the siting of the proposed equipment, design measures to reduce the perception of the ESS equipment and extensive new native planting across the Site, to provide a high quality and robust landscape design, to accord with policy DP11 and DP21.

9.59 The landscape, townscape and visual assessment demonstrates that the Proposed Development has been sensitively designed to integrate into the local environment and that the predicted effects would reduce across the operational phases of the Proposed Development. The design has therefore minimised the potential adverse effects of the Proposed Development, to accord with Policy DP31: Energy Infrastructure.

10.0 GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

10.1 As set out in the introduction and with reference to **Figure 1**, the Site is within the Green Belt, for which there are spatial and visual matters associated with the concept of 'openness', i.e. an absence of built development.

10.2 As the cable connection would be underground, the focus of the Green Belt assessment is on the ESS Site and access between Rectory Lane and the ESS Site.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

10.3 Chapter 13: Protecting the Green Belt, paragraph 142 sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

10.4 The five Green Belt purposes are:

> *a) "to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
> *b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
> *c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
> *d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;*
> *e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land."*

10.5 Paragraph 145 sets out that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances.

10.6 Paragraph 148 sets out that:

> *"Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt which is not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations. However, when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should determine whether a site's location is appropriate with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary."*

10.7 Paragraph 151 states:

> *"Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land. Where Green Belt land is released for development through plan preparation or review, the 'Golden Rules' in paragraph 156 below should apply."*

10.8 Paragraph 152 sets out that Local Planning Authorities should give substantial weight to any harm to the Green Belt and its openness. However footnote 55 states that development of grey belt land is not inappropriate.

10.9 Paragraph 155 states:

> *"The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:*
>
> *a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally*
>
> *undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
>
> *b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed[56];*
>
> *c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and*
>
> *d. where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below."*

10.10 Paragraph 160 states:

> *"When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources."*

10.11 The NPPF definition of grey belt is:

> *"For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development."*

National Planning Practice Guidance – Green Belt, 2025[27]

10.12 The guidance sets out considerations involved in assessing the contribution Green Belt land makes to Green Belt purposes, where relevant to identifying grey belt land. The guidance states that land to be assessed should be based upon assessment areas of a sufficient granularity to enable the assessment of their variable contribution to the Green Belt purposes.

[27] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, https://www.gov.uk/guidance/green-belt

10.13 The following table sets out the stated guidance in assessing the contribution of land to the Green Belt.

Table 10-1: PPG Contribution to the Green Belt and Illustrative Features

NPPF Purpose	Contribution	Features
A – to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.	Strong	Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development, and lack physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development. They are also likely to include all of the following features: - be adjacent or near to a large built up area - if developed, result in an incongruous pattern of development (such as an extended "finger" of development into the Green Belt)
	Moderate	Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be adjacent or near to a large built up area, but include one or more features that weaken the land's contribution to this purpose a, such as (but not limited to): - having physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development - be partially enclosed by existing development, such that new development would not result in an incongruous pattern of development - contain existing development - being subject to other urbanising influences
	Weak or None	Assessment areas that make only a weak or no contribution are likely to include those that: - are not adjacent to or near to a large built up area - are adjacent to or near to a large built up area, but containing or being largely enclosed by significant existing development
B – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another (towns, not villages)	Strong	Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development and include all of the following features: - forming a substantial part of a gap between towns - the development of which would be likely to result in the loss of visual separation of towns
	Moderate	Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be located in a gap between towns, but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to): - forming a small part of the gap between towns - being able to be developed without the loss of visual separation between towns. This could be (but is not limited to) due to the presence or the close proximity of structures, natural landscape elements or topography that preserve visual separation
	Weak or None	Assessment areas that contribute weakly are likely to include those that: - do not form part of a gap between towns, or - form part of a gap between towns, but only a very small part of this gap, without making a contribution to visual separation
D – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns (not villages)	Strong	Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely be free of existing development and to include all of the following features: - form part of the setting of the historic town - make a considerable contribution to the special character of a historic town. This could be (but is not limited to) as a result of being within, adjacent to, or of significant visual importance to the historic aspects of the town

NPPF Purpose	Contribution	Features
	Moderate	Assessment areas that perform moderately are likely to form part of the setting and/or contribute to the special character of a historic town but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to): - being separated to some extent from historic aspects of the town by existing development or topography - containing existing development - not having an important visual, physical, or experiential relationship to historic aspects of the town
	Weak or None	Assessment areas that make no or only a weak contribution are likely to include those that: - do not form part of the setting of a historic town - have no visual, physical, or experiential connection to the historic aspects of the town

10.14 The guidance states in relation to the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt, that judgements need to consider:

> *"Openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*
>
> *the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and*
>
> *the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation."*

LTVIA Green Belt Assessment

10.15 At the time of undertaking this LTVIA, there is no published Green Belt assessment covering the Site.

10.16 In respect of NPPF footnote 7, the ESS Site is not covered by any designated ecological sites; nor is it a local green space or designated landscape, nor heritage asset. Therefore the ESS Site is not covered by any policies of footnote 7 which may restrict development.

Grey Belt Assessment

10.17 In respect of NPPF purpose A, the ESS Site is not adjacent to, nor near a large built up area, as it is physically separated from surrounding settlements by fields, paddocks and polytunnels. The PPG guidance states that land which is not adjacent to a large building up area, like the ESS Site, therefore makes a weak or no contribution to NPPF purpose A. The LTVIA Green Belt assessment concludes that the large built up areas in the study area are physically contained by the road networks and established woodlands. The ESS Site is not adjacent to any large built up areas and therefore makes no contribution to NPPF purpose A.

10.18 In respect of NPPF purpose B, the Site is not located between towns, it forms part of a range of land uses between Manor Farm and the B2173. The Site is situated in a low lying position and is bordered by fields and polytunnels, such that there is inter-visibility across the ESS Site, to surrounding land uses in more elevated parts of the landscape / townscape. Therefore, whilst the ESS Site is free of existing development, it does not form part of a gap between towns, nor does it form part of any visual separation. Therefore, the ESS Site makes no contribution to NPPF purpose B.

10.19 In respect of NPPF purpose D, the ESS Site is not adjacent to any historic towns; nor does it form part of the visual setting of a historic town. The Site therefore makes no contribution to NPPF purpose D.

10.20 From the above, as the ESS Site does not contribute to NPPF purposes A, B and D, its 'baseline' i.e. starting point, is that the Site is Grey Belt. This conclusion reflects the LPA pre-application response, which notes the Site is not considered to contribute to these Green Belt purposes.

10.21 The Proposed Development would introduce new equipment within an undeveloped field, thereby resulting in a physical reduction in openness. The Proposed Development would also be visible, as demonstrated by the visual assessment. However, the low lying position of the ESS Site and the relatively low height of the ESS units and visual permeability of the sub-station would enable views to remain across the ESS Site, thereby limiting impacts to visual openness.

10.22 The proposed ESS equipment would be set within retained field boundaries and enclosed by new planting, including along the northern and eastern edges of the Site. The equipment would be consolidated to the southern part of the Site, located adjacent to polytunnels, such that combination with the existing vegetation and new planting, it would be physically and visually contained and set within existing and new defensible boundaries. The Proposed Development would therefore not result in unrestricted sprawl of a built up area; nor merging with another town and no harm to the setting and special character of a historic town.

10.23 In respect of NPPF paragraph 155, the ESS Site is assessed as Grey Belt.

10.24 In respect of NPPF purpose c), the spatial reduction to openness within the ESS Site due to the introduction of new equipment would result in encroachment at the ESS Site scale only. This encroachment would be reduced by the physical distance between the ESS equipment and the permeability of the sub-station and would occur only to the southern part of the ESS Site. The change would be to an area of land which is not surrounded by inherent 'countryside' in landscape and townscape terms, due to the varied land uses. The perception of encroachment would also be reduced with the establishment of the proposed planting and that views would remain across the ESS Site due to the relatively low height of the equipment, as demonstrated by **Viewpoint 4**. The impact to purpose c) would therefore be negligible adverse.

10.25 In respect of NPPF purpose e), the Proposed Development would comprise a temporary use of a greenfield site and therefore would not result in the long-term loss of the land. Following the decommissioning of the development at the end of the 40-year period, the land will be restored to its former condition. Moreover, renewable energy developments (including energy storage systems) are not an uncommon sight in countryside locations, including Green Belt, owing to the established and urgent national need to decarbonise the electricity grid.

10.26 It should also be noted the Hurst Grid substation, to which the Proposed Development would connect, is located 1.45km north-east of the Site in the Green Belt. The Proposed Development requires a location in proximity to the point of connection and it must have the capacity to accommodate an ESS of up to 200 MW. The Hurst Grid substation is one of a limited number of existing substations suitable to accommodate the development. The Site was selected as it is located in proximity to the substation and would therefore result in the fewest technical and environmental impacts. As demonstrated in the Site Selection Report (SSR) submitted with the planning application, there were no additional sites of sufficient size in urban areas / on brownfield land or agricultural land of lower quality and within viable distance of the existing Hurst Grid substation.

10.27 Given the very localised landscape, townscape and visual effects, the consolidated layout, the beneficial changes from new planting and the temporary duration of the Proposed Development, the NPPF Green Belt purposes (taken as a whole) would not be fundamentally undermined.

10.28 Given the combination of the ESS Site being assessed as Grey Belt and the negligible adverse effect to NPPF purpose c) and that for purpose e) the Proposed Development would not conflict with the purpose of assisting in the recycling of derelict and urban land, the Proposed Development is considered to be not inappropriate.

11.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Baseline

11.1 With reference to **Figure 1**, the ESS Site is an agricultural field, which is broadly square and bordered by fields and polytunnels. With reference to on-line mapping, none of the existing vegetation is covered by Tree Preservation Orders, nor is it ancient woodland and with reference to the Ecological Impact Assessment, the field is of negligible botanical value. The ESS Site is not covered by any landscape or townscape related designations, is neither within, nor adjacent to, a Conservation Area and is not publicly accessible.

11.2 With reference to **Figure 2**, the ESS Site is in a low lying position within the landscape/townscape, forming part of the valley floor, which extends west to east between the A223 and Chalk Wood, such that the more elevated ridgelines are to the north of the ESS Site, along Parsonage Lane, the east of the ESS Site across Chalk Wood and to the south of the ESS Site, across the B2173 and Ruxley Wood.

11.3 With reference to **Figure 1 and Figure 3**, the ESS Site forms part of a landscape / townscape of a range of land uses, consisting of residential, horticultural, horsiculture and transport. The main concentration of the residential land uses is to the north and south of the Site, across the more elevated valley sides, including along Parsonage Lane and adjacent to the B2173. The polytunnels to the south of the ESS Site are up to 3.7m in height at their apex and form part of Honeydale Farm, which also consists of larger agricultural buildings.

11.4 With reference to **Figure 4B**, the screened ZTV demonstrates that the theoretical visibility of the ESS equipment is consolidated to within close proximity of the ESS Site, due to the relatively low lying position of the ESS Site, with more elevated land to the north, east and south. The density of residential land uses and vegetation between the ESS Site and the A223 largely negates the theoretical visibility of the ESS equipment from the west of the A223.

11.5 From the fieldwork, the visibility of the Proposed Development is broadly reflective of that suggested by **Figure 4B**. This is due to the ESS Site being in low lying position, such that the more elevated and wooded land to the north, adjacent to Parsonage Lane and across Chalk Wood limits the extent of visibility in relation to the wider landscape/townscape to the north and east. There is inter-visibility between the ESS Site and Manor Farm, as well as several properties adjacent to Parsonage Lane.

11.6 In relation to the south of the ESS Site, the ESS Site is visible from PRoW (footpath) FP 141 and parts of the B2173. Within these views, the ESS Site is seen beyond intervening polytunnels and farm buildings, such that it is evidently visually consolidated to developed parts of the landscape. From the south of the B2173, the combination of rising landform and woodland negates views of the ESS Site, such that the visibility is less than suggested by the ZTV.

