



NEILSTON GREENER GRID PARK S36 APPLICATION

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

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23/08/2024

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
2	Landscape Legislation And Policies.....	7
3	Baseline Conditions.....	8
4	Embedded Mitigation.....	11
5	ZTV and Viewpoint Analysis.....	12
6	Residual Landscape Effects	16
7	Residual Visual Effects.....	18
8	Cumulative Effects.....	21
9	Summary & Conclusions.....	24

Appendix A – LVA Methodology

Appendix B – Landscape Figures

Figure 1 – Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoints

Figure 2 – Landscape Character

Figure 3 – Landscape Designations, Ancient Woodland and Visual Receptors

Appendix C – Photomontage Visualisations: proposed s.36 Layout

Appendix D – Photomontage Visualisations: consented scheme by Appeal

1 Introduction

This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by TGP Landscape Architects Ltd, a firm of independent consultants. The LVA report has been prepared with the aim of identifying the predicted landscape and visual effects of the proposed Neilston Greener Grid Park (the 'Proposed Development'). The Proposed Development is located at land to the east of the B775, approximately 400m northwest Of Sergeant Law, Renfrewshire (grid ref: 245060, 659853). It comprises formation of an up to 750MW Battery Storage Facility, comprising up to 88 battery storage container blocks and associated infrastructure, storage containers, welfare, diesel generators, CCTV and lighting columns and associated access, internal access roads, hard and soft landscaping, SuDS Basin, perimeter fence and underground grid connection cable.

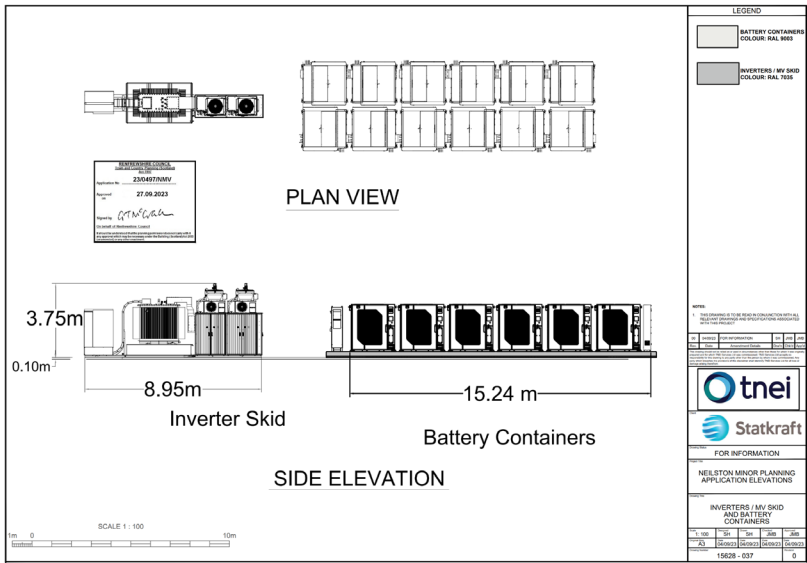
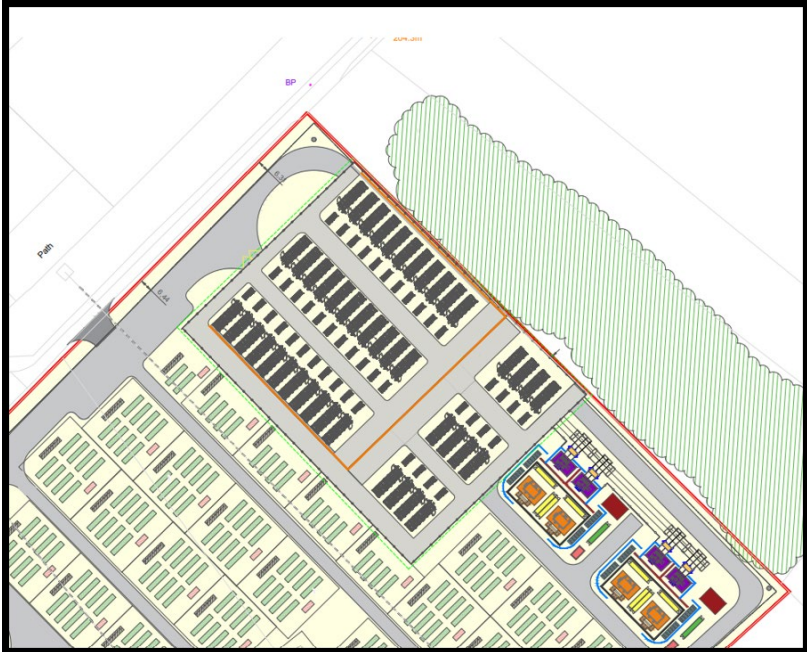
1.1 Project Background

By way of background, the Neilston Greener Grid Park (GGP) proposal (LPA Ref. 21/0034/PP), which proposed 'energy management and battery storage containers with associated access, landscaping and fencing' was originally refused full planning permission by Renfrewshire Council (the LPA) dated 8 Nov 2021 due to landscape visual impact reason.

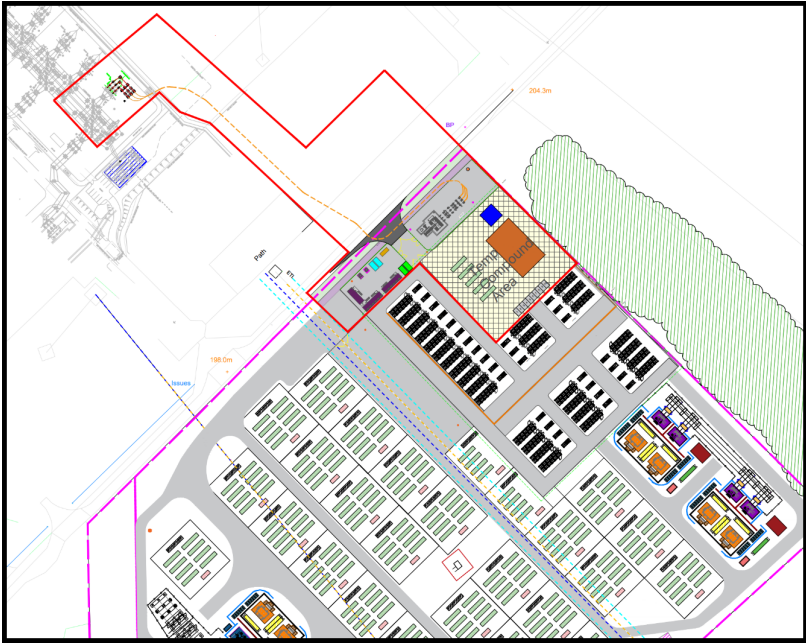
An appeal was subsequently submitted to the Scottish Government's 'Division of Planning and Environmental Appeals' (DPEA) in February 2022. The appeal was allowed (DPEA Ref. PPA-350-2047) by the Reporter on 28 April 2022 and therefore planning permission granted. The approved layout is shown below.



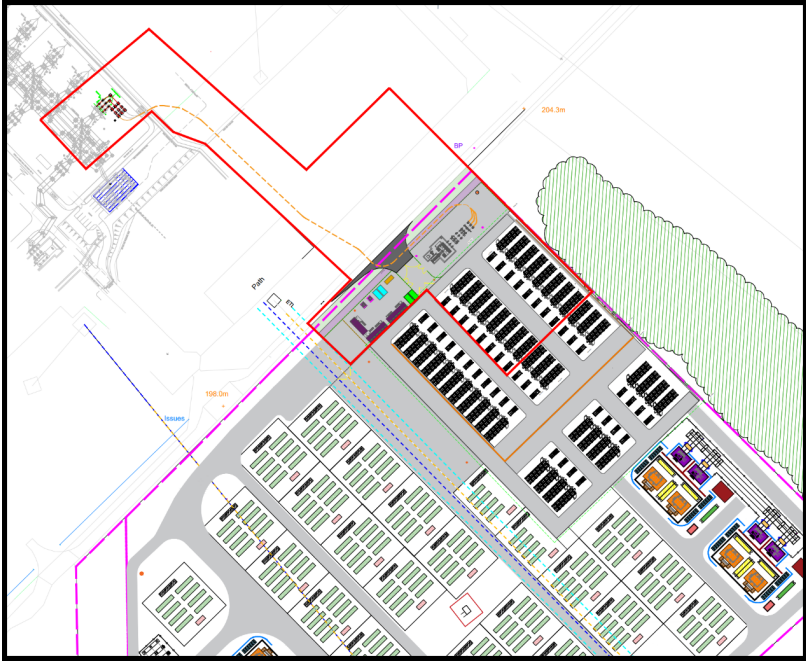
The applicant subsequently amended the Appeal Scheme via a Non-material Variation (NMV) application (LPA Ref. 23/0497/NMV) that was approved by Renfrewshire Council on 27 Sept 2023. This is to amend the north-east corner of the Appeal Scheme with a revised BESS layout as shown below and that these battery containers have been approved as part of the NMV to be in signal white colour (RAL 9003). See extracts of approved plans below relating to the NMV.



