



Lime Down

Solar Park

Limestone Lowlands Character Assessment (Tracked)

~~August~~September 2026

Revision 2

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010168

Document Reference: EXAM/9.60

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)



Schedule of Changes

<u>Revision</u>	<u>Section Reference</u>	<u>Description of Changes</u>	<u>Reason for Revision</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Table 1</u>	<u>Updated hedgerow, woodland and ground cover measurements</u>	<u>Amended to follow latest revision of Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plans.</u>
	<u>Table 3</u>	<u>Updated hedgerow, woodland and ground cover measurements</u>	<u>Amended to follow latest revision of Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plans.</u>
	<u>Table 8</u>	<u>Updated hedgerow, woodland and ground cover measurements</u>	<u>Amended to follow latest revision of Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plans.</u>

List of Contents

1	Assessment of Effects on Landscape Types and Character Areas.....	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Proposed Development.....	7
1.3	Baseline Landscape Assessment	9
1.4	Assessment of Effects.....	11
1.5	Cumulative Landscape Effects.....	47
1.6	Conclusions	56

List of Tables

Table 1: Effects on the Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area	12
Table 2: Effects on LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area	21
Table 3 Effects on Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type	25
Table 4: Effects on LCA 6: Upper Avon Valley Character Area.....	32
Table 5: Effects on LCA 10: Corsham Rolling Lowland	34
Table 6: Effects on LCA 11: Avon Valley Lowland	37
Table 7: Effects on LCA A3: Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland.....	40
Table 8: HOST -LCA 16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands.....	43
Table 9: Existing Solar Schemes and Included CD Sites in relation to Landscape Types and Landscape Character areas.....	47
Table 10: Cumulative Effects on the Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area	50
Table 11: Cumulative Effects on LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area.....	52
Table 12: Effects on Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type	53
Table 13: Cumulative effects on the HOST -LCA16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area	54
Table 14: Summary of Landscape Effects.....	57
Table 15: Summary of Cumulative Landscape Effects.....	61

1 Assessment of Effects on Landscape Types and Character Areas

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Assessment of Effects on Landscape Types and Character Areas has been undertaken following Action Point 14 and 15 from Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) **[EV8-010]** as follows:

- Action 14: Provide an assessment of how the Limestone Lowland landscape type and its sub-divided Landscape Character Areas would be affected including reference to the: - key characteristics; - Inherent landscape sensitivities; and - broad management objectives.
- Action 15: Provide an assessment of how the key characteristics of the relevant landscape character types (Limestone Lowland and Hullavington Rolling Lowland) would be impacted by cumulative developments. Explain whether the key characteristics of the character types would be so changed by the cumulative developments as to transform it into a different landscape type.

1.1.2 In reviewing the request above and in consideration of the approach to the assessment of effects on landscape character undertaken in the LVIA (the Study Area approach), it was decided that assessing the effects on the Limestone Lowland Landscape Character Type and its component Landscape Character Areas alone would be too simplistic. The reasons for this are outlined below:

- There are two levels of Landscape Character Assessments in Wiltshire relevant to the Scheme: the County Assessment and the local level assessments of North Wiltshire and West Wiltshire which have different geographical extents.
- The sensitivity judgements (including value and susceptibility) for the Study Areas used in the LVIA approach to assessing the effects on landscape character would not be comparable. Judgements on Sensitivity need to consider the Sensitivity of the wider surrounding landscape types and character areas to be holistic. This is predominantly due to the presence of the Cotswold National Landscape within the Study Areas.

Methodology

1.1.3 A LVIA **[REP3-025]** has been undertaken as part of the Environmental Statement. This LVIA has been based on the principles and guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment as set out within the Landscape Institutes GLVIA3 and the methodology **[REP1A-006]** has been agreed through consultation with WC. The Limestone Lowland landscape type and its sub-divided Landscape Character Areas were assessed in the LVIA. However, the

approach to the assessment differs as they were assessed holistically as part of the assessment of effects on Study Areas and not individually.

- 1.1.4 In the LVIA two independent Landscape Assessments were undertaken:
- The effects on Landscape Fabric (being the constituent elements of the landscape (the Landscape Fabric) being the individual tangible elements or features of the landscape, such as landform, woodland, hedges, tree cover, vegetation within the development area or site, for example which can usually be described and quantified); and
 - The effects on Landscape Character (being the specific aesthetic or perceptual qualities and the character of the landscape as a whole in different areas) with reference to the relevant published Landscape Character Types/ Areas.
- 1.1.5 This Assessment of Effects on Landscape Types and Character Areas supplements the Assessment on Landscape Character undertaken in the LVIA which assessed the effects of the Lime Down Scheme within the following Study Areas.
- The 1km Study Area (The Local 1km Study Area);
 - The 2km Study Area (The Wider 2km Study Area);
 - The 5 km Study Area (The Outer 5 km Study Area); and
 - The 10km Study Area (The Cumulative Study Area).
- 1.1.6 This Assessment of Effects on Landscape Types and Character Areas assesses the effects of the Scheme on **all** the identified Landscape Types and Character Areas within the 10km Study Area. Although the request was to assess the effects on the Limestone Lowland landscape type and its sub-divided Landscape Character Areas, to be holistic and comparable with the LVIA, all relevant Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified in the three Landscape Character Assessments which relate to Wiltshire within the 10km Study Area have been considered.
- 1.1.7 This Assessment follows the Methodology as set out in **ES Volume 3 Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology [REP1A-006]** and GLIVIA3. However, this assessment considers the effects of the Scheme on the individual Character Areas and Types rather than on the Study Areas and follows the following steps:
- Description of the Lime Down Scheme (Section 2);
 - Baseline Assessment (Section 3);
 - Assessment of Effects (Section 4) including:
 - The effects on the “key characteristics”,

- Consideration of the “inherent landscape sensitivities”; and
- Compliance with the “broad management objectives”.

- 1.1.8 The main difference between Landscape Character Types (LCT) and Landscape Character Areas (LCA) is that LCTs are generic categories based on shared features, while LCAs are specific, unique places on a map (reference - an Approach to Landscape Character Assessment October 2014 Christine Tudor, Natural England).
- 1.1.9 Landscape Character Types (LCT) are therefore repeating and group together landscapes that look and function the same way, no matter where they are in the country due to their shared traits: They share similar geology, landforms, vegetation, land use, and field patterns (for example, "Upland Moorland" or "Broad River Valley") and occur in multiple locations.
- 1.1.10 Landscape Character Areas (LCA) are unique and specific. They are individual, geographically bounded pieces of land which have their own local identity: They belong to a broader LCT, but they have their own specific name, distinct boundary, and unique sense of place. They exist in a single location (for example, the "The Malmesbury to Corsham Limestone Lowland " area belongs to the generic "Limestone Lowland" which can occur in other areas of the country.
- 1.1.11 The Applicant's Assessment on Landscape Character for Deadline 5 also considers the Inter Cumulative effects of the Scheme and the Cumulative Development Sites from the included list as set out in Table 8-31 Included Cumulative Development Sites and shown in **ES Volume 2, Figure 8-15-1 to 8-15-7 Cumulative Sites [APP-106]**.
- 1.1.12 Full descriptions of the relevant Landscape Types and Character Areas are described in the Landscape Baseline in Section 8.8 of the **LVIA [REP3-025]** and within 6.3 **Environmental Statement Volume 3, Appendix 8-4 Landscape Character Area Descriptions [APP-195]**, These have been summarised in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 1.1.13 There are three Published Landscape Character Assessments for Wiltshire:
- The 2005 Wiltshire County Assessment where the Lime Down Scheme lies within the Limestone Lowland Landscape Type (LCT 16) and Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA16A):as shown on **ES Figure 8-5-1: National and Regional Landscape Character Areas in ES Volume 2 [APP-094]**;
 - The 2004 North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment where the Lime Down Scheme lies within the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type and the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area (LCA 8) as shown on **Figure 8-5-3: North and West Wiltshire Local Landscape Character Areas in ES Volume 2 [APP-094]**; and

- The 2006 West Wiltshire District Landscape Character Assessment where large sections of the Cable Route Corridor (CRC) is located.

- 1.1.14 Key differences between the assessments relate to the scale and detail of each. The Wiltshire Assessment covers the county of Wiltshire within which the identified Limestone Lowland Landscape Type “*covers a large swathe of northwest Wiltshire. The area extends from Bradford-on-Avon in the south to the Kemble Airfield in the far north. The county border constrains the area to the north and west. The boundary to the east is a less distinct transition, occurring with the change in underlying geology from limestone to clay. There is only one character area within the Limestone Lowland Landscape Type, 16A: Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands*”. The Limestone Lowland Landscape Type includes part of the Cotswold National Landscape to its western edge to the county boundary.
- 1.1.15 The North Wiltshire Assessment covers the district of North Wiltshire to the west of Swindon, sitting astride the M4. The Assessment describes the landscape of the district as “*a diverse, though essentially gentle, landscape dominated by rivers and influenced on the fringes by hills. The River Avon runs in a gentle valley north to south through the centre of the area while the River Thames passes through the north east corner. To the south east the dramatic topography of chalk scarp of the North Wessex Downs with distinctive White Horses dominate the landscape. **To the west, the dipslope and wooded valleys of the Cotswolds provide further variety.** Both these areas are designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (National Landscapes). The main settlements of the area are Chippenham, Calne, Wootton Bassett and Malmesbury. Other smaller nucleated settlements are spread throughout what is a settled lowland landscape*” [Author emphasis added in bold].
- 1.1.16 The North Wiltshire Assessment provides a finer grain of assessment and separates the character of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland from the Upper Avon Valley (LCA6) and the Sherston Dipslope lowland (LCA7) which are located to the north and east respectively and are both located within the CNL. As such, the boundaries between the Hullavington Rolling Lowland and both the Upper Avon Valley (LCA6) and the Sherston Dipslope Lowland (LCA7) are contiguous with the CNL boundary.
- 1.1.17 It is also worth noting that the extent of the Upper Avon Valley (LCA6) and the Sherston Dipslope lowland (LCA7) are contiguous with the CNL boundary in the vicinity of the Lime Down Scheme.

Scope of Assessment

- 1.1.18 The following Landscape Character Areas were scoped into the Assessment (as agreed with Wiltshire Council at Scoping) and as set out in Table 8-7: Summary of Landscape Character Assessments in the **LVIA [REP3-025]**:

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- LCA16A: Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands (Host Character Area).

North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- LCA 6 - Upper Avon Valley;
- LCA 7 - Sherston Dip Slope;
- LCA 8 - Hullavington Rolling Lowland (Host Character Area);
- LCA 10 - Corsham Rolling Lowland; and
- LCA 11 - Avon Valley Lowland.

The West Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment

- LCA A3 - Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland.

Assessment Format

- 1.1.19 Section 2 provides a description of the Lime Down Scheme (Section 2) and the proposed mitigation.
- 1.1.20 Section 3 summarises the Baseline Assessment and identifies the relevant Local and County Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas with full descriptions of the baseline character provided in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.1.21 Section 4 provides an Assessment of Effects on the “key characteristics” and overall character of the relevant Landscape Character Types and Area with consideration of:
- The “inherent landscape sensitivities”; and
 - the “broad management objectives” (in relation to the Host LCT/ LCA).

Key Documents

- 1.1.22 Key documents referenced in this report include:
- **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3 The Scheme [APP-055]**
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in **ES Volume 1 Chapter 8 Landscape and Visual [REP3-025]**
- 1.1.23 Key Figures referenced in this report include:
- **ES Figure 8-5-1: National and Regional Landscape Character Areas in ES Volume 2 [APP-094]**

- **ES Volume 2, Figure 8-15-1 to 8-15-7 Cumulative Sites [APP-106]**
- **Figure 3-4-4.1 and 3-4-4.2 Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan in ES Volume 2 [REP3-037]**

1.1.24 Key Appendices referenced in this report include:

- **Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology in ES Volume 3 [REP1A-006]**
- **Appendix 8-3-2-1 Visual Assessment Sheets (Non-Significant) in ES Volume 3 [APP-190]**
- **Appendix 8-3-2-2 Landscape and Visual Assessment Sheets (Significant) in Volume 3 [REP3-044]**
- **Appendix 8-3-4: Landscape and Visual Assessment Sheets – Cable Route Corridor [APP-193]**
- **Appendix 8-6 in in ES Volume 3 Appendix 8-6 Assessment of Effects on the Cotswolds National Landscape and its Special Qualities [EN010168/APP/6.3] (Revision 2);**

1.1.25 Other Examination documents include:

- **7.18 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [REP3-100]**
- **Annex E of the Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses at ISH2 [REP4-085]** which shows the Baseline Existing Solar Schemes and CD Sites within the context of the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005)

1.2 Proposed Development

- 1.2.1 This Assessment is based on the Lime Down Scheme as submitted into Examination on 19 September 2025 and accepted for examination on 17 October 2025. It also makes reference to any amended and additional information submitted during the examination which commenced on 21 April 2026.
- 1.2.2 Details of the Scheme are set out within ES Volume 1, Chapter 3 The Scheme [APP-055] which provides a description of the physical characteristics of the Scheme and the activities that would be undertaken during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.

