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## Appendix 1 Glossary

**Cumulative effects.** The additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together. <sup>1</sup>

**Green Infrastructure (GI).** The network of natural and semi-natural features within and between our villages, towns and cities. These features range in scale, from street trees, green roofs and private gardens through to parks, rivers and woodlands

**Landscape Character Areas** These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type. Each has its own individual character and identity, even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other types. <sup>2</sup>

**Landscape character type.** These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use, and settlement pattern. <sup>2</sup>

**Landscape effects.** Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right. <sup>1</sup>

**Landscape character.** A distinct and recognisable pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse. <sup>2</sup>

**Landscape quality (or condition).** A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements. <sup>1</sup>

**Landscape receptor.** Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal. <sup>1</sup>

**Landscape value.** The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons. <sup>1</sup>

**Magnitude (of effect).** A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term, in duration. <sup>1</sup>

**Mitigation.** Measures which are proposed to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects (or to avoid, reduce and if possible remedy identified effects). <sup>1</sup>

**Sensitivity.** A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor. <sup>1</sup>

**Susceptibility.** The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences. <sup>1</sup>

**Visual amenity.** The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area. <sup>1</sup>

**Visual effect.** Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people. <sup>1</sup>

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Visual receptor. **Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal.**<sup>1</sup>

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). **A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.**<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, Landscape Institute with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013

<sup>2</sup> An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, Natural England, 2014.

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## Appendix 2 Methodology

### Introduction

This appendix contains additional detail regarding the assessment methodology, supplementing the information provided within the LVIA text. This appendix sets out a standard approach – specific matters in terms of the scope of assessment, study area and modifications to the standard approach for this assessment are set out within the LVIA.

The methodology has the following key stages, which are described in more detail in subsequent sections, as follows:

- **Baseline** – includes the gathering of documented information; agreement of the scope of the assessment with the EIA co-ordinator and local planning authority; site visits and initial reports to the EIA co-ordinator of issues that may need to be addressed within the design.
- **Design** – input into the design / review of initial design / layout / options and mitigation options.
- **Assessment** – includes an assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the scheme, requiring site based work and the completion of a full report and supporting graphics.
- **Cumulative Assessment** – assesses the effects of the proposal in combination with other developments, where required.

### Baseline

The baseline study establishes the planning policy context, the scope of the assessment and the key receptors. It typically includes the following key activities:

- A desk study of relevant current national and local planning policy, in respect of landscape and visual matters, for the site and surrounding areas.
  - Agreement of the main study area radius with the local planning authority.
  - A desk study of nationally and locally designated landscapes for the site and surrounding areas.
  - A desk study of existing landscape character assessments and capacity and sensitivity studies for the site and surrounding areas.
  - A desk study of historic landscape character assessments (where available) and other information sources required to gain an understanding of the contribution of heritage assets to the present day landscape.
  - Collation and evaluation of other indicators of local landscape value such as references in landscape character studies or parish plans, tourist information, local walking & cycling guides, references in art and literature.
  - The identification of valued character types, landscape elements and features which may be affected by the proposal, including rare landscape types.
  - Exchanging information with other consultants working on other assessment topics for the development as required to inform the assessment.
  - Draft Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) studies to assist in identifying potential viewpoints and indicate the potential visibility of the proposed development, and
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therefore scope of receptors likely to be affected. The methodology used in the preparation of ZTV studies is described within Appendix 6.3.

- The identification of and agreement upon, through consultation, the scope of assessment for cumulative effects.
- The identification of and agreement upon, through consultation, the number and location of representative and specific viewpoints within the study area.
- The identification of the range of other visual receptors (e.g. people travelling along routes, or within open access land, settlements and residential properties) within the study area.
- Site visits to become familiar with the site and surrounding landscape; verify documented baseline; and to identify viewpoints and receptors.
- Input to the design process.

The information gathered during the baseline assessment is drawn together and summarised in the baseline section of the report and reasoned judgements are made as to which receptors are likely to be significantly affected. Only these receptors are then taken forward for the detailed assessment of effects (ref. GLVIA 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2013, para 3.19).

## Design

The design and assessment stages are necessarily iterative, with stages overlapping in parts. Details of any mitigation measures incorporated within the proposals to help reduce identified potential landscape and visual effects are set out within the LVIA.

## Assessment

The assessment of effects includes further desk and site based work, covering the following key activities:

- The preparation of a ZTV based on the finalised design for the development.
- An assessment, based on both desk study and site visits, of the sensitivity of receptors to the proposed development.
- An assessment, based on both desk study and site visits, of the magnitude and significance of effects upon the landscape character, designated and recreational landscape and the existing visual environment arising from the proposed development.
- An informed professional judgements as to whether each identified effect is positive, neutral or adverse.
- A clear description of the effects identified, with supporting information setting out the rationale for judgements.
- Identification of which effects are judged to be significant based on the significance thresholds set out within the LVIA
- The production of photomontages from a selection of the agreed viewpoints showing the anticipated view following construction of the proposed development.

## Site

The effect of physical changes to the site are assessed in terms of the effects on the landscape fabric.

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Landscape and Townscape Character Considerations

**The European Landscape Convention (2000) provides the following definition:**

“Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”

**And notes also in Article 2 that landscape includes** “natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas. It includes land, inland water and marine areas”.

**An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England, 2014) defines landscape character as:**

“a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements, or characteristics, in the landscape that make one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.”

The susceptibility of landscape character areas is judged based on both the attributes of the receiving environment and the characteristics of the proposed development as discussed under ‘susceptibility’ within the methodology section of the LVIA. Thus, the key characteristics of the landscape character types/areas are considered, along with scale, openness, topography; the absence of, or presence, nature and patterns of development, settlement, landcover, the contribution of heritage assets and historic landscape elements and patterns, and land uses in forming the character. The condition of the receiving landscape, i.e. the intactness of the existing character will also be relevant in determining susceptibility. The likelihood of material effects on the landscape character areas can be judged based on the scale and layout of the proposal and how this relates to the characteristics of the receiving landscape.

The introduction of any development into a landscape adds a new feature which can affect the ‘sense of place’ in its near vicinity, but with distance, the existing characteristics reassert themselves.

The baseline is informed by desk study of published landscape character assessments and field survey. It is specifically noted within An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England, 2014) that:

“Our landscapes have evolved over time and they will continue to evolve – change is a constant but outcomes vary. The management of change is essential to ensure that we achieve sustainable outcomes – social, environmental and economic. Decision makers need to understand the baseline and the implications of their decisions for that baseline.”