A subsequent full planning permission (LPA Ref. 23/0224/PP) (under a 'minor' application) was granted on 30 Nov 2023 to vary the original consented scheme by proposing the erection of a new HV Yard and ancillary structures, cable route to the existing substation, relocated site access, and temporary construction compound to the north-west corner of the site as shown below (application site edged in red).



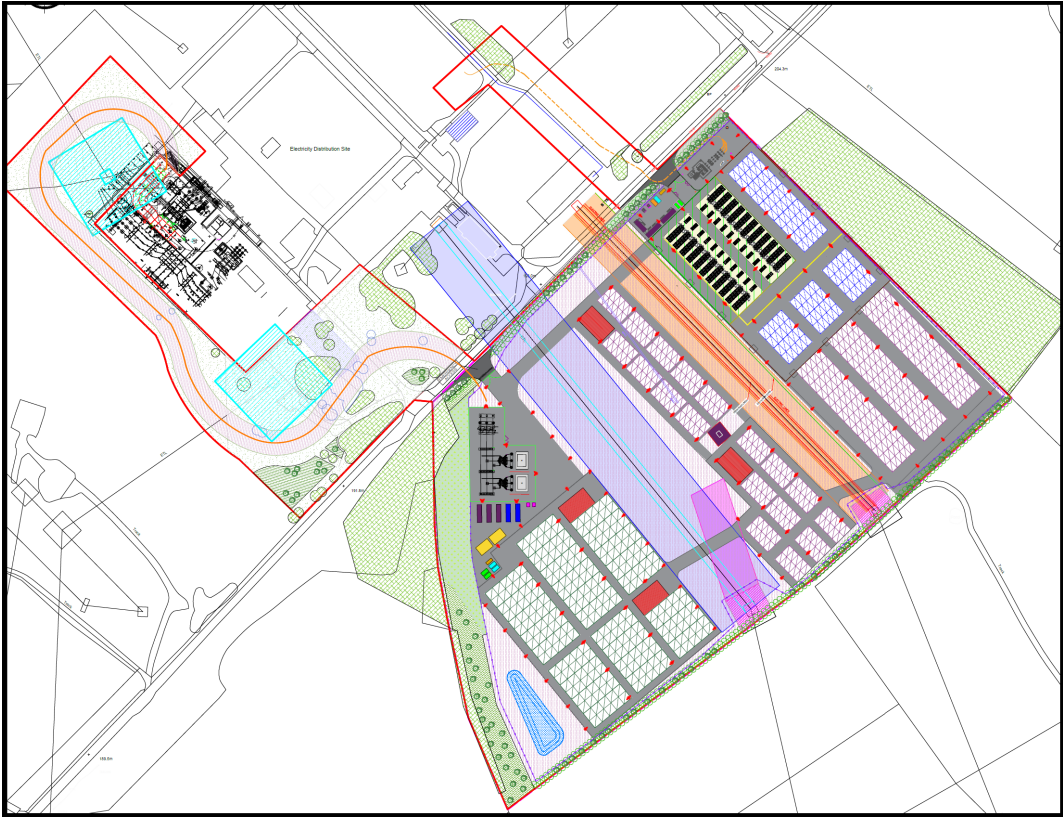
Planning Permission LPA Ref. 23/0224/PP makes clear that the temporary construction compound will be subsequently populated with BESS to align with the previous NMV approval (LPA Ref. 23/0497/NMV). The plan below shows this clearly for context and was submitted as part of application 23/0224/PP.



This element of development of the Greener Grid Park to the north-east corner of the site is currently under construction and accordingly forms part of the baseline. The battery storage units within this localised part of the Site will be white in colour; whilst the other built form will be a muted green colour.

The applicant now seeks to amend the layout of the Proposed Development across the remaining part

of the Site, with a view to increasing the overall Site capacity to 750MW. The revised layout forms the basis of this LVA, which accompanies the Section 36 Application. The layout is illustrated below.



s.36 Layout



Visualisation of s.36 scheme – northward view



Visualisation of s.36 scheme – southward view

The Section 36 layout ('s.36 Layout') occupies the same footprint as the consented scheme as granted by way of an appeal, and primarily incorporates the same elements, including battery containers and associated infrastructure, as well as ancillary works including fencing, access, parking, and underground grid connection.

With the exception of the signal white colour battery containers in the northern part of the Site, approved via the 2023 NMV (and currently under construction), the s.36 Layout would comprise the same external colours as the consented scheme. This comprises a muted green colour (RAL 6003, Olive Green, or similar approved). The s.36 Layout would also incorporate the same approach to landscape planting within the Site as a means of softening the appearance of the Proposed Development, and contributing towards local landscape character and habitat enhancement. Refer to TGP drawing nos. 2161/L01 and 2161/L02 for full details.

The main changes within the s.36 Layout are therefore limited to the Site infrastructure and internal road layout. The consented scheme incorporated Synchronous Compensator Housing (Sync Comps), with max height of up to 6m, thereby representing some of the tallest elements within the consented scheme. For the s.36 Layout, these Sync Comps are not required. Accordingly, the highest elements would comprise infrastructure within the 400kV HV Yard, which would be located at a low-lying position in the southwestern part of the Site. In addition, the s.36 Layout retains greater areas of open space between the banks of battery stores in comparison to the consented scheme. These open spaces would align with the existing overhead lines extending through the Site and would comprise wildflower meadow ground cover. The s.36 Layout does not alter in any way the consented HV Yard and signal white colour battery containers in the northern part of the Site that are currently under construction.

The retention of the same Site footprint, external colours, consistent landscape mitigation (with greater open space / soft landscape within the Site compound), and the exclusion of the Sync Comps suggests that the landscape and visual effects of the s.36 Layout should be no greater than those of the consented scheme. However, taking a precautionary approach, potential changes to previously reported levels of effect are addressed within this LVA. Accordingly, this LVA makes reference to the LVA for the consented scheme (the '2021 LVA' as undertaken by Arcus Consultancy Services, January 2021) and the associated L&V Appeal Statement (by TGP Landscape Architects Ltd, February 2022). The LVA also reviews the baseline for any potential changes that may have occurred.

1.2 Guidance and Methodology

The methodology used in this LVA is included in **Appendix A** and is consistent with the approach in the 2021 LVA. This is based on the following best practice guidance:

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)*; Institute of Environmental Management and Appraisal and the Landscape Institute, 2013;
- *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*; Prepared on behalf of the Countryside Agency and NatureScot, Land Use Consultants, 2002;
- *Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Guidance*; NatureScot, 2022; and
- *Visual Representation of Development Proposals*; Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/2019 (2019).

1.3 Scope of the LVA

This assessment follows the same stages of analysis (and criteria for evaluating the potential effects) as presented in the 2021 LVA. Potential construction phase effects and decommissioning effects would be predominantly unaltered from those described within the 2021 LVA and are therefore not considered further in this LVA. Instead the assessment focuses on potential changes to the assessed level of effect on key landscape and visual receptors during the operational phase of the Proposed Development. As such, the LVA is organised in the following sections:

- Landscape Legislation And Policies – reviews any changes to policy since the 2021 LVA;
- Baseline Conditions – reviews any changes to the landscape and visual baseline that may have occurred since the 2021 LVA;
- Embedded Mitigation – describes the integrated design measures to minimise potential landscape and visual effects;
- ZTV and Viewpoint Analysis – analysis of the geographic extents of visibility and the potential effects at a selection of viewpoints (consistent with those in the 2021 LVA);
- Residual Landscape Effects – assesses the effects upon landscape character and landscape designations within the Study Area, with reference to the consented scheme;
- Residual Visual Effects – assesses the effects on visual amenity of residents, recreational receptors and road users within the Study Area, with reference to the consented scheme;
- Cumulative Effects – considers the combined effects of the Proposed Development in combination with other electricity infrastructure; and

- Summary & Conclusion – a summary of the LVA results, highlighting any changes in effects in relation to the 2021 LVA.

The LVA is augmented by supporting text, plans, and visualisations. This includes the following figures within **Appendix B**:

- Figure 1 – Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoints;
- Figure 2 – Landscape Character; and
- Figure 3 – Landscape Designations, Ancient Woodland and Visual Receptors.

In addition, the LVA should be read in conjunction with the detailed planting proposals as illustrated in TGP drawing nos. 2161/L01: Main Compound, and 2161/L02: Cable Route.

1.4 Study Area

The LVA focuses on landscape and visual receptors located within 2km of the Site. This is consistent with the 2km radius Study Area adopted within the original LVA. Any notable landscape or visual effects would be confined well within this geographical area.

2 Landscape Legislation And Policies

With reference to legislation and policy context at a local level; the development plan referred to in the 2021 LVA comprised the following documents:

- *Renfrewshire Local Development Plan*, Renfrewshire Council, 2014; and
- *Renfrewshire LDP New Development Supplementary Guidance*, Renfrewshire Council, 2014.

