

# Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Legislation and Policy

## 1.1 Legislation

- 1.1.1 The landscape and visual assessment has been undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation, together with national, regional and local plans and policies.
- 1.1.2 Relevant legislation that has been considered in the preliminary environmental assessment is presented in Table 1.1 below.
- 1.1.3 A number of the sources of legislation referred to throughout the ES, including this Appendix, derive from the law of the European Union (EU). European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2020 ensured that all EU legislation which had not already been transposed into UK law at the point at which the UK left the EU was transferred to the UK statute. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2020 guarantees that those laws remain unchanged until amended or rescinded by Parliament.

**Table 1.1 – Legislative Requirements**

| SCALE                  | DESCRIPTION OF LEGISLATION   |
|------------------------|--|
| <p><b>European</b></p> | <p><b>European Landscape Convention (ELC) (2000, Convention of the Council of Europe)</b><br/> The Landscape Institute website (Landscape Institute, n.d.) provides the following information about the ELC:<br/> <i>'The ELC is the first international treaty dedicated to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe. Signed by the UK government in 2006 and introduced in March 2007, the ELC provides a people-centred and forward looking way to reconcile management of the environment with the social and economic challenges of the future and aims to help people reconnect with place...The ELC contains 18 articles which, collectively, promote landscape protection, management and planning, and organising European cooperation on landscape issues.'</i></p> |
| <p><b>National</b></p> | <p><b>Environment Act 2021</b><br/> The Environment Act has two main functions.<br/> 1. To give a legal framework for environmental governance in the UK.<br/> 2. To bring in measures for improvement of the environment in relation to waste, resource efficiency, air quality, water, nature and biodiversity, and conservation.<br/> The majority of the Act does not make any immediate changes for organisations other than regulators.<br/> The Environment Act does not currently present specific legislative requirements relevant to landscape and visual. Further requirements may be implemented through secondary legislation to be made under this Act in the future, and the Project will respond as required.</p>   |

## 1.2 National policy statements

1.2.1 The solar energy projects are referenced by a National Policy Statement’s (NPS) which are considered of importance to the Secretary of State’s decision as to whether to grant a DCO for the Scheme. The relevant NPS statements are listed below:

- Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN1);
- National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3);  
and
- National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5).

1.2.2 The NPSs set out the Government’s energy policy, the need for new infrastructure and guidance for determining an application for a DCO. The NPSs include specific criteria and issues which should be covered by applicants’ assessments of the effects of their scheme, and how the decision-maker should consider these impacts.

1.2.3 The Government is currently reviewing and updating the Energy NPSs. Towards the end of that process government published a suite of Energy NPSs in November 2023 which currently await designation in the coming weeks. These are termed ‘Emerging’ and until designated the 2011 NPSs formally remain the designated NPSs. The relevant sections of the Emerging Energy NPS (EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5) are included in Table 1.2 below.

1.2.4 The relevant NPS policies and an indication of where in the ES chapter the information provided to address these requirements are provided in Table 1.2 below.