Mitigation

- 1.2.3 The landscape proposals have been designed with reference to the principles set out within the following guidance:
- Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment,
 - North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment,
 - West Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment,
 - Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025 and 2025-2030,
 - Cotswolds Nature Recovery Plan, and
 - Wiltshire Councils Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Wiltshire and Swindon.
- 1.2.4 Buffers and offsets have been embedded into the design of the Scheme to protect the existing landscape fabric throughout the Order Limits. The embedded mitigation includes new planting to mitigate the landscape and visual effects of the Scheme and reinforce the structure of the receiving landscape. This includes the re-establishment of historic hedgerows within the setting of the CNL, new areas of native woodland, trees, scrub and grassland, new planting within riparian corridors to strengthen rivers and wetland, as well the restoration of dry-stone walls and the creation of new ponds.
- 1.2.5 At decommissioning other than the buried cabling, all infrastructure would be removed with agricultural fields returned to landowners, with the exception of the reinforced landscape which would be retained due to future countryside protection policies.
- 1.2.6 Following decommissioning, the Site would benefit from the substantially enhanced tree and hedgerow planting that has been carried out and has matured to create a much stronger and robust landscape, retaining, and strengthening the overall character of the Site and providing considerable

biodiversity benefits aligning with the aims and aspirations of the Wiltshire Nature Recovery Strategy and the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment. The Wiltshire Nature Recovery Strategy provides a framework to reverse biodiversity decline and build resilience across the county's landscapes and was developed under the Environment Act 2021.

- 1.2.7 The layout for the Scheme and the landscape proposals has been developed in response to the Scheme's location on the edge of the CNL. Avoidance measures have been incorporated into the Scheme Design as part of the Mitigation Hierarchy as set out in Section 8.9 of the LVIA **[REP3-025]** and the standalone assessment on the CNL in Appendix 8-6 in ES Volume 3 Appendix 8-6 Assessment of Effects on the Cotswolds National Landscape and its Special Qualities (Change Application) (Rev 1) (Clean) **[CR1-034]**, which includes the avoidance of panels within Fields A1, A11, A12, B12, C1, C6, C8, C9 and C10.
- 1.2.8 Within the setting of the CNL, the Scheme has sought to further the purposes of the CNL through the creation of wildflower meadows and scrub on the edge of the CNL within the northern part of A1, C1, C6, C8, C9, C10 and B12 and through the inclusion of wildflower meadow verges on the edge of set aside land in A11, A12 and C10 to provide attractive buffers in views from public roads. These support the aims of the Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023 – 2025 and 2025-2030 and the Cotswolds Nature Recovery Plan 2021.
- 1.2.9 The landscape and visual effects of the Scheme on the CNL and its Special Qualities have been mitigated throughout the landscape led, iterative design process and have been informed by the Cotswold Nature Recovery Plan in conjunction with liaison with the project Ecologist and consultation with officers at the CNL and WC.

1.3 Baseline Landscape Assessment

- 1.3.1 Consideration of the “key characteristics”, “inherent landscape sensitivities”; and “broad management objectives” (as requested by the ExA) are set out in Section 8.8 of the LVIA [REP3-025]; noting that the terminology used in the two assessments varies slightly but are synonymous.
- 1.3.2 The following Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and corresponding Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) as shown on figures in ES Volume 2, Figure 8-5-1 to 8-5-3 Landscape Character Areas [APP-094] as are summarised below:

County Landscape Character

- 1.3.3 At the county level Landscape Character is defined in the published Wiltshire Landscape Character assessment which identifies and describes Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas as:

Landscape Character Types:

LCT 16: Limestone Lowlands Landscape Type

LCT 11: Rolling Clay Lowland (Scoped Out)

LCT 12: Open Clay Vale (Scoped Out)

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA 16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands

Local Landscape Character

- 1.3.4 At the local level Landscape Character is defined in the published North Wiltshire and West Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessments which identifies and describes Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas as:

North Wiltshire

Landscape Character Type:

Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland

LCA7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland.

Landscape Character Type:

Lowland Clay Farmland Landscape Type

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA5: Minety and Malmesbury Rolling Lowland (Scoped Out)

Landscape Character Type:

Settled Farmland Valley Landscape Type

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA 6: Upper Avon Valley

Landscape Character Type:

Rolling Settled Lowland Landscape Type

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA10: Corsham Rolling Lowland

Landscape Character Type:

Lowland River Farmland Landscape Type

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA11: Avon Valley Lowland

West Wiltshire

Landscape Character Type:

LCT A Limestone Lowland Landscape Type

Landscape Character Areas:

LCA: A3: Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland

- 1.3.5 Full descriptions of the Scoped In LCTs and LCAs are provided in Appendix A of this report.

1.4 Assessment of Effects

1.4.1 The assessment of effects undertaken in this report has been undertaken as a two-part process:

- Firstly, it considers the effects on the individual LCAs by considering the effects on its individual key features and then the overall effects on the Landscape Character Area; and
- Secondly considering the effects on the LCTs (where relevant) by considering the combined effects on the corresponding LCAs.

1.4.2 Where there is only one LCA within the Type, the effects are as assessed for the LCA.

1.4.3 The effects on Landscape Character are assessed starting with the local level assessments and then the county level assessment and starts with the host Landscape Character Area.

Effects on Landscape Character Areas and Types within North Wiltshire

1.4.4 The Landscape Character Areas and Types have been assessed in the following order:

LCA8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland- Host Landscape Character Area.

LCA7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Landscape Character Area.

Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland - Host Landscape Type.

LCA 6 - Upper Avon Valley (of the Settled Farmland Valley Landscape Type).

LCA 10: Corsham Rolling Lowland (of the Rolling Settled Lowland Landscape Type).

LCA 11: Avon Valley Lowland (of the Lowland River Farmland Landscape Type).

Effects on the Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area

Table 1: Effects on the Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area

HOST -LCA8 – Hullavington Rolling Lowland	
Key Characteristics	Description of Effects
Rolling or lowland hills between 60-120m AOD, on Forest Marble limestone, Oxford Clay and Cornbrash.	To the west of the Site, and west of the country boundary, the topography falls eastwards from high ground within the Cotswolds National Landscape beyond towards the lowlands of the River Avon. Watercourses within the area generally run west to east which gives rise to a gently rolling landform creating a series of low valleys and ridges. The nature of the Scheme where solar panels are essentially laid across the land and flow with the existing topography would have a limited effect on rolling or lowland hills of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area. Installation of the BESS units and substations both require level surfaces on hardstanding. This would result in changes to Site levels within field parcels containing BESS and substations to accommodate.
Patchwork of irregular, medium sized fields, mainly pasture, and larger more recent enclosures used for arable, especially on the richer soils.	Land within the Order Limits is currently predominantly arable and contains some larger sized fields with an irregular field pattern. Land use would change from arable agricultural farmland to solar arrays above grassland, whilst maintaining the existing field patterns as solar infrastructure would be located within the existing field structure without the need for large scale hedgerow removal or amalgamation of fields to accommodate the arrays. Proposed new native hedgerows would help to reduce field sizes in a few places which will strengthen the receiving landscape pattern.
Continuous hedges with many mature oaks.	The proposed scheme maintains the characteristic continuous hedges with many mature oaks and protects these features using buffers to infrastructure. There will be some very limited removal of hedgerow to provide new access tracks or widening of existing access tracks as set out in as set out in Annex C LV1.1 – Landscape Fabric – Quantifying Loss and Provision [REP3-128]. The design utilises and builds upon the existing landscape framework provided by the field boundaries. The approach to mitigation has been to reinforce the existing hedgerows and the use of new native tree planting to provide greater enclosure to the Site and provide screening of the infrastructure. In addition to the reinforcement of all hedgerows, new native hedgerows with trees are proposed across the Scheme which reinstates lost hedgerows. The Gauze Brook provides opportunities to strengthen the watercourse and setbacks to the brook, new riparian planting and hedgerows are proposed, especially along footpaths, to provide long term riparian corridors along the brook as they pass through the Site. These proposals would strengthen landscape character in line with the guidelines for the Hullavington Rolling Lowland LCA. These interventions

	would lead to meaningful increases in natural habitat and biodiversity benefits across the Scheme within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland and support the aims of Wiltshire's Nature Recovery Strategy for the Cotswolds Limestone Lowlands - Area 4. As a result of the proposed mitigation measures there will be an increase in the length of hedgerows within the Order Limits. The measurements below are for the areas of the Scheme, not including existing hedgerow understories, existing woodland understories, existing tracks or roads within the Site and the proposed Scheme infrastructure (substations, invertersinverters etc) as set out within Table 8-18 of the LVIA [REP3-025]: • Proposed Ground Cover: 702.8097 ha • Green Corridor & Woodland Planting: 11.4513 ha • Enhanced Riparian Native Planting: 7.78 ha • Hedgerow Reinforcement & Reinforced Roadside Reinforcement: 54.9451 km • Proposed Hedgerows: 15.4957 km • Reintroduction of Historic Ponds and New Ponds: 14No. The proposed embedded mitigation described above is as shown in the Figure 3-4-4.1 and 3-4-4.2 Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan in ES Volume 2: (Rev 3) [REP3-037] The above measures provide considerable beneficial changes in land management away from arable; • areas of new woodland to create green corridors and enhanced riparian corridors through the Scheme, • reinforcement to all hedgerows with additional linear tree planting across the Scheme; • proposed new native hedgerows with trees to improve landscape character and create greater age and species diversity (including the reintroduction of disease resistant Elm); • and reintroduction of historic ponds and new ponds to provide ecological benefits across the Scheme. The substantial provision of new planting combined with the minimal losses to accommodate the Scheme are the driver behind the beneficial effects associated with the Landscape Fabric of the Scheme as assessed in the LVIA.
Medium sized woodlands and deciduous copses.	Woodlands on elevated land provide wooded skylines which, combined with the topography of the landscape, limits intervisibility between the individual Lime Down Sites. All woodlands and copses within the Order Limits of the Scheme are retained and will be positively managed as set out in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100]. As noted above, the Scheme proposes 11.45 ha of Green Corridor & Woodland Planting which would increase the level of this characteristic landscape feature and is considered Beneficial.