11.7 From the west of the ESS Site, there is inter-visibility with residential property no.143 and the upper storey of flats adjacent to Chambers Avenue. However, the combination of rising landform, properties and roadside vegetation negates views of the ESS Site from the wider study area to the west of the A223, including from across the grounds of Foots Cray Place.

Primary Mitigation

11.8 The iterative design process has sought to reduce the potential effects of the Proposed Development. This includes the siting of the equipment across the southern part of the field, thereby avoiding more elevated land and increasing the distance between it and surrounding residential properties. Design measures include rendering the ESS containers dark green to reflect the tonal colours of the landscape and larger scale agricultural buildings within the grounds of Honeydale Farm. **Figure 13: Illustrative Landscape Masterplan** also demonstrates the extent of new planting across the ESS Site, based upon native and where practicable, locally sourced plants.

Likely Landscape and Visual Effects

Landscape Effects

11.9 The landscape and townscape baseline assessment has identified a range of character areas, with varying sensitivity to the Proposed Development. The higher sensitivity character areas reflect ancient woodlands and Conservation Areas. Most of the character areas are however of low sensitivity, due to either being developed areas, e.g. residential areas of low architectural quality and few designations, or main road networks. The ESS Site is one of several medium sensitivity areas, reflecting the undeveloped character of the ESS Site, functional value of boundary vegetation and undulating landform as part of the wider Cray Valley.

11.10 There would be high tiers of adverse landscape effects (major adverse) at the ESS Site scale, due to the presence of machinery and the work required to construction the ESS equipment. The scale of machinery and type of construction activity would be an evident change in character from general farming. The ESS access and below ground cable corridor would result in lower tiers of adverse landscape effects (minor adverse) during the construction phase, due to either being smaller scale construction works, or located along existing busy roads.

11.11 In operation, there would be high tiers of adverse landscape effects (major adverse) at the ESS Site scale, due to the obvious change in character, from a field to an area of renewable energy storage. The potential impacts to the ESS Site character are reduced by the proposed equipment being offset from boundary vegetation and the extent of new planting, which once established would result in an improved vegetation cover across the ESS Site and opportunities for biodiversity. By year 10 of operation, whilst the change in land use and character would remain at the ESS Site level, the greater height and establishment of the proposed planting, in both winter and summer conditions, would result in a greater physical and visual enclosure to the ESS equipment such that it would be set within more

defined boundaries. The more settled character and the beneficial changes to vegetation cover and opportunities for biodiversity and increased enclosure would result in the predicted effects at the ESS Site reducing from major adverse to moderate adverse.

11.12 In operation, there would be no change to the character of the landscape/townscape related to the cable corridor route, due to it being below ground. The change in character from the proposed access would relate to very localised reductions in roadside vegetation and increased hardsurfacing, but would be very small in extent such that the effects would be negligible adverse.

11.13 In relation to the published landscape character areas, the Proposed Development would be too small in scale and extent to result in any high tiers of landscape or townscape effects. The change in character would only be perceived at a very local scale, and from few publicly accessible locations. Therefore at the local scale of LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (which covers the ESS Site and most of the access), the ESS equipment would result in a more developed character to the LTCA and moderate adverse effects in winter and summer conditions at year 1. By years 5 and 10, the perception of the ESS equipment would reduce due to the establishment of the proposed planting, particularly that along the eastern edge of the ESS Site and the northern edge of the ESS equipment. Accounting for the continued, but temporary change in land use, by year 10 of operation the improved vegetation cover across the Site, the higher degree of physical and visual enclosure and the reduced perception of the ESS equipment would result in the effects reducing to negligible adverse in summer.

Visual Effects

11.14 The visual baseline has identified a range of visual receptors with varying sensitivity to the Proposed Development. The high sensitivity receptors reflect recreational users on routes where there is an expectation of views contributing to their experience, or residents, with fixed views from their homes. The medium sensitivity receptors either reflect road users on secondary routes or where the view may be valued locally but is not the specific reason for receptors being present. The low sensitivity receptors reflect main road users, whom are either highly transient or where the view is notably influenced by existing features.

11.15 During the construction phase, the higher tier construction effects (major and moderate adverse) would be localised to receptors in close proximity to the ESS Site, including recreational receptors along PRoW (footpath) FP141, to the south of the ESS Site, and residents in a more elevated position within the landscape to the north and south of the ESS Site. The higher tiers of visual effects are due to the construction activity representing a notable change to the composition of views in comparison to general farming and horticultural activities. At greater distance from the ESS Site, the construction activity would either not be visible or only the upper parts of taller machinery would be visible, such that the tiers of effects are lower. In all instances, the visual construction effects are temporary.

11.16 In operation, there would be close range views of the ESS equipment from PRoW (footpath) FP141, resulting in moderate adverse effects, although the overall mass of the equipment would be reduced by the dark green rendering and it would remain below the height of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site. This would enable views to remain across the Site to Manor Farm and the wider landscape, retaining a visual openness within the view.

11.17 The main change to the composition of the view for recreational receptors on PRoW (footpath) FP141 and residents at a greater distance to the north and south of the ESS Site, would be from the upper parts of the sub-station, due to its height above the existing polytunnels. However, in views from the north, the sub-station would be softened by the intervening taller trees and partially screened in summer at year 1, again by the existing vegetation. By year 10, with the proposed planting established, the visibility of the proposed ESS equipment and sub-station would be substantially reduced from PRoW (footpath) FP141 and residents to the north and south of the ESS Site, such that the visual effects are predicted to range between minor adverse and neutral.

11.18 Visual effects from the access and cable corridor would only occur during the construction phase, and are therefore temporary. In operation, with the cable corridor below ground, views would remain as existing.

Green Belt

11.19 With reference to **Figure 1**, the ESS Site is within the Green Belt. The ESS Site is assessed as not contributing to NPPF purposes A, B and D, and the ESS Site is therefore considered to be Grey Belt.

11.20 The Proposed Development would introduce new equipment within an undeveloped field, thereby resulting in a physical reduction in openness. The Proposed Development would also be visible, as demonstrated by the visual assessment. However, the low lying position of the ESS Site and the relatively low height of the ESS units and visual permeability of the sub-station would enable views to remain across the ESS Site, thereby limiting impacts to visual openness.

11.21 In respect of NPPF purpose c), the spatial reduction to openness within the ESS Site due to the introduction of new equipment would result in encroachment at the ESS Site scale only. This encroachment would be reduced by the physical distance between the ESS equipment and the permeability of the sub-station and would occur only to the southern part of the ESS Site. The change would be to an area of land which is not surrounded by inherent 'countryside' in landscape and townscape terms, due to the varied land uses.

11.22 The impact to purpose c) would therefore be negligible adverse, given the very localised landscape, townscape and visual effects. In respect of NPPF purpose e), the Proposed Development would not conflict with the purpose of assisting in the recycling of derelict and urban land. Therefore, given the consolidated layout, the beneficial changes from new planting and the temporary duration of the

Proposed Development, the NPPF Green Belt purposes (taken as a whole) would not be fundamentally undermined.

Conclusion

11.23 The Proposed Development is considered to achieve a high-quality design via the embedded mitigation measures, which focus upon the siting of the proposed equipment, design measures to reduce the perception of the ESS equipment and extensive new native planting across the Site, to provide a high quality and robust landscape design.

11.24 The predicted landscape, townscape and visual effects for the operational phase of the Proposed Development are in part inevitable due to the change in land use, but more pertinently are localised to the Site and its immediate context, due to the low lying position of the ESS equipment.

11.25 The predicted landscape and visual effects reduce either immediately, between winter and summer conditions, or with the establishment of the proposed planting, which provides a greater density and height of vegetation around the ESS equipment.

11.26 Due to the reduced landscape, townscape and visual effects across the operational phases of the Proposed Development, the design has minimised the potential adverse effects of the Proposed Development, to accord with Local Policy DP31: Energy Infrastructure.

11.27 In respect of the Green Belt, given the combination of the ESS Site being Grey Belt and the negligible adverse effect to NPPF purpose c) and that in relation to purpose e) Proposed Development would not conflict with the purpose of assisting in the recycling of derelict and urban land, the Proposed Development is considered to be not inappropriate development.

11.28 From the above, the Proposed Development is considered to be able to be successfully accommodated within the Site and its context.

12.0 LTVIA APPENDIX I: LTVIA METHODOLOGY

12.1 The method of landscape, townscape and visual assessment for the Proposed Development has been devised to address the specific issues raised by a development of this scale and nature. The methodology draws upon the following established best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, (GLVIA 3), (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment) 2013.
- Landscape Institute Assessing Value outside of national designations (2021).
- Landscape Institute Guidance Note 06/19 2019: Visual Representation of Development Proposals.
- Landscape Institute Townscape Character Assessment (TIN 05/2017), revised 2018.

Assessment Process

12.2 This methodology identifies potential landscape, townscape character and visual receptors within the study area in order to establish the baseline conditions. The approach to this assessment is based on GLVIA 3 and is outlined below:

- The sensitivity of the receptor is derived from the value and susceptibility of the receptor.
- The potential magnitude of impact is described as High, Medium, Low, Very Low or None based criterion.
- The assessment of effects is derived through a combination of sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact associated with the Proposed Development, defined as Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible or Neutral; and
- Effects of major and moderate are significant. Effects of minor, negligible and neutral and not significant.

Landscape, Townscape Character Assessment Methodology

The Nature of the Landscape and Townscape Receptor (Sensitivity)

12.3 The sensitivity of a landscape/townscape receptor is defined via a combination of their landscape value and susceptibility.

Landscape/townscape Value

12.4 The value of the landscape/townscape receptor is based upon the consideration of any landscape/townscape designations and the criteria outlined in GLVIA 3 Box 5.1 along with consideration of LI Technical Note assessing landscape value outside of designated landscapes:

- Quality (condition).

- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interests;
- Recreation value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations and functionality.

12.5 From the consideration of these factors, an assessment of the landscape/townscape value is based upon the criteria set out in the following table.

Table 12-1: Landscape/Townscape Value Criteria

Value	Criteria
Very High	The receptor may be internationally designated or exhibit the most of the key features of a nationally designated landscape.
High	The receptor is likely to be highly valued for one or more of its attributes and may be protected by a statutory landscape designation. The landscape receptor may contain elements/features that could be described as unique; or are nationally scarce; or mature vegetation with provenance such as ancient woodland. Mature landscape features which are characteristic of and contribute to a sense of place and illustrates time-depth in a landscape and if replaceable, could not be replaced other than in the long term.
Medium	The receptor is likely to have a positive landscape character but could include some areas of alteration/degradation/or erosion of features; and/or perceptual/aesthetic aspects. The receptor may have some vulnerability to change; and/or features/elements that are locally commonplace; unusual locally; or mature vegetation that is in moderate/poor condition or readily replicated. The receptor is likely to be valued at a district or local level only.
Low	The receptor is likely to be undesignated and with little recognised value. Areas which are relatively commonplace in character with few/no notable features and/or landscape elements/features that make a contribution to local distinctiveness.
Very Low	The receptor is likely to be a detracting feature, damaged or eroded or is considered not to contribute positively to the landscape.

Landscape/Townscape Susceptibility

12.6 GLVIA 3 defines landscape susceptibility as *"the ability of a defined landscape receptor to accommodate the specific Proposed Development without undue negative consequences."* (within the GLVIA 3 glossary) and also as *"the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies."* (GLVIA pages 88 and 89).

12.7 The following table sets out the criteria for landscape/townscape susceptibility.

Table 12-2: Landscape/Townscape Susceptibility Criteria

Susceptibility	Criteria
Very High	The landscape/townscape is likely to have a very strong pattern / texture or unique and/or rare and intact and/or with a no or very limited ability to accommodate change.
High	The landscape/townscape is likely to have a strong pattern / texture or is a simple but very distinctive landscape and essentially intact and/or with a small ability to accommodate change.
Medium	The landscape/townscape is likely to have a moderate pattern / texture or is simple but distinctive and mostly intact and/or reasonably tolerant of change.
Low	The landscape/townscape is likely to have a weak pattern / texture and or is simple but not distinctive and may already be partially degraded with common/ indistinct features and minimal variation in the landscape pattern and/or tolerant of substantial change.
Very Low	The landscape/townscape is likely to have a damaged or a substantially modified pattern / texture and/or able to accommodate change.