**Table 1.2 Emerging National Policy Statements (NPS’s)**

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS  |  | PROJECT RESPONSE   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Overarching National Planning Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN1) – Published, November 2023</b> |  |  |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 4.3.2<br>November 2023   | <i>“The Regulations specifically refer to effects on population, human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air, climate, the landscape, material assets and cultural heritage, and the interaction between them.”</i>   | This will be considered within inter-cumulative effects section of the ES.   |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 4.3.3<br>November 2023   | <i>“The Regulations require an assessment of the likely significant effects of the proposed project on the environment, covering the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short, medium, and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects at all stages of the project, and also of the measures envisaged for avoiding or mitigating significant adverse effects.”</i> | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual identifies the types of identified effects and outlines proposed visual and landscape design measures. The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 4.7.6<br>November 2023   | <i>“Whilst the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure, there may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of</i>   | This forms a part of proposed Environmental Design Measures considerations and will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout and described within the Outline  |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS                      | PROJECT RESPONSE  |
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|  | Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (OLEMP).  |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 4.7.11<br/> November 2023</p> | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual identifies the types of visual impacts.</p>  |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.1<br/> November 2023</p> | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual considers the rural landscape that have potential to be affected by the Proposed Development.</p>  |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.4<br/> November 2023</p> | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual considers both sensitivity and magnitude of change.</p>  |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.5<br/> November 2023</p> | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual considers the potential effects and their nature, whether beneficial or adverse.</p>   |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.6<br/> November 2023</p> | <p>The design is subject to the iterative and ongoing process informed by Landscape and Visual Assessment, stakeholder consultation and operational requirements. The proposed Environmental Design Measures considerations will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout and described within the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (OLEMP).</p> |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS                       |   | PROJECT RESPONSE   |
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| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.12<br/> November 2023</p> | <p><i>“Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally. Where a local development document in England or a local development plan in Wales has policies based on landscape or waterscape Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) 145 character assessment, these should be paid particular attention. However, locally valued landscapes should not be used in themselves to refuse consent, as this may unduly restrict acceptable development.”</i></p> | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual considers the potential local policies and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD’s).</p>                              |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.12<br/> November 2023</p> | <p><i>“All proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites.”</i></p>   | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual considers the potential visual effects.</p>   |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.13<br/> November 2023</p> | <p><i>“All proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites.”</i></p>   | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual will assist in these considerations by providing an assessment of landscape and visual effects.</p>                   |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.16<br/> November 2023</p> | <p><i>“The applicant should carry out a landscape and visual impact assessment and report it in the ES, including cumulative effects (see Section 4.3). Several guides have been produced to assist in addressing landscape issues.”</i></p>  | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual reports on identified landscape and visual impacts whilst addressing the cumulative landscape and visual effects.</p> |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.16<br/> November 2023</p> | <p><i>“The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant’s assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England and local development plans in Wales.”</i></p>   | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual takes into the account Local Landscape Character Assessments and local policies.</p>                                  |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.19<br/> November 2023</p> | <p><i>“The applicant should consider landscape and visual matters in the early stages of siting and design, where site choices and design principles are being established. This will allow the applicant to demonstrate in the ES how negative effects have been minimised and opportunities for creating positive benefits or enhancement have been recognised incorporated into the design, delivery and operation of the scheme.”</i></p>   | <p>The emerging mitigation layout is being developed iteratively to minimise adverse effects and maximise the benefits.</p>                              |
| <p>NPS EN-1<br/> Paragraph 5.10.20</p>                    | <p><i>“The assessment should include the effects on landscape components</i></p>  | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual assess the effects both on landscape</p>  |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS            |  | PROJECT RESPONSE  |
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| November 2023                                  | <i>and character during construction and operation.....”</i>   | elements and landscape character throughout all development stages.   |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.24<br>November 2023 | <i>“Applicants should consider how landscapes can be enhanced using landscape management plans, as this will help to enhance environmental assets where they contribute to landscape and townscape quality.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.25<br>November 2023 | <i>“In considering visual effects it may be helpful for applicants to draw attention, in the supporting evidence to their applications, to any examples of existing permitted infrastructure they are aware of with a similar magnitude of impact on equally sensitive receptors. This may assist the Secretary of State in judging the weight they should give to the assessed visual impacts of the proposed development.”</i> | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.28<br>November 2023 | <i>“Depending on the topography of the surrounding terrain and areas of population it may be appropriate to undertake landscaping off site. For example, filling in gaps in existing tree and hedge lines may mitigate the impact when viewed from a more distant vista.”</i>  | The off-site planting forms part of the iterative design development.   |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.29<br>November 2023 | <i>“The Secretary of State should be satisfied that local authorities will have sufficient design content secured to ensure future consenting will meet landscape, visual and good design objectives.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.35<br>November 2023 | <i>“The scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a very wide area. The Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project.”</i>   | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual details outlines proposed visual and landscape design measures.   |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.35<br>November 2023 | <i>“In reaching a judgement, the Secretary of State should consider whether any adverse impact is temporary, such as during construction, and/or whether any adverse impact on the landscape will be capable of being reversed in a timescale that the Secretary of State considers reasonable.”</i>   | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual details outlines proposed visual and landscape design measures.   |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.36<br>November 2023 | <i>“The Secretary of State should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline  |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS   |  | PROJECT RESPONSE  |