Fine stone villages with muted colours and dispersed farms.	There are five villages associated with the Scheme which were assessed in the visual assessment in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-3-2-1 Visual Assessment Sheets (Non-Significant) [APP-190] which are within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area. These are listed below and organised in relation to the distance from the village to the nearest Lime Down Site. • Norton (Receptor RS008) Distance to Nearest Site: 293m (Lime Down D). • Rodbourne Bottom (RG041) Distance to Nearest Site: 359m (Lime Down E). • Rodbourne (Receptor RS016 Distance to Nearest Site: 379m (Lime Down E). • Corston (Receptor RS015) Distance to Nearest Site: 869m (Lime Down E). • Hullavington (Receptor RS010) Distance to Nearest Site: 922m (Lime Down D). With reference to the detailed assessment sheets for these villages in Section 1: Visual Assessment Sheets of Private Receptors – Settlements in [APP-190], the effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the above villages are set out below: Norton (Receptor RS008) The visual effects of the Scheme on Norton and its surrounding farmsteads have been fully assessed in the LVIA. In consideration of landscape effects on the village, the landscape setting of the village is protected by the village's location in a natural dip with rising topography on all sides. There are limited views towards the church from within the village and there no views to or from the Church from the wider landscape. Infrastructure within the Lime Down Scheme is set back from the village and there are no direct effects on the village. However, there will be perceivable changes in landscape character with the Site as agricultural fields change to solar infrastructure and this will be experienced to varying degrees when using local roads and footpaths to and from the village. Rodbourn Bottom (Receptor RG041) The visual effects of the Scheme on Rodbourne Bottom and its surrounding farmsteads have been fully assessed in the LVIA. The Visual Assessment notes significant tree cover surrounding the residential group which would limit views towards the Scheme within parts of Lime Down E. Filtered views to the 132 substation within E6 are noted and the rising topography north and west of Rodbourne Bottom limits views to fields located within Lime Down E in that direction. The level of change in views would be limited and although there will be no direct effects on Rodbourne Bottom and its surrounding farmsteads as a result of the Lime Down Scheme, there will be perceivable changes in landscape character of the Site as agricultural fields change to solar infrastructure which will be experienced to varying degrees when using local roads and footpaths.
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	Rodbourne (Receptor RS016) The visual assessment for Rodbourne describes the character of the settlement noting Rodbourne is situated on high ground to the south of Corston and to the northeast of Site E. The local undulating topography associated with the Rodbourne Brook limits longer distance views. There are glimpsed views from the top of Pound Hill to the west towards E8 (removed from the Scheme due to its visibility in cross valley views) and there are fleeting cross valley views to the southwest from the eastern approach to the village towards Bincombe Wood on the horizon. Although there will be no direct effects on Rodbourne and Manor Farm as a result of the Lime Down Scheme, there will be perceivable changes in landscape character of the Site as agricultural fields change to solar infrastructure which will be experienced to varying degrees when using local roads and footpaths. With reference to the substantial mitigation measure as detailed in Section 3 these effects will reduce as proposed new planting matures. Corston (Receptor RS015) The visual assessment for Corston describes the character of the settlement noting the village is situated to the north of Lime Down E and to the east of Lime Down D. The village is located on the Gauze Brook which runs southwest to northeast, with rising land to both sides. The water tower at Rodbourne is a distinctive feature of the landscape in views on the western approach to the village and from higher ground around the village. The existing Rodbourne Rail solar farm is located to the northeast of the village. The Visual Assessment notes that construction activities in E2, E3 and E4, on higher ground to the south of Corston would be glimpsed in filtered oblique views east from upper stories through intervening layers of vegetation level of visual change in views would be Very Low. It is recognised that the landscape will be experienced from local roads and footpaths surrounding the village. Although Site D is not visible from the village itself, it is experienced from a number of footpaths from Corston. These include Footpath WT\MALW\52 (Receptor TP165) which follows the ridgeline from Corston towards Hullavington; Bridleway WT\MALW\51 (Receptor TP163), Bridleway WT\HULL\7 (Receptor TP159) from Corston towards the Gauze Brook; and Footpath WT\MALW\49 (Receptor TP161) from Common Road, Corston past West Park Farm towards the Gauze Brook. The effects on visual amenity on users of these footpaths are fully assessed in [APP-190] and [APP-191] for Significant and Non-significant effects respectively. In views from the above footpaths there is very limited visibility to the existing Rodbourne Rail solar farm. Although there will be no direct effects on Corston as a result of the Lime Down Scheme, there will be perceivable changes in landscape character of the Site as agricultural fields change to solar infrastructure which will be experienced to varying degrees when using local roads and footpaths as noted above. Hullavington (Receptor RS010)
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	The visual assessment for Hullavington describes the character of the settlement noting the village is situated to the south of Lime Down D and the South Wales Main Line railway line. It is located on slightly elevated ground between two minor watercourses to the northwest and southeast within a gently rolling landscape. The village has a linear form along the main road through the village -the Street which is enclosed by limestone cottages, stone walls and some mature trees. The church tower is visible in some views from the wider landscape. Hullavington was assessed in the context of Lime Down D. At a distance of approximately 922m, there are views from the northern edge of the village towards Site D. The intervening railway line is situated on an embankment where it crosses Gauze Brook and rising landform between the village and Gause Brook restricts views. Although intervisibility between the Site and the Receptor is limited, the potential above ground development could be visible. From high ground to the northeast of the village there are long distance views east in the direction of Rodbourne. Farmsteads associated with Corston include Hill Hayes Farm (Receptor RG023) to the northwest and Bradfield Manor Farm (Grade I Listed) (Receptor RI068) to the north of the village. Also, of note is the existing solar farm west of Hill Hayes Lane which is on rising land (Windmill Hill) to the northwest of the village. The Visual Assessment notes that Construction activities on higher ground directly north of the railway line in Site D will be visible in glimpsed views beyond intervening vegetation and the railway line from upper stories of properties on the northern extent of the settlement. Rising topography to the east of the A429 screens views of Site E and the level of change in views would be Very Low. As noted above, it is recognised that the landscape will also be experienced from local roads and footpaths surrounding the village. Although Site D is just discernible in views from the northern extent of the village, it is experienced from a number of footpaths from Hullavington. There are 10 circular walks detailed in "Through History and Countryside" and promoted by Hullavington Parish Council. The routes use Public Rights of Way and local roads and 8 of the 10 walks use Footpaths and roads within the Lime Down Order limits. These have some degree of visibility with the Lime Down Scheme which has been assessed in the LVIA. For example, Walk 8, a 4 mile (6.44km) walk to Bradfield Wood and Malmesbury Common uses Footpath WT HULL 4 (Receptor TP130) and Footpath WT HULL 5 (Receptor TP131 both of which pass through Field D11 where walkers will be in close proximity to solar arrays. The LVIA in Appendix 8-3-2-2 Landscape and Visual Assessment Sheets (Significant) [REP191] recognises that there will be long term Major / Moderate Adverse (Significant) effects on users of these footpaths (as mitigation planting would be inappropriate to the lasting legacy landscape). However, these effects will be experienced in progressive view for 0.34 km in one direction and 0.48km in the other direction (a total of 0.82km) which amounts to 12.75% of the route. When considering the effect on the Lime Down Scheme on the route as a whole, the level of change reduces from High (when adjacent to the Scheme) to Low for the whole route. Although there will be no direct effects on Hullavington as a result of the Lime Down Scheme, there will be perceivable changes in landscape character of the Site as agricultural fields change to solar infrastructure which will be experienced to varying degrees when using local roads and footpaths as noted above.
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	The above assessments demonstrates that there will be localised indirect adverse effects on five individual villages within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area as a result of the Lime Down Scheme.
Use of undressed limestone to walls, ashlar quoins, lintels and mullions, and stone slates.	These features relate to man-made built form and include dry-stone walls as noted in the general description of the Character Area: <i>“Dry stone walls are also evident but not common as field boundaries”</i> There is a distinct and visibly notable lack of dry-stone walls within the Hullavington Rolling Lowlands as compared to the adjacent Upper Avon Valley (LCA 6) to the north and- the Sherston Dip Slope (LCA 7) to the east which are within the CNL. There is one section of dry-stone wall within Sites A-D which follows the northwestern side of Bridleway WT SHER 16 along A1 and to the northeastern side between fields A2 and A3. This wall is to be retained and restoration and maintenance is proposed for the duration of the Scheme and considered to provide low beneficial change to the landscape. There is also one drystone wall within the Cable Route Corridor which will require partial removal to accommodate the works. However, this will be rebuilt following completion of the works.
Detractors of the M4, the edge of Chippenham and Hullavington airfield.	The M4, the edge of Chippenham and Hullavington airfield are recognised as detracting features of the landscape. However, due to the character of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area including its rolling topography, continuous hedgerows, medium sized woodlands and deciduous copses, the effect of these detracting features on landscape character are localised.
Overall Character	Description of Effects
Overall Character of the LCA	The Scheme would have a localised effect on areas of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland especially during the construction phase of the development. Construction activities would have an impact locally, and the change in land use from arable farmland to a solar scheme would cause a noticeable change to the character of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area. The Cable Route Corridor is a key element of the Scheme which runs through the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area. It would require digging of trenches along the length of the Cable Route Corridor as the cable is installed. The effects of this would not be above that typically associated with utility installation of this nature and would be limited to short-term temporary effects during the Construction Phase. The effect of the Cable Route Corridor on landscape character within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area would not be over and above those assessed for Lime Down Sites A-E.

	The proposed mitigation is in line with the Guidelines and Strategy for the Hullavington Rolling Lowland which proposes to retain and enhance hedgerows, introduce a significant number of new hedgerows, specimen trees, native woodland and meadow creation to provide continuity of cover and optimising ecological value. The proposals would reinforce the wetland character in riverside locations along the Gauze Brook to create more diverse waterside habitats. The effect of the proposed mitigation planting across the Scheme would be limited initially. The proposals would provide new landscape features that reflect the key characteristics of the character area, whilst ensuring successful integrated into its context. As it matures, new planting would strengthen and reinforce the landscape character in the immediate context of the Site allowing the scheme to become absorbed into the receiving countryside. Planting would, over time, provide screening and containment to the Site allowing the development to become increasingly absorbed into the receiving landscape. Although there would be localised benefits to landscape fabric of the Sites, as a result of the enhancement measures, the change in land use within the Scheme would result in changes to the character of the individual sites as they transition from open agricultural farmland to a solar development. By Year 15, as mitigation planting matures, these changes would be readily assimilated into the wider landscape with little effect on the Hullavington Rolling Lowland as a whole. All Solar PV Panels, mounting piles, cabling, inverters, transformers, switchgear, BESS and substations would be removed from within the Solar PV Sites and recycled or disposed of in accordance with good practice and market conditions at that time. The reinforced landscape would have the ability to absorb the short-term decommissioning activities of the solar infrastructure. At decommissioning, agricultural fields are likely to be returned to agriculture and as infrastructure is removed, there would be an overall benefit to the character of the area with landscape mitigation retained providing long term benefit towards the legacy landscape. The existing landscape would be able to readily absorb the decommissioning processes with limited impacts to the character of the wider Hullavington Rolling Lowland. Landscape Sensitivity Value: When considering the value of the landscape within the 1km Study Area the Value of the Landscape was assessed as High to Medium This was because <i>“the Scheme is situated wholly within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland within the 1km Local Study Area. The 1km Local Study Area extends into the Sherston Dipslope Lowland to the north and west and the Upper Avon Valley to the north, which are both located within the Cotswold National Landscape. This increases the overall Value of the landscapes within the 1km Local Study Area”. As a result of this, the value is considered to be High to Medium reflecting the presence of the Cotswold National Landscape to the north and west of the Scheme”</i>. When considering the Value of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland separately as a standalone receptor, i.e. without the influence of the High value Sherston Dipslope Lowland and the Upper Avon Valley Landscape
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	Character Areas, both within the CNL), the value of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland requires revision. Without the presence of the High Value Landscapes of the Dipslope Lowland, the value of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland is assessed as Medium. With reference to Table 8.1.1.5: Landscape Receptor Sensitivity Criterion in the LVIA Methodology [REP1A-006] where landscape character, its characteristics, and key features, would have a medium landscape tolerance or some scope for landscape change. This often includes landscapes of medium landscape value and quality which may be locally designated or areas that have a positive landscape character but include some areas of alteration/degradation/or erosion of features. It also includes landscapes where perceptual/aesthetic aspects have some vulnerability to unsympathetic development; and/or features/elements that are locally commonplace; unusual locally but in moderate/poor condition; or mature vegetation that is in moderate/poor condition or readily replicated. Susceptibility: Consideration of the Susceptibility of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland takes into account the existing character and quality of the landscape. Noting that the Lime Down scheme will retain the key landscape features of the landscape the Hullavington Rolling Lowland is assessed as being moderately susceptible to the Scheme. This is where the landscape has a moderate ability to accommodate the specific proposed change and the receiving landscape and its relevant characteristics have some ability to accommodate the Scheme without undue adverse effects on the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity: In combining the judgement on Landscape Value and Susceptibility, the overall Sensitivity of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland is assessed as Medium. However, in recognising that landscape is a continuum, it is noted that overall sensitivity gradually changes across the LCA from west to east. This recognises that land within the setting of the CNL on the western edge of the Character Area is inherently more sensitive than land towards Avon Valley Lowland to the east. Magnitude of Change The introduction of ground mounted solar infrastructure does not change the physical fabric of the land within the Site to the same extent as, for example, a quarry excavation or a residential development, as the solar scheme is essentially 'overlaid' across a landscape and is considered reversible. The land use would however change from arable farmland to grassland with solar infrastructure and would therefore fundamentally change the character of the landscape within the boundaries of the Scheme. The landscape would change from greenfield land to a renewable solar scheme and is considered to represent an adverse effect of the highest level (Major Adverse and Significant). However, due to the dispersed nature of the Sites within the Scheme, the strong framework of existing vegetation and the nature of the topography of the receiving landscape the adverse effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the wider landscape dissipates quickly with distance. With reference to Table 8.1.1.8: Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change the LVIA methodology in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-1 Landscape and
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	Visual Impact Assessment Methodology (Rev 2) (Clean) [REP1A-006] the Lime Down Scheme would result in a small proportion (3.41%) of the existing landscape changing from arable farmland to solar infrastructure with localised major adverse effects on the character of the landscape. However, due to the nature of the Scheme being overlain onto the landscape and maintaining the pattern of vegetation and landscape elements, as well as the low proportion detailed above, the resultant change to the landscape character resulting from such a loss is low. There would be a small-scale alteration of the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape such as the loss of greenfield land to solar infrastructure, although without the removal of existing components of the landscape. The effects change a small number of key characteristics of the landscape features and landscape character, which are nevertheless critical to its distinctive overall character. The change in character would affect a small part of the landscape receptors being assessed, as the Scheme would occupy a small geographical extent, at the immediate location of the Scheme. The scheme is short term / temporary and predominantly reversible. In noting that the Lime Down Scheme represents 3.41% of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland where there would be major adverse effects and the limited effects on its key features as described above, the magnitude of Change is considered to be Low overall at all stages of the assessment as shown below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Low	Low	Low	Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor

Effects on LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area

Table 2: Effects on LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area

LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland	
Key features / Main Characteristics	Description of Effects
Gently undulating, broad low hills and shallow river valleys.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will no effect on the topography of the Sherston Dipslope Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Locally steeper and more enclosed valley forms.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will no effect on the topography of the Sherston Dipslope Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Rich heritage of human settlement and archaeological sites.	The Character Area includes a number of small settlements. Those associated with the Lime Down Scheme include: • Luckington (Receptor RS001) Distance to Nearest Site: 1.09km (Lime Down C) • Alderton (Receptor RS002) Distance to Nearest Site: 422m (Lime Down C) • Sherston (Receptor RS004) Distance to Nearest Site: 730m (Lime Down A) As the southern edge of the village has a strong landscape and visual relationship with the Upper Avon Valley, the village was assessed within the assessment for that character area above. The residential visual effects of the Scheme are assessed in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-3-2-1 Visual Assessment Sheets (Non-Significant) [APP-190]. These are summarised below and have informed the assessment on landscape character below: Alderton The village of Alderton is located to the west of Site C. Its location on slightly higher rolling land allows views to and from the village and its listed church. No panels are proposed in C1, C6 or C8 to protect the CNL and maintain views of the Church from footpaths to and from the CNL such as Footpath WT LUCK 35 (Receptor TP077) (refer to Viewpoints 30 and 31). Proposed infrastructure is set back from the ridge line and the buffer to development within the CNL's setting. Although there would be some low-level adverse effect on residential receptors with upper storey views on the eastern extents of the village, the Lime Down Scheme would be just discernible on the ridgeline in some views. The level of change in views would be Very Low due to the offset of infrastructure within the setting of the CNL. Luckington The village of Luckington is located on higher ground to the west of the Lime Down Scheme and to the west of a tributary of the River Avon between Sherston and Luckington which forms a strong intervening

	valley. There are cross valley views from open space areas on the periphery of the village towards the Scheme where the top of the water tower in Field C6 is just discernible. There are views towards Luckington from the boundary of C6 and the CNL boundary towards Luckington. Due to the offset of infrastructure within the setting of the CNL the effects of the Lime Down Scheme are Negligible indirect adverse visual effects. In conclusion, there is some limited visibility of the Scheme from both the village of Alderton and Luckington.
Broad panoramas and distant views.	Characteristic panoramic and distant views are not restricted to within the Character Area. As noted above, the topography allows for some views over the landscape towards the Site. Due to the offsets to development on the edge of the CNL in Fields C1, C2, C6, C8, and C9; and to a lesser extent C10, there are only very limited views of the Scheme from within the Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area.
Continuity of hedgerows and veteran oak trees	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no direct effects on the continuity of hedgerows and veteran oak trees as a result of the Lime Down Scheme. However, proposed enhancement measures on the edge of the CNL, including hedgerow reinforcement and new tree planting would have locally beneficial effects. The enhancement measures on the edge of the CNL have been Quantified in Table 4 Extent of proposed planting under item 2 (above) that would be for enhancement only (Refer to attached Figure showing extent of Enhancement) in Annex C LV1.1 in response to the Examiner's First Questions in [REP3-128].
Dry stone walls as field boundaries and in relation to larger properties and village houses.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to dry stone walls within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area. A dry-stone wall on the northwestern side of Bridleway WT SHER 16 along A1 and to the northeastern side between fields A2 and A3 will be restored and maintained as a result of the lime Down Scheme.
Variation in field sizes and shapes, from small irregular medieval, to larger fields enclosed or amalgamated in the modern period.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to field patterns within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area. The Scheme proposes the reinstatement of historic hedgerows which is considered to be an enhancement within the setting of the CNL.
Variation in woodland cover, with many areas devoid of woodland cover, and other areas with small woods or copses.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to woodland within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.