In the intervening time, these documents have been superseded by updated planning policy. The latest policy, setting out spatial strategy and proposals for Renfrewshire over the next 10 years comprises:

- *Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2021*, Renfrewshire Council, 2021; and
- *Renfrewshire LDP New Development Supplementary Guidance*, Renfrewshire Council, 2022.

2.1 Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2021

Key landscape-related policy within the Renfrewshire LDP 2021 comprises:

- Policy I4 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments, supports development in principle where appropriate in terms of location, siting and design, including individual or cumulative effects on landscape character and visual amenity.
- Policy P5 – Green/Blue Network, supports development which protects or enhances the quality and connectivity of green/blue networks.
- Policy ENV1 – Green Belt, recognises the importance of the green belt to landscape setting. Essential infrastructure (including electricity and renewables) will be considered appropriate in principle where it does not have an adverse impact on the character of the green belt.
- Policy ENV2 – Natural Heritage, seeks to protect and enhance the natural environment and minimise any adverse impacts on habitats and landscape character.

2.2 Renfrewshire LDP New Development Supplementary Guidance 2022

The New Development Supplementary Guidance sets out detailed development criteria in support of policy within the LDP. This incorporates guidance specific to Infrastructure, Places and Environment.

In terms of Infrastructure, guidance in relation to Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments states that proposed development should avoid significant visual intrusion, or impacts on the amenity of local residents, as well as unacceptable adverse effects on the natural environment. Cognisance should be given to development scale and design, as well as alternative sites. Individual and cumulative impacts require consideration.

In terms of Places, guidance for Green Network and Infrastructure requires new development to incorporate green infrastructure, designed to link with the surrounding area, as well as its long-term management.

In terms of Environment, guidance in relation to Green Belt requires new development to avoid significant detrimental impact on local landscape character. Landscaping proposals should be incorporate well-designed boundary treatment. The importance of Natural Heritage is also highlighted, including its contribution to landscape character. Accordingly, impacts on natural assets should be avoided where possible, and/or minimised and compensated via new planting. There is an onus on protecting woodland and planting new broad-leaved species. Planting that provides habitat enhancement and connectivity is encouraged. With regard to buildings within the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, there is a requirement to avoid significant impacts on the visual amenity of the area, via consideration of scale and design.

With regards to LVA, the guidance highlights that assessment should follow industry standard guidance within the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Appraisal 3rd Edition* (The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, 2013).

3 Baseline Conditions

3.1 Local Landscape Context

Figure 1 illustrates the geographic location of the Proposed Development, which is located within an area of undulating farmland, 900m south of Foxbar. The local context surrounding the Proposed Development is predominantly unchanged since the 2021 LVA. The locality is substantially influenced by existing electricity infrastructure. This includes the existing Neilston Substation to the northwest, and associated pylons and overhead power lines (OHLs) extending outwards to the northwest, southwest and southeast. These OHLs form a ‘wire-scape’ in the vicinity of the Site by virtue of their scale and density / concentration in this area. This includes two separate OHLs that extend in a southeasterly direction across the Site.

Since the 2021 LVA, the primary changes to the local area are limited to the ongoing construction of the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound within the northern part of the Site (associated

with the 2023 NMV). In addition, the cumulative Grid Stability Facility (in planning at the time of the 2021 LVA, and consented at the time of the 2022 Appeal) has been constructed. This development is located 600m to the southwest of the Site, on the opposite side of the B775. Together, these elements represent comparatively small-scale additions that augment the other existing infrastructure within the locality.

In addition to the above, the existing consent for battery storage development within the Site also forms a theoretical component within the future baseline.

3.2 Landscape Character

There have been no changes to published landscape character assessment as described within the 2021 LVA. With reference to **Figure 2**, the Site is located within the Rugged Upland Farmland LCT¹. The key characteristics of this LCT are as follows:

- *'Rugged landform comprising rocky bluffs and shallow troughs.*
- *Reservoirs in flooded troughs.*
- *Dominance of pastoral farming.*
- *Frequent tree cover often emphasising landform, for example concentrated on bluffs and outcrops.*
- *Settlement limited to farms and villages.'*

Although not listed within the key characteristics of the LCT as a whole, the LCT description goes on to state that urban influences include *'electricity infrastructure and masts, particularly around Gleniffer Braes'*. As described within the 2022 Appeal, the local context surrounding the Proposed Development is substantially influenced by existing electricity infrastructure. This includes the existing Neilston Substation and associated pylons and OHLs extending outwards from this, which form a 'wire-scape' in the vicinity of the Site by virtue of their scale and density / concentration in this area. Subsequently, these elements have been augmented by the Grid Stability Facility to the southwest, as well as the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site (which is under construction and forms part of the baseline). Together, these elements form a subtype of this LCT – namely the 'Rugged Upland Farmland with Infrastructure' LCT subtype.

3.3 Landscape Designations, Country Parks and Green Belt

There have been no changes to landscape designations since the 2021 LVA. As illustrated in **Figure 3**, there are no landscape designations within the Study Area, albeit the Site is located within an area of Green Belt. In addition, Gleniffer Braes Country Park extends across the surrounding landscape to the north, west and east of the Site.

¹ NatureScot (2019) Scottish Landscape Character Types (<https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/scottish-landscape-character-types-map-and-descriptions>)

3.4 Visual Baseline

Local Residents

Residential receptors are considered to be of High sensitivity to the Proposed Development in all cases. The nearby settlements of Foxbar and Glenburn are located outside the ZTV and are not considered further. The 2021 LVA identified twelve individual properties located within 2km of the Site. These are illustrated in **Figure 3** (as R1 – R12). Baseline review identified four additional dwellings / clusters of dwellings within the Study Area (R13 – R16). Those within the ZTV are listed below.

- R1 Craigmuir, 1.8km to the west;
- R2 Bent Farm, 1.4km to the west;
- R3 Brownside, 1.8km to the southwest;
- R4 Lapwing Lodge, 1.2km to the southwest;
- R5 East Caplaw Farm, 1.1km to the southwest;
- R6 Caplaw Farm, 1.0km to the southwest;
- R7 Middleton, 1.6km to the south;
- R8 Mossneuk Farm, 1.0km to the south; and
- R9 Greenfield Muir, 1.4km to the south.

All other isolated dwellings within 2km of the Site are located outside the ZTV and are not considered further. These comprise Sergeantlaw (R10), Thornliemuir (R11), Capellie Farm (R12), West Caplaw and Elcarim (R13), Low Bardrain (R14), Mackiesmill (R15) and High Craigenfeoch (R16).

Recreational Receptors

The sensitivity of recreational receptors to the Proposed Development is considered High in all cases. With reference to the 2021 LVA, the key recreational routes and attractions with the Study Area comprises the Core Path network (specifically GB/24), which extends through Gleniffer Braes Country Park to the north of the Site. Wider parts of the Core Path network are located entirely outside the ZTV and are not considered further. Similarly, Paisley Golf Club would be fully screened and is not considered further.

Baseline review identified three further potential recreational attractions within the Study Area. These comprise Robertson Park Picnic Area / Vantage point and nearby Standing Stones within Gleniffer Braes Country Park, as well as the Durrockstock Park Local Nature Reserve and Stanely Castle (remains), which are both located north of the Site on the edge of Foxbar. These attractions are all located outside the ZTV and consequently are not considered further.

Road Users

The key transport routes within the Study Area are limited to road users on the B775 (Gleniffer Road). This route extends northeast-southwest through the Study Area, along the northwestern side of the Site boundary at the closest point. Based on the transient nature of such views, road users are considered to be of Medium sensitivity to the Proposed Development.

4 Embedded Mitigation

4.1 Site Design

As described in Section 1.1, the s.36 Layout occupies the same footprint as the consented scheme, and primarily incorporates the same elements of infrastructure, with the exception of the Sync Comps that are excluded from the s.36 Layout. In addition, the Site compound retains greater areas of open space (comprising wildflower meadow) than the consented scheme. Accordingly, the scale of the infrastructure proposed within the s.36 Layout would be consistent, and reduced in some instances, in comparison to the consented scheme. In particular, the overall massing of built form would be reduced in the s.36 Layout due to the retention of open space within the compound.