**At page 51 it describes the function of Key Characteristics in landscape assessment, as follows:**

“Key characteristics are those combinations of elements which help to give an area its distinctive sense of place. If these characteristics change, or are lost, there would be significant consequences for the current character of the landscape. Key characteristics are particularly important in the development of planning and management policies. They are important for monitoring change and can provide a useful reference point against which landscape change can be assessed. They can be used as indicators to inform thinking about whether and how the landscape is changing and whether, or not, particular policies – for example - are effective and having the desired effect on landscape character.”

**It follows from the above that in order to assess whether landscape character is significantly affected by a development, it should be determined how each of the key characteristics would be affected. The judgement of magnitude therefore reflects the degree**

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to which the key characteristics and elements which form those characteristics will be altered by the proposals.

Landscape value - considerations

Paragraph 5.19 of GLVIA states that “A review of existing landscape designations is usually the starting point in understanding landscape value, but the value attached to undesignated landscapes also needs to be carefully considered and individual elements of the landscape- such as trees, buildings or hedgerows - may also have value. All need to be considered where relevant.”

Paragraph 5.20 of GLVIA indicates information which might indicate landscape value, including:

- Information about areas recognised by statute such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Information about Heritage Coasts, where relevant;
- Local planning documents for local landscape designations;
- Information on features such as Conservation Areas, listed buildings, historic or cultural sites;
- Art and literature, identifying value attached to particular areas or views; and
- Material on landscapes of local or community interest, such as local green spaces, village greens or allotments.

An assessment of landscape value is made based on the following factors outlined in Box 5.1 of GLVIA3: Landscape quality (condition); scenic quality; rarity; representativeness; conservation interest; recreational value; perceptual aspects; and associations.

In addition to the above list, consideration is given to any evidence that indicates whether the landscape has particular value to people that would suggest that it is of greater than Community value.

Viewpoints and Visual Receptors - considerations

A wide variety of visual receptors can reasonably be anticipated to be affected by the proposed development. Within the baseline assessment, the ZTV study and site visits are used to determine which visual receptors are likely to be significantly affected and therefore merit detailed assessment. In line with guidance (GLVIA, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2013); both representative and specific viewpoints may be identified to inform the assessment. In general, the majority of viewpoints will be representative – representing the visual receptors at the distance and direction in which they are located and of the type(s) that would be present at that location. The representative viewpoints have generally been selected in locations where significant effects would be anticipated; though some may be selected outside of that zone – either to demonstrate the reduction of effects with distance; or to specifically ensure the representation of a particularly sensitive receptor.

The types of visual receptors likely to be included with the assessment are:

- Users of walking routes or accessible landscapes including Public Rights of Way, National and Regional Trails and other long distance routes, Common Land, Open Access Land, permissive paths, land held in trust (e.g. Woodland Trust, National Trust) offering free public access, and other regularly used, permitted walking routes;

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- Visitors to and residents of settlements;
- Visitors to specific valued viewpoints;
- Visitors to attractions or heritage assets for which landscape and views contribute to the experience; and
- Users of roads or identified scenic routes.

Visual receptors are grouped for assessment into areas which include all of the routes, public spaces and homes within that area. Groups are selected as follows:

- Based around settlements in order to describe effects on that that community – e.g. a settlement and routes radiating from that settlement; or
- An area of open countryside encompassing a number of routes, accessible spaces and individual dwellings; or
- An area of accessible landscape and the routes within and around it e.g. a country park; and
- such that effects within a single visual receptor group are similar enough to be readily described and assessed.

With the exception of specific viewpoints, each route, settlement or location will encompass a range of possible views, which might vary from no view of the development to very clear, close views. Therefore effects are described in such a way as to identify where views towards the development are likely to arise and what the scale, duration and extent of those views are likely to be. In some cases this will be further informed by a nearby viewpoint and in others it will be informed with reference to the ZTV, aerial photography and site visits. Each of these individual effects are then considered together in order to reach a judgement of the effects on the visual receptors along that route, or in that place.

The representative viewpoints are used as ‘samples’ on which to base judgements of the scale of effects on visual receptors. The viewpoints represent multiple visual receptors, and duration and extent are judged when assessing impacts on the visual receptors.

For specific viewpoints (key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape), duration and extent are assessed, with extent reflecting the extent to which the development affects the valued qualities of the view from the specific viewpoint.

## Visual Receptor Sensitivity – typical examples

	High	Medium	Low
National/International	1	4	8
Local/District	2	5	8
Community	3	6	9
Limited		7	10

- 1) Visitors to valued viewpoints or routes which people might visit purely to experience the view, e.g. promoted or well-known viewpoints, routes from which views that form part of the special qualities of a designated landscape can be well appreciated; key designed views; panoramic viewpoints marked on maps.
- 2) People in locations where they are likely to pause to appreciate the view, such as from local waypoints such as benches; or at key views to/from local landmarks. Visitors to local attractions, heritage assets or public parks where views are an important contributor to the experience, or key views into/out of Conservation Areas.
- 3) People in the streets around their home, or using public rights of way, navigable waterways or accessible open space (public parks, open access land).
- 4) Users of promoted scenic rail routes.
- 5) Users of promoted scenic local road routes.
- 6) Users of cycle routes, local roads and railways.
- 7) Outdoor workers.
- 8) Users of A-roads which are nationally or locally promoted scenic routes.
- 9) Users of sports facilities such as cricket grounds and golf courses.
- 10) Users of Motorways and A-roads; shoppers at retail parks, people at their (indoor) places of work.



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## Preparation and use of Visuals

The ZTVs are used to inform the field study assessment work, providing additional detail and accuracy to observations made on site. Photomontages may also be produced in order to assist readers of the assessment in visualising the proposals but are not used in reaching judgements of effect. The preparation of the ZTVs (and photomontages where applicable) is informed by the Landscape Institute's Advice Note 01/11 – 'Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment' and SNH 'Visual Representation of Wind Farms Best Practice Guidance' (both the 2007 and 2017 editions).

The following points should be borne in mind in respect of the ZTV study:

- Areas shown as having potential visibility may have visibility of the development obscured by local features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments or buildings.

A detailed description of the methods by which ZTVs and visualisations are prepared is included in Appendix 6.4.

In addition to the main visualisations, illustrative views are used as appropriate to illustrate particular points made within the assessment. These are not prepared to the same standard as they simply depict existing views, character or features rather than forming the basis for visualisations.

## Cumulative Assessment

Cumulative assessment relates to the assessment of the effects of more than one development. A search area from the proposal site (typically of a similar scale to the study area) is agreed with the planning authority. For each of the identified cumulative schemes agreement is reached with the Planning Authority as to whether and how they should be included in the assessment.

