The Great Grid Upgrade

Sea Link

Sea Link

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Part 2 Suffolk
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Landscape and Visual

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1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) presents the assessment of the likely significant landscape and visual effects that could result from the Proposed Project (as described in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**) specifically the Suffolk Onshore Scheme.

1.1.2 This chapter summarises the methodology used, the datasets that have informed the assessment, baseline conditions, mitigation measures, and the landscape and visual effects that could result from the Proposed Project.

1.1.3 Landscape effects associated with the Suffolk Onshore Scheme relate to the changes to the fabric, character, and quality of the landscape and how it is experienced. As defined in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third edition) (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment , 2013) the term landscape also encompasses urban landscape, often referred to as townscape. For the purpose of this assessment the term landscape is adopted and may include areas of townscape within towns or villages.

1.1.4 Visual effects relate closely to changes to the landscape, but primarily concern changes in people's views and visual amenity as a result of the introduction of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. Although effects on the landscape and visual environment are interrelated, they are assessed and reported separately in this chapter.

1.1.5 The Order Limits, which illustrate the boundary of the Proposed Project, are shown on **Application Document 2.2.1 Overall Location Plan** and the Suffolk Onshore Scheme Boundary is shown on **Application Document 2.2.2. Suffolk Location Plan**.

1.1.6 This chapter should be read in conjunction with the following ES chapters:

- **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**;
- **Application Document 6.2.1.5 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 5 EIA Approach and Methodology**;
- **Application Document 6.2.1.6 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 6 Scoping Opinion and EIA Consultation**;
- **Application Document 6.2.2.2 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity**;
- **Application Document 6.2.2.3 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage**;
- **Application Document 6.2.2.7 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport**;
- **Application Document 6.2.2.9 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 9 Noise and Vibration**; and
- **Application Document 6.2.2.10 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 10 Socio-Economics, Recreation and Tourism**.

1.1.7 This chapter is supported by the following figures:

- **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**;
- **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**; and
- **Application Document 6.4.2.1 Landscape and Visual**.

1.1.8 This chapter is supported by the following appendices:

- **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology**;
- **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**;
- **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**; and
- **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.1.9 This chapter is supported by the following application documents:

- **Application Document 6.10 Arboricultural Impact Assessment**;
- **Application Document 7.5.3 Outline Onshore Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)**;
- **Application Document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice**;
- **Application Document 7.5.3.2 CEMP Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)**;
- **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk**;
- **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document – Suffolk**; and
- **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1.

1.2 Regulatory and Planning Context

1.2.1 This section sets out the legislation and planning policy that is relevant to the landscape and visual impact assessment. A full review of compliance with relevant national and local planning policy is provided within **Application Document 7.1 Planning Statement** submitted as part of the application for Development Consent.

1.2.2 Policy generally seeks to minimise landscape and visual effects from development and to avoid significant adverse effects. This applies particularly to landscapes with statutory designations, including in this case, Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), but also to other landscapes outside of designated areas where there is an aspiration in policy terms to conserve and enhance landscapes of high value or features that are particularly distinctive.

Legislation

European Landscape Convention

1.2.3 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) (Council of Europe, 2006) was signed by the UK Government in 2006 and came into effect in March 2007[1]. The ELC recognises landscape in law. It focuses specifically on landscape issues and highlights the importance of integration of landscape into areas of policy, to promote protection, management and planning of all landscapes, including the assessment of landscape and analysis of landscape change.

1.2.4 The ELC defines landscape as:

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

1.2.5 The ELC promotes an 'all-landscapes approach', founded on the recognition of value in all landscapes. It recognises that the landscape is important as a component of the environment and of people's surroundings in both town and country and whether it is ordinary landscape or outstanding. The ELC considers landscape as a whole (land or marine) from urban to rural areas, and whether special or degraded.

National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

1.2.6 In England and Wales national parks and AONB are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (HM Government , 1949). The Environment Act 1995 revised the original legislation and set out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:

"Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage"

and

"Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public".

1.2.7 When national parks carry out these purposes, they also have the duty to:

"Seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks (Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995)".

Tree Preservation Orders

1.2.8 The law on Tree Preservation Orders is contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (in particular Sections 197-214, as amended) (HM Government, 1990) and in the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999 (as amended) (Statutory Instrument number 1892) (HM Government, 1999).

Strengthened Duty for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

1.2.9 The rebranding of AONBs in November 2023 to National Landscapes, following the Glover Review of protected landscapes in England signifies a strengthened recognition for their function and purpose. This has been reflected in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (HM Government, 2023) which came into force in December 2023.

[1] The UK remains a signatory post-Brexit.

1.2.10 Section 245 of the 2023 Act amends (insofar as is relevant to this matter) Section 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (HM Government , 1949) so as to impose a duty on relevant authorities, including the Secretary of State, to seek to further the purposes of National Parks.

1.2.11 Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (HM Government, 2000) has also been amended to state that public bodies should 'seek to further' the purposes of the AONB to 'conserve and enhance natural beauty', rather than the former 'have regard' to the purposes. **Application Document 7.1 Planning Statement** should be referred to for further information on the compliance with the Section 85 requirements.