4.2 Landscape Design Approach

The landscape approach for the s.36 Layout is primarily unaltered from the consented scheme. This is illustrated in TGP drawing nos. 2161/L01 and 2161/L02, and seeks to effectively integrate the Proposed Development into the surrounding landscape. As per the consented approach, the planting proposals seek to provide screening to lessen potential influence on landscape and visual amenity, and habitat enhancement to contribute towards landscape character and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). To this end, the Proposed Development incorporates the following embedded mitigation measures:

- Land clearance and occupation would be limited to necessary areas only to minimise the geographic spread of the infrastructure and limit the potential impact on the local landscape fabric (areas underneath the existing overhead lines would be retained as open green space);
- In terms of colour and materials, the battery storage units, inverter skid, and perimeter fencing would be a recessive green colour (such as RAL 6003 Olive Green, or similar) to assist blending in with the surrounding landscape;
- The existing tree groups to the northeast and southwest of the Site would be retained, and protected during the construction works via temporary fencing to demarcate the root protection area. Similarly, a localised area of existing species-rich grassland of ecological value at the southwestern edge of the Site would be retained;
- New hedge, tree and woodland edge planting would be established along the Site perimeter to provide screening / soften views from surrounding areas, and form a green link between the areas of existing vegetation to the northeast and southwest of the Site.
- Tree planting, woodland edge and hedgerows would be based on a mix of native species. Trees would comprise feathers (up to 1.75m height) to provide screening and softening of views at an early stage;
- Areas of wildflower meadow would be established across the Site, providing ecological and landscape character enhancement. This includes two distinct mixes, in response to the localised conditions along the proposed hedgerows, and across more open parts of the Site. This includes continuous blocks of wildflower meadow between the banks of battery stores within the Site compound.

All new planting would comprise native, broad leaf species characteristic of the local area. New hedges would be based on a 55% Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) content, augmented with other flowering and berry-producing native species for enhanced wildlife benefit.

Existing trees to be retained would be protected via temporary tree protection fencing, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Clause 6.2. The fencing would be constructed prior to commencement of construction works and there would be no works, vehicular over-run, or storage of materials within the extents of the tree protection fencing area.

These landscape proposals form an integral component of the Proposed Development, and are considered in the assessment of effects.

5 ZTV and Viewpoint Analysis

5.1 ZTV Analysis

Figure 1 illustrates the areas from where it may be theoretically possible to view parts of the Proposed Development. The ZTV is calculated on the basis of bare ground, and does not incorporate the potential screening influence of built form or vegetation. This illustrates that the main views of the Proposed Development would be focused across the landscape to the west, southwest and south of the Site.

Based on the exclusion of the Sync Comps and revised infrastructure arrangement within the s.36 Layout, the geographic extents of the ZTV coverage are reduced in comparison to the consented scheme. Accordingly, the landscape and visual effects would be focused within a more contained area surrounding the Site.

5.2 Viewpoint Analysis

Viewpoint analysis has been undertaken to review the nature / extent of visibility at five key locations as illustrated in **Figure 1**. The viewpoint locations are consistent with those within the 2021 LVA and 2022 Appeal. The following analysis reviews any potential changes in effects based on the s.36 Layout. Photomontage visualisations illustrating the proposed s.36 Layout are presented in Appendix C. For cross-reference, photomontages showing the consented scheme by appeal are presented in Appendix D.

Viewpoint 1 – B775 (north)

This viewpoint is representative of close proximity views experienced by road users on the B775 travelling southwest (Medium sensitivity), and walkers on the local Core Path GB/24 (High sensitivity). The existing view comprises the B775 road corridor, flanked by coniferous tree cover and roadside scrub. Existing built form incorporates overhead transmission lines and associated pylons that punctuate the skyline. The construction works associated with the consented HV Yard, ancillary buildings and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site are also visible. These components will form an integral part of the view within the future baseline.

View at Year 0: Based on the introduction of the s.36 Layout, there would be views of the perimeter fence extending along the roadside in the distance. All other elements of infrastructure would be predominantly screened beyond the intervening HV Yard and ancillary buildings within the northern

part of the Site that are currently under construction.

View at Year 5: The native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would begin to soften views of the Proposed Development, in particular the fencing extending along the side of the B775.

View at Year 15: The establishment of native hedge tree planting along the Site boundary would result in almost complete screening of the perimeter fence. Views would be predominantly limited to consented infrastructure within the HV Yard (currently under construction).

In summary, within the 2021 LVA the levels of effect at Year 0 were described as being Moderate-Major for road users, and Major for recreational walkers. Upon the establishment of planting, the effects were described as reducing to Minor for road users, and Moderate for walkers. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously.

Viewpoint 2 – B775 (south)

This viewpoint illustrates the view experienced by road users on the B775 travelling northeast (Medium sensitivity). The existing view comprises the B775 road corridor and adjacent fields of open pasture, dissected by two separate overhead transmission lines. Longer distance views to the north east are foreshortened by the rising landform and coniferous tree cover, which form the horizon. The skyline is punctuated by a further overhead transmission line located beyond these trees and telecoms masts to the east. The construction works associated with the consented HV Yard, ancillary buildings and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site are also visible on the horizon. These components will form an integral part of the view in front of the existing forestry.

View at Year 0: Based on the introduction of the Proposed Development, there would be close proximity views of the perimeter fence and infrastructure within the Site. At this distance, the Proposed Development would represent a notable new feature within the view. However, it would be experienced within the same angle of view as the existing pylons and telecoms masts, as well as the consented HV Yard and associated battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. With reference to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would retain greater areas of open space within the Site. These open spaces would comprise wildflower meadow, aligned with the overhead power lines extending through the Site. As a result, the overall massing of built form / infrastructure would be reduced in the s.36 Layout in comparison with the consented scheme.

View at Year 5: The native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would begin to soften views of the Proposed Development. Views would be predominantly limited to localised parts of the perimeter fence, as well as the consented HV Yard and battery compound in the northern part of the Site (currently under construction).

View at Year 15: The establishment of native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would further soften views of the Proposed Development. Views would be predominantly limited to the consented HV Yard and battery compound in the northern part of the Site. The establishment of tree planting along the Site boundary would also result in partial screening of existing overhead

transmission lines and telecoms masts within the view, and thereby disguise the spread of existing electrical infrastructure along the horizon.

In summary, within the 2021 LVA the levels of effect were described as being Moderate-Major at Year 0, reducing to Moderate upon establishment of planting. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously.

Viewpoint 3 – Unclassified Road (Southwest)

This viewpoint illustrates the transient view experienced by road users on the local road network to the south west of the Site (Medium sensitivity). The existing view comprises rolling landform with rough grassland, and localised parcels of tree cover. Electricity infrastructure forms a key component of the view, including the existing Neilston Substation, Grid Stability Facility, and overhead transmission lines. There are also views of telecoms masts on the distant skyline to the east. The construction works for the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site are also partly visible in the distance.

View at Year 0: The Proposed Development would be visible on the sloping landscape in the distance, in the same angle of view as existing electricity infrastructure and the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound. The Proposed Development would be experienced below the horizon and would be back-clothed by tree cover to the north. The Proposed Development would augment the existing and consented infrastructure within the view, without widening its spread across wider parts of the landscape. The overall massing of built form / infrastructure would be reduced in the s.36 Layout in comparison to the consented scheme due to the retention of open space (wildflower meadow) within the Site.

View at Year 5: At this distance, the native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would soften the edges of the Proposed Development, albeit exert limited influence on the view.

View at Year 15: The establishment of native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundaries would further soften the edges of the Proposed Development. The infrastructure within the Site would remain visible, albeit at distance, within the context of existing and consented electricity infrastructure.

In summary, within the 2021 LVA the levels of effect were described as being Minor at Year 0, reducing to Negligible upon establishment of planting. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously.

Viewpoint 4 – Caplaw Road, B775 Junction

This viewpoint illustrates the transient view experienced by road users on the local road network / B775 to the south west of the Site (Medium sensitivity). The existing view comprises the B775 road corridor, flanked by areas of pastoral farmland that are dissected by overhead transmission lines. Other built form within the view incorporates the existing Neilston Substation to the north, and telecoms masts that break the skyline to the north east. The Grid Stability Facility is visible in filtered

views through intervening trees at the side of the B775. There will also be views of the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site.

View at Year 0: The Proposed Development would be visible on the sloping landscape in the distance where it would be experienced below the horizon, and back-clothed by tree cover to the north. The Proposed Development would represent a new element within the local landscape, within the same angle of view as existing electricity infrastructure. The overall massing of built form / infrastructure would be reduced in the s.36 Layout in comparison to the consented scheme due to the retention of open space (wildflower meadow) within the Site. Due to the sloping nature of the landform, the proposed wildflower meadow within the Site would form a visible presence between the banks of infrastructure, softening their influence on the view.

View at Year 5: At this distance, the native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would slightly soften the edges of the Proposed Development, albeit would exert limited influence on the view.

View at Year 15: The establishment of native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundaries would soften the edges of the Proposed Development and provide partial screening of built form within the lower-lying southwestern parts of the Site in particular. The infrastructure within other parts of the Site would also be partly screened. Localised elements that remain visible (including battery stores in the northern part of the Site) would be experienced at distance, within the context of existing and consented electricity infrastructure.

In summary, within the 2021 LVA the levels of effect experienced by road users were described as being Moderate at Year 0, reducing to Minor upon establishment of planting. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously.