Only operational and consented developments are considered, unless specific circumstances indicate that a development in planning should be included, with progressively decreasing emphasis placed on those which are less certain to proceed. Typically, operational and consented developments are treated as being part of the landscape and visual baseline. i.e. it is assumed that consented schemes will be built except for occasional exceptions where there is good reason to assume that they will not be constructed.

The cumulative assessment examines the same groups of landscape and visual receptors as the assessment for the main scheme, though different viewpoints may be used in order to better represent the likely range of effects arising from the combination of schemes. The assessment is informed by cumulative ZTVs as necessary, showing the extent of visual effects of the schemes in different colours to illustrate where visibility of more than one development is likely to arise. Cumulative wirelines or photomontages may also be prepared.

In addition, the effects on users of routes through the area, from which developments may be sequentially visible as one passes through the landscape are also considered, if appropriate. This assessment is based on the desk study of ZTVs and aerial photography, and site visits to travel along the routes being assessed.

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In relation to landscape and visual cumulative assessment, it is important to note the following:

- For each assessed receptor, combined cumulative effects may be the same as for the application scheme, or greater (where the influence of multiple schemes would increase effects, or where schemes in planning other than the application scheme would have the predominant effects).
- For each assessed receptor, incremental cumulative effects may be the same as for the application scheme, or reduced (where the influence of other schemes in planning would be such that were they consented and considered to be part of the baseline, the incremental change arising from the addition of the application scheme would be less).
- Subject to the distance and degree of intervening landform, vegetation and structures there may be no cumulative effects.

The way in which the assessment is described and presented is varied depending on the number and nature of scenarios which may arise. This variation is needed in order to convey to the reader the key points of each assessment. For example, the three different cumulative combinations that may arise for an assessment in which there are two existing undetermined applications each can be assessed individually. A situation in which there are 10 applications cannot reasonably be assessed in this way and the developments may need to be grouped for analysis.

Residential Amenity

Paragraph 6.17 of GLVIA, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition notes that:

*“In some instances it may also be appropriate to consider private viewpoints, mainly from residential properties.... Effects of development in private property are frequently dealt with mainly through ‘residential amenity assessments’. These are separate from LVIA although visual effects assessment may sometimes be carried out as part of a residential amenity assessment, in which case this will supplement and form part of the LVIA for a project. Some of the principles set out here for dealing with visual effects may help in such assessments but there are specific requirements in residential amenity assessment”*

When dealing with effects on residential properties, the outlook from a private property is essentially a private matter. The difference between that private interest and what should be protected in the public interest has been the subject of particular focus at Public Inquiries in relation to wind farm cases and the lessons learnt from Inspector’s decisions have informed how effects on views from residential properties influence a planning decision. This is fully described and set out in paragraphs 209-211 of the decision regarding Spring Farm Ridge wind farm (APP/Z2830/A/11/2165035 – December 2014), which sets out the approach that in considering effects on private residential amenity – whether effects are visually significant is not relevant – effects which fall below the threshold of being “so unpleasant, overwhelming and oppressive that this would become an unattractive place to live” (known as the Lavender Test) “would not feature in the planning balance, irrespective of how many dwellings were so affected”. The Inspector’s report also makes clear that this is a separate exercise to “weighing in the balance, as a component of the character and appearance issue, the effects on the locality generally that would derive from visual effects on resident receptors”, which is covered within the assessment of effects on visual receptors.

The Spring Farm Ridge Inspector’s decision is for a wind farm but makes it clear that “the level of impact or threshold at which the public interest would be so engaged should be no different for wind turbines than would be the threshold applicable to other types of development.” Wind farms are

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unusually tall developments with a greater chance that they could have such an effect. Most forms of development are unlikely to cause effects of such a high magnitude to render a property an unattractive place in which to live unless in very close to the property and occupying a large proportion of views.

Residential properties closest to the site are viewed on site and from aerial photography to consider whether a residential amenity assessment is required. Where such an assessment is required, it is provided as an appendix to the LVIA.

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## Appendix 3 Visualisations and ZTV Studies

### ZTV Studies

ZTV studies are prepared using the ESRI ArcGIS Viewshed routine. This creates a raster image that indicates the visibility (or not) of the points modelled. LDA Design undertake a ZTV study that is designed to include visual barriers from settlements and woodlands (with heights derived from NEXTMAP 25 surface mapping data). If significant deviations from these assumed heights are noted during site visits, for example young or felled areas of woodland, or recent changes to built form, the features concerned will be adjusted within the model or the adoption of a digital surface model will be used to obtain actual heights for these barriers. In this instance Lidar data has been used to include buildings and vegetation in the ZTV model.

The model is also designed to take into account both the curvature of the earth and light refraction, informed by the SNH guidance. LDA Design undertake all ZTV studies with observer heights of 2m.

The ZTV analysis begins at 1m from the observation feature and will work outwards in a grid of the set resolution until it reaches the end of the terrain map for the project.

For all plan production LDA Design will produce a ZTV that has a base and overlay of the 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Raster mapping or better. The ZTV will be reproduced at a suitable scale on an A3 template to encompass the study area.

### Ground model accuracy

Depending on the project and level of detail required, different height datasets may be used. Below is listed the different data products and their specifications:

Product	Distance Between Points	Vertical RMSE Error
LiDAR	50cm – 2m	up to +/- 5cm
Photogrammetrically Derived Heights	2m – 5m	up to +/- 1.5m
Ordnance Survey OS terrain 5	5 m	up to +/- 2.5m
NextMap25 DTM	25 m	+/- 2.06m
Ordnance Survey OS terrain 50	50 m	+/- 4m

Site-specific topographical survey data may also be used where available.

### Photomontages and Photowires

Verified / verifiable photomontages are produced in seven stages. Photowires are produced using the same overall approach, but only require some of the steps outlined below.

- 1) Photography is undertaken using a digital SLR camera and 50mm equivalent lens. A tripod is used to take overlapping photographs which are joined together using an industry standard application to create a single panoramic image for each viewpoint. These are then saved at a fixed height and resolution to enable correct sizing when reproduced in the final images. The photographer also notes the GPS location of the viewpoint and takes bearings to visible landmarks whilst at the viewpoint.