Landscape/Townscape Sensitivity

12.8 The following table sets out the criteria for landscape/townscape sensitivity, resulting from the combination of the landscape/townscape value and landscape/townscape susceptibility.

Table 12-3: Landscape/Townscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	A designated landscape that is highly valued and is likely to be fully representative of the designations, such that is susceptibility to very small changes only.
High	A valued landscape, whether through landscape designations or distinctive components and characteristics, susceptible to small changes.
Medium	Landscape with some value (including designated landscapes), but of relatively common components and characteristics, reasonably tolerant of changes.
Low	Landscape of limited value, relatively inconsequential components and characteristics, unlikely to be designated, the nature of which is potentially tolerant of substantial change.
Very Low	Very low or no value, a degraded landscape or landscape with very few or no natural or original features remaining and not designated, such that it is tolerant of change.

Landscape/Townscape Nature of Effect (Magnitude of Impact)

12.9 The magnitude of impact is determined by considering the following aspects of the Proposed Development to derive an overall magnitude of change, as set out in in the following table.

Table 12-4: Landscape/Townscape Magnitude of Impact

Landscape/Townscape Impact	Criteria
High	The total or major loss or alteration of key characteristics or the addition of new features or components that would substantially alter the character or setting of the area. Change may be permanent or temporary.
Medium	The partial loss or alteration of characteristics or the addition of new features or components that would alter the character or setting of the area. Change may be permanent or temporary.
Low	The limited loss or alteration of components or the addition of new features or components that reflect the character or setting of the area. Change may be permanent or temporary.
Very Low	Virtually imperceptible loss or alteration or addition of new features or components that overall retain the character or setting of the area. Change may be permanent or temporary.
None	No change to the character or setting of the area. Change may be permanent or temporary.

Visual Appraisal Methodology

The Nature of the Visual Receptor (Sensitivity)

12.10 In line with GLVIA 3, visual sensitivity is a combination of the value of the view, combined with the susceptibility of the viewer to the particular or specific change arising from the Proposed Development.

Visual Value

12.11 The following table sets out the criteria and descriptions for visual value.

Table 12-5: Visual Value

Value	Criteria
Very High	A view which is recognised as 'iconic' and/or a specific visitor attraction or fully representative of a designated landscape.
High	A recognised high-quality view, likely to be well frequented and/or promoted as a beauty spot/visitor destination; a view with strong cultural associations (recognised in art, literature or other media); a view which relates to the experience of other features, for example heritage assets in which landscape or visual factors are a consideration; and a view which is likely to be an important part of, or primary reason for the receptor being present at the location.
Medium	A view, whilst it may be valued locally, is not widely recognised for its quality or has low visitor numbers. The view has may have cultural associations. An attractive view which is however unlikely to be the receptor's primary reason for being there.
Low	An ordinary, but not necessarily unattractive view, with no recognised quality which is unlikely to be visited specifically to experience the views available. Although the view may be appreciated by receptors, it is typically incidental to the receptor's reason for being there.
Very Low	A poor quality or degraded view which is unvalued or discordant and is unlikely to be the receptor's reason for being there. A view which detracts from the receptors experience of being there.

Visual Susceptibility to Change

12.12 The following table sets out the relevant criteria and descriptions.

Table 12-6: Visual Susceptibility

Susceptibility	Criteria
Very High	Visitors to iconic view locations.
High	Residents at home; people engaged in outdoor recreation, whose attention/interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views, including strategic/ popular public rights of way; visitors to heritage assets or other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience; communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents and travellers on identified scenic routes which people take to experience or enjoy the view.
Medium	Travellers on road, rail, or other transport routes who anticipate some enjoyment of landscape as part of the journey but where the attention is not primarily focused on the landscape; users of Public Rights of Way or where the attention is not focused on the landscape; and schools and other institutional buildings and their outdoor areas, play areas.
Low	Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes not focused on the landscape/particular views e.g., on motorways and "A" road or commuter routes; and people engaged in outdoor sport/recreation which does not involve/depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape.
Very Low	People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work/activity and not their surroundings.

Visual Sensitivity

12.13 From the consideration of the visual value and visual susceptibility, the visual sensitivity of a receptor is classified as per the following table.

Table 12-7: Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Criteria
Very High	Activity specifically focused on a designated or iconic view.
High	Activity resulting in a particular interest or appreciation of the view (e.g. residents or people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is focused on the landscape) and/or a high value of existing view (e.g. a designated landscape, unspoilt countryside or conservation area designation).
Medium	Activity resulting in a general interest or appreciation of the view (e.g., residents or people engaged in outdoor recreation that does not focus on an appreciation of the landscape, residents) and/or a medium value of existing view (e.g., suburban residential areas or intensively farmed countryside).
Low	Activity where interest or appreciation of the view is secondary to the activity (e.g., people at work or motorists travelling through the area) and/or low value of existing views (e.g., featureless agricultural landscape, poor quality urban fringe).
Very Low	Activity where interest or appreciation of the view is inconsequential (e.g., people at work with limited views out, or drivers of vehicles in cutting) and/or very low value of existing view (e.g., Industrial areas or derelict land).

Visual Nature of Effect (Magnitude of Impact)

12.14 The following factors are considered to determine an overall visual magnitude as set out in the following table.

Table 12-8: Visual Magnitude of Impact

Visual Impact	Criteria
High	Extensive change to the composition of the existing view (e.g., widespread loss of characteristic features or the widespread addition of new features within the view) and/or high degree of exposure to view (e.g., close, direct or open views). Change may be permanent or temporary.
Medium	Partial change to the composition of the existing view (e.g., loss of some characteristic features or the addition of new features within the view) and/or medium degree of exposure to the view (e.g. middle-distance or partially screened views). Change may be permanent or temporary.
Low	Subtle change to existing view (e.g., limited loss of characteristic features or the addition of new features within the view) and/or low degree of exposure to view (e.g., long-distance, substantially screened or glimpsed views). Change may be permanent or temporary.
Very Low	Barely perceptible change to the existing view and/or very brief exposure to view. Change may be permanent or temporary.
None	No change to the view.

Classification of Landscape/Townscape and Visual Effects

12.15 The overall significance of landscape/townscape and visual effects has been derived by considering the combination of the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the Proposed Development. A guide to these combinations to determine importance is set out below.

12.16 Where the guide allows for a choice (e.g. major or moderate) a reasoned explanation is provided in the assessment narrative for the single effect, i.e. major.

Table 12-9: Classification Guide for the Importance of Landscape/Townscape and Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact				
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Very Low**	**None**
Very High	Major	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Neutral
High	Major or Moderate	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible	Neutral
Medium	Major or Moderate	Moderate or Minor	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Neutral
Low	Moderate or Minor	Minor	Minor or Negligible	Negligible or Neutral	Neutral
Very Low	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Negligible or Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

12.17 Major or moderate effects are important, with minor, negligible and neutral effects being less important.

12.18 A description of the landscape/townscape and visual importance of effects is set out in the following table.

Table 12-10: Landscape/Townscape and Visual Importance of Effects

Effect	Landscape/Townscape Effect	Visual Effect
Major beneficial	Where the Proposed Development substantially improves the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape and/or enriches the quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a pronounced improvement to the existing view
Moderate beneficial	Where the Proposed Development largely improves the characteristic of the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape, and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a notable improvement to the existing view.
Minor beneficial	Where the Proposed Development partially improves the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape, and/or quality or characteristic features	Where the Proposed Development causes a partial improvement to the existing view.
Negligible beneficial	Where the Proposed Development causes a very slight improvement to the existing landscape/townscape.	Where the Proposed Development causes a barely perceptible improvement to the existing view
Neutral	No change to the landscape character or landscape/townscape features.	No change to the view.
Negligible adverse	Where the Proposed Development causes a very slight deterioration to the existing landscape/townscape.	Where the Proposed Development causes a barely perceptible deterioration to the existing view
Minor adverse	Where the Proposed Development partially deteriorates the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape, and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development causes a partial deterioration to the existing view.
Moderate adverse	Where the Proposed Development largely deteriorates the characteristic of the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape, and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a notable deterioration to the existing view.
Major adverse	Where the Proposed Development substantially deteriorates the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape and/or quality or characteristic features.	Where the Proposed Development results in a pronounced deterioration to the aesthetic quality or composition of the existing view.

Character of the Night Sky

12.19 The LTVIA identifies the existing character of the night sky via a review of relevant publications and night-time fieldwork. The classification of the environmental lighting zones is derived from the Institution of Lighting Professionals Table 2: Environmental Zones, as set out below.

Table 12-11: Environmental Lighting Zones

Zone	Surrounding	Lighting Environmental	Examples
E0	Protected	Dark	Astronomical Observable dark skies, UNESCO starlight reserves, IDA dark sky places
E1	Natural	Dark	Relatively uninhabited rural areas, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, IDA buffer zones etc
E2	Rural	Low district brightness	Sparsely inhabited rural areas, village or relatively dark outer suburban locations.
E3	Suburban	Medium district brightness	Well inhabited rural and urban settlements, small town centres of suburban locations
E4	Urban	High district brightness	Town / City centres with high levels of night-time activity

VISUALS

North Cray Road

Technical Methodology

March 2025

Overview

The process of generating photomontages and photo-wires for the North Cray Road was carried out by FTR Visuals.

High quality/resolution photographs were taken from the agreed locations by FTR Visuals. A georeferenced model was constructed to OSGB36.

Site Visit

FTR Visuals visited the site in February 2025 to obtain viewpoint photography. The tripod positions were photographed for reference.

The work fully complies with the following guidance:

Landscape Institute - Visual Representation of Development ProposalsTechnical Guidance Note 06/19 - 17 September 2019

Preparation

Following a formal instruction from the client, the scope of the project was agreed. The client identified a number of viewpoints and supplied a map of required view locations.

Focal length, image format, required content and context was agreed prior to the site visit. The photographer was familiar with the scope of the project and read any relevant information that was made available by the client.

Photography

The site visit was done in February 2025, and consideration was made to:

- Forecast weather conditions
- Shot itinerary based on sun position/time of day
- Access / distance to site / duration of journey to site and required time on site
- Suitable parking

Equipment used

- Camera (Sony A7IV)
- 50mm lens (Sigma 50mm F1.4 DG DN | Art Lens - E-Mount)
- SD cards, 128GB
- Remote cabled shutter release
- Tripod with indexed/panoramic head (ARTCISE AS80C 63.8”)
- Panoramic Tripod Head (Andoer)

Lens Selection Criteria

In order to capture appropriate and relevant context, it was agreed that a 50mm lens should be used in combination with a panoramic tripod head. A series of shots were taken (with the camera in landscape and portrait orientation) to form panoramic photographs for each view location.

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On site procedure

1. Based on the order of viewpoints on the itinerary, each view location was visited.
2. The tripod was erected and camera attached, along with the 50mm lens.
3. The height of the lens' central axis above ground level was measured and set to 1.50m using the tape measure.
4. Using a camera phone, shots were taken of the tripod.
5. RAW files capture only to avoid loss of dynamic range and image quality.
6. Enabled highlight warning
7. Used 'Live View' and zoom function to fix and verifiy focus on the site.