Small areas of unimproved calcareous grassland	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to existing unimproved calcareous grassland within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area. The Lime Down Scheme proposes wildflower meadows as part of the enhancement measures within the setting of the CNL. These will be calcareous (where existing soils are appropriate).
Dispersed settlement and few villages.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to the dispersed settlements within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Fine stone buildings, and use of undressed limestone to walls, ashlar quoins, lintels and mullions, and stone slates.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to these key features of the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Long distance footpaths.	A section of the Macmillan Way follows a tributary of the River Avon between Sherston and Luckington to the west of the Lime Down Scheme. It predominantly follows the valley which restricts views towards the Site. It reaches slightly higher ground on the eastern edge of Luckington where the top of the water tower in Field C6 is just discernible. As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no direct effects on the Macmillan Way within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area. Due to the offset of infrastructure on the edge of the CNL there are no direct visual effects to users of the Macmillan Way.
Localised developments such as Castle Combe circuit and Colerne airfield.	These developments are noted and both are at distance from the Lime Down Scheme.
Overall Character of the LCA	Landscape Sensitivity Value: The Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area is wholly within the CNL in the vicinity of the Site and is of High value. Susceptibility: The Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area as a standalone landscape receptor has a High susceptible to the Scheme. The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the Scheme, and has a low ability to accommodate the specific proposed change, because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate the specific proposed change without undue adverse effects when taking into account the existing character and quality of the landscape, and/or requirements of relevant planning policies and strategies. Sensitivity: In combining the judgement on Landscape Value and Susceptibility, the overall Sensitivity of the Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area is assessed as High. This recognises that land within the CNL is highly valued for its scenic quality.

	Magnitude of Change The Lime Down Scheme has from the outset recognised the sensitivity of the CNL and has sought to protect the landscape through the embedded avoidance measures on the edge of the CNL within its setting in Sites A and C. There are no direct effects on the Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area due to the offsets provided by the avoidance areas along the boundary of the Scheme and the CNL. With reference to Table 8.1.1.8: Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change in the LVIA methodology in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology (Rev 2) (Clean) [REP1A-006] there would be a Very Low magnitude of change as a result of the Lime Down Scheme. This is where: <i>"A barely perceptible extent of landscape features and elements of importance to the character of the baseline are lost / adjusted. There is a barely discernible change to aesthetic and / or perceptual attributes of landscape features and landscape character and such changes occur across a very limited geographical area and / or proportion of the landscape receptor. The effects change a barely discernible number of the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character The change would affect only a negligible part of the landscape receptors being assessed, as the Scheme would occupy a limited geographical extent, e.g., the site level, within the Scheme itself."</i> In noting that there are no direct landscape effects on the Sherston Dipslope and there are only low levels of change (both positive and negative) to the perceptual and aesthetics qualities of a limited number of key features, there would be a Very Low overall level of change at all stages of the assessment as shown below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects on Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type

- 1.4.5 A full assessment of effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the two Landscape Character Areas which wholly make up the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type has been undertaken above. The assessment considered the effects of the Scheme on the main characteristic of the Character Area, it's "inherent landscape sensitivities"; and considered the Scheme's compliance with the "broad management objectives" in relation to the Host LCT/ LCA.
- 1.4.6 This assessment on the generic Landscape Type combines the assessments of the two Landscape Character Areas. There are no identified key features for the Landscape Types provided in the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment and this assessment considers the effect on the combined key features (using professional judgement) of the two corresponding Landscape Character Areas.

Table 3 Effects on Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type

HOST - Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type	
Key Characteristics from LCA8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland and LCA7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland.	Description of Effects
Rolling or lowland hills between 60-120m AOD, on Forest Marble limestone, Oxford Clay and Cornbrash. Sherston Dipslope Gently undulating, broad low hills and shallow river valleys. Locally steeper and more enclosed valley forms. Broad panoramas and distant views.	The topography of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type falls eastwards from high ground within the Cotswolds beyond the county boundary to the west, across the Dipslope which is a transitional area along the eastern edge of the Cotswolds (extending north and south beyond the area within the Landscape Type) and then east across the Hullavington Rolling Lowland to the lowlands of the River Avon. Watercourses within the area generally run west to east which gives rise to a gently rolling landform creating a series of low valleys and ridges. Whilst the dipslope provides broad panoramic and distant views in places, the topography of the Type is more generally "<i>gently undulating lowland farmland underlain by limestone</i>" which provides a high degree of visual containment which restricts the landscape effects on the wider Landscape Type The nature of the Scheme where solar panels are essentially laid across the land and flow with the existing topography will have a limited effect on the rolling topography of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type.

	Installation of the BESS units and substations both require level surfaces on hardstanding. This will result in changes to localised site levels within field parcels containing BESS and substations.
Patchwork of irregular, medium sized fields, mainly pasture, and larger more recent enclosures used for arable, especially on the richer soils. Sherston Dipslope Variation in field sizes and shapes, from small irregular medieval, to larger fields enclosed or amalgamated in the modern period.	Land within the Order Limits is currently predominantly arable with an irregular pattern of fields that includes some larger sized fields. Field parcel sizes are generally smaller on the Dipslope with greater areas of small fields of permanent pasture. The proposed scheme maintains the patterns of fields as solar infrastructure will be located within the fields. Proposed new native hedgerows will reduce larger field sizes in a few places which will be beneficial to the receiving landscape pattern. Land use will change from arable agricultural farmland to solar arrays above grassland. This, as well as associated infrastructure including fencing, access tracks, BESS and substations will have a notable change on land use locally but the effect of this on the field pattern across the wider landscape within the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type would be unaffected as outside the Order Limits.
Continuous hedges with many mature oaks. Sherston Dipslope Continuity of hedgerows and veteran oak trees	The proposed scheme maintains the characteristic continuous hedgerows with many mature and veteran oaks and protects these features through the use of buffers to infrastructure. There will be minimal removal of hedges to provide new access tracks or widening of existing access tracks as set out in Annex C LV1.1 – Landscape Fabric – Quantifying Loss and Provision [REP3-128]. The design utilises and builds upon the existing landscape framework provided by the field boundaries. The approach to mitigation has been to reinforce the existing hedgerows and the use of new native tree planting to provide greater enclosure to the Site and provide screening of the infrastructure. In addition to the reinforcement of all hedgerows, new native hedgerows with trees are proposed across the Scheme to reinstate lost hedgerows. The Gauze Brook provides opportunities for watercourse reinforcement. Setbacks to the brook, new riparian planting and hedgerows are proposed, especially along footpaths, to provide long term riparian corridors along the brook as they pass through the Site. These proposals would strengthen landscape character in line with the guidelines for the Hullavington Rolling Lowland LCA. These interventions would lead to meaningful increases in natural habitat and biodiversity benefits across the Scheme within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland and support the aims of Wiltshire's Nature Recovery Strategy for the Cotswolds Limestone Lowlands - Area 4. As a result of the proposed mitigation measures there will be a net gain in hedgerows within the Order Limit. The below measurements are for the areas of the Scheme, not including existing hedgerow understories, existing woodland understories, existing tracks or roads within the Site and the proposed Scheme infrastructure (substations, invertors etc) as set out within Table 8-18 of the LVIA [APP-060]: - Proposed Ground Cover: 702.8097 ha - Green Corridor & Woodland Planting: 11.4513 ha

	- Enhanced Riparian Native Planting: 7.78 ha - Hedgerow Reinforcement & Reinforced Roadside Reinforcement: 54.94<u>51</u> km - Proposed Hedgerows: 15.49<u>57</u> km - Reintroduction of Historic Ponds and New Ponds: 14 The proposed embedded mitigation described above is shown in Figure 1-4 Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan in ES Volume 2 [REP3-037]. The above measures provide considerable beneficial changes in land management away from arable with; - areas of new woodland to create green corridors; - enhanced riparian corridors through the scheme; - reinforcement to all hedgerows; - additional linear tree planting across the Scheme; - proposed new native hedgerows with trees to improve landscape character and create greater age and species diversity (including the reintroduction of disease resistant Elm); and - reintroduction of historic ponds and new ponds to provide ecological benefits across the Scheme. Furthermore, proposed enhancement measures on the edge of the CNL, including hedgerow reinforcement and new tree planting which would have locally beneficial effects to the CNL. The enhancement measures on the edge of the CNL have been Quantified in Table 4 Extent of proposed planting under item 2 (above) that would be for enhancement only (Refer to attached Figure showing extent of Enhancement) in Annex C LV1.1 in response to the Examiner's First Questions in [REP3-128].
Medium sized woodlands and deciduous copses. Sherston Dipslope Variation in woodland cover, with many areas devoid of woodland cover, and other areas with small woods or copses.	Woodlands on elevated land provide wooded skylines which combined with the topography of the landscape, limit intervisibility between the individual Lime Down Sites. All woodlands and copses within the Order Limits of the Scheme are retained and will be positively managed as set out in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100]. As noted above, the Scheme proposes 11.45 ha of Green Corridor & Woodland Planting which would increase the level of this characteristic landscape feature.
Fine stone villages with muted colours and dispersed farms. Sherston Dipslope Rich heritage of human settlement	There are five villages associated with the Scheme which were assessed in the visual assessment in ES Volume 3: Appendix 8-3-2-1 Visual Assessment Sheets (Non-Significant) [APP-190] which are within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area. These are listed below and organised in relation to the distance from the village to the nearest Lime Down Site. Norton (Receptor RS008) Distance to Nearest Site: 293m (Lime Down D)

and archaeological sites. Dispersed settlement and few villages. Fine stone buildings, and use of undressed limestone to walls, ashlar quoins, lintels and mullions, and stone slates.	• Rodbourne Bottom (RG041) Distance to Nearest Site: 359m (Lime Down E) • Rodbourne (Receptor RS016 Distance to Nearest Site: 379m (Lime Down E) • Corston (Receptor RS015) Distance to Nearest Site: 869m (Lime Down E) • Hullavington (Receptor RS010) Distance to Nearest Site: 922m (Lime Down D) There are three villages associated with the Scheme which were assessed in the visual assessment in APP 190 which are within the Sherston Dipslope. Character Area. These include: • Luckington (Receptor RS001) Distance to Nearest Site: 1.09km (Lime Down C) • Alderton (Receptor RS002) Distance to Nearest Site: 422m (Lime Down C) • Sherston (Receptor RS004) Distance to Nearest Site: 730m (Lime Down A). As the southern edge of the village has a strong landscape and visual relationship with the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character area, the village was assessed within the assessment for that character area above. However, as this Upper Avon Valley is of a different landscape type, it is considered here. Please refer to the detailed assessment sheets for these villages in the Visual Assessment Sheets of Private Receptors – Settlements [APP-190 and APP-191], and the further assessments of the effects on the above villages within their corresponding Landscape Character Area Assessments. For the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area, the assessment concluded “<i>there will be localised indirect Adverse Effects on five individual villages within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area as a result of the Lime Down Scheme.</i> The effects are as a result of Sites D and E, with only Norton experiencing effects from two Sites (Sites D and B).” For the Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area, the assessment concluded “<i>there is some limited visibility of the Scheme from both the village of Alderton and Luckington.</i>”
Use of undressed limestone to walls, ashlar quoins, lintels and mullions, and stone slates. Sherston Dipslope Dry stone walls as field boundaries and in relation to larger properties and village houses.	These features relate to man-made built form and is considered to include dry-stone walls as noted in the general description of the Character Area: “<i>Dry stone walls are also evident but not common as field boundaries</i>” There is a distinct and visibly notable lack of dry-stone walls within the Hullavington Rolling Lowlands as compared to the adjacent Upper Avon Valley (LCA 6) to the north and- the Sherston Dip Slope (LCA 7) to the east which are within the CNL. There is one section of dry-stone wall within Sites A-D which follows the northwestern side of Bridleway WT SHER 16 along A1 and to the northeastern side between fields A2 and A3. This wall is to be retained and is to be restored and maintained for the duration of the Scheme.