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- 2) Creation of a ground model and 3D mesh to illustrate that model. This is created using NextMap25 DTM point data (or occasionally other terrain datasets where required, such as site-specific topographical data or Photogrammetrically Derived Heights) and ground modelling software.
  - 3) The addition of the proposed development to the 3D model. The main components of the proposed development are accurately modelled in CAD and are then inserted into the 3D model at the proposed locations and elevations.
  - 4) Wireline generation – The viewpoints are added within the 3D CAD model with each observer point being inserted at 1.5m above the modelled ground plane. The location of the landmarks identified by the photographer may also be included in the model. The view from the viewpoint is then replicated using virtual cameras to create a series of single frame images, which also include bearing markers. As with the photographs, these single frame images are joined together using an industry standard application to create a single panoramic image for each viewpoint. These are then saved at a fixed height and resolution to ensure that they are the same size as the photographs.
  - 5) Wireline matching – The photographs are matched to the wirelines using a combination of the visible topography, bearing markers and the landmarks that have been included in the 3D model.
  - 6) For the photomontage, an industry standard 3D rendering application is used to produce a rendered 3D view of the proposed development from the viewpoint. The rendering uses materials to match the intended surface finishes of the development and lighting conditions according to the date and time of the viewpoint photograph.
  - 7) The rendered development is then added to the photograph in the position identified by the wireline (using an image processing application) to ensure accuracy. The images are then layered to ensure that the development appears in front of and behind the correct elements visible within the photograph. Where vegetation is proposed as part of the development, this is then added to the final photomontage.
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## Appendix 4 National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, February 2019) makes clear that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development (Section 2), and that design (Section 12), and effects on the natural environment (Section 15) are important components of this.

Paragraph 11 sets out that in determining applications for development this means that developments which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved. Where the development plan is not fit for the purpose of determining the application, paragraph 11 directs that the permission should be granted unless “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole” or “the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed”. The areas or assets of particular importance in respect of landscape and visual matters referred to within the relevant footnote 6 are:

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- National Parks including the Norfolk Broads;
- Heritage Coast.

The list also includes important and/or irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets, areas at risk of flooding or coastal change, and land-use designations (Green Belt, Local Green Space).

Section 11 sets out considerations in ‘Making Effective Use of Land’ and notes in paragraph 122 that in respect of development density the considerations should include whether a place is well-designed and “the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting ... or of promoting regeneration and change”.

Paragraph 127 of the NPPF indicates that decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) ...

Section 15 of the NPPF covers both ecological and landscape matters. Paragraph 170 requires that decisions should contribute by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, ... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
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- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate; ...”

**In respect of valued landscapes, paragraph 171 notes that planning policy should “distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites”. Paragraphs 172 and 173 require that:**

“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

173. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 172), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.”

**Footnote 55 notes that “whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined”.**

**Paragraph 180 requires decisions to ensure that “new development is appropriate for its location” including by limiting the impact of light pollution on local amenity and “intrinsically dark landscapes”.**

Planning Practice Guidance for Natural Environment, January 2016

**This document is intended to explain the key issues in implementing policy to protect biodiversity, but also contains a section on landscape. This section reiterates the policy set out in the NPPF, clarifying that development outside National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty “might have an impact on the setting of, and implementation of, the statutory purposes of these protected areas” (para 003), that “National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty management plans may also be material considerations in making decisions on individual planning applications, where they raise relevant issues” (para 004) and that Natural England has published advice on Heritage Coasts. This guidance indicates that heritage coasts are “managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility for visitors”.**

Planning Practice Guidance for Design, March 2014

**The guidance sets out principles in respect of the design of a development, noting that:**

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“Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations.

Good design responds in a practical and creative way to both the function and identity of a place. It puts land, water, drainage, energy, community, economic, infrastructure and other such resources to the best possible use – over the long as well as the short term.”

**In respect of the determining applications and the relationship between a proposal and the surrounding townscape, the guidance notes that:**

“Local planning authorities are required to take design into consideration and should refuse permission for development of poor design. Local planning authorities should give great weight to outstanding or innovative designs which help to raise the standard of design more generally in the area. This could include the use of innovative construction materials and techniques. Planning permission should not be refused for buildings and infrastructure that promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns *have been mitigated by good design...*”

**In respect of local character, the guidance further notes that:**

“Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre.

When thinking about new *development the site’s land form should be taken into account*. Natural features and local heritage resources can help give shape to a development and integrate it into the wider area, reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and contribute to a sense of place. Views into and out of larger sites should also be carefully considered from the start of the design process.

Local building forms and details contribute to the distinctive qualities of a place. These can be successfully interpreted in new development without necessarily restricting the scope of the designer. Standard solutions rarely create a distinctive identity or make best use of a particular site. The use of local materials, building methods and details can be an important factor in enhancing local distinctiveness when used in evolutionary local design, and can also be used in more contemporary design. However, innovative design should not be discouraged.

The opportunity for high quality hard and soft landscape design that helps to successfully integrate development into the wider environment should be carefully considered from the outset, to ensure it complements the architecture of the proposals and improves the overall quality of townscape or landscape. Good landscape design can help the natural surveillance of an area, creatively help differentiate public and private space and, where appropriate, enhance security.”

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December 2020  
Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

## Appendix 5 Extracts from Landscape Character Assessment

Hertsmere Landscape Character Assessment (2001)

- LCA16: Aldenham Plateau
- LCA 22: Borehamwood Plateau

County map showing location of LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

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County Council  
LA076678



**LOCATION**

This area is located between Radlett and Watford. The valley of the Colne lies to the north-west and the Borehamwood plateau to the south-east.

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

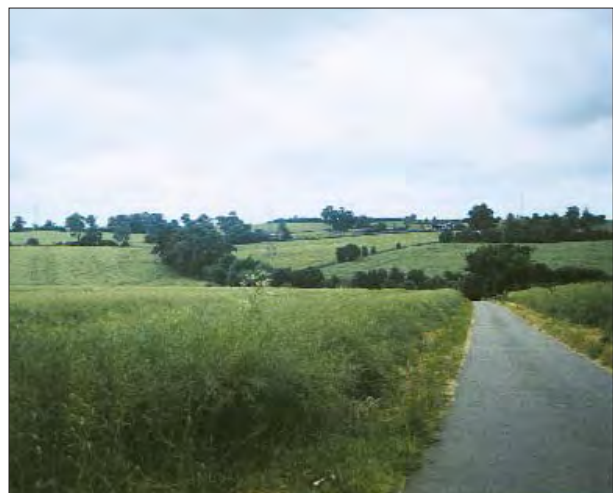
An area of predominantly gently undulating arable farmland interspersed with a number of distinctive villages clustered around greens and with a good mix of vernacular buildings. Areas of grazing are prevalent in association with modest parklands on the edge of the settlements. Medium to tall hedgerows and sunken lanes help to enclose the open arable fields and retain a rural and tranquil character which only changes at the approaches to the noisy M1/A41 corridor.