Panoramic Shots

- A 360 degrees horizontal field of view was determined to include the site and sufficient relevant context, vertical field of view was also considered based on height of the proposals and proximity to the site - the views were very close to the site, so the camera was set in both landscape and portrait orientaion.
- The tripod was levelled using the tripod mounted level.
- A minimum of 50% shot overlap must was achieved with the camera. The panoramic tripod head assembly was adjusted to rotate incrementally at approximately 50% of the total horizontal field of view of the selected lens with the camera is in portrait orientation.
- The panoramic tripod head was adjusted to centre the lens nodal point to the rotational axis of the tripod. It was important to ensure this is set to the correct measurement in order to avoid parallax.
- With the camera centred on the site, 'live view' and x10 magnification was enabled and an appropriate point was identified to focus on.
- Once focused, and accounting for conditions, the correct exposure was achieved by adjusting the shutter speed.
- The panorama was shot from left to right, through the panorama attempting where possible to avoid cars and any other moving objects.
- Shots were previewed to check the quality, focus, highlight warning and histogram for the shots to ensure that a well exposed usable set of photographs had been captured.

Survey Equipment

- Trimble R12 GNSS Receiver

Field Survey

Reference points were collected for the location and the height of the camera using the GNSS GPS.

Post Processing Photos

The RAW files were processed in Adobe Photoshop

Settings were adjusted to achieve the best exposure, contrast sharpening, and noise reduction.

Stitching Photos

The photos were stitched in PTGui software as 360° cylindrical panorama photos.

Processing

Using Adobe Camera Raw, simple and standard digital photo processing techniques were applied ie sharpening, noise reduction and chromatic aberration correction. Settings were adjusted as necessary to achieve the best exposure, shadow detail and clarity.

Using Adobe Photoshop, the processed RAW files were stitched to form panorama of cylindrical projection.

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Viewpoint 4: View from PRoW (footpath) FP141 looking north-west

Baseline Photograph

Camera Location

Mapped Location

Location Data

OSGB36 Location:	548929.451 170519.285
AOD:	33.17m
Camera Height:	1.5m
Distance to Site:	346.6 m
Camera:	SONY ILCE-7M4
Lens:	50mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art
Orientation:	Landscape
Format:	Cylindrical Panorama
Date:	17/2/2025
Time:	13:30
Weather Conditions:	30% cloud, Good Visibility

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Viewpoint 6: View from pavement

Baseline Photograph

Camera Location

Mapped Location

Location Data

OSGB36 Location:	548462.627 170521.673
AOD:	44.834m
Camera Height:	1.5m
Distance to Site:	443.7 m
Camera:	SONY ILCE-7M4
Lens:	50mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art
Orientation:	Landscape
Format:	Cylindrical Panorama
Date:	17/2/2025
Time:	12:55
Weather Conditions:	30% cloud, Good Visibility

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Viewpoint 8: View from the A223 looking east

Baseline Photograph

Camera Location

Mapped Location

Location Data

OSGB36 Location:	548382.683 171106.231
AOD:	26.633m
Camera Height:	1.5m
Distance to Site:	354.5 m
Camera:	SONY ILCE-7M4
Lens:	50mm f/1.4 DG HSM Art
Orientation:	Portrait
Format:	Cylindrical Panorama
Date:	10/7/2024
Time:	14:15
Weather Conditions:	50% cloud, Good Visibility

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Photo-wire Images

The wirelines are produced using the 3Ds Max and Photoshop softwares to generate a cylindrical persepective.

The 3Ds Max creates a 3D model of the existing terrain using topo data and models representing the specified geometry and position of the proposed development.

Photo-wire images in 90 degree field of views have been created for each viewpoint.

The 90 degree field of view images are showing the visual effect of the proposed development for each viewpoint. But these images do not take to account of the screening effects by any intervening objects and vegetation

Photomontage Images

Photomontages have been produced for 2 viewpoints in order to provide a ‘photorealistic image’ of the Project.

3DS MAX was used to create accurate 3D models and lighting conditions for each viewpoint.

The photomontage is produced by digitally combining the wrendered images onto the baseline photograph.

Limitations of visualisations

The photomontage visualisations are for illustrative purposes only and, whilst useful tools in the assessment, are not considered to be completely representative of what will be apparent to the human eye.

The photomontage visualisations have a number of limitations when using them to form a judgement on visual effect. These include:

- A photograph will never capture as much detail as the eye would see in the field, it therefore follows that a photomontage can never truly capture the sense of perspective and detail which would be possible in reality;
- It should be recognised that baseline photographs on which photomontages are based can, at best, only ever be a ‘flattened’ 2D representation of what the eye sees in 3D on site;
- A visualisation can never show exactly what the development will look like in reality due to factors such as: different lighting, weather and seasonal conditions which vary through time and the resolution of the image;
- The 2D images do not give the scale and the distance to the project. In reality, the development at different distances would appear in varying degrees of sharpness;
- A 2D static image cannot convey movement such as blade rotation.
- Images should be held flat at a comfortable arm’s length. If viewing these images on a wall or board at an exhibition, stand at arm’s length from the image presented to gain the best impression.

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13.0 LTVIA APPENDIX II: PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER EXTRACTS

Cray Valley

Location & Surroundings

The Cray Valley is located in the south-east of the borough. The dual carriageway of North Cray Road (A233) runs directly through the valley, linking Bexley Village in the north to Foots Cray in the south. To the east, Joyden's Wood straddles the borough boundary between Bexley and Dartford (the majority of the woodland being located within Dartford borough).

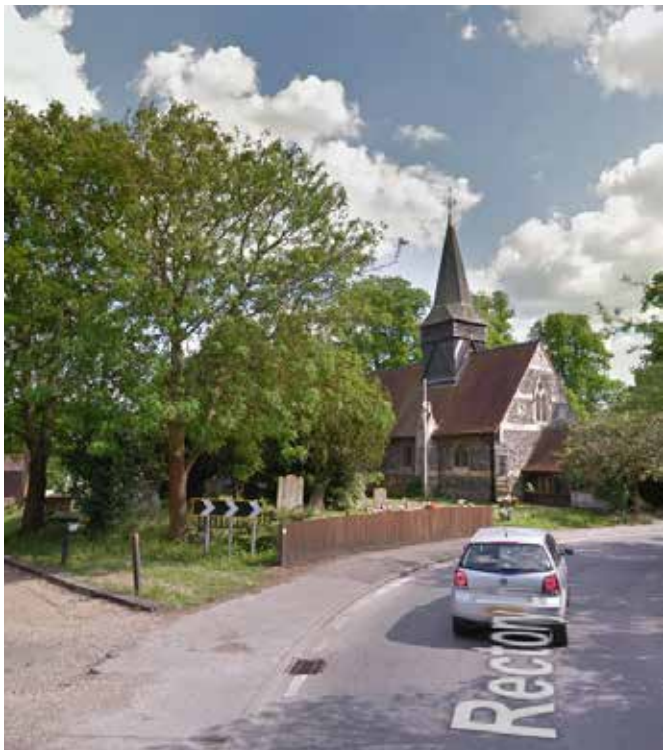
To the south, a number of garden centres/ nurseries are present along Maidstone Road (B1273). Foots Cray Business Area is located in the south-west of the valley with a small primarily residential area immediately to the north of the business area.

The valley runs initially through a wide and open meadow landscape. The geology here includes major bands of chalk which rise close to the surface.

This chalky character defines much of the flora and fauna of the river valleys. The woodlands of Chalk Wood and Joydens Wood bordering the open meadows at Footscray straddle the geographic boundary between Bexley and Dartford, where the Green Belt includes the slopes of the North Downs which contain ancient woodland connected by hedgerows surrounded by open farmland.
North of Old Bexley village the valley is characterised by extensive woodland, grazed water meadow, horse paddocks and arable fields.

Historic landscapes which contain field patterns and elements of a built man-made environment from a previous time period. The Cray river path (The LOOP) is disrupted by the significant barrier of a major road and rail crossing. Further northwards the landscape changes into Crayford Marshes with a very different character.

Foots Cray Meadows is a large area of parkland (97 hectares) and a Local Nature Reserve including the ancient North Cray Woodland and extensive wildflower meadows. Originally this land was part of the Foots Cray Palace Estate, though the house burned down in 1940 leaving the land for recreational use. Also present



34 Five Arches Bridge
Over the River Cray at Foots Cray Meadows
35 Hall Place
At the confluence of the River Shuttle and River Cray

36 All Saints Church
Rectory Lane
37 St James Church
North Cray Road

are large areas of neutral grassland and species-rich fen. Overall the landscape has a rolling character with some views down the valley from this raised location.

Access and Use

The Cray Valley can be accessed at various points, with numerous footpaths and bridleways intersecting the valley – particularly through Joyden's Wood, Chalk Wood and Foots Cray Meadows.

Foots Cray Meadows is accessible from North Cray Road, Leafield Lane, Rectory Lane, Bexley Lane, Water Lane, The Spinney, The Grove and Riverside Road. The nearest railway station is Albany Park, and the site is on bus routes 492 and B14. There is a small car park on Rectory Lane.

Chalk Wood is primarily accessible via Parsonage Lane, where parking is also available. The nearest bus route to the woods is the 492 and Bexley is the closest railway station.

The LOOP, one of the Mayor's Strategic Walking Routes runs through the area. This links from the River Thames (Thames Path) to Sidcup Place in the south and beyond. The Shuttle Riverway Walk links from the west into the LOOP walk at Hall Place.

Being part of the urban fringe the area is under considerable pressure to accommodate an ever increasing level of leisure activities. Weekly boot sales on land at Honeydale Farm (Wednesdays, Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays, April-October) bring significant numbers of visitors.

Landscape Qualities

- Meandering river channel with riffles and pools along the profile.
- Willow and alder wet woodland.
- Floodplain meadows backed by woodland.
- Curving hedgerows defining the outer margins of the floodplain.
- Reedbeds and cressbeds alongside the river.
- Riverside walks and bridges.
- Remnant parkland landscapes – specimen trees and composed views.

Challenges

Insensitive development affecting the area Elements of the built environment associated with the recreational use of many parts of the Cray Valley area are incrementally having a detrimental effect on the characteristics, use and quality of the area and as a consequence they are seriously eroding the open nature and rural countryside atmosphere.

38 Foots Cray Meadow
Meandering River Cray creates important aquatic marginal habitats and meadows backed by woodland and curving hedgerows.

39 Remnant parkland landscapes
Ornamental man made and lake and unique designed landscapes, providing setting for Statutory Listed and Locally Listed buildings.

40 Maidstone Road
Patchwork landscape with open field and rolling farmland.

41 Parsonage Lane
Rural lanes defined by grass verges, tall boundary hedgerows and large mature trees

42 Honeydale Farm car park
Large areas of dense ancient woodland

Traffic associated with some uses is also having a negative effect.

Insensitive use of the area

As mentioned above certain uses and the intensity of certain activities are incrementally creating an urban environment contrary to the characteristics of the open nature of the area. This is particularly relevant to the horsey culture elements in and around Old Bexley. The intensity of agriculture with the introduction of large areas of polytunnels is particularly insensitive.

43 Foots Cray Meadow
Meandering River Cray creates important aquatic marginal habitats and meadows backed by woodland and curving hedgerows.

44 Remnant parkland landscapes
Ornamental man made and lake and unique designed landscapes, providing setting for Statutory Listed and Locally Listed buildings.

45 Maidstone Road
Patchwork landscape with open field and rolling farmland.

46 Parsonage Lane
Rural lanes defined by grass verges, tall boundary hedgerows and large mature trees

47 Honeydale Farm car park
Large areas of dense ancient woodland

14.0 LTVIA APPENDIX III: RELEVANT POLICY

14.1 The following policies are relevant to landscape and visual maters.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

14.2 Paragraph 8 states:

> *"a social objective - to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being;*
>
> *an environmental objective – 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."*

14.3 Paragraph 124 states:

> *"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. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land."*

14.4 Paragraph 129 states:

> *"Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:*
>
> *a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
>
> *b) local market conditions and viability;*
>
> *c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
>
> *d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
>
> *e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places."*

14.5 Paragraph 130 states:

> *"Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and*

sustainable places. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site…"

14.6 Paragraph 131 states:

"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process."

14.7 Paragraph 135 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 users51; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."

14.8 Paragraph 136 states:

"Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined50, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in

the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users."

14.9 Paragraph 161 states:

"The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure."