	There is also one drystone wall within the Cable Route Corridor which will require partial removal to accommodate the works. However, this will be rebuilt following completion of the works. As such, there will be no long-term adverse effects.
Detractors of the M4, the edge of Chippenham and Hullavington airfield. Sherston Dipslope Localised developments such as Castle Combe circuit and Colerne airfield	The M4, the edge of Chippenham and Hullavington airfield are recognised as detracting features of the landscape. However, due to the character of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area including its rolling topography, continuous hedgerows, medium sized woodlands and deciduous copses, the effect of these detracting features on landscape character are very localised.
Overall Character	Description of Effects
Overall Character of the LCA	The Scheme would have localised effect on areas of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type especially during the construction phase of the development. Construction activities would have an impact locally, and the change in land use from arable farmland to a solar scheme would cause a noticeable change to the character of the Character Type in close proximity to the Site. There would be short term Moderate Adverse effects during the construction phase. The Cable Route Corridor is a key element of the Scheme which runs through the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type. It would require trench excavation along the length of the Cable Route Corridor during installation works. The effects of this would not be above that typically associated with utility installation of this nature and would be limited to short-term temporary effects during the Construction Phase. The effect of the Cable Route Corridor on landscape character within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area would not be over and above those assessed for Lime Down Sites A-E. The proposed mitigation is in line with the Guidelines and Strategy for the Landscape Character Areas within the Landscape Type which proposes to retain and enhance hedgerows, proposes a significant number of new hedgerows, specimen trees and native woodland and meadow creation to provide continuity of cover while optimising ecological value. The proposals would reinforce the wetland character in riverside locations along the Gauze Brook to create more diverse waterside habitats. The effect of the proposed mitigation planting across the Scheme would initially be limited. The proposals would provide new landscape features that reflect key characteristics of the character area, whilst ensuring the proposals are well integrated into its context. As planting matures it would strengthen and reinforce the landscape character of the immediate context to the Site allowing the scheme to become absorbed into the receiving countryside.

	Planting would gradually provide screening and containment to the Site allowing the proposals to become increasingly absorbed into the receiving landscape. Although there would be localised benefits to landscape fabric of the Sites, as a result of the mitigation measures, the change in land use within the Scheme would result in adverse changes to the character of the individual sites as they transition from open agricultural farmland to a solar development. By Year 15, as mitigation planting matures, these changes would be readily assimilated into the wider landscape with little effect on the entirety of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type. All Solar PV Panels, mounting piles, cabling, inverters, transformers, switchgear, BESS and substations would be removed from within the Solar PV Sites and recycled or disposed of in accordance with good practice and market conditions at that time. The reinforced landscape would have the ability to absorb the short-term decommissioning activities of the solar infrastructure. At decommissioning and as infrastructure is removed, agricultural fields are to be returned to landowner control, and there would be an overall benefit to the character of the area with landscape mitigation retained, thus providing long term benefit as a legacy landscape. The existing landscape would be able to readily absorb the decommissioning processes with limited impacts to the character of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type. Landscape Sensitivity Value: The Value of the landscape within the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type considers the value of landscape assessed for the corresponding Landscape Character Areas (assessed above). This considers the influence of the High value Sherston Dipslope Lowland within the CNL, to the west and the Medium Value of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland. In combination it is therefore concluded that the value of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type is of Medium to High value. Susceptibility: Consideration of Susceptibility takes into account the existing character and quality of the landscape within the corresponding landscape Character Areas. The Hullavington Rolling Lowland as a standalone landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the Scheme and has a moderate ability to accommodate the specific proposed change. The relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate the Scheme without undue adverse effects on the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity: In combining the judgement on Landscape Value and Susceptibility, the overall Sensitivity of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type is assessed as Medium to High. This recognises that landscape is a continuum, and the overall sensitivity gradually changes across the landscape from west to east. Land within the CNL on the western edge of the Landscape Type is inherently more sensitive than land towards the Avon Valley Lowland to the east. Magnitude of Change In noting that the Lime Down Scheme represents 3.41% of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland and will result in both Adverse and
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	Beneficial effects on its key features as described above, the magnitude of Change is considered to be Low overall. With reference to Table 8.1.1.8: Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change the LVIA methodology in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology [REP1A-006] this is where “A small extent of existing landscape elements would be lost / adjusted, the proportion that this represents within the landscape is low and the resultant change to the landscape character resulting from such a loss is low. Small scale alteration of the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape such as the removal of existing components of the landscape or by addition of new ones. The effects change a small number of the key characteristics of the landscape features and landscape character, which are critical to its distinctive overall character. The change would affect a small part of the landscape receptors being assessed, as the Scheme would occupy a small geographical extent, e.g., at the level of the immediate setting of the Scheme. The scheme is Short term / temporary; partially reversible or reversible”. Due to the limited change in the perception of the landscape and its key features, as well as the inherent sensitivities accounted for in the design of the Scheme as described above, the Magnitude of Change on the character of the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type would be Low at all stages of the assessment as summarised below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Low	Low	Low	Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate /Minor	Moderate/ Minor

Effects on LCA 6: Upper Avon Valley Character Area

Table 4: Effects on LCA 6: Upper Avon Valley Character Area

LCA 6: Upper Avon Valley	
Key features / Main Characteristics	Description of Effects
Steep and intimate or more open, shallower valley.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will no effect on the topography of the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Complex geology and resulting variation in fertility and agriculture, from riverside meadows to arable.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will no effect on the complex geology and resulting land use variation of the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Variation in field sizes and shapes, from small irregular medieval, to larger fields enclosed or amalgamated in the modern period.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to field patterns within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Continuity of settlement and richness of archaeological sites.	The Character Area extends from the southeastern edge of Sherston to the southern edge of Malmesbury. It includes the small settlements of Easton Grey and Foxley. Pinkney is located on the northern boundary of the Character Area. Although Sherston is not within the Character Area, the southern edge of the village has a strong landscape and visual relationship with the Avon valley to the south of the Sherston. The above settlements are assessed in the LVIA which concludes that there are no direct effects on the four settlements within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area. However, there is a recognition that there is some limited visibility of the Scheme from the village of Foxley and the southern extent of Sherston. The Lime Down Scheme has from the outset recognised the sensitivity of the CNL and has sought to protect the landscape through the embedded avoidance measures on the edge of the CNL within its setting in Sites A, B and C. As a result, there are limited perceivable effects on these characteristic settlements within the Upper Avon Valley LCA.
Important river ecology.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no direct effects on the important river ecology as a result of the Lime Down Scheme. However, proposed reinforcement measures along the Gauze Brook in Site D which is a tributary of the River Avon (but not within the Character Area) will have positive effects on the overall Character Area.

Small blocks of woodland and copses, both deciduous and coniferous.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to woodland within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Mature oaks on drier land, and willow and alder by stream-sides.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to the characteristic mature oaks and streamside willows and alders within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Bright winter colours of crack willow and soils on the cornbrash	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to the bright winter colours associated with the cornbrash vegetation within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Fine stone buildings, and use of undressed limestone to walls, ashlar quoins, lintels and mullions, and stone slates	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to these key features within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Dry stone walls as field boundaries.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to dry stone walls within the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Quiet and unspoilt character, with a strong sense of time depth.	As the Lime Down Scheme is not within the Character Area, there will be no effect to these key features of the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area.
Overall Character	Description of Effects
Overall Character of the LCA	Landscape Sensitivity Value: The Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area is wholly within the CNL and is of High Landscape Value. Susceptibility: The Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area as a standalone landscape receptor has a High susceptible to the Scheme, with a low ability to accommodate the specific proposed change. Key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate the specific proposed change without undue adverse effects taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape, and/or achievement of relevant planning policies and strategies. Sensitivity: In combining the judgement on Landscape Value and Susceptibility, the overall Sensitivity of the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area is assessed as High. This recognises that land within the CNL is highly valued for its scenic quality.

	Magnitude of Change The Lime Down Scheme has from the outset recognised the sensitivity of the CNL and has sought to protect the landscape through the embedded avoidance measures on the edge of the CNL within its setting in Sites A, B and C. There are no direct effects on the Upper Avon Valley Landscape Character Area due to the offsets provided With reference to Table 8.1.1.8: Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change the LVIA methodology in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology [REP1A-006] there would be a barely perceptible extent of landscape change on the features and elements of the landscape of importance to the character area which would affect the baseline situation. There is barely any discernible change to the aesthetic and / or perceptual attributes of the key landscape features and its overall landscape character and such changes occur across a very limited geographical area (being limited to the southern extents of the settlements of Sherston and Foxley in closest proximity to the Scheme). These effects are not direct, and the perceptual changes affect only one of the key characteristics of the landscape which are critical to its distinctive character. Due to the limited change in the perception of the landscape and its key features, as well as the inherent sensitivities accounted for in the design of the Scheme as described above, the Magnitude of Change on the character of the Upper Avon Valley LCA would be Very Low at all stages of the assessment as summarised below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects on LCA 10: Corsham Rolling Lowland

Table 5: Effects on LCA 10: Corsham Rolling Lowland

LCA 10: Corsham Rolling Lowland	
Key features / Main Characteristics	Description of Effects
Gently sloping topography with a small steep valley.	The Cable Route Corridor will have no effect on the topography of the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Traditional core of Corsham.	The Cable Route Corridor will have no effect on the traditional core of Corsham within the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area.

Urban fringe character of areas at periphery with Corsham including mosaic housing, military infrastructure, industrial areas, communication corridors, small fields and woodlands.	The Cable Route Corridor runs through the eastern side of the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area. The effects of the cable route corridor on the landscape would be short term, temporary in nature and are confined to the area within the CRC itself and not the wider Landscape Character Area. All cables would be underground with no new overhead lines or associated poles required. Runs of overhead lines between components or to connect underground cables are not proposed. These effects will be Minor / Negligible Adverse and Temporary in nature. The CRC has been designed where possible, to avoid natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ditches, woodland. Where crossing such features becomes unavoidable, the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. Where HDD is not possible, any loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland would be mitigated in full and in line with the species and composition of vegetation loss. Where possible and appropriate such replacements should improve the baseline scenario and include gapping up of adjacent hedgerows for instance as defined in the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (Rev 2) (Clean) [REP3-100].
Rural character in the southern part of the area with traditional rural settlements.	The Cable Route Corridor will have no effect on the traditional rural settlements within the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Panoramic views out towards north and east in parts.	The Cable Route Corridor will have a temporary localised impact on some panoramic views in the eastern part of the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Visual influence of electricity transmission lines.	During construction, the Cable Route Corridor will be seen in conjunction with electricity transmission lines in some locations within the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Overall Character	Description of Effects
Overall Character of the LCA	The effects of the Cable Route Corridor on Landscape Character have been Assessed in Appendix 8-3-4: Landscape and Visual Assessment Sheets – Cable Route Corridor [APP-193]. The effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area relate to the Cable Route Corridor. All effects on the landscape would be short term, temporary in nature and are confined to the area within the CRC itself and not the wider 500m Study Area. All cables would be underground with no new overhead lines or associated poles required. Runs of overhead lines between components or to connect underground cables are not proposed. Where the cable is proposed to cross open farmland, excavations and trenching would take place to allow the cable to be placed in situ. Where the cable is proposed to pass through substantial landscape features (such as woodland), the cable would use trenchless techniques to pass underneath with no permanent above ground structures proposed. This

	is proposed to reduce the effects on ecology and landscape as well as visual receptors. The CRC has been designed where practicable, to avoid natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ditches, woodland. Where crossing such features becomes unavoidable, the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. Where HDD is not possible, any loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland would be mitigated in full and in line with the species and composition of vegetation loss. Where practicable and appropriate such replacements should improve the baseline scenario and include gapping up of adjacent hedgerows for instance as defined in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100]. Landscape Sensitivity Value: The Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area is predominantly not within the CNL and is of Medium Value. Susceptibility: The Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area as a standalone landscape receptor has a Very Low susceptibility to the installation of the Cable Route Corridor. This is where the relevant characteristics of the landscape have a very high ability to accommodate the installation of the cable without undue adverse effects on the character of the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity: The Medium Value and Very Low Susceptibility combine to Low Sensitivity Magnitude of Change The level of landscape change as a result of the Cable Route Corridor is considered to be Very Low and Temporary in nature. With reference to Table 8.1.1.8: Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change the LVIA methodology in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology [REP1A-006] this is where: <i>“A barely perceptible extent of landscape features and elements of importance to the character of the baseline are lost / adjusted. There is a barely discernible change to aesthetic and / or perceptual attributes of landscape features and landscape character and such changes occur across a very limited geographical area and / or proportion of the landscape receptor. The effects change a barely discernible number of the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character The change would affect only a negligible part of the landscape receptors being assessed, as the Scheme would occupy a limited geographical extent, e.g., the site level, within the Scheme itself.”</i> Due to the limited change in the perception of the landscape and its key features, as a result of the Cable Route Corridor as described above, the Magnitude of Change on the character of the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area would be Very Low at all stages of the assessment as summarised below:
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Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
Significance of Effect	Minor/ Negligible	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects on LCA 11: Avon Valley Lowland

Table 6: Effects on LCA 11: Avon Valley Lowland

LCA 11: Avon Valley Lowland	
Key features / Main Characteristics	Description of Effects
Low-lying river landscape, between 70m and 30m AOD on river terrace and alluvial geology with heavy soils, interspersed with light sands.	The Lime Down Scheme and the Cable Route Corridor will have no effect on the low-lying topography and geology of the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Dominant presence of water in the form of ditches, streams and river with related riparian vegetation and structures.	The Lime Down Scheme and the Cable Route Corridor will have no effect on the ditches, streams and river and related riparian vegetation within the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area. The CRC has been designed where possible, to avoid natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ditches, woodland. Where crossing such features becomes unavoidable, the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. Where HDD is not possible, any loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland would be mitigated in full and in line with the species and composition of vegetation loss. Where possible and appropriate such replacements should improve the baseline scenario and include gapping up of adjacent hedgerows for instance as defined in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100].
Damp meadow and pasture along watercourses/valley floor.	The Cable Route Corridor runs through a small area on the western edge of the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area and has been sited to avoid valuable features such as damp meadows and pasture. The Cable Route Corridor crosses some minor tributary streams of the River Avon where the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. The effects of the cable route corridor on the landscape would be short term, temporary in nature and are confined to the area within the CRC itself and not the wider Landscape Character Area.