**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

- gently undulating landform
- large tenanted estates with arable dominant and some secondary grazing
- small organic clustered villages around village greens
- declining pattern of hedgerows within arable areas
- limited woodland except to M1

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES**

- Aldenham church
- high proportion of elm in hedges



Hill Farm •  
(J. Billingsley)

### PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

**Geology and soils.** To the north the underlying geology is a combination of plateau and river terrace drift. The soils are well-drained flinty coarse loamy and sandy over some gravels (Sonning 1 association). To the south, including Letchmore Heath, the geology is Eocene and Jurassic loam and clay with fine deep and coarse loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils and seasonal waterlogging (Bursledon association).

**Topography.** Within this undulating plateau area the highest ground is to the east and centre around Kemprow and the edge of Radlett. Most of the central plateau areas have minimal falls while to the edges the landform becomes more strongly undulating, e.g. at Hill north of Radlett. There are a number of sunken lanes in the core of the area.

**Degree of slope.** Across the plateau, slopes are typically less than 1 in 50, but on the slopes can be up to 1 in 25.

**Altitude range.** 70 to 100m.

**Hydrology.** The clay soils support a number of streams that flow off the plateau towards the Colne. There are also a number of ponds associated with farmsteads, woodlands, village greens or larger houses.

**Land cover and land use.** The primary land use is arable. Areas of grazing are mixed with the arable fields or found closer to individual farms, e.g. Hill Farm. These fields are often enclosed with fencing. Woodland cover is not generally significant. Aldenham golf course occupies the north-west corner of the area.

**Vegetation and wildlife.** Woodlands are few, being discrete and linear in character. Species include oak, hazel, ash and sycamore. In some locations Leyland cypress and poplars have been introduced as shelterbelts, but they are not in harmony with the landscape pattern. The only major woodlands are close to the M1 within the Aldenham Country Club golf course grounds. These include oak/hazel, e.g. Berrygrove, which reflects the acidic and relatively wet ground conditions, although these ancient woods now also contain areas of conifers. Where present, hedges are tall and prominent features in the landscape, with mixed species including hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple and hazel. Elm is locally very significant in this area, however many of the elms are suffering from Dutch elm disease. Field trees are locally important, particularly around and within areas of pasture which are often, but not exclusively, linked to the modest areas of parkland close to the clustered villages, e.g. Patchetts Green, Batlers Green and Edge Grove. There are a few acidic to neutral buttercup pastures remaining, e.g. Batlers Green.

### HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Aldenham is recorded in the Domesday Book. Letchmore Heath was not recorded before the 16th century, but its name comes from the Old English word meaning 'dirty pond'.

**Field pattern.** The historic field pattern is one of pre-18th century organic enclosure. This pattern is largely intact, except to the north where there has been considerable 20th-century enclosure and field enlargement. Despite the continuity of the field pattern there has been considerable hedge removal in the arable areas. The hedges are best retained along the local minor roads.

**Transport pattern.** The historic pattern of narrow winding lanes is partly retained between the villages. The lanes are often sunken where they run down locally steeper slopes. The 'improved' B462 between Radlett and Bushey skirts the villages, but is unsympathetically planted with a mix of 100% hawthorn. Much of the area is only served by farm tracks.

**Settlements and built form.** In the estate farmlands the settlement is sparse and dispersed. However, the small historic villages are one of the key features of the area. Building materials include brick, clay tile and flint. Letchmore Heath is a picturesque village centred around a village green, pond and groupings of 16th and 17th-century cottages. Aldenham is centred around a leafy village green and church. The tower and buttresses of the parish church are unique, being made of Hertfordshire 'puddingstone', a hard conglomerate rock.

**VISUAL AND SENSORY PERCEPTION**

The relatively elevated level nature of the land and the enclosing vegetation means it is only locally visible from the surrounding areas. There are some long views from the area to the north as far as St Albans cathedral. The area is generally quiet except where close to the M1. The localised decline in hedges in the arable areas opens up views to some urbanising elements.

**Rarity and distinctiveness.** This landscape type is frequent. The distinctive features are the small villages clustered around greens.

**VISUAL IMPACT**

The M1/A41 corridor and the associated urbanising elements are well contained by the adjacent woodland and the road cutting. The sewage works on Oakridge Lane are well screened, their presence given away by the concrete access road. Two rows of pylons cross the area and detract from the rural character. Built development on the edges is generally well absorbed although there are exceptions, e.g. suburban housing in Patchets Green, the northern edge of Radlett and views to tower blocks in Watford. There has been a move from pasture to arable and to recreation at Aldenham Country Park, where the tree planting style and species are out of keeping with the traditional pattern.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

There are a number of footpaths in the area. However, the links between the small villages are limited and often rely on walking down the narrow sunken lanes, which can be dangerous. Aldenham golf course lies to the north west. Batlers Green Farm Shop complex is just outside Radlett.

**COMMUNITY VIEWS**

The greens and village landscapes in this area are significantly valued for their distinctiveness, including respondents for whom villages are not their favourite feature in the environment (C).

Re. Letchmore Heath: *'It is a suprisingly beautiful little place in view of the fact that "much of the building seems to have been around 1872"'* (Hertfordshire Countryside Vol.20, No.83, March 1966).

**LANDSCAPE RELATED DESIGNATIONS**

Watling Chase Community Forest.

**CONDITION**

<i>Land cover change:</i>	<b>widespread</b>
<i>Age structure of tree cover:</i>	<b>mixed</b>
<i>Extent of semi-natural habitat survival:</i>	<b>relic</b>
<i>Management of semi-natural habitat:</i>	<b>variable</b>
<i>Survival of cultural pattern:</i>	<b>declining</b>
<i>Impact of built development:</i>	<b>moderate</b>
<i>Impact of land-use change:</i>	<b>high</b>

**STRENGTH OF CHARACTER**

<i>Impact of landform:</i>	<b>apparent</b>
<i>Impact of land cover:</i>	<b>prominent</b>
<i>Impact of historic pattern:</i>	<b>interrupted</b>
<i>Visibility from outside:</i>	<b>locally visible</b>
<i>Sense of enclosure:</i>	<b>partial</b>
<i>Visual unity:</i>	<b>coherent</b>
<i>Distinctiveness/rarity:</i>	<b>frequent</b>

<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	Strengthen and reinforce	Conserve and strengthen	Safeguard and manage
	<b>MODERATE</b>	Improve and reinforce	Improve and conserve	Conserve and restore
	<b>POOR</b>	Reconstruct	<b>Improve and restore</b>	Restore condition to maintain character
		<b>WEAK</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>STRONG</b>
<b>STRENGTH OF CHARACTER</b>				

## STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CHANGE: IMPROVE AND RESTORE

- support Watling Chase Community Forest in the realisation of its objectives for the area
- promote the creation of new woods within the area. Planting to focus on screening harsh built edges of settlements and providing access for local population, e.g. Radlett
- promote the appropriate management of existing semi-natural woodland in order to maintain a species-rich ground flora and the distinction between different management systems, such as high forest, coppice, coppice-with-standards. Ensure that management does not reduce the screening of the M1
- use ancient hedge and field boundaries to locate wood restoration and expansion
- woodlands should cater for public access, conservation and economic productivity
- promote enhanced habitat and visual linkage through a substantially improved and restored network of hedges and hedgerow trees
- promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and important semi-natural habitats and the creation of links between semi-natural habitats
- promote crop diversification and the restoration of mixed livestock/arable farming where possible
- promote both the creation of new ponds and the retention/enhancement for wildlife of existing ponds
- promote hedgerow restoration through locally appropriate measures, including coppicing, laying and replanting/gapping-up
- promote the creation of new orchards, the use of traditional varieties of fruit and reduced use of herbicides and pesticides
- maintain and enhance framed views to Aldenham parish
- protect the setting and character of the local villages and resist further development
- improve rights of way and create new routes between villages and to the adjacent towns to avoid the use of narrow or congested roads
- retain and enhance parkland areas, e.g. Edge Grove. Ensure new planting is encouraged to maintain age diversity. Landscape improvements should respect the historic context of existing features and the form and character of parkland and gardens. Ornamental species should only be used to replace damaged or over-mature specimens where appropriate
- encourage reversion from arable uses to pasture and grassland
- restrict ploughing of grasslands within parklands
- encourage the re-use of existing agricultural buildings for equestrian activity
- promote the use of traditional field enclosure where land is converted to equestrian pasture
- develop a strategy for tree planting, grassland management and wildlife enhancement within Aldenham golf course
- discourage the use of non-native trees in shelterbelts and recreational areas
- ensure that ancient lanes and their associated hedgerows are retained
- ensure that the surroundings of new and converted buildings are designed and maintained to be in keeping with their agricultural surroundings. 'Garden' details are to be screened from view where possible and locally indigenous hedging and trees should be used in preference to fencing or exotics. Car parking to be screened, e.g. Batlers Green shopping village
- traffic-calming measures, where considered necessary, must be of a scale and design that relates to the local landscape character of the settlement



- Aerial view of Batlers Green (Environmental Land Management Service (Rural Estates) HCC)

County map showing location of LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA



**LOCATION**

This area lies between Borehamwood to the east, Bushey to the west and Elstree to the south. To the north is the Aldenham plateau.

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

An area of gently undulating landform and considerable pasture within an intact landscape framework .A combination of tall bushy hedgerows and field trees contain views into and across the landscape. Two reservoirs are important features but are not prominent visually, being hidden by landform vegetation. Parkland areas, mostly associated with private schools, are apparent in the landscape and add to the pastoral character. The integrity of the area is diluted on approaching the towns that enclose to the east, west and south.

**KEY CHARACTERISTICS**

- gently undulating landform
- pasture is dominant land use with arable secondary
- a number of private schools set in mature landscaped grounds
- Aldenham Park historic parkland with woodland and perimeter belts
- two large reservoirs, i.e. Aldenham and Hilfield
- Aldenham Country Park
- fragmentation and disruption by the M1/A41 corridor including pylons and associated built development

**DISTINCTIVE FEATURES**

- Elstree aerodrome
- electricity transformer station
- Hilfield Castle

Aldenham Country Park •  
(Environmental Land Management Service (Rural Estates) HCC)



### PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

**Geology and soils.** The underlying geology to the area comprises Tertiary clay overlaid by slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged soils with some brown subsoils, (Windsor series). Locally, there are areas of fine loamy and silty soils over the clays.

**Topography.** An undulating plateau area with the highest ground adjacent to Elstree Ridge. The central plateau area has minimal falls, while to the edges slopes are steeper where the landform becomes more strongly undulating in the minor valleys that run off the slopes. The two reservoirs are significant landforms, albeit at the hand of man.

**Degree of slope.** Typically 1 in 80 across the plateau. 1 in 20 in the minor valleys to the south-west, e.g. Hilfield Farm.

**Altitude range.** 75 - 111m.

**Hydrology.** The clay soils support small ponds and a number of visually and ecologically important streams that flow off the plateau. The streams include Tykes Water, which receives water from Aldenham Reservoir and then passes through a lake at Aldenham Park, before travelling north through Radlett. Aldenham Reservoir, 65 acres in size, was hand-dug by French prisoners of war between 1795-97. Its purpose was to control the flow of water levels in the River Colne following the construction of the Grand Union Canal. The larger Hilfield Reservoir, opened in 1957 to provide drinking water, is now an LNR.

**Land cover and land use.** The primary land use is pasture for both horses and cattle. The area contains a number of parklands which also account for the high proportion of pasture. The most notable park is Aldenham Park, now partly forming the grounds of Haberdasher's Aske's School. The grounds contain fine specimen trees, an ornamental lake, woodland and the remains of a magnificent lime avenue west of the house. Other parklands include Kendall Hall and Aldenham School, both private schools. Secondary land use is arable but not the larger open fields that characterise much of the Aldenham Plateau to the north. The reservoirs are a key land use. Besides their major functions they provide a habitat for birds and have good vegetation, including perimeter shelterbelts. The Elstree aerodrome operates from a small runway north of Hilfield Reservoir. There are other recreational land uses including the Aldenham Country Park and a golf course.

**Vegetation and wildlife.** There are few ancient or semi-natural woodlands in the area, mostly plantations associated with the parklands or reservoirs. Species include oak, sycamore, lime, pine and poplar, with native black poplars along Tykes Water. Hedges are very important in this landscape, but are in decline in places with gaps developing and infill fencing rather than replanting. They are typically tall and bushy with mature field trees. Species are mixed and include elm, field maple, hawthorn and hazel. Field trees are oak with some ash. Areas of elm by the M1 are in decline. On the London clay there are some neutral grasslands.

### HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

**Field pattern.** The historic field pattern is mainly pre-18th century organic enclosure. This pattern is largely intact with small to medium-sized irregular fields. Exceptions to this are towards Bushey, where there has been 20th-century enclosure on the urban edge and around Aldenham reservoir where there is some parliamentary enclosure.

**Transport pattern.** A number of straight arterial roads pass through the area. The Roman Watling Street A5 runs north to Radlett and verges are often wide. The A41 and the M1 run close to each other to the west of the area. Secondary roads are often straight, e.g. around Aldenham Park. The St Pancras railway runs to the east.

**Settlements and built form.** The settlement pattern is dispersed with no villages, rather a number of farmsteads and a few individual houses.