Viewpoint 5 – Unclassified Road (South)

This viewpoint is representative of the transient view experienced by road users on the local road network to the south east of the Site (Medium sensitivity). The existing view comprises the sloping landform with ground cover of rough pasture and scattered parcels of tree cover. Electricity infrastructure forms a key component of the view, including the existing Neilston Substation and overhead transmission lines. There are also views of telecoms masts on the distant skyline to the north. The construction works associated with the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site are partly visible. These components will form an integral part of the view.

View at Year 0: The Proposed Development would be partly screened by the intervening landform, and represent a relatively discreet new element within the local landscape. It would be experienced within the same angle of view as the existing overhead lines and Neilston Substation (and the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound once fully constructed). As such, the Proposed Development would exert limited influence on the existing view, and would be contained within the spread of existing / consented infrastructure.

View at Year 5: The native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would begin to soften views of the Proposed Development, albeit the upper parts of the infrastructure would be visible.

View at Year 15: The establishment of native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundary would partly screen the Proposed Development. Views would be limited to the upper parts of the infrastructure within the Site, which would be filtered by intervening vegetation. The establishment of tree planting would also result in partial screening of the existing Neilston Substation, thereby softening its influence upon the view.

In summary, within the 2021 LVA the levels of effect were described as being Moderate at Year 0, reducing to Minor upon establishment of planting. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously.

6 Residual Landscape Effects

6.1 Effects on Landscape Character

The Proposed Development would result in direct effects on the Rugged Upland Farmland LCT. The key characteristics of this LCT, and local landscape subtype at the Site, are described in Section 3.2. The sensitivity of the LCT as described in the 2021 LVA is considered to be Low–Medium, with reference to the existing elements of infrastructure that detract from local landscape quality.

The Proposed Development would represent a new element of infrastructure within the LCT. This would be located in close proximity to the existing elements of electricity infrastructure, as well as the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site that is under construction. These elements contribute towards the pre-existing ‘Rugged Upland Farmland with Infrastructure’ LCT-subtype that is evident in the Site locality.

The Proposed Development would augment this existing infrastructure. Given the relatively low height of the proposed infrastructure, in combination with the muted external colours and containment within the footprint of the consented scheme, the resultant effects upon landscape character would be focused well-within the associated LCT-subtype. The influence on the Proposed Development on local landscape character would be further tempered by the landscape planting around its perimeter and the wildflower meadow within the Site compound, which would soften its appearance over time and augment the existing green infrastructure in the adjoining areas to the northeast and southwest of the Site. Accordingly, there would be no increase in the geographic spread of the pre-existing LCT-subtype, and very limited influence on the character of the wider Rugged Upland Farmland LCT.

The 2021 LVA reported that the main effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character would be focused within the Site itself and that effects on the wider LCT would be Negligible. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously. Large parts of the Rugged Upland Farmland LCT would be completely unaffected.

There would be no notable effects on any other LCT in the Study Area.

6.2 Effects on Landscape Designations, Country Parks and Green Belt

Gleniffer Braes Country Park

Gleniffer Braes Country Park extends around the neighbouring landscape to the north, west and east of the Site. With reference to the 2021 LVA, it is considered to be of Medium sensitivity to the Proposed Development. There would be no direct, physical effect on the landscape within the Park. Instead the potential effects would be indirect, based solely on views of the proposed infrastructure.

As illustrated by the ZTV in **Figure 1**, potential views of the Proposed Development would be very limited across the Park, and focused across localised parts to the west of the Site. This area coincides with the existing Neilston substation, which exerts a strong influence across this part of the Park. This will be augmented by the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site once fully constructed. The Proposed Development would represent an additional element of electricity infrastructure in the area, albeit would typically be experienced at greater distance (beyond the existing / consented infrastructure), and would be of lower height. The close proximity of the Site to the existing elements of infrastructure would ensure no increase in the spread of built form across wider parts of the surrounding landscape. The muted external colours would further temper the influence of the Proposed Development on outward views from the Park. Views of the Proposed Development would steadily reduce over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish, resulting in reduced visual influence over time.

As reported in the 2021 LVA, the effects would be Moderate in the immediate vicinity of the Site, reducing to Negligible across wider parts of the Country Park. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously. These effects would reduce over time and would be Moderate-Minor at most by Year 15 based on a Small magnitude of change. The vast majority of Gleniffer Braes Country Park would be completely unaffected.

Renfrewshire Green Belt

Green Belt land falls under the remit of Policy ENV1 within the Renfrewshire LDP 2021, which seeks to safeguard its existing character and contribution to the green network, aligning with opportunities for recreational use. The effects upon the Green Belt are therefore linked in-part to those in relation to landscape character.

As described above, the Proposed Development would be located within an area that is already influenced by existing large-scale electricity infrastructure, resulting in a pre-existing LCT-subtype. This is considered to be of lower susceptibility to infrastructure development as a consequence. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would result in limited change to the existing landscape character of the locality.

In terms of the green network, there would be no loss of trees or hedgerows. Instead, the embedded landscape proposals would result in the extension of existing field boundary planting and tree cover around the Site perimeter. This would be augmented by areas of species-rich grassland and wildflower

meadow (encompassing greater parts of the Site within the s.36 Layout in comparison to the consented scheme). With regards to opportunities for recreational use, there is no access to the Site at present. The main focus for public access in the vicinity is to Gleniffer Braes Country Park. As assessed above, the effects of the Proposed Development on this recreational resource would be very localised.

In summary, the 2021 LVA reported no notable effects upon the Renfrewshire Green Belt. This was re-examined as part of the 2022 Appeal, which also concluded that the key criteria of the Green Belt would not be notably affected by the Proposed Development. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect. The influence of the Proposed Development on the Green Belt would steadily reduce over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

7 Residual Visual Effects

7.1 Visual effects experienced by Local Residents

The Appraisal below considers the effects experienced by local residents in isolated residential dwellings / groups of dwellings within 2km of the Site. In all cases, sensitivity is deemed to be High.

R1 Craigmuir is located 1.8km to the west of the Proposed Development. Potential views would be screened by intervening vegetation within the curtilage. In filtered views the Proposed Development would represent a distant element beyond existing the Neilston Substation and overhead lines, within the context of the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. The 2021 LVA concluded that the level of effect would be Negligible. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously.

R2 Bent Farm is located 1.4km to the west of the Proposed Development. Potential views would be screened by intervening vegetation around the garden. In filtered views the Proposed Development would represent a distant element beyond existing the Neilston Substation, overhead lines and Grid Stability Facility. The 2021 LVA concluded that the level of effect would be Negligible. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously.

R3 Brownside is located 1.8km to the southwest of the Proposed Development. Potential views would be screened by intervening woodland / shelterbelt in the landscape to the northeast. The 2021 LVA concluded that there would be no views and no effect. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously.

R4 Lapwing Lodge is located 1.2km to the southwest of the Proposed Development, within an area of established woodland. The 2021 LVA concluded that there would be no views and no effect. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously.

R5 East Caplaw Farm is located 1.1km to the southwest of the Proposed Development. As described in the 2021 LVA, there would be no views from the property due to intervening outbuildings. With reference to secondary views from the driveway, the 2021 LVA reported a Moderate-Major level of

effect. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously. With reference to Viewpoint 4 (located on the nearby road), the increased retention of open space (wildflower meadow) within the s.36 Layout would soften the appearance of the proposed infrastructure in comparison to the consented scheme. Over time, the establishment of native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundaries would soften the edges of the Proposed Development and provide partial screening of built form within the Site by Year 15.

R6 Caplaw Farm is located 1.0km to the southwest of the Proposed Development, and comprises the dwellings of Glenview and Scarsdale. Potential views from Scarsdale would be fully screened by intervening roadside tree cover and garden vegetation. Views from Glenview would be partly screened by intervening outbuildings on the northern side of the dwelling. The clearest views of the Proposed Development would be experienced from wider parts of the curtilage. The Proposed Development would be experienced beyond pylons in the foreground of the view, in the context of the existing Neilston Substation and consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. The 2021 LVA reported a Moderate-Major level of effect. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously. With reference to Viewpoint 4 (located on the nearby road), the increased retention of open space (wildflower meadow) within the s.36 Layout would soften the appearance of the proposed infrastructure in comparison to the consented scheme. The establishment of native hedge and tree planting along the Site boundaries would soften the edges of the Proposed Development over time, and provide partial screening of built form within the Site by Year 15.

R7 Middleton is located 1.6km to the south of the Proposed Development. The property is southeast-facing. Potential views of the Proposed Development from the rear, northwest-facing side of the property would be screened by intervening outbuildings. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no discernible views and no effect.

R8 Mossneuk Farm is located 1.0km to the south of the Proposed Development, and comprises the main farmhouse (two-storey, west-facing) and the nearby bungalow of Glenmire. Views from Glenmire would be fully screened by intervening garden vegetation. Potential views from Mossneuk Farm would be oblique to the main direction of view and filtered by tree cover around the curtilage. Within more open views from upper storey windows, the Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of existing overhead lines, within the same sector of view as Neilston Substation and the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. The 2021 LVA reported a Moderate level of effect. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously.