	All cables would be underground with no new overhead lines or associated poles required.
Intact and predominantly well managed hedgerows frequently with hedgerow trees.	The CRC has been designed where possible, to avoid natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ditches, woodland. Where crossing such features becomes unavoidable, the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. Where HDD is not possible, any loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland would be mitigated in full and in line with the species and composition of vegetation loss. Where possible and appropriate such replacements should improve the baseline scenario and include gapping up of adjacent hedgerows for instance as defined in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100] .
Areas of high quality arable agricultural land located throughout the area, on areas of Kellways Sand.	Where the CRC crosses arable agricultural land, the land will be immediately returned to its agricultural land use.
Shelterbelts of poplar act as significant vertical elements in the horizontal landscape.	The CRC has been designed where possible, to avoid natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ditches, woodland. Where crossing such features becomes unavoidable, the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. Where HDD is not possible, any loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland would be mitigated in full and in line with the species and composition of vegetation loss. Where possible and appropriate such replacements should improve the baseline scenario and include gapping up of adjacent hedgerows for instance as defined in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100] .
Rural and somewhat isolated feel to remoter parts of character area.	The short term, temporary effects of the CRC will have a localised effect on the rural character within the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Scattered settlements and dwellings.	The CRC avoids scattered settlements and dwelling and there will be no direct effects on these features within the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Strong rural sense of place, which begins to break down around Chippenham and communication corridor.	The short term, temporary effects of the CRC will have a localised effect on the strong rural sense of place within the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Green valley floor through Chippenham.	There will be no effect on the green valley floor through Chippenham as the CRC is located to the town's west.
Broad expansive skyline, frequently unbroken by development.	There will be no effect on the Broad expansive skyline within the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area.

Significance of electricity transmission lines.	The CRC will not add to the significance of the electricity transmission lines within the Avon Valley Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Overall Character	Description of Effects
Overall Character of the LCA	Landscape Sensitivity Value: The Avon Valley Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area is not within the CNL and is of Medium Value. Susceptibility: The Avon Valley Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area as a standalone landscape receptor has a Very Low susceptibility to the installation of the Lime Down Scheme and the Cable Route Corridor. This is where the relevant characteristics of the landscape have a very high ability to accommodate the installation of the cable without undue adverse effects on the character of the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity: The Medium Value and Very Low Susceptibility combine to give Low Sensitivity Magnitude of Change The level of landscape change as a result of the Cable Route Corridor is considered to be Very Low and would be Temporary in nature. Value: The Avon Valley Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area is not within the CNL and is of Medium Value. Susceptibility: The Avon Valley Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area as a standalone landscape receptor has a Very Low susceptibility to the installation of the Lime Down Scheme and the Cable Route Corridor. This is where the relevant characteristics of the landscape have a very high ability to accommodate the installation of the cable without undue adverse effects on the character of the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity: The Medium Value and Very Low Susceptibility combine to give Low Sensitivity Magnitude of Change The level of landscape change as a result of the Cable Route Corridor is considered to be Very Low and would be Temporary in nature. With reference to Table 8.1.1.8: Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change the LVIA methodology in ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology [REP1A-006] this is where: <i>“A barely perceptible extent of landscape features and elements of importance to the character of the baseline are lost / adjusted. There is a barely discernible change to aesthetic and / or perceptual attributes of landscape features and landscape character and such changes occur across a very limited geographical area and / or proportion of the landscape receptor. The effects change a barely discernible number of the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character The change would affect only a negligible part of the landscape receptors being assessed, as the Scheme would occupy</i>

	<i>a limited geographical extent, e.g., the site level, within the Scheme itself."</i> The effects of the Cable Route Corridor on Landscape Character have been Assessed in Appendix 8-3-4: Landscape and Visual Assessment Sheets – Cable Route Corridor [APP-193] All effects on the landscape would be short term, temporary in nature and are confined to the area within the CRC itself and not the wider landscape of the Avon Valley Lowland LCA. The overall level of change is assessed as Very Low at all stages of the assessment as summarised below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
Significance of Effect	Minor/ Negligible	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects on the West Wiltshire Landscape Character Area

- 1.4.7 There is only one Landscape Area, as defined in the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment, which is potentially affected by the Lime Down Scheme.
- 1.4.8 The effects of the Scheme on the Landscape Type are as described for the corresponding Character Area.
- 1.4.9 Therefore, the Landscape Character Areas and Types assessed in this section, and the order they have been assessed, is set out below:
- LCA A3: Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland

Effects on LCA A3: Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland

Table 7: Effects on LCA A3: Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland

	LCA A3: BROUGHTON GIFFORD LIMESTONE LOWLAND
Key features / Main Characteristics	Description of effects
Gently undulating limestone lowland.	The Cable Route Corridor will have no effect on the topography of the Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character Area.

Linear villages and scattered farm buildings connected by a dense network of rural roads and footpaths.	The Cable Route Corridor will have no direct effect on the linear villages within the Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Distinct pattern of small sized mainly irregular fields enclosed by in places fragmentary hedgerows with mature trees.	The Cable Route Corridor runs through the eastern side of the Corsham Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area. The effects of the cable route corridor on the landscape would be short term, temporary in nature and are confined to the area within the CRC itself and not the wider Landscape Character Area. There will be no effect to the distinct field pattern and as the route will utilize existing gaps in hedgerows there subsequent replanting would gap up existing fragmented hedgerows.
Generally extensive views.	The Cable Route Corridor will have a temporary localised effect on some views in the Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character Area.
Pylons as a conspicuous vertical element.	The Cable Route Corridor will not add to the conspicuous pylons within the landscape.
Overall character of the Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland	Landscape Sensitivity Value: The Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character Area is predominantly not within the CNL and is of Medium Value. Susceptibility: The Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character Area has a Very Low susceptibility to the installation of the Cable Route Corridor. This is where the relevant characteristics of the landscape have a very high ability to accommodate the installation of the cable without undue adverse effects on the character of the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity: The Medium Value and Very Low Susceptibility combine to Low Sensitivity Magnitude of Change The effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character relate to the Cable Route Corridor. All effects on the landscape would be short term, temporary in nature and are confined to the area within the CRC itself and not the wider 500m Study Area. All cables would be underground with no new overhead lines or associated poles required. Runs of overhead lines between components or to connect underground cables are not proposed. Where the cable is proposed to cross open farmland, excavations and trenching would take place to allow the cable to be placed in situ. Where the cable is proposed to pass through substantial landscape features (such as woodland), the cable would use trenchless techniques to pass underneath with no permanent above ground structures proposed. This

	is proposed to reduce the effects on ecology and landscape as well as visual receptors. The CRC has been designed where practicable, to avoid natural landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ditches, woodland. Where crossing such features becomes unavoidable, the construction would utilise HDD to ensure these features are protected. Where HDD is not possible, any loss of natural features such as trees, hedgerows and woodland would be mitigated in full and in line with the species and composition of vegetation loss. Where practicable and appropriate such replacements should improve the baseline scenario and include gapping up of adjacent hedgerows for instance as defined in the Outline LEMP [REP3-100]. Due to the limited change in the perception of the landscape and its key features, as a result of the Cable Route Corridor as described above, the Magnitude of Change on the character of the Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland Landscape Character would be Very Low at all stages of the assessment as summarised below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
Significance of Effect	Minor/ Negligible	Minor/ Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Effects on County Landscape Character

- 1.4.10 There is only one Landscape Character Area, as defined in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment, which is potentially affected by the Lime Down Scheme.
- 1.4.11 The effects of the Scheme on the corresponding Landscape Type is as described for the corresponding Character Area.
- 1.4.12 Therefore, the Landscape Character Areas and Types assessed in this section, and the order they have been assessed, is set out below:

LCA 16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands

HOST -LCA 16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands

Table 8: HOST -LCA 16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands

HOST -LCA16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands	
Positive landscape features of significance	Description of effects
Peaceful rural landscape.	There would be localised effects especially during the construction phase of the development on this feature of the landscape. However, the effects of this will be localised due to the “disaggregated / dispersed nature of the Lime Down Sites A to E” combined with a rolling character of the landscape within the central area of the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character area. The effect on the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area as a whole would be minimal.
Panoramic views from higher ground.	Views from higher ground predominantly relates to the western part of the Character Area associated with the CNL. Due to the buffer provided by the areas of avoidance to development on the edge of the CNL there is a limited effect on the panoramic views from higher ground to the west.
Strong network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and occasional woodland copses.	The proposed scheme maintains the strong network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and occasional woodland copses .and protects these features through the use of buffers to infrastructure. There will be some removal of hedges to provide new access tracks or widening of existing access tracks as set out in as set out in Annex C LV1.1 – Landscape Fabric – Quantifying Loss and Provision [REP3-128]. The design utilises and builds upon the existing landscape framework provided by the field boundaries. The approach to mitigation has been to reinforce the existing hedgerows and the use of new native tree planting to provide greater enclosure to the Site and provide screening of the infrastructure. In addition to the reinforcement of all hedgerows, new native hedgerows with trees are proposed across the Scheme to reinstate lost hedgerows.

	The Gauze Brook provides opportunities for watercourse enhancements. Setbacks to the Brook, new riparian planting and hedgerows are proposed, especially along footpaths, to provide long term riparian corridors along the Brook as they pass through the Site. These proposals would strengthen landscape character in line with the guidelines for the Hullavington Rolling Lowland LCA. These interventions would lead to meaningful increases in natural habitat and biodiversity benefits across the Scheme within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland and support the aims of Wiltshire's Nature Recovery Strategy for the Cotswolds Limestone Lowlands - Area 4. As a result of the proposed mitigation measures there will be a net gain in hedgerows within the Order Limit. The below measurements are for the areas of the Scheme, not including existing hedgerow understories, existing woodland understories, existing tracks or roads within the Site and the proposed Scheme infrastructure (substations, invertors etc) as set out within Table 8-18 of the LVIA [REP3-025]: • Proposed Ground Cover: 702.899<u>7</u> ha • Green Corridor & Woodland Planting: 11.45<u>13</u> ha • Enhanced Riparian Native Planting: 7.78 ha • Hedgerow Reinforcement & Reinforced Roadside Reinforcement: 54.94<u>51</u> km • Proposed Hedgerows: 15.49<u>57</u> km • Reintroduction of Historic Ponds and New Ponds: 14 The proposed embedded mitigation described above is shown in Figure 1-4 Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan in ES Volume 2 [REP3-037]. The landscape character area description notes that "<i>hedgerows vary in condition with some gappy and low flailed hedges in evidence for example around Grittleton</i>". The Lime Down Scheme proposes that all hedgerows within the Order Limits (except those on the edge of the CNL) are reinforced. This includes gapping up and allowing hedgerows to grow out to strengthen landscape character and provide screening of the development. The above measures provide considerable positive changes in land management away from arable; areas of new woodland to create green corridors and enhanced riparian corridors through the scheme, reinforcement to all hedgerows with additional linear tree planting across the Scheme; proposed new native hedgerows with trees to improve landscape character and create greater age and species diversity (including the reintroduction of disease resistant Elm); and reintroduction of historic ponds and new ponds to provide ecological benefits across the Scheme.
Dry stone walls.	Dry-stone walls are predominantly found in the western part of the Character Area within the CNL. There is one section of dry-stone wall within Sites A-D which follows the northwestern side of Bridleway WT[SHER]16 along A1 and to the northeastern side between fields A2 and A3. This wall is to be retained,

	restored and maintained for the duration of the Scheme and is considered to provide very low beneficial change to the landscape. There is also one drystone wall within the Cable Route Corridor which will require partial removal to accommodate the works. However, this will be rebuilt following completion of the works.
Remaining areas with medieval field pattern.	The Lime Down Scheme maintains the patterns of fields as solar infrastructure and will be located within existing field layouts. Proposed new native hedgerows will occasionally reduce larger field sizes which will be beneficial to the receiving landscape pattern. Land use will change from arable agricultural farmland to solar arrays above grassland. This, as well as associated infrastructure including fencing, access tracks, BESS and substations will have a notable change on land use.
Historic parklands.	The Lime Down Scheme has no interaction with Historic Parklands within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands and there will be no effect on these landscape features.
Remaining areas of ancient woodland, chalk grassland and other areas of ecological diversity.	The Lime Down Scheme provides buffers to Ancient Woodland and other ecological features as set out in Table 8-11: Embedded Mitigation: General Offsets / Buffers of the LVIA [REP3-025]. As such these features are protected and there will be no effect on the areas Ecological diversity. The Lime Down Scheme proposes wildflower meadows as part of the enhancement measures within the setting of the CNL. These will be calcareous (where existing soils are appropriate).
Overall Character of the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands	Sensitivity Value. In recognition that the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands include the higher ground associated with the Cotswold dip slope, it is assessed as High to Medium value. Susceptibility- Consideration of Susceptibility takes into account existing character and quality of the landscape. The Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands as a standalone landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the Scheme and has a moderate ability to accommodate the specific proposed change. The relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate the Scheme without undue adverse effects on the landscape and without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. Sensitivity -The Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands covers an extensive area of land within Wiltshire. The central corridor of the area is undulating low-lying land with rising land of the to the west associated with the Cotswolds. The higher ground associated with the Cotswold dip slope has a High sensitivity to change while the lowland farmland areas to the east has a Medium sensitivity to change However, it is recognised that the more centrally and eastern s within the majority of the Character Area is less sensitive to change and the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands are assessed as having a High to Medium Sensitivity.