14.10 Paragraph 165 states:

"To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development;

and

c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co- locating potential heat customers and suppliers."

14.11 Paragraph 168 states:

"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new

development to:

a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption."

14.12 Paragraph 187 states:

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."

Bexley Local Plan, 2023

14.13 SP1: Achieving sustainable development includes:

"b) Protect and enhance the natural and built environment by:

i. adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change, including flood risk;

ii. focussing new development on urban, brownfield sites in accessible locations; and,

iii. optimising the efficient management of waste and existing natural resources."

14.14 SP5: Placemaking through good design states:

"1. The Council will continue to expect the highest quality standards of design in Bexley. Design should respect the existing character and context but need not be constrained by what already exists; local character evolves over time. The Council will seek to ensure that:

a) all development within the borough is of high-quality design, contributes positively to the local environment, and protects the best elements of Bexley's character;

b) design enhances social cohesion and health and wellbeing and considers the principles of inclusive and active design, in order to support good physical and mental health; and,

c) design considers the relationships between building and spaces, including its contribution to and shaping of the public realm.

2. The Council will masterplan future development, where appropriate, to ensure it achieves the objectives of sustainable development and proposals for developments in these areas will need to demonstrate that they will fit satisfactorily into the masterplan.

3. In locations suitable for large developments, proposals that are piecemeal in nature will normally be resisted unless the proposal demonstrates that it will fit satisfactorily into a larger development."

14.15 DP11: Achieving high-quality design states:

"Development proposals within a primarily residential area, as defined on the submission policies map, must seek to protect or enhance the area's character and its amenities. Proposals for uses other than those residential in nature, will only be acceptable where they provide community, social or leisure facilities, or employment uses compatible with a residential area.

2. Development proposals for new buildings, extensions and alterations, conversions, changes of use and public and private spaces will be expected to follow the principles and requirements set out in this document and to:

Character

a) ensure that the layout, height, scale and massing, façade treatment, and materials are complimentary to the surrounding area contribute positively to the street scene

Landscaping

b) provide a high standard of landscaping design, appropriate to the proposal and with regard to the character of the surrounding area

Privacy, outlook and adverse impacts

c) ensure that appropriate levels of privacy, outlook, natural daylight and other forms of amenity are provided

d) ensure existing properties' amenity is appropriately protected

e) ensure that all proposed development and uses do not unacceptably affect residents or occupiers of either the proposed development or of existing neighbouring residents, businesses and community facilities by means of noise, odour, vibration and light spill or other disturbances

Quality of residential accommodation

f) provide sufficient useable on-site external amenity space (communal, semi-private and private) and appropriate play spaces for children, relative to the proposed scale of development

g) meet appropriate internal accommodation standards

Crime

h) apply the principles of designing out crime whilst maintaining an attractive, connected environment

Advertisements

i) ensure that new advertisements do not detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area and do not have an adverse effect on public safety."

14.16 SP6: Managing Bexley's heritage assets states:

"The Council will manage its heritage and archaeological assets, whilst seeking opportunities to make the most of these assets; including adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change. This will enhance the local sense of place and support the revitalisation and development of the borough, including promoting the visitor economy. This will be achieved by:

a) promoting the borough's heritage assets, such as Lesnes Abbey, Danson Mansion, Hall Place and Gardens, Crossness Beam Engine House and Red House;

b) reviewing the status of existing and identifying new heritage and archaeological assets;

c) applying the NPPF and London Plan requirements for development proposals affecting heritage assets to conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets, their settings, and the wider historic environment, and the requirements to protect assets from development that is likely to adversely impact on the significance, integrity, character or appearance of those assets or their settings;

d) protecting the internal features of Council owned non-designated heritage assets where they contribute to the asset's significance; and,

e) supporting historic restoration schemes through partnership working and seeking funding to enhance and utilise heritage and archaeological assets in an appropriate and sympathetic manner."

14.17 SP9: Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological assets states:

"In its planning decisions, planning policies and action plans, the Council will protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity and geodiversity assets, in line with national and regional policy, by:

a) ensuring development in Bexley does not adversely affect the integrity of any European site of nature conservation importance;

b) recognising the value of landforms, landscapes, geological processes and soils as contributors to the geodiversity of the borough by protecting designated sites of

special scientific interest (SSSI), and regionally and locally important geological sites (RIGs and LIGs) and supporting their sustainable conservation and management;

c) establishing clear goals for the management of identified geological sites, in order to promote public access, appreciation and interpretation of geodiversity;

d) protecting, conserving, restoring, and enhancing ecological networks, sites of importance for nature conservation (SINC), local nature reserves and strategic and local wildlife corridors, thus securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. Recognising and promoting those sites where ecological value has increased to a higher grade of nature conservation importance;

e) resisting development that will have a significant adverse impact on the population or conservation status of protected or priority species as identified by legislation or in biodiversity action plans prepared at national, regional or local level;

f) protecting and enhancing the natural environment, seeking biodiversity enhancements, net gains for biodiversity and improved access to nature, particularly in areas of deficiency, as illustrated by Figure 7, through new development and projects that help deliver opportunities for green infrastructure – preference will be given to enhancements that help to deliver the targets for habitats and species set out in the London Plan and local biodiversity action plans and strategies;

g) enabling environmental education opportunities at the borough's schools, and investigating opportunities to involve the wider community in biodiversity or geodiversity restoration and enhancement through projects;

h) ensuring landscaping schemes in development proposals use native plant species of local provenance; and,

i) seeking opportunities to provide for greening of the built environment."

14.18 DP21: Greening of development sites states:

"Development proposals should set out what measures have been taken to achieve urban greening onsite; and all new major developments should quantify what Urban Greening Factor (UGF) score has been achieved.

2. Development proposals will be required to provide a high standard of landscape design, having regard to the well-being, water, wildlife and character of the surrounding area, ensuring sustainable planting for the long term and be supported by appropriate management and maintenance measures.

3. There will be a presumption in favour of the retention and enhancement of existing trees, woodland and hedgerow cover on site; and planning permission will not normally be permitted where the proposal adversely affects important trees, woodlands, or hedgerows.

4. Development proposals should maximise potential for the planting of new native trees and hedges within the development site and new streets should be tree-lined, unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate.

5. Planting and landscaping within developments and ecological buffer zones:

a) will be required to contribute to habitats and features of landscape and nature conservation importance; and,

b) must not include 'potentially invasive, non-native species'; and, where found on a site, appropriate measures to remove these species must be taken as part of the redevelopment."

14.19 SP14: Mitigating and adapting to climate change states:

"1. The Council will actively pursue the delivery of sustainable development by:

a) supporting developments that achieve zero-carbon and demonstrate a commitment to drive down greenhouse gas emissions to net zero;

b) administering the borough's carbon offset fund, ring-fencing payments to implement projects that deliver greenhouse gas reductions;

c) investigating opportunities for the funding and development of decentralised energy networks in the borough; and, supporting the provision of infrastructure, including safeguarding routes and land for such use, where necessary;

d) supporting new and enhanced green infrastructure, including greening of development sites such as living roofs, and the contribution green infrastructure can make to managing flood risk and surface water, and to the mitigation of the urban heat island effect;

e) supporting integrated water management (IWM) through a coordinated and holistic approach to land and water management, including managing water storage, supply, wastewater, flood risk, quality of watercourses and water bodies and the wider environment;

f) applying the recommendations of Bexley's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, and Integrated Water Management Strategy;

g) directing new development into the most sustainable locations by applying the flood risk sequential test across the borough and the exception test to the site allocations in this Local Plan;

h) following the sequential approach to flood risk management advocated in national planning policy and its associated practice guidance;

i) working with the Environment Agency and others to ensure the recommendations of the TE2100 Plan are implemented in new and existing developments, to keep communities safe from flooding in a changing climate and improving the local environment; and,

j) supporting the protection of key infrastructure assets from the risks of flooding."

15.0 LTVIA APPENDIX IV: LIKELY LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

15.1 The following table sets out the likely landscape/townscape effects of the Proposed Development.

Table 15-1: Likely Landscape/Townscape Effects

Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
The Site (ESS location)	Value The ESS Site is not covered by any landscape or townscape designations. There is no evident cultural association, nor is there any recreational value. The condition of the boundary vegetation appears to be good overall and the Site is representative of the wider arable land use. The perceptual aspects are lowered by the surrounding land uses, but there is a higher scenic quality to the Site. The value is assessed as medium. Susceptibility As a generally low lying area of land, with a simple pattern and gently undulating landform and where the key vegetation structure is located around the perimeter of the ESS Site, the susceptibility is assessed as medium. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and medium susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction of the ESS equipment would result in localised excavation and alteration to surface landform, as well as construction activity and machinery of a greater scale and duration than general farming activity. There would be a unsettled state to the ESS Site, due to the ESS equipment being in varying stages of construction, along with a range of temporary structure, e.g. tree protection fencing and site facilities and compounds, resulting in a high degree of change. Year 1 At year 1, the ESS equipment would evidently result in a change in character at the Site level, from an undeveloped field to part ESS equipment and part landscape and ecological areas. The form and scale of the existing field would remain, due to the proposed equipment being set within the retained vegetated boundaries. There would be an obvious renewable energy character to the ESS Site, with the new planting being low in height and not established, such that the impact would be high in both winter and summer months. Year 5 By year 5, the proposed grassland and wildflower areas would have established to a greater degree, providing a near continuous sward in summer conditions. The positive management of the existing boundary vegetation would retain the existing vegetation structure, with the western field boundary being taller in height and denser in winter conditions that at year 1. The proposed hedgerow with trees along the eastern edge would also be taller and more established, reinforcing the geometric shape of the Site. The proposed woodland belt would also be taller in height, forming part of the improved vegetated cover across the Site and opportunities for biodiversity in comparison to the existing field. Due to the change in land use and the proposed planting, the impact would remain high in winter and summer months. Year 10 By year 10, whilst the change in land use would remain, there would be an improved vegetation structure and a higher degree of physical enclosure to the Site from the taller existing and proposed planting. With the vegetation established, there would be a more settled character. Therefore, whilst the impact would remain high, the effects are predicted to reduce at year 10.	Construction (winter): High Year 1 (winter/summer): High / High Year 5 (winter/summer): High / High Year 10 (winter/summer): High / High	Construction (winter): Major adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Major adverse / Major adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Major adverse / Major adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Moderate adverse
The Site (ESS access)	Value The access is not covered by any landscape or townscape designations. There are no rare or distinctive features and the value is low. Susceptibility As a grass track and hardstanding road, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction of the access would require localised alteration to ground levels and existing grass and hardstanding surfacing. There would also be machinery and a general unsettled state to this part of the Site, along with some localised vegetation removal at the junction with the A223, such that the impact would be high. Year 1 At year 1, the new access would reflect the existing spatial arrangement of access, with the key boundary vegetation being retained. Such that in both summer and winter months, the change to the character of this part of the Site would be low, due to a more developed character than the existing grass track and lane. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse

Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		The assessment would reflect that at year 1.		
The Site (cable corridor)	Value The majority of the cable corridor is along the A223, with part of the route within Old Bexley Conservation Area and therefore on balance the value is medium due to the Conservation Area. Susceptibility As existing road networks, the susceptibility is very low. Sensitivity The combination of the medium and very low susceptibility results in **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would result in localised excavation to areas of existing hardstanding, along with temporary traffic measures and machinery. Given the existing character of the A223 and Vicarage Road, along with the general extent of activity, the overall change to the character would be low. Year 1 In operation, with the cable corridor below ground, there would be no change to the character of this part of the ESS Site. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
Published Landscape Character Assessments				
NCA 113: North Kent Plain	Value As an area of cultural association, recreational value and function value, the value is high. Susceptibility As an area of varied land uses, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the high value and low susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would reflect that stated above at the Site level, with localised alteration to landform and vegetation, along with the presence of construction activity. The scale and extent of the construction activity would be very small in relation to the wider geographic extent of the NCA, therefore, there would be no change to the character. Year 1 The Proposed Development would introduce additional renewable energy infrastructure within the NCA, located in close proximity to horticultural polytunnels and a tract of varying development to the east of the A223. Therefore, the Proposed Development would be fairly well located in relation to existing development patterns and in an 'active' part of the NCA. The Proposed Development would respond positively to the Statements of Environmental Opportunity via protecting the existing vegetation at the ESS Site and implementing new planting (although not established) as part of the creation of new green corridors. The scale and extent of the construction activity would be very small in relation to the wider geographic extent of the NCA, therefore, there would be no change to the character and the key characteristics of the NCA would remain. Year 5 With the establishment of the proposed planting, the perception of the proposed ESS equipment would reduce. However, like at year 1, the scale and extent of the Proposed Development would be very small in relation to the wider geographic extent of the NCA, therefore, there would be no change to the character. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 5.	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
Bexley Cray Valley	Value There is a recreational and functional value to the cray valley, such that the value is high. Susceptibility As an area of varied landform and varying vegetation patterns, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the high value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would be located in both developed and undeveloped parts of the character area. The perception of the construction activity at the ESS Site would be localised, whereas that along the A223 to the Hurst Grid sub-station would be greater. The scale and extent of the construction activity would be small, such that the overall character of the Cray Valley would remain. Year 1 The Proposed Development would introduce new renewable energy equipment across undeveloped land. However, the ESS equipment would be located in a part of the Cray Valley which is already perceived as active via the horticultural land uses and paddocks. The Proposed Development would result in a temporary change in arable	Construction (winter): Very Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very Low / Very Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Very Low / Very Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very Low / Very Low	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse

Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		land use but this would be a small extent of the wider undeveloped land extending between Parsonage Lane and the A20. There would be no change to the character of the area from the access and underground cable. Year 5 With the establishment of the proposed planting, the perception of the proposed ESS equipment would reduce. However, like at year 1, the scale and extent of the ESS equipment would be very small in relation to the wider geographic extent of the character area. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 5, but with the reduced perception of the Proposed Development in winter and summer months due to the greater density and height of the proposed planting, along with the existing vegetation being in leaf.		
Local Landscape/Townscape Character Areas (LLCA)				
LTCA 1: Parsonage Lane Residential	Value The LTCA is not covered by any landscape related designations. There is a recreational value and a functional value from the vegetation. The value is low. Susceptibility As a developed area, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would not be located in the LTCA and therefore there would be no physical change to the key features. Any perception of the construction activity would be in the context of the horticultural land uses on the valley floor and at distance from the LTCA, so as not to alter its character, which would remain an elongated area of residential land uses set within well vegetated grounds. Year 1 The ESS equipment would not alter the character of the area, which would remain as a well enclosed residential area, physically and visually separated from the wider townscape/landscape The immediate setting of the LTCA would remain Manor Farm and arable fields. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 2: North Cray Arable (covers the ESS Site and most of the access)	Value The LTCA is not covered by any landscape related designations. There is a functional value via the vegetation patterns and a geological value via the undulating valley landform. There is no evident cultural association nor recreational access. The value is assessed as medium. Susceptibility As an agricultural area, with undulating landform and a varied vegetation structure, the value is medium. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and medium susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would reflect that at the Site scale, with localised alteration to surface landform and the presence of construction activity within the ESS Site and along the proposed access areas. The construction activity would be geographically located within a smaller part of the LTCA, with its perception very limited due to a lack of access. However, there would be a more unsettled character in comparison to the existing land use. Year 1 The ESS equipment would result in a change in land use and a localised change in character due to the introduction of renewable energy equipment and planting. The proposed equipment would result in a more developed character to the local area, although the perception would be limited by the lack of access and the dark green tonal colours to the ESS equipment and fencing. Year 5 Compared to the year 1 assessment, the perception of the ESS equipment would reduce at year 5 in winter and summer conditions, due to the taller height of the existing vegetation along the western and northern edges of the Site, as well as from the establishment of the proposed planting along the eastern edge of the Site. Therefore there would be a reduction in the impact, with the effect reducing in summer months. Year 10	Construction (winter): High Year 1 (winter/summer): High / High Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Medium Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Moderate adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse

Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		By year 10, the perception of the proposed ESS equipment would have reduced further than at year 1, in both winter and summer months, due to the greater height and density of the proposed planting and the positive management of the existing vegetation. This would aid in increasing the physical and visual enclosure to the ESS equipment, particularly in relation to the north and east of the ESS Site.		
LTCA 3: Cray Hall Residential	Value Due to the listed building and the functional value from the vegetation structure, the value is medium. Susceptibility As a low density residential area but with areas of established vegetation the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would not be located in the LTCA and therefore there would be no physical change to the LTCA. Any perception of the construction activity would be over 100m from the LTCA at its closest point, associated with the new landscaping proposals across the northern part of the ESS Site. The perception of the construction activity would be largely negated by the density of intervening vegetation and distance, such that the character of the LTCA would not be altered. Year 1 Due to the intervening distance, there would be no change to the physical features of the LTCA, nor the immediate setting, including that of the listed building. With the perception of the LTCA would remain as a small scale residential area set within well vegetated grounds and separated from the surrounding residential, horticultural and transport land uses, including the Proposed Development by fields. Therefore, there would be no change to the character of the LTCA in winter or summer months. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 4: A223 (covers most of the below ground cable corridor and a small part of the access)	Value As an undesignated area the value is very low. Susceptibility As a dual carriageway, the susceptibility is very low. Sensitivity The combination of the very low value and very low susceptibility results in a **very low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction for part of the below ground cable corridor would be located in the LTCA. This construction activity would be in the context of existing road networks, where there is already the perception of movement, activity and noise. Therefore the impact would be low. Year 1 In operation, there would be no change to the physical character of the LTCA due to the cable corridor being below ground. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 5: North Cray Residential	Value As an undesignated area, but with a recreational value and a generally low scenic quality to the built form, the value is low. Susceptibility As a developed area the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction Any perception of the construction activity would not alter the dominant residential character of the LTCA, nor would there be any physical change to the key features. Year 1 The ESS equipment would not alter the character of the LTCA, which would remain an evident residential area bordered by a variety of land uses, with a high degree of physical and visual separation between the LTCA and the ESS equipment. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1..	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral

Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
LTCA 6: Barton Road Residential	Value As an undesignated area, but with a recreational value and a generally low scenic quality to the built form, the value is low. Susceptibility As a developed area the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction Any perception of the construction activity would not alter the dominant residential character of the LTCA, nor would there be any physical change to the key features. Year 1 With the west to east alignments of the street pattern, the intervening vegetation and polytunnels, the ESS equipment would not alter the character of the LTCA, which would remain an evident residential area bordered by a variety of land uses. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 7: Cray Valley Horticultural	Value There is a recreational value to the LTCA, along with a functional value from vegetation. There is no notable cultural association and the LTCA is not covered by any landscape designations, therefore the value is low. Susceptibility As an active landscape with buildings, car-parking and polytunnels, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be no physical change to the LTCA. The perception of the construction activity would result in a more active and unsettled character to the immediate setting of the LTCA, but would not be completely out of character given the movement and activity within the LTCA. Therefore, the construction activity would not result in any notable change to the key character of the LTCA. Year 1 The perception of the ESS equipment would result in a more developed context to the LTCA and within its immediate setting, but given the existing land uses the overall change to the character would be very limited in winter months and negated in summer months. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 With the establishment of the proposed planting, particularly along the southern edge of the Site, the perception of the Proposed Development would reduce in winter and summer months in comparison to the year 1 assessment, such that there would be no change to the character of the LTCA.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 8: Cray Valley Paddocks	Value There is a recreational value to the LTCA, both via public rights of way and the land use. There is a geological value via undulating landform, but limited scenic quality and functional value, such that the value is low. Susceptibility As an area of undulating landform and a simple pattern, the susceptibility is medium. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be no physical change to the LTCA. The perception of the construction activity would result in a more active and unsettled character to the immediate setting of the LTCA, and a slight alteration to the character of the LTCA. Year 1 The perception of the ESS equipment would result in a more developed context to the LTCA and within its immediate setting, but given the influence of surrounding land uses at LTCA and the perception of surrounding residential and transport land uses, the change to the character of the LTCA would be virtually imperceptible. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 With the establishment of the proposed planting, particularly along the southern edge of the Site, the perception of the Proposed Development would reduce in winter and summer months in comparison to the year 1 assessment, such that there would be no change to the character of the LTCA.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 9: Chalk Wood	Value	Construction	Construction (winter): None	Construction (winter): Neutral

Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
	Due to the ancient woodland and functional value, the value is assessed as very high. Susceptibility As an area of woodland, situated across sloping ground, the susceptibility is very high. Sensitivity The combination of the very high value and very high susceptibility results in a **very high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	There would be no physical change to the LTCA, with the construction activity located over 215m from the LTCA. With limited public access and the perception of surrounding land uses, including polytunnels, buildings and activity within Honeydale Farm, there would be no change to the character of the LTCA during construction. Year 1 The ESS equipment would not be located in the LTCA and therefore there would be no physical change to its key characteristics. The perception of the ESS equipment would not alter the character of the LTCA, which is dominated by the woodland and a very high degree of physical and visual enclosure. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 10: Old Bexley Conservation Area (covers part of the underground cable)	Value Due to the cultural association, the value is high. Susceptibility As an area with a locally distinctive architectural form and scale, the susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the high value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction for part of the below ground cable corridor would be located in the LTCA. This construction activity would be in the context of existing road networks, where there is already the perception of movement, activity and noise. Therefore the impact would be low. Year 1 In operation, there would be no change to the physical character of the LTCA due to the cable corridor being below ground. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
LTCA 11: Vicarage Road	Value There is a recreational value along with a functional value from the avenue of trees, such that the value is assessed as medium. Susceptibility As an existing road, the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and low susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The excavation for the below ground cable corridor would result in the presence of machinery and excavation to existing hard surfacing, in comparison to the general movement of vehicles along the road. Therefore, there would be a notable change to the generally less active character of the LTCA. Year 1 With the cable corridor below ground and the key features of the alignment of the road, the recreational value and vegetation structure remaining, there would be no change to the character of the LTCA. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral

16.0 LTVIA APPENDIX V: LIKELY VISUAL EFFECTS

16.1 The following table sets out the likely visual effects of the Proposed Development.

Table 16-1: Likely Visual Effects

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
1A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The low level construction activity at the ESS Site would be screened by the combination of the intervening roadside hedgerows, sheds and the lower lying position of the ESS Site. The taller machinery would be visible, seen in the context of the above and forming a small part of the overall composition of the view. In the context of the intervening vertical features (lighting columns, signage), the taller machinery would therefore result in a small change to the composition of the view. The construction activity associated with the access and below ground corridor would not be visible due to distance and intervening landform. Year 1 The ESS containers would not be visible due to the low lying position of the ESS Site and the intervening vegetation and structures. The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible, although softened by the intervening trees adjacent to the southern edge of the Site in winter. The change to the composition of the view would be small in winter conditions. In summer, with the existing vegetation in leaf, including the taller height of the roadside hedgerow, the sub-station would not be visible. The access and below ground cable corridor would not be visible. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to change to the composition of the view relating to the upper parts of the sub-station, which would remain above the height of the proposed planting, but below that of the intervening vegetation bordering the southern edge of the ESS Site. Year 10 By year 10, the taller height of the proposed trees along the south-east edge of the ESS Site would provide a greater density of vegetation and further softening of the upper parts of the sub-station, such that the impact and effect would reduce in winter months. In summer, the greater density of the vegetation would screen the upper-parts of the sub-station, with the proposed trees being seen as part of the wooded back-drop of the view.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Low / None Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / None Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral
1B. Residents adjacent to the B2173	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and high susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The views of the construction activity would be oblique, due to the orientation of the residential properties and that some of the properties are bungalows. The low level construction activity at the ESS Site would be screened by the combination of the intervening roadside hedgerows, sheds and the lower lying position of the ESS Site. The taller machinery would be visible, seen in the context of the above and forming a small part of the overall composition of the view. In the context of the intervening vertical features (lighting columns, signage), the taller machinery would therefore result in a small change to the composition of the view. The construction activity associated with the access and below ground corridor would not be visible due to distance and intervening landform. Year 1 With oblique angles of view towards the Site, or views across the B2173, whilst the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible in winter, it would form a subtle change to the composition of the view. In summer, with the existing vegetation in leaf, including the taller height of the roadside hedgerow, the visibility of the upper parts of the sub-station would reduce further. The access and below ground cable corridor would not be visible due to being below ground and distance from the receptor.. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to change to the composition of the view relating to the upper parts of the sub-station, which would remain	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		above the height of the proposed planting, but below that of the intervening vegetation bordering the southern edge of the ESS Site. Year 10 By year 10, the taller height of the proposed trees along the south-east edge of the ESS Site would provide a greater density of vegetation and further softening of the upper parts of the sub-station, such that the impact and effect would reduce in winter months. In summer, the greater density of the vegetation would screen the upper-parts of the sub-station, with the proposed trees being seen as part of the wooded back-drop of the view.		
2. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP241	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As people engaged in outdoor recreation, the susceptibility is high. Susceptibility The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction Due to the relatively elevated position of the receptor, the taller construction machinery would be visible, along with the construction of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station. The lower level construction activity would not be visible due to the intervening landform and vegetation (even in winter), along with the low lying position of the ESS Site. The access and below ground cable construction would not be visible due to the intervening distance and features. The overall change to the composition of the view would be small. Year 1 The majority of the ESS equipment would not be visible, due to the low lying position of the ESS Site, the intervening landform and vegetation (even in winter). The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible, forming a small change to the composition of the view and being seen in the context of the polytunnels and agricultural barns. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be screened. There would be no change to the composition of the view from the access and below ground cable corridor. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1 due to the upper parts of the proposed sub-station extending above the height of the proposed hedgerow and tree planting along the eastern edge of the ESS Site. Year 10 By year 10, with the greater density of new planting along the eastern edge of the ESS Site, the upper parts of the proposed substation would be screened in winter and summer months.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible / None Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
3A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As people engaged in outdoor recreation, the susceptibility is high. Susceptibility The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction across the ESS Site would be visible, due to the slightly elevated position of the receptor. The construction activity would be a noticeable change to the composition of the view in comparison to the intervening paddocks and sheds, introducing a greater degree of movement and activity and machinery of a generally larger scale than general farming and horticultural practices. The construction activity relating to the access and below ground cable corridor would not be visible due to the density of the intervening vegetation and distance. Year 1 The proposed sub-station and ESS units in the western part of the Site would be visible, whilst the visibility of the ESS units in the eastern part of the Site would be reduced by the intervening undulating landform. The perceived massing and scale of the ESS units would be reduced by their dark green render. The ESS equipment would remain below the overall vegetated skyline, with some softening of views from the intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the ESS Site, such that the Proposed Development would result in a partial change to the composition of the view in winter conditions. In summer, the visibility of the sub-station and ESS equipment would reduce due to the trees along the southern edge of the ESS Site being in leaf. Year 5 The new planting would provide a greater density of vegetation in winter, but views would remain like at year 1 due to the vegetation being in leaf. Similarly, in summer conditions, the new planting would provide an increased level of screening to the lower parts of the sub-station. Year 10	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / None	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		By year 10, the greater density of the proposed planting, including new trees along the south-east and eastern edges of the ESS Site, along with taller scrub at around 3.5m in height along the southern edge of the ESS Site (taller than the ESS units) would provide a higher degree of visual softening in comparison to the year 1 assessment. In summer, there would be a higher degree of screening, due to the existing and proposed planting being in leaf, thereby reducing the predicted effects.		
3B. Horse riders / visitors to the paddocks	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As people whom are not involved in the appreciation of views of the landscape, their susceptibility is low. Susceptibility The combination of the medium value and low susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction across the ESS Site would be visible, due to the slightly elevated position of the receptor. The construction activity would be a noticeable change to the composition of the view in comparison to the intervening paddocks and sheds, introducing a greater degree of movement and activity and machinery of a generally larger scale than general farming and horticultural practices. The construction activity relating to the access and below ground cable corridor would not be visible due to the density of the intervening vegetation and distance. Year 1 The proposed sub-station and ESS units in the western part of the ESS Site would be visible, whilst the visibility of the ESS units in the eastern part of the Site would be reduced by the intervening undulating landform. The perceived massing and scale of the ESS units would be reduced by their dark green render. The ESS equipment would remain below the overall vegetated skyline, with some softening of views from the intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the ESS Site, such that the Proposed Development would result in a partial change to the composition of the view in winter conditions. In summer, the visibility of the sub-station and ESS equipment would reduce due to the trees along the southern edge of the ESS Site being in leaf. Year 5 The new planting would provide a greater density of vegetation in winter, but views would remain like at year 1 due to the vegetation being in leaf. Similarly, in summer conditions, the new planting would provide an increased level of screening to the lower parts of the sub-station. Year 10 By year 10, the greater density of the proposed planting, including new trees along the south-east and eastern edges of the ESS Site, along with taller scrub at around 3.5m in height along the southern edge of the ESS Site (taller than the ESS units) would provide a higher degree of visual softening in comparison to the year 1 assessment. In summer, there would be a higher degree of screening, due to the existing and proposed planting being in leaf, thereby reducing the predicted effects.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Neutral
4A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP141	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As people engaged in outdoor recreation, the susceptibility is high. Susceptibility The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity across the ESS Site would be visible from where there are gaps in the hedgerow bordering the PRoW. Compared to the existing view of the field, the construction activity would introduce activity and machinery of a generally larger scale than general farming and horticultural practices, along with tonal changes to the composition of the view due to areas of excavated land. Machinery constructing the access between the ESS Site and Manor Farm would also be visible. Year 1 The southern side of the palisade fencing and the upper parts of the ESS units and equipment in the eastern part of the Site would be visible, although the overall mass would be reduced by the dark green rendering. The ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would remain below the height of the existing hedgerow along the northern edge of the Site, thereby enabling views to remain across the Site to Manor Farm. Most of the ESS equipment in the western part of the Site would be screened by the height of the intervening existing vegetation along the southern edge of the Site. The taller ESS equipment would remain below the height of the polytunnels and their dark green tones would be seen against the backdrop of vegetation. The main change to the composition of the view would be from the sub-station, although views in winter would be softened by the intervening vegetation. In summer, with this vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the sub-station would reduce and equipment would reduce, such that the main change to the composition of the view would relate to the ESS equipment in the eastern	Construction (winter): High Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low	Construction (winter): Major adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		part of the Site. There would be no change to the composition of the view resulting from the access and underground cable corridor. Year 5 The establishment of the proposed scrub and trees along the southern edge of the ESS Site would reduce the visibility of the lower parts of the ESS fencing in the eastern part of the Site and the lower parts of the substation. This additional softening of views would be more noticeable in summer months. Year 10 By year 10, winter, the proposed ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would be predominantly screened by the taller height of the new planting along the southern edge of the Site. Views would still remain across the ESS Site to the fields beyond and Manor Farm. The visibility of the sub-station would also be reduced, such that there would be largely softened views of the upper parts of the equipment only, which would be back-clothed against the vegetation to the north of the Site. In summer, the proposed ESS equipment and sub-station would be screened, with views of the new trees reflecting views of existing trees along the southern edge of the Site.		
4B. Employment users at Honeydale Farm	Value The view Is not likely to be visited specifically and the value is low. Susceptibility As people whom are not involved in the appreciation of views of the landscape, their susceptibility is low. Susceptibility The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction For workers at the farm, most of the construction activity would be screened by the intervening polytunnels. The taller construction activity would be visible, although softened by the intervening vegetation. The access and below ground cable corridor construction would not be visible due to distance and intervening features. Year 1 The upper parts of the sub-station would be visible, although softened by intervening vegetation and seen beyond polytunnels. The polytunnels would largely screen the remainder of the ESS equipment in winter conditions. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the upper parts of the substation would reduce. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to the height of the proposed sub-station remaining above that of the proposed planting. Year 10 By year 10, the visibility of the upper parts of the sub-station would reduce due to the greater density of the proposed planting along the southern edge of the ESS Site in winter conditions, becoming screened in summer.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 10 (winter/summer): very Low / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral
5A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction Most of the ground level construction activity within the ESS Site would be screened by the roadside vegetation, distance and the intervening buildings and polytunnels. The taller construction equipment would be visible, although forming a small change to the composition of the view. Year 1 The ESS units and fencing would be screened by the intervening polytunnels and distance, along with being situated in a lower lying position within the landscape. The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible, although softened by intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the Site. Views would remain across the ESS Site to the well vegetated skyline, such that the overall change to the composition of the view in winter would be small. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would reduce further. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to the lower height of the proposed planting. Year 10 By year 10, the increased density and height of planting along the southern edge of the ESS Site would enable the visibility of the proposed sub-station to reduce even further in winter conditions and be screened in summer conditions.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very low / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
5B. Residents adjacent to the B2173 at Glebe Cottages	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be views of the construction activity within the ESS Site from upper storey rear windows, seen beyond the polytunnels, representing a notable change in comparison to general horticultural activity. Construction machinery associated with the access between the ESS Site and Manor Farm would also be visible. Year 1 The ESS units and the sub-station would be visible from rear storey upper windows, although softened by intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the Site and in the intervening fields. Views would remain across the ESS Site to the well vegetated skyline. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would reduce further. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to the lower height of the proposed planting. Year 10 By year 10, the increased density and height of planting along the southern edge of the ESS Site would enable the visibility of the proposed sub-station to reduce even further in winter conditions and be screened in summer conditions.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
6A. Road users on the B2173 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction Most of the ground level construction activity within the ESS Site would be screened by the intervening buildings and polytunnels, along with . The taller construction equipment would be visible, although forming a small change to the composition of the view. Construction machinery associated with the access between Manor Farm and the A223 would be visible, although forming a very small change to the composition of the view. Year 1 The ESS units and fencing would be predominantly screened by the intervening polytunnels and distance, along with being situated in a lower lying position within the landscape. The upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be visible, although softened by intervening vegetation along the southern edge of the Site. Views would remain across the ESS Site to the well vegetated skyline, such that the overall change to the composition of the view in winter would be small. In summer, with the roadside trees in leaf, the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would be barely discernible. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to the lower height of the proposed planting. Year 10 By year 10, the increased density and height of planting along the southern edge of the ESS Site would enable the visibility of the proposed sub-station to reduce even further in winter conditions and be screened in summer conditions.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very low / None Year 5 (winter/summer): Very low / None Year 10 (winter/summer): Very low / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral
6B. Residents adjacent to the B2173	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be views of the construction activity within the ESS Site from upper storey rear windows, seen obliquely, beyond the polytunnels, representing a notable change in comparison to general horticultural activity. Construction machinery associated with the access between the ESS Site and Manor Farm would also be visible. Year 1 The ESS units in the eastern part of the Site and the upper parts of the sub-station would be visible from rear storey upper windows, although softened by intervening vegetation in the intervening fields. Views would remain across the ESS Site to the well vegetated skyline such that the overall change to the composition of the view would be small. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the upper parts of the proposed sub-station would reduce further. Year 5	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very Low / Very low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		The assessment would reflect that at year 1, due to the lower height of the proposed planting. Year 10 By year 10, the increased density and height of planting along the southern edge of the ESS Site would enable the visibility of the proposed sub-station to reduce even further in winter conditions and be screened in summer conditions.		
7A. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP171	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As people engaged in outdoor recreation, the susceptibility is high. Susceptibility The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction Due to the relatively elevated position of the receptor, the taller construction machinery and construction of the upper parts of the sub-station would be visible. The intervening polytunnels would screen the majority of the ground level construction activity. The construction activity would be a noticeable change to the composition of the view, but would be located in a low lying position, such that views across the wider landscape to Chalk Wood and the wooded skyline would remain. Construction activity associated with access and cable corridor would either not be visible. Year 1 In winter, the upper parts of the taller ESS equipment and the sub-station would be visible, with the polytunnels screening the lower parts of the equipment, which would also be situated in a lower topographical position within the composition of the view. Views would remain across the landscape to the wooded skyline due to the lower lying position of the Site. In summer, there would be a slight reduction in the visibility of the upper-parts of the sub-station, due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1 due to the height of the proposed sub-station above the proposed planting. Year 10 By year 10, with the establishment of the proposed planting along the southern edge of the Site, there would be a reduced visibility of the ESS equipment in both winter and summer conditions. The proposed ESS equipment would therefore result in a subtle change in winter conditions and a barely perceptible change in summer conditions.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Medium Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Medium Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
7B. Residents adjacent to the eastern end of Barton Road	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be oblique views of the construction activity from the upper storey rear windows and gable ends of residents at the eastern end of Barton Road. The construction activity would be seen beyond the intervening vegetation with the change in the composition of views relating to the upper parts of tall construction activity and the substation. Year 1 The majority of the ESS units and taller equipment would be screened by the intervening polytunnels and the field boundary vegetation. There would be oblique views of the upper parts of the sub-station in winter, with the visibility reducing in summer due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that of year 1. Year 10 By year 10, with the taller height of the eastern field boundary vegetation and the establishment of the proposed planting along the south-west edge of the Site, the visibility of the upper part of the sub-station in oblique views would reduce in winter months and be screened in summer months.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very Low / None	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral
8A. Road users on the A223 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low.	Construction The density of the intervening vegetation would screen the majority of the construction activity, with the exception of taller equipment, which would be seen obliquely. The access and below cable corridor construction would not be visible due to the distance from these parts of the Site. Year 1	Construction (winter): Very low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Negligible adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
	Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Due to the density of the intervening vegetation the proposed ESS equipment would neither be visible in winter, nor summer conditions. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.		
8B. Residents at 141 to 143 North Cray Road	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The density of the intervening vegetation would screen the construction activity for properties 141 and 142, whilst there would be softened views of the construction from property 143. This would be in contrast to the smaller scale agricultural equipment and general farming activity. Year 1 Due to the density of the intervening vegetation and most of the ESS equipment being at the same height as the intervening 3m hedgerow along the Site's western boundary, the change to the composition of the view would relate to oblique and softened views of the upper parts of the sub-station in winter. In summer, the overall extent of visibility would reduce due to the intervening vegetation being in leaf. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year due to the proposed woodland area being lower in height than the sub-station. Year 10 By year 10, the proposed woodland belt would be taller in height, thereby largely softening views in winter and screening the ESS equipment in summer conditions, in combination with the intervening vegetation.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very Low / None	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral
8C. Residents in Chambers Avenue	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be oblique views of the construction activity from the upper storey windows of flats adjacent to Chambers Avenue. The construction activity would be seen beyond the intervening vegetation with the change in the composition of views relating to the upper parts of tall construction activity and the substation. The construction activity would form a very small part of a wider view. Year 1 The ESS equipment would form a very small part of a wider view, seen immediate beyond intervening residential properties and polytunnels. The dark green tone of the ESS containers would aid in reducing their perceived mass. The overall change to the composition of the view would be very small in both winter and summer conditions.. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that of year 1. Year 10 By year 10, with the taller height of the eastern field boundary vegetation and the establishment of the proposed planting along the south-west edge of the Site, the visibility of the upper part of the sub-station in oblique views would reduce in winter months and be screened in summer months.	Construction (winter): Very Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very Low / Very Low Year 5 (winter/summer):Very Low / Very Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very Low / Very low	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse
9. Road users on the A223	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity	Construction There would be oblique and highly transient views of construction activity between the A223 and Manor Farm, along the existing North Cray Road. There would also be localised views of the construction activity to excavate existing ground and implement the below ground cable corridor. The construction activity would include localised removal of existing vegetation at the junction of North Cray Road and the A223. The construction of the ESS equipment would not be visible due to the intervening landform and vegetation. Year 1 In operation, with the access reflecting existing views of North Cray Road and the below ground cable connection not visible, the change to the composition	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Very low/ Very low Year 10 (winter/summer): Very low / Very low	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Negligible adverse