- The red brick Aldenham House was built c.1672 for H. Coghill, remodelled in 1785 and further enlarged between 1870-73. In the grounds is Home Farm, built by the Victorian architect Butterfield.
- Hilfield Castle is a Gothic construction of 1805, complete with gatehouse and portcullis. Aldenham School was rebuilt from 1825 in the Jacobean castellated style.
- The built edges of Bushey and Borehamwood form a stark line in places, contrasting with the rural landscape. There are a number of 20th-century additions to the landscape, including school buildings at Haberdasher's Aske's and Aldenham School. There is also a prominent laboratory building at Hilfield Reservoir, industrial units by Aldenham Reservoir and the aerodrome hangars.

**VISUAL AND SENSORY PERCEPTION**

There are filtered and framed views into much of the area, particularly from Elstree. Views within the area are limited by the density of hedgerows and plantation woodlands. The two reservoirs are concealed from view even at close distance. The area is generally coherent apart from to the south west where there is a mix of recreational, industrial and agricultural uses and the noisy M1/A41 corridor contributes to the downgrading.

**Rarity and distinctiveness.** This landscape type is frequent in this part of the county. The distinctive features are the reservoirs and the private schools set in mature parklands.

**VISUAL IMPACT**

A number of structures create visual impact, including the electricity transformer station, the dam banks of Hilfield reservoir, the laboratory building at Hilfield reservoir, industrial units by Aldenham reservoir and the aerodrome hangars. Two major power lines run through the area. Built edges of the settlements are particularly raw in places, most notably on the northern edge of Borehamwood.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

There are a good number of rights of way in the area, but the M1/A41 corridor and, to a lesser extent, the St Pancras railway line act as barriers from the larger settlements. Aldenham Country Park is centred on the reservoir and provides a local attraction, with sailing, fishing, walking and a rare breeds area. Other recreational facilities include Medburn Equestrian Centre, Borehamwood golf course and Elstree aerodrome.

**COMMUNITY VIEWS**

The lakesides at Aldenham and Hilfield are some of the county's most valued landscapes (B). Otherwise, the area is largely unremarked upon for distinctiveness (E).

**LANDSCAPE RELATED DESIGNATIONS**

- Watling Chase Community Forest.
- SAM: Penne's Place moated site (grounds of Haberdasher's Aske's School).
- English Heritage Grade II listing: Aldenham Park.

**CONDITION**

- Land cover change:* **localised**
- Age structure of tree cover:* **mixed**
- Extent of semi-natural habitat survival:* **fragmented**
- Management of semi-natural habitat:* **variable**
- Survival of cultural pattern:* **intact**
- Impact of built development:* **high**
- Impact of land-use change:* **moderate**

**ROBUSTNESS**

- Impact of landform:* **apparent**
- Impact of land cover:* **prominent**
- Impact of historic pattern:* **continuous**
- Visibility from outside:* **locally visible**
- Sense of enclosure:* **partial**
- Visual unity:* **coherent**
- Distinctiveness/rarity:* **unusual**

<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	Strengthen and reinforce	Conserve and strengthen	Safeguard and manage
	<b>MODERATE</b>	Improve and reinforce	Improve and conserve	Conserve and restore
	<b>POOR</b>	Reconstruct	<b>Improve and restore</b>	Restore condition to maintain character
		<b>WEAK</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>STRONG</b>
<b>STRENGTH OF CHARACTER</b>				



**STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING****CHANGE: IMPROVE AND RESTORE**

- support Watling Chase Community Forest in the realisation of its objectives for the area
- promote the creation of new woods within the area. Planting to focus on screening harsh built edges of settlements, e.g. Borehamwood and Bushey, industrial development to the south-west and integrating M1 and A41 corridor by the use of medium to large-scale woodlands
- use ancient hedge and field boundaries to locate woodland restoration and expansion
- promote the appropriate management of existing plantation woodlands in order to create a balanced age structure and biodiverse woodland community
- woodlands should cater for public access, conservation and economic productivity
- provide enhanced habitat and visual linkage through a substantially restored network of hedges and hedgerow trees
- promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and important semi-natural habitats and the creation of links between semi-natural habitats
- promote crop diversification and the continuation of mixed livestock/arable farming
- promote both the creation of new ponds and the retention/enhancement for wildlife of existing ponds
- promote hedgerow restoration through locally appropriate measures including coppicing, laying and replanting/gapping-up
- promote the creation of new orchards, the use of traditional varieties of fruit and minimise the use of herbicides and pesticides
- retain and enhance parkland areas including Aldenham Park. Ensure new planting maintains age diversity. Landscape improvements should respect the historic context of existing features and the form and character of parkland and gardens. Ornamental species should only be used to replace damaged or over-mature specimens, where appropriate
- encourage reversion from arable uses to pasture and grassland
- restrict ploughing of grasslands within parklands
- encourage the re-use of existing agricultural buildings for equestrian activity
- promote the use of traditional field enclosure where land is converted to equestrian pasture
- discourage the use of non-native trees in shelterbelts and recreational areas
- traffic-calming measures, where considered necessary, must be of a scale and design that relates to the local landscape character of the settlement
- support the continued use of Aldenham Country Park for a range of recreational uses and explore the opportunities for increased access to Hilfield Reservoir



• Cattle at Kendal Hall Farm  
(J. Billingsley)

December 2020  
Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

Appendix 6 Consultation  
Consultation with Hertsmere Borough Council

**From:** [Ryan Mills - Senior Landscape Consultant](#)  
**To:** [Ben Croot](#); [Max Sanders](#); ["Nick Leaney"](#); [Maria Kitts - Senior Built Heritage Consultant](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer Richards](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Hilfield Solar Farm - pre-app  
**Date:** 14 December 2020 13:06:39  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)

---

Morning Ben,

Thank you for sending through the methodology. My only comment relates to Landscape Value. I understand designations play a role in affirming value, but this shouldn't be the only contributing factor. As you will know, GLIVA (Box 5.1) makes reference to the number of factors that should be considered when assessing value. For instance, Landscape quality (condition), Representativeness and Conservation interest. Therefore, rather than determining value based on designation, these should be contributing factors and the value scale should be defined by Low- Medium – High, rather than National/International - Local/District – Community.

In regards to the additional/revised viewpoints, we can confirm these are acceptable.

Kind regards,

**Ryan Mills** BSc (Hons) MSc CMLI  
**Senior Landscape Consultant** at Place Services

telephone: 03330320591 | mobile: 07775008053  
web: [www.placeservices.co.uk](http://www.placeservices.co.uk)  
linkedin: [www.linkedin.com/in/ryanhmills](http://www.linkedin.com/in/ryanhmills)



---

**From:** Ben Croot <Ben.Croot@lda-design.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 10 December 2020 11:56  
**To:** Ryan Mills - Senior Landscape Consultant <Ryan.Mills@essex.gov.uk>; Max Sanders <Max.Sanders@hertsmere.gov.uk>; 'Nick Leaney' <NickLeaney@aardvarkem.co.uk>; Maria Kitts - Senior Built Heritage Consultant <Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Jennifer Richards <jennifer.richards@headlandarchaeology.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Hilfield Solar Farm - pre-app

Dear Ryan

Thank you for your formal pre-app letter response in relation to the LVIA for Hilfield solar farm and battery storage.