R9 Greenfield Muir is located 1.4km to the south of the Proposed Development. The two-storey property is northwest-facing. The Proposed Development would be experienced beyond intervening pylons, within the same sector of view as Neilston Substation and the consented HV Yard and battery storage compound. It would represent a discreet, low-lying element in the distance. It would not

extend the spread of electricity infrastructure across wider parts of the view. The 2021 LVA concluded that the level of effect would be Negligible. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect reported previously.

7.2 Visual effects experienced by Recreational Receptors

The Appraisal below considers the effects experienced by recreational walkers on Core Path GB/24, to the north of the Site. Sensitivity of walkers is deemed to be High. ZTV coverage is limited to a 280m long section of the path.

For walkers traveling south, views of the Proposed Development would be partly screened by intervening roadside vegetation along the B775, including coniferous species. Within more open views, the Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of existing overhead lines and Neilston Substation, as well as the consented HV yard and battery storage compound within the northern part of the Site (see Viewpoint 1). Accordingly, the Proposed Development would represent a relatively minor addition within southerly views.

For walkers travelling north, the Proposed Development would be located behind the direction of travel.

The 2021 LVA described the level of effect at Year 0 as being Moderate, reducing to Negligible upon the establishment of planting. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the levels of effect reported previously. The Proposed Development would represent a relatively discreet element within southerly views, beyond intervening buildings and tree cover, experienced by those walking in a southerly direction only.

7.3 Visual effects experienced by Road Users

The potential visual effects experienced by those travelling on the B775 (Gleniffer Road) are described below. The sensitivity of road users is considered to be Medium. It is relevant to note that views would be experienced transiently and would be restricted in part by the screening effect of intervening tree cover and the orientation of travel. As such, views would not be experienced uniformly. ZTV coverage is primarily focused along a 2.0km section of the road to the west of the Site.

For road users travelling southwest, the first views of the Proposed Development would be experienced upon passing the brow of the hill at the north side of Sergeant Law. With reference to Viewpoint 1, there would be views of the perimeter fence extending along the roadside, albeit all other elements of infrastructure would be predominantly screened beyond the intervening HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. As the road user travels further, there would be close proximity views of the proposed infrastructure to the southwest. These views would account for a 300m section of the route. Thereafter, the Proposed Development would be located behind the direction of travel.

For road users travelling northeast, the first views of the Proposed Development would be experienced

on approach to the junction at Caplaw Road. With reference to Viewpoint 4, the Proposed Development would be visible on the sloping landscape in the distance, back-clothed by tree cover, within the same sector of view as existing electricity infrastructure. The retained open space (wildflower meadow) within the Site would form a visible presence between the banks of infrastructure, softening their influence on the view, and reducing overall massing of built form in comparison to the consented scheme. As the road user travels further, there would continue to be partial views of the Proposed Development, in the background landscape beyond intervening pylons in the foreground. Upon passing under these OHLs, views would be screened by intervening roadside vegetation / woodland. Views would open up again as the road user draws level with the Site. From a 300m section of the route extending along the Site boundary there would be close proximity views of the proposed infrastructure to the southwest (see Viewpoint 2). Again, the overall massing of built form within these views would be reduced in comparison to the consented scheme due to the increased presence of open wildflower meadow within the Site compound. As the road user travels further, the proposed infrastructure would be screened by the intervening HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. Thereafter, the Proposed Development would be located behind the direction of travel.

In summary, the key views of the Proposed Development would be restricted to localised sections in closest proximity to the Site. The 2021 LVA described the level of effect as Moderate-Major at Year 0, reducing to Minor upon establishment of perimeter planting. Based on the s.36 Layout, there would be no increase to the level of effect. Lengthy sections of the route would be unaffected.

8 Cumulative Effects

This section examines the potential cumulative effects of the Proposed Development in combination with other large-scale elements of electricity infrastructure within the Study Area. In this instance, the assessment includes consideration of the following sites:

- Existing Neilston Substation (to the northwest of the Site) and associated OHLs;
- Existing Grid Stability Facility, 600m to the southwest of the Site; and
- HV Yard and Battery Storage Compound within the northern part of the Site (under construction).

Landscape and visual receptors described in Sections 6 and 7 as undergoing / experiencing a Negligible level of effect are excluded from consideration in the cumulative assessment on the basis that the Proposed Development would exert such a limited effect in its own right that it would not meaningfully contribute to potential cumulative effects, and as such would not tip the balance from a minor cumulative effect to a notable cumulative effect.

8.1 Cumulative Landscape Effects

Cumulative Effects on the Rugged Upland Farmland LCT

As described within Section 3, the Proposed Development is located in a landscape context that is

already part-characterised by the existing and consented developments listed above. This has resulted in the formation of the 'Rugged Upland Farmland with Infrastructure' LCT subtype, which can be considered as a notable pre-existing effect on landscape character.

The Proposed Development would be located in very close proximity to these cumulative developments and exert its primary influence over the same local landscape area. The containing effect of surrounding landform that rises to the east, tree cover to the north, and existing development to the west, would prevent the geographic spread of potential cumulative effects across wider parts of the surrounding landscape. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would augment the existing elements and slightly extend the presence of built form in an easterly direction from the existing Neilston Substation. However, it would not extend the geographic spread of the pre-existing LCT-subtype, and would exert very limited cumulative influence upon the wider Rugged Upland Farmland LCT.

In summary, the Proposed Development would contribute to cumulative effects in combination with the existing Neilston Substation and associated OHLs, Grid Stability Facility, and consented HV Yard and Battery Storage Compound in the northern part of the Site (under construction). However, the combined cumulative effects that underpin the LCT-subtype across the local area are primarily attributed to the existing Neilston Substation and associated OHLs. This is based on the large scale and geographic spread of the pylons. Conversely, the cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would be relatively limited based on its lower height, contained footprint and muted external colours. As the embedded landscape planting measures establish over time, the cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would reduce further. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect.

Cumulative Effects on Gleniffer Braes Country Park

As described in the main assessment, the effects of the Proposed Development on the Park would be indirect, and limited to very localised areas in closest proximity to the Site. From these areas, it would be experienced alongside the existing Neilston Substation, associated OHLs, and consented HV Yard and Battery Storage Compound in the northern part of the Site. The Proposed Development would be experienced at greater distance, and would be of lower height.

Accordingly, the Proposed Development would contribute to cumulative effects on the Park. However, the combined cumulative effects are primarily attributed to the existing Neilston Substation and associated OHLs, which are located within the Park itself and visible over wider areas. The Proposed Development would exert very limited additional cumulative influence. As the embedded landscape planting measures establish over time, the cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would reduce further. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect.

Cumulative Effects on the Green Belt

As described in the main assessment, the potential effects on the Green Belt are closely aligned to

those on landscape character; of which, the cumulative effects are reviewed above. The combined cumulative effects on the Green Belt are primarily attributed to the existing Neilston Substation and associated OHLs, by virtue of their scale and spread. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would be relatively limited based on its lower height, contained footprint and muted external colours. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development on the Green Belt would steadily reduce over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

8.2 Cumulate Visual Effects

Cumulative Effects experienced by Local Residents

With reference to the main assessment, potential cumulative views from R5 East Caplaw Farm would be screened from the dwelling and limited to parts of the driveway. From these secondary views the Proposed Development would be experienced in the same angle of view as Neilston Substation and associated OHLs, and consented HV Yard and Battery Storage Compound in the northern part of the Site. There would also be filtered views of the Grid Stability Facility in a different sector of the view. Together, these developments exert a notable cumulative effect on the view. These effects are primarily attributed to the existing OHLs associated with Neilston Substation, due to their scale and spread. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would be more limited based on its lower height, contained footprint and muted external colours. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect. Conversely, the retention of greater areas of open space within the Site would reduce the overall massing of built form in direct comparison. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would soften further over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

Similarly, for residents of R6 Caplaw Farm (in particular at Glenview), the clearest views of the Proposed Development would be experienced from wider parts of the curtilage. In these views it would be experienced beyond pylons in the foreground of the view, in the same context as the existing Neilston Substation and consented HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site. As above, these developments exert a notable cumulative effect on the view; and these effects are primarily attributed to the existing OHLs associated with Neilston Substation. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect. Conversely, the retention of greater areas of open space within the Site would reduce the overall massing of built form in direct comparison. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would soften further over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

For residents at R8 Mossneuk Farm, the Proposed Development would be experienced in the same field of view as the existing Neilston Substation, associated OHLs, and consented HV Yard and Battery Storage Compound in the northern part of the Site. The combined cumulative effect would be notable based primarily on the existing overhead lines associated with Neilston Substation. The cumulative

influence of the Proposed Development would be more limited based on its lower height, contained footprint and muted external colours. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would soften further over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

Cumulative Effects experienced by Recreational Receptors on Core Path GB/24

With reference to the main assessment, views of the Proposed Development would be restricted to localised sections of the route, by walkers traveling south. It would be experienced in the same field of view as the existing OHL associated with Neilston Substation, and the consented HV yard and battery storage compound within the northern part of the Site. The combined cumulative effects would be notable along localised sections based primarily on the existing overhead lines and Neilston Substation. The Proposed Development would represent a relatively minor addition behind these elements and accordingly would exert limited cumulative influence. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would soften further over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

Cumulative Effects experienced by Road Users on the B775

With reference to the main assessment, the key effects of the Proposed Development would be restricted to a localised section of the route extending along the northwestern side of the Site. The Proposed Development would be experienced in the context of the existing Neilston Substation and associated OHLs, and consented HV Yard and Battery Storage Compound in the northern part of the Site. There would also be filtered views of the Grid Stability Facility in the opposite direction of view, subject to screening by roadside vegetation. Together, these developments exert a notable cumulative effect on transient views from localised parts of the B775. The cumulative influence of the Proposed Development would steadily soften over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish, and views of the infrastructure within the Site are increasingly screened from the road. The established planting would also provide some screening of the existing OHL network, thereby reducing the cumulative influence of existing elements of infrastructure along parts of the route. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect. Conversely, the retention of greater areas of open space within the Site would reduce the overall massing of built form in direct comparison.