	Magnitude of Change There would be localised effects especially during construction phase of the development on the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands. However, the effects of this will be localised due to the “disaggregated / dispersed nature of the Lime Down Sites A to E” combined with a rolling character of the landscape within the central area of the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character area. The Cable Route Corridor is a key element of the Scheme which runs through the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area. It would require trench excavation along the length of the Cable Route Corridor as the cable is installed. The effects of this would not be above that typically associated with utility installation of this nature and would be limited to short-term temporary effects during the Construction Phase. The effect of the Cable Route Corridor on landscape character within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area would be significantly less than that of the Lime Down Sites A-E. The magnitude of change would be Very Low at all stages of the development as set out below:			
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Very Low	Very Low	Very Low/	Very Low/
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor

Effects on County Landscape Type

- 1.4.13 As there is only one Landscape Character Area within the Limestone Lowland Landscape Type 16, the effects of the Lime Down scheme are as set out above in the assessment on the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands LCA.

1.5 Cumulative Landscape Effects

- 1.5.1 The inter-project Cumulative Landscape Effects occur when the impacts of one development interact with the impacts of other developments. It involves the interaction of impacts from different projects, potentially leading to a combined effect that is more significant than the sum of individual impacts.
- 1.5.2 Cumulative Landscape Effects are considered in Section 13 of the LVIA **[REP3-025]** and included an assessment of 13 development Cumulative Development Sites (CD Sites) within the 10km Cumulative Study Area as set out in Table 8-31 Included Cumulative Development Sites. These are shown in:
- ES Volume 2, Figure 8-15-1 to 8-15-7 Cumulative Sites **[APP106]** which shows the CD Sites in context with the Local North and West Wiltshire Local Landscape Assessments; and
 - Annex E of the Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses at ISH2 **[REP4-085]** which shows the Baseline Existing Solar Schemes and CD Sites within the context of the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005)
- 1.5.3 This Assessment considers the cumulative effects on the Host Landscape Types and their individual corresponding Landscape Character Areas as described in the Baseline Landscape Assessment in Appendix A of this report.

Cumulative Baseline

- 1.5.4 The table below sets out the baseline for the Cumulative Assessment (existing solar schemes) and the included Cumulative Sites in relation to the Host Landscape Types and Character Areas.

Table 9: Existing Solar Schemes and Included CD Sites in relation to Landscape Types and Landscape Character areas

Host Local Landscape Types/ Character Areas (as defined in the North Wiltshire and Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment)	Cumulative Development Sites	Existing Solar Schemes
North Wiltshire: Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland		
LCA8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland	CD Site 221 Land to the south of the M4 at Leigh Delamere (90.48 km from Cable Route Corridor; 3.57km from Solar Sites)	Hayes Lane, Hullavington (within 1 km Local Study Area)

	CD Site 243 Kington St Micheal (2.53km from Cable Route Corridor; 2.53km from Solar Sites) CD Site 229 Grange Lane, Corston (1.54km from Cable Route Corridor 1.56km from Solar Sites) CD Site 346 Battens Farm, Allington, Chippenham -within planning system (3 total) (0.02km from Cable Route Corridor; 6.05km from Solar Sites)	Rodbourne Rail, Corston (within the 2km Wider Study Area) Battens Farm, Allington (within the 5-10km Cumulative Study Area)
LCA7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland.	None	Castle Coombe Circuit (within the 5-10km Cumulative Study Area) 3 solar farms at Long Newnton Airfield, Newton Dairy Farm, and Upper Marsh Farm, near Brokenborough (within 10km Study Area and not within the CNL)
Wilshire Limestone Lowland		
LCA 8: Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands	CD Site 221 Land to the south of the M4 at Leigh Delamere (90.48 km from Cable Route Corridor; 3.57km from Solar Sites) CD Site 243 Kington St Micheal (2.53km from Cable Route Corridor; 2.53km from Solar Sites) CD Site 229 Grange Lane, Corston (1.54km from Cable Route Corridor 1.56km from Solar Sites) CD Site 346 Battens Farm, Allington, Chippenham -within planning system (3 total). (0.02km from Cable Route Corridor; 6.05km from Solar Sites) CD Sites 207 and 208, both Battery Storage facilities near Yatton Keynell and are also	Hayes Lane, Hullavington (within 1 km Local Study Area) Rodbourne Rail, Corston (within the 2km Wider Study Area) Castle Coombe Circuit (within the 5-10km Cumulative Study Area) Battens Farm, Allington (within the 5-10km Cumulative Study Area) 3 solar farms at Long Newnton Airfield, Newton Dairy Farm, and Upper Marsh Farm, near Brokenborough (within 10km Study Area and not within the CNL)

	within the Cable Route Corridor (0.22 km from Cable Route Corridor; 6.56km from Solar Sites) CD Site 234 Bishoper Farm (1.13km from Cable Route Corridor; 5.62km from Solar Sites)	
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Assessment of Cumulative Landscape Effects

- 1.5.5 The Assessment of Cumulative Landscape Effects follows the same principles as the assessment of Landscape Effects above. Therefore, the Landscape Character Areas and Types assessed in this section, and the order they have been assessed, is set out below:

Effects on the Local Level Landscape Character Areas and Types

LCA8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland- Host Landscape Character Area

LCA7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Landscape Character Area

Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type

Effects on the County Level Landscape Character Areas and Types

LCA16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area

- 1.5.6 Although there are no Cumulative Development Sites within the Sherston Dipslope Lowland Landscape Character Area. The Character Area is considered in the assessment as it is one of the two Character Areas within the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type. In considering the effects on the Landscape Type consideration of both Landscape Character Areas is required.

Assessment of Cumulative Effects on Local Landscape Character

Cumulative Effects on the Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area

Table 10: Cumulative Effects on the Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area

Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area		
Sensitivity		
The Host LCA 8: Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area covers an extensive area of land within North Wiltshire. The assessed CD sites are dispersed across Character Area. The central corridor of the area is undulating lowland farmland areas which has a Medium sensitivity to change. (Refer to Table 1 for full assessment of Sensitivity)		
Receptor Value Medium	Receptor Susceptibility Medium	Receptor Sensitivity Medium
Description of effects		
CD Site 229 is located directly north of the existing Rodbourne Rail Solar Farm which is nestled into low lying land where is has a limited impact on the character of the wider landscape. Both CD Site 229 and the existing solar farm are enclosed by tall hedgerows to the A429 and to a lesser extent from Grange Lane. The Gauze Brook meanders west through the village of Corston, directly to the south of Rodbourne Rail Solar Farm towards the River Avon. The topography is typical of the undulating lowland landscape within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland LCA. The topography rises to a distinct hill at 94m AOD to the southeast of the Site and to the northeast to the distinct Cam's Hill at 99m AOD where a wind turbine marks the top. To the west the land rises to a long ridgeline at 90m AOD which continues to West Park Wood, a distinct wooded knoll to the west of Corston. To the south of the Gauze Brook and to the south of the Site, the land rises to Rodbourne at 94m AOD where the water tower is a distinctive feature of the landscape and visible in many views from the wider landscape. These topographical features combined with blocks of woodlands, hedgerows and hedgerow trees all provide a sense of enclosure to the landscape where the low-lying land immediately surrounding CD Site 229 is not perceivable from the wider landscape. This results in limited intervisibility between CD Site 229 and Lime Down B, 1.76 km away and Lime Down E, 1.55km away. The Lime Down Scheme and CD Site 229 in combination would lead to an intensification of energy infrastructure locally, however, from within the wider area, both the Scheme and CD Site 229 would be absorbed by the rolling nature of the landscape which limits intervisibility. This would maintain the perception of the rural landscape as it can be readily absorbed into its location with limited appreciation from within the surrounding arable countryside. Due to the existing containment, effects on the character of the wider area would be very limited and not wide ranging. Although it is recognised that there would be some localised effects on Landscape Character during the Construction Phase, Operation Phase (Year 1 & Year 15) or Decommissioning Phase as a result of the Lime Down Scheme, the additional effects of CD Site 229 on landscape character within the 2km Wider Study of the Scheme would be limited due to the nature of the rolling landscape and limited intervisibility. The Cumulative Effects of the Lime Down Scheme in combination with CD Site 229 (including the existing Hullavington Solar Farm and Rodbourne Rail Solar) on the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area are considered to be Low Adverse The other three CD Sites within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland LCA are located to the south of the M4. The M4 is a major east west transport route which cuts across the southern part of the		

Cotswolds NCA. Although many sections of the route are in cuttings which limits its impact in places, nevertheless, it generates noise and movement, which affects the peace of the surrounding rural landscape.

High voltage power lines have a greater impact within the NCA, and the sequence of pylons are also intrusive elements in the landscape. The M4 follows the general grain of the Dip-Slope and is a strong physical and visual barrier within the landscape. The intervening landscape between the M4 and the Lime Down Scheme contains numerous large woodlands, predominantly on high ground, including Sevington Covert, Leigh Delamere Wood, Stanton Park Wood and numerous woodlands along Scotland Hill which connect to Seagry Wood to the east of Lime Down Site E. These woodlands in conjunction with strong hedgerows and hedgerow tress provide enclosure to the mixed arable and pastoral landscape. The intervening topography is characteristic of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland with watercourses running west to east through the dipslope towards the River Avon.

These water courses give rise to the undulating topography characterised by enclosed valleys, steeply sloping in places, and low ridges where woodland predominates. These characteristic features of the landscape, as well as the M4 provide a strong sense of separation between the Scheme and all the Cumulative

From within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area, the Scheme and the Cumulative Development Sites identified would be well screened and readily absorbed into the rolling landscape with little to no appreciation from within the surrounding arable countryside.

No additional Landscape Effects are identified at any point of the Cumulative Assessment – Construction Phase, Operation Phase (Year 1 & Year 15) or Decommissioning Phase.

Despite the intensification of solar schemes across the area, the receiving landscape has the ability to accommodate the Scheme and the CD Sites without resulting in any overall increase in the Significance of Effects. This is due to dispersed nature of the Sites within the Scheme, the strong framework of existing vegetation which is retained and reinforced and the nature of the rolling topography of the receiving landscape the adverse effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the wider landscape dissipates quickly with distance.

The cumulative effects on Landscape Character within the Character Area, are predominantly as a result of the Lime Down Scheme and are as shown below:

Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Low	Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor

Cumulative Effects on LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area

Table 11: Cumulative Effects on LCA 7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area

LCA7: Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area		
Sensitivity		
Value: The Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area is wholly within the CNL and is of High value. Susceptibility: The Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area as a standalone landscape receptor has a High susceptible to the Scheme. The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the Scheme, and has a low ability to accommodate the specific proposed change, because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate the specific proposed change without undue adverse effects taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape, and/or achievement of relevant planning policies and strategies. Sensitivity: In combining the judgement on Landscape value and Susceptibility, the overall Sensitivity of the Sherston Dipslope Landscape Character Area is assessed as High. This recognises that land within the CNL is highly valued for its scenic quality.		
Receptor Value High	Receptor Susceptibility High	Receptor Sensitivity High
Description of effects		
There are no Cumulative Development Sites within the Sherston Dipslope Lowland Character Area. Therefore, there are no Cumulative Effects, and the effects are as identified for the LD Scheme in Table 2 above.		

Effects on Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type

Table 12: Effects on Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type

Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type				
Sensitivity				
The Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands covers an extensive area of land within Wiltshire. The assessed CD sites are dispersed across Character Area. The central corridor of the area is undulating low-lying land with rising land of the to the west associated with the Cotswolds. The higher ground, associated with the Cotswold Dipslope has a High sensitivity to change while the lowland farmland areas more to the east has a Medium sensitivity to change. However, it is recognised that the more central and eastern areas within the majority of the Character Area are less sensitive to change and the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands are assessed as having a High to Medium Sensitivity.				
Receptor Value High to Medium	Receptor Susceptibility High to Medium	Receptor Sensitivity High to Medium		
Description of effects				
As noted in the assessment of effects for the Sherston Dipslope above (one of the two Landscape Character Areas within the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type) there are no Cumulative Development sites within the Character Area. Therefore, the cumulative effects of the Scheme are as set out as for the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area. However, in considering the cumulative effects on the wider, more extensive Landscape Type which includes the Dipslope within the CNL, reconsideration of the Landscape's sensitivity and the magnitude of change is required. As assessed above, the Medium Sensitivity of the Hullavington Rolling Lowland and the High Sensitivity of the Sherston Dipslope gives rise to a High to Medium Sensitivity for the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type. In considering the magnitude of change across the Landscape Type, including the Low level of change as a result of the Lime Down Scheme within the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area combined with No effects on the Sherston Dipslope, this gives rise to an overall Low Level of change within the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type. The cumulative effects on Landscape Character within the Character Area, are predominantly as a result of the Lime Down Scheme and are as shown below:				
Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Low	Low	Very Low	Very Low
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Moderate/ Minor	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor

Cumulative Effects on County Landscape Character

Cumulative effects on the HOST -LCA16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area

Table 13: Cumulative effects on the HOST -LCA16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area

LCA16A – Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands		
Sensitivity		
The Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands covers an extensive area of land within Wiltshire. The assessed CD sites are dispersed across the Character Area. The central corridor of the area is undulating low-lying land with rising land to the west associated with the Cotswolds. The higher ground associated with the Cotswold Dip slope has a High sensitivity to change while the lowland farmland areas to the east has a Medium sensitivity to change. However, it is recognised that the more central and eastern areas within the majority of the Character Area are less sensitive to change and the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands are assessed as having a High to Medium Sensitivity.		
Receptor Value High to Medium	Receptor Susceptibility Medium	Receptor Sensitivity High to Medium
Description of effects		
Magnitude of change The assessed solar schemes within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area includes 5 existing built out solar schemes and 6 CD sites. The Magnitude of Change is assessed in consideration of these 11 sites in combination with the Lime Down Scheme.		
Construction Phase During Construction, it is recognised that there would be localised impacts in relation to both the Lime Down Scheme and the individual CD Sites which would be temporary in nature. However, the dispersed nature of the CD Sites across the landscape means there is no intervisibility due to the character of the rolling topography of the landscape and large areas of woodland across the Character Area. The magnitude of change within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area would be Very Low and is predominantly as a result of Lime Down Sites A-E. The Cable Route Corridor is a key element of the Scheme which runs through the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area. It would require trench excavation along the length of the Cable Route Corridor during installation works. The effects of this would not be above that typically associated with utility installation of this nature and would be limited to short-term temporary effects during the Construction Phase. The effect of the Cable Route Corridor on landscape character within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area are significantly less than that of the Lime Down Sites A-E and would not be over and above those assessed for the Scheme and the identified Solar Schemes within the Area.		
Operation Phase (Year 1) From within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area, the Scheme and the Cumulative Development Sites identified within the area are dispersed across the Character Area and are absorbed by the Area's characteristic wooded character and rolling topography with little to no appreciation from within the surrounding arable countryside. Any		

proposed mitigation would have a limited effect initially and the magnitude of change would remain Very Low.