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
	The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	of the view would relate to a very small reduction in existing roadside vegetation in winter and summer months. The ESS equipment would not be visible. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.		
10. Road users on North Cray Road	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a secondary road the susceptibility is medium. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be close range views of the construction of the access and softened views of the construction of the ESS equipment in the western part of the ESS Site, although partially softened by intervening vegetation. The construction in the eastern part of the ESS Site would be largely screened by the density of the vegetation adjacent to access track. Year 1 Views of the proposed access would reflect the composition of existing views. The ESS equipment in the western part of the ESS Site would be visible, although its perceived mass would be softened by the dark green colour tones. The upper parts of the sub-station would be visible through the intervening vegetation. Views would remain across the wider landscape due to the relatively low lying position of the ESS Site and the height of the ESS containers being lower than the top of the polytunnels. In summer, with the intervening vegetation in leaf, the change to the composition of the view would reduce, with the main focus of the view remaining towards Chalk Wood or across land to the west of the ESS Site. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 By year 10, with the establishment of the proposed woodland belt across the central part of the ESS Site, the visibility of the ESS equipment and sub-station would be substantially reduced.	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Low / Very low Year 5 (winter/summer): Low / None Year 10 (winter/summer): Very low / None	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Negligible adverse / Neutral
11. Residents at Manor Farm Cottage	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity in the eastern part of the Site, including that for the sub-station would be visible. The construction of the access route would also be visible. The construction activity would be or a greater scale than general farming activity and a noticeable change to the composition of the view, although with the receptors in an elevated position, views across the valley would remain. Year 1 The ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would be visible, including the sub-station, whilst that in the western part of the Site would be screened in winter by the density of the vegetation bordering the north-west part of the Site. The dark green render to the ESS equipment would aid in reducing the perceived mass, with views remaining across the wider landscape due to the Proposed Development being in a low lying position. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 By year 10, the visibility of the ESS equipment and the substation in the eastern part of the Site would notably reduce due to the establishment of the woodland belt across the central part of the Site. In summer, with this new planting in leaf, the visibility of the equipment would reduce further.	Construction (winter): High Year 1 (winter/summer): High / Medium Year 5 (winter/summer): High / Medium Year 10 (winter/summer): Medium / Low	Construction (winter): Major adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Major adverse / Moderate adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Major adverse / Moderate adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse
12A. Road users on Parsonage Lane	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility	Construction The construction activity would not be visible due to the intervening residential land uses. Year 1	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
	As travellers on a secondary road the susceptibility is medium. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	The ESS equipment would not be visible due to the intervening residential land uses. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.		
12B. Residents adjacent to the south side of Parsonage Lane (north of Manor Farm)	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity in the eastern part of the Site, including that for the sub-station would be visible from upper storey rear windows or residential properties in a more elevated position to the north of the ESS Site. The construction of the access route and below ground corridor would not be visible. The construction activity would be or a greater scale than general farming activity and a noticeable change to the composition of the view, although with the receptors in an elevated position, views across the valley would remain. Year 1 The ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would be visible, including the sub-station, whilst that in the western part of the Site would be screened in winter by the density of the vegetation bordering the north-west part of the Site. The dark green render to the ESS equipment would aid in reducing the perceived mass, with views remaining across the wider landscape due to the Proposed Development being in a low lying position. In summer, with the garden vegetation in leaf, the visibility of the ESS equipment would reduce. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 By year 10, the visibility of the ESS equipment and the substation in the eastern part of the Site would notably reduce due to the establishment of the woodland belt across the central part of the Site. In summer, with this new planting in leaf, the visibility of the equipment would reduce further, with vies remaining across the wider landscape	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Low Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Minor adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse
13A. Road users on Parsonage Lane	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a secondary road the susceptibility is medium. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity would not be visible due to the intervening residential land uses. Year 1 The ESS equipment would not be visible due to the intervening residential land uses. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): None Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Neutral Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
13B. Residents adjacent to Parsonage Lane (east of Cocksure Lane)	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high. Sensitivity The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction The construction activity in the eastern part of the Site, including that for the sub-station would be visible from upper storey rear windows or residential properties in a more elevated position to the north of the ESS Site. The construction of the access route and below ground corridor would not be visible. The construction activity would be or a greater scale than general farming activity and a noticeable change to the composition of the view, although with the receptors in an elevated position, views across the valley would remain. Year 1 The ESS equipment in the eastern part of the Site would be visible, including the sub-station.. The dark green render to the ESS equipment would aid in reducing the perceived mass, with views remaining across the wider landscape due to the Proposed Development being in a low lying position. In summer,	Construction (winter): Medium Year 1 (winter/summer): Medium / Medium Year 5 (winter/summer): Medium / Medium Year 10 (winter/summer): Low / Very Low	Construction (winter): Moderate adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Moderate adverse Year 5 (winter/summer): Moderate adverse / Moderate adverse Year 10 (winter/summer): Minor adverse / Negligible adverse

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
		the change to the composition of the view would be similar, due to the proposed planting along the eastern edge of the Site being low in height. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1 in winter conditions, but there would be some reduction of the visibility of the ESS equipment and substation in summer conditions, due to the proposed planting being taller and in leaf. Year 10 By year 10, the visibility of the ESS equipment and the substation in the eastern part of the Site would notably reduce due to the establishment of the hedgerows and trees along the eastern edge of the Site.		
14A. Road users on the A2018 (including pedestrians on the footway)	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be close range views of the construction of the underground cable corridor, although seen in the context of vehicles and existing development. In combination with the highly transient nature of the view, the change to the composition of the view would be small. Year 1 With the cable corridor below ground, there would be no change to the composition of the view. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Negligible adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
14B. Residents adjacent to the A2018	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As travellers on a main road the susceptibility is low. Sensitivity The combination of the low value and low susceptibility results in a **low sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be close range views of the construction of the underground cable corridor, although seen in the context of vehicles and existing development. The change to the composition of the view would be small. Year 1 With the cable corridor below ground, there would be no change to the composition of the view. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
15A. Recreational users on Vicarage Road	Value The location is unlikely to be visited specifically for the view, such that the value is low. Susceptibility As people engaged in outdoor recreation, the susceptibility is high. Susceptibility The combination of the low value and high susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be close range views of the construction of the underground cable corridor, although seen in the context of vehicles and existing development. The change to the composition of the view would be small. Year 1 With the cable corridor below ground, there would be no change to the composition of the view. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral
15B. Residents adjacent to Vicarage Road	Value The view is unlikely to be visited specifically and is likely to be incidental to the receptor's reason for being present. The value is therefore low. Susceptibility As residents, their susceptibility is high.	Construction There would be close range views of the construction of the underground cable corridor, although seen in the context of vehicles and existing development. The change to the composition of the view would be small. Year 1	Construction (winter): Low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Minor adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral

Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Assessment Narrative	Impact	Effect
	Sensitivity The combination of the low value and high susceptibility results in a **medium sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	With the cable corridor below ground, there would be no change to the composition of the view. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.		
16. Recreational users on PRoW (footpath) FP133	Value The view is likely to be valued locally and the value is medium. Susceptibility As people engaged in outdoor recreation, the susceptibility is high. Susceptibility The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a **high sensitivity** to the Proposed Development.	Construction There would be softened and oblique views of the construction of the underground cable corridor, although seen in the context of vehicles and existing development. The change to the composition of the view would be small. Year 1 With the cable corridor below ground, there would be no change to the composition of the view. Year 5 The assessment would reflect that at year 1. Year 10 The assessment would reflect that at year 1.	Construction (winter): Very low Year 1 (winter/summer): None / None Year 5 (winter/summer): None / None Year 10 (winter/summer): None / None	Construction (winter): Negligible adverse Year 1 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 5 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral Year 10 (winter/summer): Neutral / Neutral