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|   | <i>the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by appropriate mitigation.”</i>  | Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.  |
| NPS EN-1<br>Paragraph 5.10.37<br>November 2023  | <i>“The Secretary of State should consider whether requirements to the consent are needed requiring the incorporation of particular design details that are in keeping with the statutory and technical requirements for landscape and visual impacts.”</i>  | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| <b>Renewable Energy Infrastructure National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-3 (Published, November 2023);</b> |  |   |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.5.2<br>November 2023  | <i>“Proposals for renewable energy infrastructure should demonstrate good design, particularly in respect of landscape and visual amenity, opportunities for co-existence/co-location with other marine and terrestrial uses, and in the design of the project to mitigate impacts such as noise and effects on ecology and heritage.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.42<br>November 2023  | <i>“Applicants are encouraged to design the layout and appearance of the site to ensure continued recreational use of public rights of way, where possible during construction, and in particular during operation of the site.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.43<br>November 2023  | <i>“Applicants are encouraged where possible to minimise the visual impacts of the development for those using existing public rights of way, considering the impacts this may have on any other visual amenities in the surrounding landscape.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.44<br>November 2023  | <i>“Applicants should consider and maximise opportunities to facilitate enhancements to the public rights of way and the inclusion, through site layout and design of access, of new opportunities for the public to access and cross proposed solar development sites (whether via the adoption of new public rights of way or the creation of permissive paths), taking into account where appropriate the views of landowners.”</i> | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.45<br>November 2023  | <i>“Applicants should set out detail on how public rights of way would be managed to ensure they are safe to use is set out in an outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.47   | <i>“Applicants should assess the visual impact of these security measures, as</i>  | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the   |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS            |   | PROJECT RESPONSE  |
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| November 2023                                  | <i>well as the impacts on local residents, including for example issues relating to intrusion from CCTV and light pollution in the vicinity of the site.”</i>   | emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.   |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.48<br>November 2023 | <i>“Applicants should consider the need to minimise the impact on the landscape and the visual impact of security measures.”</i>  | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.               |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.94<br>November 2023 | <i>“The approach to assessing cumulative landscape and visual impact of large-scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing other onshore energy infrastructure. Solar farms are likely to be in low lying areas of good exposure and as such may have a wider zone of visual influence than other types of onshore energy infrastructure.”</i> | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual includes the Assessment of Cumulative effects   |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.95<br>November 2023 | <i>“However, whilst it may be the case that the development covers a significant surface area, in the case of ground-mounted solar panels it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography, the area of a zone of visual influence could be appropriately minimised.”</i>   | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual includes the Assessment of Cumulative effects   |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.97<br>November 2023 | <i>“Applicants should carry out a landscape and visual assessment and report it in the ES. Visualisations may be required to demonstrate the effects of a proposed solar farm on the setting of heritage assets and any nearby residential areas or viewpoints.”</i>  | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual identifies the types of identified effects and outlines proposed visual and landscape design measures. Visualisations will be produced at the ES stage. |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.98<br>November 2023 | <i>“Applicants should follow the criteria for good design set out in Section 4.7 of EN-1 when developing projects and will be expected to direct considerable effort towards minimising the landscape and visual impact of solar PV arrays especially within nationally designated landscapes.”</i>   | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.               |
| NPS EN-3<br>Paragraph 2.10.99<br>November 2023 | <i>“Whilst there is an acknowledged need to ensure solar PV installations are adequately secured, required security measures such as fencing should consider the need to minimise the impact on the landscape and visual impact (see paragraphs 2.10.31 – 2.10.33 above).”</i>  | The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.               |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS  |   | PROJECT RESPONSE  |
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| <p>NPS EN-3<br/> Paragraph 2.10.100<br/> November 2023</p>   | <p><i>“The applicant should consider as part of the design, layout, construction, and future maintenance plans how to protect and retain, wherever possible, the growth of vegetation on site boundaries, as well as the growth of existing hedges, established vegetation, including mature trees within boundaries. Applicants should also consider opportunities for individual trees within the boundaries to grow on to maturity.”</i></p>       | <p>The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.</p>  |
| <p>NPS EN-3<br/> Paragraph 2.10.101<br/> November 2023</p>   | <p><i>“The impact of the proposed development on established trees and hedges should be informed by a tree survey and arboricultural/hedge assessment as appropriate.”</i></p>  | <p>The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. The impacts on the trees and hedges is detailed within Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>  |
| <p><b>Electricity Networks National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-5 – (Published, November 2023)</b></p> |   |   |
| <p>NPS EN-5<br/> Paragraph 2.9.9<br/> November 2023</p>  | <p><i>“New substations, sealing end compounds (including terminal towers), and other above-ground installations that serve as connection, switching, and voltage transformation points on the electricity network may also give rise to adverse landscape and visual impacts.”</i></p>  | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual identifies the types of identified effects and outlines proposed visual and landscape design measures. The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.</p> |
| <p>NPS EN-5<br/> Paragraph 2.9.10<br/> November 2023</p>   | <p><i>“Cumulative adverse landscape, seascape and visual impacts may arise where new overhead lines are required along with other related developments such as substations, wind farms, and/or other new sources of generation.”</i></p>  | <p>Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual considers landscape and visual impacts associated with substations.</p>  |
| <p>NPS EN-5<br/> Paragraph 2.9.11<br/> November 2023</p>   | <p><i>“Landscape and visual benefits may arise through the reconfiguration, rationalisation, or undergrounding of existing electricity network infrastructure. Though mitigation of the landscape and visual impacts arising from overhead lines and their associated infrastructure is usually possible, it may not always be so, and the impossibility of full mitigation in these cases does not countermand the need for overhead lines.”</i></p> | <p>The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. The impacts on the trees and hedges is detailed within Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p>  |
| <p>NPS EN-5<br/> Paragraph 2.9.18<br/> November 2023</p>   | <p><i>“The Horlock Rules – guidelines for the design and siting of substations – were established by National Grid in 2009 in pursuance of its duties under Schedule 9 to the Electricity Act</i></p>   | <p>The proposed Environmental Design Measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout at the ES Stage and OLEMP Outline Landscape and Ecology</p>   |



| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS  | PROJECT RESPONSE  |
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| <p><i>1989. These principles should be embodied in applicants' proposals for the infrastructure associated with new overhead lines.</i></p> <p><i>In brief, the Horlock Rules state that applicants should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• consider environmental issues from the earliest stage to balance the technical benefits and capital cost requirements for new developments against the consequential environmental effects in order to keep adverse effects to a reasonably practicable minimum.</i></li> <li><i>• seek to avoid altogether internationally and nationally designated areas of the highest amenity, cultural or scientific value by the overall planning of the system connections<sup>21</sup>.</i></li> <li><i>• protect as far as reasonably practicable areas of local amenity value, important existing habitats and landscape features including ancient woodland, historic hedgerows, surface and ground water sources and nature conservation areas.</i></li> <li><i>• take advantage of the screening provided by land form and existing features and the potential use of site layout and levels to keep intrusion into surrounding areas to a reasonably practicable minimum.</i></li> <li><i>• keep the visual, noise and other environmental effects to a reasonably practicable minimum. • consider the land use effects of the proposal when planning the siting of substations or extensions.</i></li> <li><i>• consider the options available for terminal towers, equipment, buildings and ancillary development appropriate to individual locations, seeking to keep effects to a reasonably practicable minimum.</i></li> <li><i>• use space effectively to limit the area required for development consistent with</i></li> </ul> | <p>Management Plan. The impacts on the trees and hedges is detailed within Landscape and Visual Assessment.</p> |