Operation Phase (Year 15)

From within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area, the Scheme and the Cumulative Development Sites identified within the area would be well screened and readily absorbed into the rolling landscape with little to no appreciation from within the surrounding arable countryside. By Year 15 it is anticipated that the effect of mitigation measures would provide localised screening of all the Solar Schemes within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area which would increase the level of vegetation associated with the Schemes. This would reduce the effects on landscape character to Negligible by Year 15.

Decommissioning Phase

It is assumed that similar to the Lime Down Scheme, all Solar PV Panels, mounting piles, cabling, inverters, transformers, switchgear, BESS and substations would be removed from within the Cumulative Developments, and all existing agricultural fields are likely to return to agricultural use. The landscape has the ability to absorb short term decommissioning activities and the effects on landscape character within the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area would be Negligible. In conclusion, despite the intensification of solar schemes across the area, the receiving landscape has ability to accommodate the Scheme and the CD Sites without resulting in any overall increase in the Significance of Effects. The cumulative effects on the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character are shown below:

Point of Assessment	Construction	Operation – Year 1	Operation – Year 15	Decommissioning
Magnitude of Change	Ver Low	Very Low	Very Low	Negligible
Type of Effect	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse
Significance of Effect	Minor	Minor	Minor	Minor

Cumulative Effects on County Landscape Type

- 1.5.7 As there is only one Landscape Character Area within the Limestone Lowland Landscape Type 16, the effects of the Lime Down scheme are as set out above in the assessment on the Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands LCA.

1.6 Conclusions

- 1.6.1 This Assessment of Effects on Landscape Types and Character Areas has considered the effects of the Lime Down Scheme on the relevant Landscape Character Types and corresponding Landscape Character Areas associated with the Lime Down Scheme (the intra effects of Lime Down Sites A to E and the Cable Route Corridor) and has assessed the inter Cumulative Landscape effects on the relevant Landscape Character Areas.
- 1.6.2 In assessing the individual Landscape Types and Character Areas instead of Study Areas, as was undertaken in the LVIA, the outcomes of the two assessments are different. This is predominantly due to the different geographical extents of the Types and Areas being assessed. For example, In the LVIA, the Hullavington Rolling Lowland Character Area (and other relevant LCAs) were assessed within the 1km, 2km, 5km and 10km Study Areas (for Cumulative effects) and the outcomes of this assessment for the scheme (extracted from Table 1 of ES Volume 3, Appendix 8-3-2-2 Landscape and Visual Assessment Sheets (Significant) [APP-191] are shown below:

Lime Down Solar Park: Summary of (Cumulative) Scheme Effects				
Receptor	Significance of Effect			
	Construction	Operation - Year 1	Operation - Year 15	Decommissioning
Local Study Area (1km)	Moderate (Significant)	Moderate (Significant)	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Wider Study Area (2km)	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Outer Study Area (5km)	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Moderate / Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse

- 1.6.3 In assessing smaller geographical areas, the assessment in the LVIA acknowledges the significant level of effect within the 1km Study Area. As shown in the table above, this dissipates with distance due to the dispersed nature of the Sites within the Scheme, the strong framework of existing vegetation and the nature of the topography of the receiving landscape.
- 1.6.4 As such, when assessing the effects of the Scheme on the individual Landscape Character Types and Areas which predominantly encompass greater geographical extents, the effects of the Scheme are found to be diluted, as the level of effects were found to be lower than those assessed in the LVIA. In this respect, no additional mitigation is recommended.

- 1.6.5 The findings of this assessment on the individual LCTS and LCAs supports the Study Area approach undertaken in the LVIA as it allows the significant localised effects of the Scheme to be recorded.
- 1.6.6 It is worth noting that Negligible Adverse effects were recorded during construction and Year 1 for LCA 7 - Sherston Dip Slope and LCA 6 - Upper Avon Valley, both within the Cotswold National Landscape reducing to No effect at Year 15 and Decommissioning and that this is due to the avoidance measures embedded within the Scheme to protect the CNL.
- 1.6.7 The Landscape and Cumulative Landscape effects of the Scheme on the individual Landscape Character Types and Character Areas assessed in this report are summarised below.

Landscape effects

- 1.6.8 The landscape effects on the relevant Landscape Types and Character areas are summarised in Table 14 below. This shows there will be Moderate/ Minor Adverse effects within the local level Host Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area and corresponding Host Landscape Type-the Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Character Type.

Table 14: Summary of Landscape Effects

	Construction	Year 1 Operation	Year 15 Operation	Decommissioning
Local Landscape Character (as defined in the North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment) and Scoped into the assessment				
Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland LCT HOST -LCA8 - Hullavington Rolling Lowland	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Moderate /Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland LCT LCA 7 - Sherston Dip Slope	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	No effect	No Effect
HOST Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Moderate /Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Settled Farmland Valley LCT	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	No Effect	No Effect

LCA 6 - Upper Avon Valley				
Rolling Settled Lowland LCT LCA 10 - Corsham Rolling Lowland	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
Lowland River Farmland LCT LCA 11 - Avon Valley Lowland	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
Local - Landscape Character (as defined in the West Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment) and Scoped into the assessment				
LCA A3: Broughton Gifford Limestone Lowland	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse
County Landscape Character – as defined in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment				
Limestone Lowland Landscape Type 16 16a Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor/ Negligible Adverse	Minor/ Negligible Adverse

1.6.9 The LVIA takes into account the effects on Landscape Character Areas listed above and acknowledges that there would be an initial change to the character of the Sites themselves and their immediate surroundings as they change from an area of arable farmland to solar infrastructure. However, the introduction of the solar arrays and other associated infrastructure would not become a defining feature on the landscape once operational (e.g. at year 1 and year 15).

1.6.10 There are six primary reasons for this, as set out below:

1. Dispersed nature of the Sites

The Scheme comprises a series of independent Sites set across an extensive agricultural landscape, with large areas of land between each Site, supporting overall assimilation. Each Site is set apart by their associated features such as robust hedgerows, woodland and tree cover, intervening settlements, road infrastructure and the changing topography. The discrete areas of land in the Scheme are placed so far apart that the Scheme would not be perceived in its entirety, and the solar panels will be distributed ‘in and amongst’ the landscape features to assimilate them into the landscape.

2. Nature of Scheme being ‘overlaid’ and reversible

For example, developments for mineral extraction fundamentally change the nature of the landscape in which they operate, whereas solar projects, with the exception of occasional structural footprints, are 'overlaid' on the landscape. This allows the important landscape features such as hedgerows, trees and watercourses to remain and continue to contribute to the landscape character of the receiving area.

3. Strong framework of existing vegetation:

The strong framework of existing vegetation means that this would provide the structure for the Scheme to sit comfortably within and not become intrusive within the landscape. The intermediary areas between the separate Sites boast a strong network of existing vegetation providing structural benefits to the landscape. The existing vegetation also acts as a backdrop for the array and helps integration into the receiving landscape, particularly in views towards the horizon.

4. The benefits of mitigation:

By Year 15, new planting would be established and help to mitigate adverse effects. Please refer to the LVIA specifically Table 8.10 which sets out the Planting Typologies utilised within the Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plans and Table 8.18 of the LVIA [REP3-025] which sets out the quantity of landscape enhancements the Scheme would provide:

- Proposed Ground Cover: 702.80 ha
- Green Corridor & Woodland Planting: 11.45 ha
- Enhanced Riparian Native Planting: 7.78 ha
- Hedgerow Reinforcement & Reinforced Roadside Reinforcement: 54.94 km
- Proposed Hedgerows: 15.49 km
- Reintroduction of Historic Ponds and New Ponds: 14

5. Biodiversity Net Gain

In following the mitigation hierarchy, the Scheme would deliver significant areas of mitigation that would enhance the natural environment by providing net gains for biodiversity. This would deliver additional landscape structure and connections to wider ecological networks as well as contributing positively to the quality of the landscape, far exceeding minimum biodiversity net gain requirements.

6. Legacy Landscape

The Legacy Landscape that will develop as a consequence of the development, will ensure a greatly enhanced landscape than exists today. This is a consequence of the landscape proposals resulting in greater species variety, greater age variation of woody plants, enhanced structure, resilience to pest and disease and reinforcement of local landscape character across the Sites. The landscape proposals have been informed by management guideline stipulated within the three relevant Landscape Character Assessments as well as the Wiltshire Nature Recovery Strategy.

Measures to allow the scheme to adapt to future landscape management objectives (such as reducing hedgerow heights or changing species specification due to disease) has been incorporated into the Outline LEMP **[REP3-100]** to future proof the Scheme.

- 1.6.11 At decommissioning, agricultural fields would be returned to landowners. As infrastructure is removed, there would be an overall positive effect to the character of the area with landscape mitigation retained to provide long term benefit as a legacy landscape. Following decommissioning, the site would benefit from the substantially strengthened tree and hedgerow planting that has been carried out and has matured to create a much stronger and robust landscape, retaining and supporting the overall character of the area and providing considerable biodiversity that will increase in benefit over the years. Due to the development, the landscape would be left in a better condition than the current day. This betterment is established as a consequence of the landscape proposals resulting in greater species variety, greater age variation of woody plants, enhanced structure, resilience to pest and disease and reinforcement of local landscape character across the Sites.
- 1.6.12 The defining legacy of the landscape would be the robust framework of features that have improved through the mitigation and landscape interventions. This mitigation in turn would give rise to long-term wider benefits, including supporting an increase in biodiversity and in promoting the resilience of ecosystems. Although the effect of this on the host Landscape Character Areas will be limited, the effect of these benefits will be experienced closer to the Lime Down Scheme.

Cumulative landscape effects

- 1.6.13 Table 15 below provides a summary of the Cumulative Landscape Effects of the Scheme in combination with the identified Cumulative Development Site which are assessed in Section 5 of this assessment. It represents a worse case assessment in that it is based on all of the included Cumulative Developments to have been built out.

Table 15: Summary of Cumulative Landscape Effects

	Construction	Year 1 Operation	Year 15 Operation	Decommissioning
North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment				
HOST -LCA8 - Hullavington Rolling Lowland	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland LCT LCA 7 - Sherston Dip Slope	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect	No Effect
HOST Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Moderate/ Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment				
16a Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible Adverse	Negligible Adverse

Effects on Local Character and Type

- 1.6.14 Moderate/ Minor Adverse (Non-Significant) effects are recorded within the Host Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area and corresponding HOST Lowland Limestone (Forest Marble) Farmland Landscape Type during Construction and Year 1. However, these effects are predominantly derived from the Lime Down Scheme.
- 1.6.15 The Lime Down Scheme which has been assessed against the baseline situation and includes the three existing solar Schemes and four CD Sites in combination would lead to an intensification of energy infrastructure locally. However, from within the wider landscape Character Area and Type, both the Scheme and CD Sites would be absorbed by the rolling nature of the landscape which limits intervisibility. This will maintain the perception of the rural landscape as the development would be readily absorbed into its location with limited impact from within the surrounding arable countryside. Due to the existing containment, effects on the character of the wider area would be very limited and not wide ranging.

Effects on County Character and Type

- 1.6.16 Minor Adverse (Non-Significant) effects are recorded within the Host Malmesbury-Corsham Limestone Lowlands Landscape Character Area and corresponding HOST Limestone Lowland Landscape Landscape Type during Construction and Year 1. However, these effects are predominantly derived from the Lime Down Scheme.

The Lime Down Scheme which has been assessed against the baseline situation and includes five existing solar Schemes and six CD Sites in combination would lead to an intensification of energy infrastructure locally. However, from within the wider landscape Character Area and Type, both the Scheme and CD Sites would be absorbed by the rolling nature of the landscape which limits intervisibility. This will maintain the perception of the rural landscape as the development can be readily absorbed into its location with limited impact from within the surrounding arable countryside. Due to the existing containment, effects on the character of the wider area would be very limited and not wide ranging *and not of a degree that the landscape type would be treated as “transformed”*.