9 Summary & Conclusions

In summary, the Proposed Development would be located in an area of undulating farmland by the side of the B775, 400m northwest of Sergeant Law. The local area is substantially influenced by existing electricity infrastructure, which will be augmented by new development that is currently under construction in the northern part of the Site. The Proposed Development would be located in close proximity to these elements of infrastructure (existing / under construction), and would occupy the

same footprint as the consented battery storage scheme at the Site, which was awarded consent at Appeal in 2022.

The s.36 Layout shares many similarities with the consented scheme, including its location and footprint. The proposed elements of infrastructure would also be of similar scale, character and arrangement as the consented scheme, and would be finished in the same muted green colour. The main alteration is the removal of the consented Sync Comps from the s.36 Layout, which represented larger elements of built form within the consented scheme. In addition, the s.36 Layout would retain greater areas of open space within the Site, which would be reinstated as wildflower meadow. The other embedded landscape planting measures would be in accordance with the consented scheme and incorporate native hedgerows and tree planting around the outer edges of the Site.

The landscape effects of the Proposed Development would be localised, and focused within parts of the host Rugged Upland Farmland LCT that are already strongly influenced by electricity infrastructure. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the level of effect upon the Rugged Upland Farmland LCT. Similarly, there would be no increase in the indirect effects upon Gleniffer Braes Country Park, and no notable effects upon the Renfrewshire Green Belt. The influence of the Proposed Development on the local landscape would steadily soften over time as the embedded landscape planting measures establish.

In terms of visual effects experienced by local residents, the clearest views of the Proposed Development would be experienced by residents at East Caplaw Farm (R5), Caplaw Farm (R6), and Mossneuk Farm (R8). In each case the views would be tempered by the orientation of the property, intervening buildings and/or garden vegetation. Accordingly, the key views would be limited to parts of the driveway or curtilage, or from upper storey windows. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the level of effect. Conversely, the retention of greater areas of open space within the Site would reduce the overall massing of built form in direct comparison.

The visual effects of the Proposed Development on views from Core Path GB/24 and the B775 would be limited to localised sections, and subject to screening by intervening vegetation and/or infrastructure. The establishment of planting along the Site boundaries would steadily soften views of the Proposed Development over time. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the level of effect.

In terms of cumulative effects, the Proposed Development would augment the presence of existing, electricity infrastructure in the locality, and the HV Yard and battery storage compound in the northern part of the Site that is currently under construction. Given the close geographic proximity of the Proposed Development to these elements, the combined cumulative effects would be retained within the same geographic area that is already part-characterised by infrastructure.

The Proposed Development would typically be experienced as a smaller-scale, lower lying addition to the landscape, which is influenced by the network of existing OHLs. The existing large-scale pylons

would continue to represent the prominent features within the landscape based on their larger height and wider spread across the landscape. Accordingly, the Proposed Development would exert limited incremental cumulative influence. In comparison to the consented scheme, the s.36 Layout would not result in any increase to the cumulative level of effect on the local landscape, or visual amenity.

In conclusion, it is assessed that the effects of the Proposed Development based on the s.36 Layout would be no greater than those of the consented scheme at the same Site. Conversely, the retention of greater areas of open space within the Site would reduce the overall massing of built form in direct comparison, softening its influence on the local landscape and select views. Accordingly, the Proposed Development could be accommodated at the Site with relatively limited and localised effects on landscape character and visual amenity.

References

Publications

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Visual Representation of Development Proposals; Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/2019 (2019).

National Landscape Character Assessment (web-based interactive map), NatureScot, 2019.

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Renfrewshire LDP New Development Supplementary Guidance, Renfrewshire Council, 2022.

Renfrewshire Core Paths Plan 2022, Renfrewshire Council, 2022.

Appendix A: LVA Methodology

The methodology and terminology employed within this LVA is consistent with the approach within the 2021 LVA.

Landscape Effects

The sensitivity of the landscape to change resulting from a Proposed Development is not absolute and varies according to the existing landscape, the nature of the Proposed Development and the type of change being proposed. Good practice guidance differentiates between baseline sensitivity of the landscape and the sensitivity of a landscape to a specific development proposal. Accordingly, the concept of 'sensitivity to change' to new development, as described within the baseline published landscape character assessments, is distinct from the consideration of landscape sensitivity to the specific development proposal.

The baseline for consideration of landscape effects is the established landscape character. The landscape effects of a Proposed Development are considered against the key characteristics of the receiving landscape. The degree to which the Proposed Development may change 'the distinct and recognisable pattern that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse' (Countryside Agency and NatureScot, 2002), enables a judgement to be made as to the significance of the effect in landscape character terms. This involves consideration of where the Proposed Development may give rise to a different landscape character type or sub-type.

In general terms, a distinctive landscape of acknowledged value (e.g. covered by a designation) and in good condition is likely to be more sensitive to change than a landscape in poor condition and with no designations or acknowledged value. General guidance on the evaluation of sensitivity is provided below; however, the actual sensitivity would depend on the attributes of the landscape receiving the proposals and the nature of those proposals.

In order to reach an understanding of the effects of development upon the landscape it is necessary to consider different aspects of the landscape as follows:

- **Landscape Fabric / Elements:** The individual features of the landscape, such as hills, valleys, woods, hedges, tree cover, vegetation, buildings and roads for example which can usually be described and quantified;
- **Landscape Quality:** The state of repair or condition of elements of a particular landscape, its integrity and intactness and the extent to which its distinctive character is apparent;
- **Landscape Value:** The importance attached to a landscape, often used as a basis for designation or recognition which expresses national or regional consensus, because of its special qualities/attributes including aesthetic or perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness, cultural associations or nature conservation interest; and
- **Landscape Key Characteristics:** The particularly notable elements or combinations of elements which makes a particular contribution to defining or describing the character of an area, which may include experiential characteristics such as wildness and tranquillity.

The sensitivity of the landscape to a particular development considers the susceptibility of the landscape and its value. The overall sensitivity is described as High, Medium or Low. This is assessed by taking into account the existing landscape quality, landscape value, and landscape capacity or susceptibility to change, which often vary depending on the type of development proposed and the particular site location, such that sensitivity needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis. This should not be confused with ‘inherent sensitivity’ where areas of the landscape may be referred to as inherently of ‘high’ or ‘low sensitivity’.

For example, a National Park may be described as inherently of high sensitivity on account of its designation, but it may prove to be less sensitive to particular development and/or the design of that development. Alternatively, an undesignated landscape may be of high sensitivity to a particular development and/or the design of that development regardless of the lack of local or national designation. The main factors to consider are discussed as follows:

Landscape susceptibility according to GLVIA3 means “the ability of the landscape to accommodate the Proposed Development without undue consequences for maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies”. Judgements on landscape susceptibility include references to both the physical and aesthetic characteristics and the potential scope for mitigation that would be in character with the landscape.

Examples on the evaluation of landscape sensitivity are provided below:

Table A.1: Landscape sensitivity criteria

High Sensitivity	Landscape character, characteristics and elements which would generally be of lower landscape capacity or scope for landscape change, and of notable landscape value and quality. These are landscapes that may be considered to be of particular importance to conserve and which may be particularly sensitive to change if inappropriately dealt with.
Medium Sensitivity	Landscape character, characteristics and elements where there would be a moderate landscape capacity or some scope for landscape change. Often include landscapes of moderate landscape value and quality which may be locally designated.
Low Sensitivity	Landscape Character, characteristics and elements where there would be higher landscape capacity or scope for landscape change to accommodate the proposed type of development. Usually applies to landscapes with of lesser landscape susceptibility or higher landscape capacity for the Proposed Development.

The level of landscape effects is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its location. It is for each assessment to determine the assessment criteria and thresholds using well informed and reasoned judgements.