| EMERGING NATIONAL POLICY STATEMENTS |   | PROJECT RESPONSE |
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|                                     | <p><i>appropriate mitigation measures and to minimise the adverse effects on existing land use and rights of way, whilst also having regard to future extension of the substation.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>make the design of access roads, perimeter fencing, earth-shaping, planting and ancillary development an integral part of the site layout and design, so as to fit in with the surroundings.</i></li> <li><i>in open landscape especially, high voltage line entries should be kept, as far as possible, visually separate from low voltage lines and other overhead lines so as to avoid a confusing appearance.</i></li> <li><i>study the inter-relationship between towers and substation structures and background and foreground features so as to reduce the prominence of structures from main viewpoints. Where practicable the exposure of terminal towers on prominent ridges should be minimised by siting towers against a background of trees rather than open skylines.</i></li> </ul> |                  |

### 1.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

1.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup>, as revised in 2023, sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out economic, social and environmental objectives for achieving sustainable development through development plans and development management decisions, although are not directly applicable policy for NSIP projects due to the decision making framework established under the Planning Act 2008.

1.3.2 The following NPPF paragraphs may possess relevance for the Landscape and Visual Assessment. The table also provides an indication of where in the ES chapter the relevant information is provided, are provided in Table 1.3 below.

<sup>1</sup> National Policy Framework. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023)

**Table 1.3: Relevant NPPF considerations for the landscape and visual assessment**

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| Paragraph 8(c) | To contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.  | The mitigation as relevant to landscape and visual matters is set out in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual and will be illustrated in Landscape Masterplan, that will be produced at the ES stage. Landscape Masterplan will illustrate retained and protected landscape elements alongside the proposed environmental design measures. |
| Paragraph 100  | Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.   | The mitigation as relevant to landscape and visual matters is set out in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual. Emerging mitigation layout will illustrate the proposed landscape treatment to PRow's and other public access areas within the Proposed Development.  |
| Paragraph 120  | Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed-use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside...   | The relevant mitigation to landscape and visual matters is set out in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual.  |
| Paragraph 130  | Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:<br>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;<br>b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;<br>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);<br>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;<br>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<br>f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and | The details of introduced environmental design measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout and described in more detail in OLEMP, which will be produced at the ES stage.  |

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|               | disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.  |  |
| Paragraph 132 | <p>Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and the local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.</p>  | <p>The details of introduced environmental design measures will be illustrated in the emerging mitigation layout and described in more detail in OLEMP produced at the ES stage. The iterative design process includes various comments received from stakeholders.</p>  |
| Paragraph 134 | <p>Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:</p> <p>a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or</p> <p>b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.</p> | <p>The mitigation relevant to landscape and visual matters is set out in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual. This includes siting of the Scheme to fit with the overall form and layout of its surrounding field and vegetation patterns. The details of introduced environmental design measures will be illustrated in emerging mitigation layout and described in more detail in OLEMP produced at the ES stage.</p> |
| Paragraph 155 | <p>To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:</p> <p>a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);</p> <p>b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and</p>  | <p>The landscape and visual matters are set out in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual, of the ES. This includes an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects and the mitigation alongside the strategy for addressing landscape and visual impacts.</p>   |

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|               | 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.  |   |
| Paragraph 157 | In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:<br>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<br>b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.  | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual effects and mitigation. emerging mitigation layout and OLEMP sets out how in relation to landscape and visual matters the Scheme has taken account of landform, layout, and landscaping.  |
| Paragraph 175 | Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.   | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual of the ES highlights that the Scheme is not covered by any landscape designation.   |
| Paragraph 174 | Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:<br>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);<br>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;<br>c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;<br>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;<br>e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being | Appendix 6.3 Landscape Character of the PEIR sets that out the assessed landscape value of the Site. The details of introduced environmental design measures will be illustrated in emerging mitigation layout and described in more detail in OLEMP at the ES stage. |

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|  | 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<br>f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate. |  |
|--|---|--|

## 1.4 National Planning Practice Guidance

1.4.1 The relevant Planning practice guidance for renewable and low carbon energy<sup>2</sup> paragraphs, together with an indication of where in the ES chapter the information is provided to address these considerations, are provided in Table 1.4 below.

**Table 1.4: National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

| <b>PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY (JULY 2013)</b> |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Paragraph ref.</b>   | <b>Relevant Paragraph</b>   | <b>Project Response</b>   |
| Paragraph 26  | The deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in very undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively.   | Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual of the ES sets out the assessed landscape and visual matters.   |
| Paragraph 27  | Particular factors a local planning authority will need to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encouraging the effective use of previously developed land, and if a proposal does involve greenfield land, that it allows for continued agricultural use<sup>11</sup> and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays</li> <li>that solar farms are normally temporary structures and planning conditions can be used to ensure that the installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use</li> <li>the effect on landscape of glint and glare (see guidance on landscape assessment at paragraphs 39-40) and on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety</li> </ul> | The Proposed Development is temporary and reversible upon decommissioning. The Glint and Glare Assessment has been included in Chapter 13. The landscape treatment to fencing will be illustrated in emerging mitigation layout and described in more detail in OLEMP, that will be produced at the ES stage. |

<sup>2</sup> Planning practice guidance for renewable and low-carbon energy. Department for Communities and Local Government (July 2013).

| PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY (JULY 2013) |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Paragraph ref.   | Relevant Paragraph  | Project Response  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the extent to which there may be additional impacts if solar arrays follow the daily movement of the sun</li> <li>the need for, and impact of, security measures such as lights and fencing</li> <li>great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting. As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of large scale solar farms on such assets. Depending on their scale, design and prominence, a large scale solar farm within the setting of a heritage asset may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset</li> </ul> <p>the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges • the energy generating potential, which can vary for a number of reasons including, latitude and aspect</p> |   |
| Paragraph 28   | <p>The approach to assessing cumulative landscape and visual impact of large scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing the impact of wind turbines (see paragraphs 41-44). However, in the case of ground-mounted solar panels it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography the area of a zone of visual influence could be zero.</p>   | <p>The proposed mitigation measures can be effective in screening completely or reducing the visibility of solar arrays. The assessment of potential effects is outlined in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual, of the ES. The details of introduced environmental design measures will be illustrated in emerging mitigation layout and described in more detail in OLEMP, that will be produced at the ES stage.</p> |

## 1.5 Regional and Local Policies

1.5.1 In local policy terms, the Proposed Development lies largely within the administrative boundaries of the North Kesteven District Council. The south-eastern part of the Cable Corridor Area lies within Boston Borough Council. The local planning policy and guidance documents referring to Landscape and Visual Assessment are listed in Table 1.5 below.