In regards to two specific points contained within:

1. I have supplied the proposed LVIA methodology as requested (email below).
2. We have taken two additional viewpoints as recommended from locations VP11 and VP12 as illustrated on the plan attached. Having revisited the site, the view from footpath 042 to Slades Farm is restricted as the land falls toward Aldenham Brook and is further screened by the rising land of the former landfill site – VP12 providing a more suitable alternative.

You will also note VP09 is now proposed for a photomontage as requested.

I would be grateful if you could confirm acceptance of the above.

With kind regards

Ben

Ben Croot  
Associate

L D A DESIGN

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email: [Ben.Croot@lda-design.co.uk](mailto:Ben.Croot@lda-design.co.uk) | [www.lda-design.co.uk](http://www.lda-design.co.uk)

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The pandemic shows the world needs a new baseline. Read [Space & Time](#), our thinking during six weeks in lockdown.

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**From:** Ben Croot

**Sent:** 16 November 2020 20:37

**To:** Max Sanders <[Max.Sanders@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:Max.Sanders@hertsmere.gov.uk)>; 'Nick Leaney' <[NickLeaney@aardvarkem.co.uk](mailto:NickLeaney@aardvarkem.co.uk)>; 'Maria Kitts, Senior Built Heritage Consultant' <[Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk)>; Ryan Mills - Senior Landscape Consultant <[Ryan.Mills@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Ryan.Mills@essex.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Jennifer Richards <[jennifer.richards@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:jennifer.richards@headlandarchaeology.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Hilfield Solar Farm - pre-app

Dear Ryan

Further to your request for sight of the LVIA methodology we intend to use, please find attached the LVIA methodology pages extract from ENSO's recent solar farm application at Larks Green, South Gloucestershire.

This is based on LDA's standard methodology – used also for Sizewell and Bradwell nuclear power stations – and has been tested at numerous appeals.

We look forward to your formal written response following our meeting in the very near future.

With kind regards

Ben

---

**From:** Max Sanders <[Max.Sanders@hertsmere.gov.uk](mailto:Max.Sanders@hertsmere.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 11 November 2020 17:39

**To:** 'Nick Leaney' <[NickLeaney@aardvarkem.co.uk](mailto:NickLeaney@aardvarkem.co.uk)>; 'Maria Kitts, Senior Built Heritage Consultant' <[Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Maria.Kitts@essex.gov.uk)>; Ryan Mills - Senior Landscape Consultant <[Ryan.Mills@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Ryan.Mills@essex.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Ben Croot <[Ben.Croot@lda-design.co.uk](mailto:Ben.Croot@lda-design.co.uk)>; Jennifer Richards <[jennifer.richards@headlandarchaeology.com](mailto:jennifer.richards@headlandarchaeology.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Hilfield Solar Farm - pre-app

Thanks Nick, and apologies for the bad connection at my end. It seems to be a problem with the Council's server – we have all been having trouble with on-line meetings for the past two or three weeks; previously they were not too bad.

I have asked Maria and Ryan to send me their written comments, which I will then pass on to you.

Regards



Planning and Economic Development  
Hertsmere Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Elstree Way  
Borehamwood  
Herts  
WD6 1WA

13/11/2020

For the attention of: Max Sanders

**Ref: 20/1183/E11 - Land North Of Butterfly Lane, Land Surrounding Hilfield Farm, and Land East Of Hilfield Lane, Aldenham, Hertfordshire**

Thank you for consulting us on the request for landscape advise for a proposed solar farm and battery storage facility

The UK Government's position on power is set out in the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), which recognises the importance of understanding and addressing landscape and visual impacts (Department of Energy and Climate Change, 2011). It includes a section on criteria for "good design" for energy infrastructure, which states that:

*"Applying "good design" to energy projects should produce sustainable infrastructure sensitive to place, efficient in the use of natural resources and energy used in their construction and operation, matched by an appearance that demonstrates good aesthetic as far as possible. It is acknowledged, however that the nature of much energy infrastructure development will often limit the extent to which it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the area."*

Furthermore, Para 2.4.2 of the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) also states *"Proposals for renewable energy infrastructure should demonstrate good design in respect of landscape and visual amenity, and in the design of the project to mitigate impacts such as noise and effects on ecology."*

There are a number of elements associated with a solar farm development which have the potential to influence the significance of the impacts on landscape character and visual amenity. These include:

- Height and layout of the panels
- Colour of the panel's surrounding frames
- Treatment of the ground below and between the panels
- Perimeter fencing.

As part of the planning application we would be expecting the details outlined above to be provided so that an appropriate judgement of landscape and visual impact can be made, but to also ensure landscape mitigation and enhancements are suitable.

The Pre-application submission includes the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Study and Proposed Viewpoint Locations plan, Draft Photo panels and LDA letter. The letter provides the scope of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) proposed as part of the anticipated planning application, referring to appropriate guideline documents such as the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Third Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of

Environmental Management and Assessment). Before proceeding with an application submission, we would advise the following recommendations are considered:

1. We ask that the proposed methodology is submitted and approved by the LPA prior to application submission. The key terms and values that should be defined include:
  - Susceptibility and value – which contribute to sensitivity of the receptor;
  - Scale, duration and extent - which contribute to the magnitude of effect; and
  - Significance.
2. To help inform the landscape baseline, we would expect a detailed landscape audit to be provided. This should include details of existing landscape features present across the development sites. Assets should include but not be limited to; existing trees, hedgerows and grassland habitats.
3. The use of photomontages as visualisation representation is welcomed. We would recommend that Viewpoint 11 is also represented as a photomontage to provide a wider understanding of the solar farm layout and the areas of landscape pull back that have been proposed.
4. All visual representation with any submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) should be in line with The Visual Representation of Development Proposals Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 06/19 (Landscape Institute, September 2019) to ensure the assessment of visual impact is accurate and in turn an appropriate judgement of the assessed impacts can be made.
5. Additional viewpoints in the following locations should also be considered to give the LPA an understand of impacts on Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the site:
  - PRoW Aldenham 042 - 51°39'42.5"N 0°19'08.1"W
  - PRoW Aldenham 040 - 51°39'58.3"N 0°18'49.9"W

If you have any queries regarding the above matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

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**Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of Hertsmere Borough Council.**

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.