The magnitude of landscape effect arising from the Proposed Development at any particular location is assessed as Large, Medium, Small or Negligible based on the interpretation of a combination of largely quantifiable parameters, as follows:

- degree of loss or alteration to key landscape features/elements or characteristics;
- distance from the Proposed Development;
- duration of effect;
- landscape backdrop to the Proposed Development;
- landscape context of other built development, particularly vertical elements.

In order to differentiate between different levels of magnitude the following definitions are provided:

Table A.2: Landscape magnitude of change definitions

Large	Total loss or extensive alteration to key landscape elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline, or introduction of uncharacteristic elements which would give rise to a fresh characterising effect.
Medium	Partial loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent, but not necessarily substantially uncharacteristic with the attributes of the receiving landscape (which could co-characterise parts of the landscape).
Small	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape or may not lead to a characterising or co-characterising effect.
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements/features/ characteristics of the baseline and/or the introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. Change would be barely distinguishable, approximating to no change.

Having established where the observation of varying levels of change to the landscape baseline may occur, the geographical extent of the change can be identified and a judgement made as to the level of effect in landscape character terms at varying scales.

The importance of the effect on the landscape resource may be determined by correlating the magnitude of the landscape effect (Large, Medium, Small or Negligible) with the sensitivity of the landscape resource (High, Medium or Low). The following table sets out the main correlations between magnitude and sensitivity.

Table A.3: Landscape effects matrix

Landscape sensitivity	Magnitude of Change				
		Large	Medium	Small	Negligible
	High	Major	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Minor-Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Minor	Negligible

Visual Effects

The sensitivity of potential visual receptors will vary depending on the location and context of the viewpoint, the activity of the receptor and importance of the view. Visual receptor sensitivity is defined as High, Medium, or Low in accordance with the criteria in Table A.4.

Table A.4: Visual sensitivity criteria

High Sensitivity	Residents within the curtilage of their homes; users of outdoor recreational facilities including footpaths, cycle ways and recreational road users; people experiencing views from important landscape features of physical, cultural or historic interest, beauty spots and picnic areas.
Medium Sensitivity	Road users and travelers on trains experiencing views from transport routes. People engaged in outdoor sport other than appreciation of the landscape, e.g. nature conservation, golf and water-based recreation.
Low Sensitivity	Workers, users of facilities and commercial buildings (indoors) experiencing views from buildings.

The magnitude of landscape effect arising from the Proposed Development at any particular location is described as Large, Medium, Small or Negligible based on the interpretation of a combination of largely quantifiable parameters, as follows:

- distance of the viewpoint/receptor from the Proposed Development;
- duration of effect;
- extent of the Proposed Development in the view;
- angle of view in relation to main receptor activity;
- proportion of the field of view occupied by the Proposed Development;
- background to the Proposed Development;
- extent of other built development visible, particularly vertical elements.

It is assumed that the change would be seen in clear visibility and the assessment is carried out on that basis. Where appropriate, comment may be made on lighting and weather conditions. In order to

differentiate between levels of magnitude the following definitions are provided in Table A.5:

Table A.5: Visual magnitude of change definitions

Large	Where the proposals would have a defining influence on the view. Change very prominent leading to substantial obstruction or complete change in character and composition of the baseline existing view.
Medium	Where the proposals would be clearly noticeable and an important new element in the view. It may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of the baseline existing view
Small	The proposals would be partially visible or visible at sufficient distance to be perceptible and result in limited or minor changes to the view. The character and composition, although altered will be similar to the baseline existing situation
Negligible	Change would be barely perceptible. The composition and character of the view would be substantially unaltered, approximating to little or no change.

The threshold for different levels of visual effects relies to a great extent on professional judgement. Criteria and local circumstances require close study and careful judgement. The following Table A.6 sets out the main correlations between magnitude and sensitivity.

Table A.6: Visual effects matrix

Visual sensitivity	Magnitude of Change				
		Large	Medium	Small	Negligible
High		Major	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Minor
Medium		Major-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Minor-Negligible
Low		Moderate	Moderate-Minor	Minor	Negligible

Level of Effect

As per the matrices in Table A.3 and Table A.6; the level of any identified landscape or visual effect has been assessed in terms of Major, Moderate, Minor, or Negligible. These categories are based on the juxtaposition of viewer or landscape sensitivity with the predicted magnitude of change. This matrix should not be used as a prescriptive tool but must allow for the exercise of professional judgement. Effects which are judged to be Major-Moderate or Major are considered to be notable. Where Moderate effects are predicted, professional judgement is applied to ensure that the potential for notable effects arising has been thoroughly considered.

Type of Effect

Landscape and visual effects are described with reference to type (direct, indirect, secondary or cumulative), timeframe (short, medium, long term, permanent, and temporary) and whether they are beneficial or adverse (beneficial or adverse). The various types of effect are described as follows:

Temporary / Residual Effects

If a proposal would result in an alteration to an environment whose attributes can be quickly recovered, then judgements concerning the significance of effects should be tempered in that light. Commercial development applications typically include permanent, long-term elements as well as minor alternations to landform resulting in residual landscape and visual effects.

Direct/Indirect

Direct and indirect landscape and visual effects are defined in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3). Direct effects may be defined “*result directly from the Proposed Development itself*” (para 3.22). An indirect (or secondary) effect is one that results “*from consequential change resulting from the Proposed Development*” (para 3.22) and is often produced away from the site of the Proposed Development or as a result of a complex pathway or secondary association. The direct or physical landscape effects of the Proposed Development would generally be limited to an area around the Proposed Development itself. Any indirect landscape effects are concerned with the view of the changes from outside the local landscape.

Beneficial/Adverse

Landscape and visual effects can be beneficial or adverse and, in some instances, may be considered neutral. Beneficial effects upon landscape receptors may result from changes to the landscape involving beneficial enhancement measures or through the addition of well-designed elements, which add to the landscape experience or sense of place in a complementary manner.

The landscape impacts of the Proposed Development have been considered against the landscape baseline, taking account of the landscape characteristics. Taking a precautionary approach, changes to rural landscapes involving construction of infrastructure elements are generally considered to be adverse, as they are not usually actively promoted as part of a district wide landscape strategy and therefore in the assessment of landscape effects they are assumed to be adverse, unless specified otherwise in the text.

It is important to recognise that for the same development, some may consider the visual effects for a development of this nature as adverse or beneficial. This depends to some extent on the viewer’s predisposition towards landscape change but also the principle of commercial building features in the landscape. Taking a precautionary approach in making an assessment of the ‘worst case scenario’, the assessment considers that all effects on views which would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development to be adverse, unless specified otherwise in the text.

Visualisation Methodology

Zone of Theoretical Visibility Map

Computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Map has been prepared to indicate the potential influence of the Proposed Development in the wider landscape.

The ZTV has been prepared on an Ordnance Survey (OS) 1:25,000 base to indicate the extent of potential visibility on the basis of bare ground, and does not include the screening effects of intervening established tree cover. The ZTV indicates areas from which it might be possible to secure views of part, or parts, of the Proposed Development based on the maximum heights of the associated infrastructure. The ZTV therefore illustrates the maximum overall visibility of the proposed structures, although its use needs to be qualified on the following basis:

- There are a number of areas within the ZTV from which there is potential to view parts of the Proposed Development, but which comprise land where the general public do not exercise regular access;
- The ZTV does not account for the screening effects and filtering of views as a result of intervening features, such as trees and forestry; and
- The ZTV does not account for the likely orientation of a viewer – for example when travelling in a vehicle.

In addition, the accuracy of the ZTV has to be considered. In particular, the ZTV will be generated from OS Landform Panorama digital data based on a gridded terrain model with 5m cell sizes. The resolution of this model cannot accurately represent small-scale terrain features, which can therefore give rise to inaccuracy in the predicted visibility. This can lead to underestimation of visibility – e.g. a raised area of ground permitting views over an intervening obstruction, or can lead to overestimation of visibility – such as where a roadside embankment obscures a view.

Appendix B: Landscape Figures

Figure 1 – Zone of Theoretical Visibility and Viewpoints

Figure 2 – Landscape Character

Figure 3 – Landscape Designations, Ancient Woodland and Visual Receptors

Appendix C: Photomontage Visualisations: proposed s.36 Layout

Photomontages are presented at five viewpoint locations as follows. These are consistent with the viewpoints included in the 2021 LVA and 2022 Appeal for the 50MW BESS at the same Site.

Viewpoint 1 – B775 (north)

Viewpoint 2 – B775 (south)

Viewpoint 3 – Unclassified Road (Southwest)

Viewpoint 4 – Caplaw Road, B775 Junction

Viewpoint 5 – Unclassified Road (South)

Appendix D: Photomontage Visualisations: consented scheme

The following visuals illustrate the consented scheme; as submitted in support of the 2022 Appeal at the same Site (original planning ref: 21/0034/PP; Appeal Ref. PPA-350-2047).