**Table 1.5: Local Policy relevant to the Landscape and Visual Assessment**

| RELEVANT DOCUMENTS   | RELEVANT POLICY  |
|--|--|
| <p>Central Lincolnshire Local Plan<br/>(Adopted April 2023)</p>            | <p>Policy S14: Renewable Energy – The policy highlights support for renewable energy schemes, where the direct, indirect, individual, and cumulative impacts are acceptable in respect of: scale, siting and design, and the consequent impacts on landscape character; visual amenity; biodiversity; geodiversity; flood risk; townscape; heritage assets, their settings and the historic landscape; highway safety, rail safety and aviation and defence systems. The policy also requires consideration of impacts on the amenity of sensitive neighbouring uses (including local residents) by virtue of matters such as noise, dust, odour, shadow flicker, air quality and traffic.</p> <p>Policy S16: Wider Energy Infrastructure – The policy will support the transition to net zero carbon future through solar energy facilities and others as long the suitable locations are selected for the project alongside the implementation of reasonable opportunities to mitigate any harm arising from such proposals.</p> <p>Policy S57: The Historic Environment – The policy lists the requirements in respect of protection, conservation and opportunities for enhancement to the historic environment of Central Lincolnshire. The policy also requires preserving landscape and townscape features through consideration of scale, design, architectural detailing, materials, siting, layout, mass, use, and views and vistas both from and towards the asset.</p> <p>Policy S59: Green and Blue Infrastructure Network<br/> This policy requires safeguarding green and blue infrastructure from inappropriate development to improve the quantity, quality, accessibility and management of the green infrastructure network. The policy lists a range of measures to protect and enhance existing and proposed green and blue infrastructure. Development is expected to make a contribution proportionate to their scale towards the establishment, enhancement and ongoing management of green and/or blue infrastructure by contributing to the development of the strategic green infrastructure network within Central Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Policy S66: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows.<br/> This policy requires protection of the existing woodland cover and requires its improvement and expansion.</p> |
| <p>South Kesteven District Council<br/>Local Plan Adopted January 2020</p> | <p>SD1: The Principles of Sustainable Development in South Kesteven<br/> This policy expects the proposals to minimise the impact of climate change and contribute towards creating a strong, stable and more diverse economy whilst enhancing Districts character, natural environment, cultural and heritage assets, services and infrastructure.</p> <p>EN1: Landscape Character<br/> This policy requires the Proposed Development to be appropriate to the character and significant natural, historic and cultural attributes and features of the landscape and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or restoration.</p> <p>EN3: Green Infrastructure<br/> This policy requires proposals to ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is considered and integrated into the scheme design,</p>   |



| RELEVANT DOCUMENTS   | RELEVANT POLICY   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>taking opportunities to enrich biodiversity habitats, enable greater connectivity and provide sustainable access for all.</p> <p>DE1: Promoting Good Quality Design<br/> This policy requires high-quality design, contributing to the local distinctiveness, vernacular and character of the area. The proposals should not have adverse effects on the settlement pattern or the landscape / townscape character of the surrounding area. The policy defines measures to achieve these objectives.</p>   |
| <p>South Holland District Council and Boston Borough Council<br/> South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036</p> | <p>Policy 28: The Natural Environment<br/> This is a high-quality, comprehensive ecological network of interconnected designated sites, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife-friendly greenspace will be achieved by protecting, enhancing and managing natural assets.</p> <p>Policy 31: Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy<br/> This policy requires all development proposals to demonstrate that the consequences of current climate change have been addressed, minimised and mitigated. This policy requires that proposals do not cause harm to visual amenity, landscape character or quality, skyline consideration, residential amenity and natural environment alongside other criteria.</p> |

## 1.6 Guidance

- 1.6.1 The following local policy-related guidance has been considered as part of the assessment.
- 1.6.2 South Kesteven District Council Local Plan 2011 - 2036 Renewable Energy Appendix 3 lists a range of criteria for carrying out Landscape and Visual Assessments for renewable energy schemes by highlighting distinct requirements for wind and solar schemes.