1.2.12 It should be noted that whilst AONBs were rebranded to National Landscapes, the legal name remains to refer to 'AONB', therefore AONB will be used throughout this chapter.

National Policy

National Policy Statements

1.2.13 National Policy Statements (NPSs) set out the primary policy tests against which the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Proposed Project would be considered. The 2023 revised NPSs (EN-1 to EN-5) came into force on 17 January 2024.

1.2.14 Table 1.1 and Table 1.2 provide details of the elements of NPS for Energy (EN-1) (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, 2023) and NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, 2023) that are relevant to this chapter and how and where they are covered in the ES. NPS EN-3 Renewable Energy Infrastructure has relevance to the Proposed Project, but only in respect of the offshore elements. As such it has no relevance to the assessment presented in this chapter.

Table 1.1 NPS EN-1 requirements relevant to landscape and visual

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
4.3.1 sets out the requirement for an ES which should describe *"the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the project"*.	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** set out an assessment of landscape and visual significant effects for construction, operation and maintenance. This chapter of the ES includes a summary of the landscape and visual assessments (Section 1.10).
4.6.2 *"Biodiversity net gain is an essential component of environmental net gain. Projects in England should consider and seek to incorporate improvements in natural capital, ecosystem*	**Application Document 6.12 Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report** provides an initial assessment of potential improvements to biodiversity and ecosystem services within the Proposed Project and provides

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
services and the benefits they deliver when planning how to deliver biodiversity net gain".	information on the delivery of biodiversity net gain. There is a strong interface between Biodiversity Net Gain and the landscape mitigation proposed (refer to **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**).
4.7.2 sets out criteria for *"good design"* for energy infrastructure and states that: *"Applying good design to energy projects should produce sustainable infrastructure sensitive to place, including impacts on heritage, efficient in the use of natural resources, including land-use, and energy used in their construction and operation, matched by an appearance that demonstrates good aesthetic as far as possible. It is acknowledged, however that the nature of energy infrastructure development will often limit the extent to which it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the area".*	**Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** identifies the environmental considerations, including landscape and visual considerations, which have informed the siting and outline design of the proposed Saxmundham Converter Station. The design of this structure, in terms of the building form and the external materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document – Suffolk**. The parameters for the Friston Substation components would be no larger than those consented as part of the East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two projects, should the substation be developed as part of Friston Scenario 2. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1 and **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document – Suffolk**.
4.7.6 *"Whilst the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure, there may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, land form and vegetation. Furthermore, the design and sensitive use of materials in any associated development such as electricity substations will assist in ensuring*	**Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** identifies the environmental considerations, including landscape and visual considerations, which have informed the siting and outline design of the proposed Saxmundham Converter Station. The design of this structure, in terms of the building form and the external

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
that such development contributes to the quality of the area. Applicants should also, so far as is possible, seek to embed opportunities for nature inclusive design within the design process"	materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1.
4.7.7 *"Applicants must demonstrate in their application documents how the design process was conducted and how the proposed design evolved. Where a number of different designs were considered, applicants should set out the reasons why the favoured choice has been selected".* *A*	The Order Limits have been developed through a detailed routeing and siting process. **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered** sets out how the Proposed Project has evolved, and the alternatives considered. The evolution of the design has been informed by both environmental and technical desk studies and site surveys as well as consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. This evolution is documented in **Application Document 7.3 Design Development Report** and summarised in **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered**.
4.7.12 "*In considering applications, the Secretary of State should take into account the ultimate purpose of the infrastructure and bear in mind the operational, safety and security requirements which the design has to satisfy. Many of the wider impacts of a development, such as landscape and environmental impacts, will be important factors in the design process*".	The Order Limits have been developed through a detailed routeing and siting process. **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered** sets out how the Proposed Project has evolved to date, and the alternatives considered. The evolution of the design has been informed by both environmental and technical desk studies and site surveys as well as consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. This evolution is documented in the **Application**

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
	Document 6.2.1.3. Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered.
Part 5.4 sets out information regarding Biodiversity and Geological Conservation and Part 5.9 sets out information regarding the Historic Environment, including reference to designations.	Assessments covering matters relating to biodiversity, geological conservation and the historic environment have informed judgements on landscape value within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**. This includes reference to natural heritage, such as habitats that are characteristic of the landscape character, and cultural heritage, such as an understanding of time depth in relation to historically defined 'Important Hedgerows'.
5.10.1 sets out that landscape and visual effects of energy development varies on a case-by-case basis and that *"references to landscape should be taken as covering seascape and townscape where appropriate".*	The baseline landscape and seascape character information is presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**, and takes into account townscape characteristics where relevant. Published landscape and seascape character documents have been used as a means of assessing the landscape effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
5.10.4 *"Landscape effects arise not only from the sensitivity of the landscape but also the nature and magnitude of change proposed by the development, whose specific siting and design make the assessment a case-by-case judgement.*	An iterative design process has informed the siting and routeing of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. Mitigation measures including those which are embedded in the Suffolk Onshore Scheme design are presented in the Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter. Landscape character, quality and value are considered in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline** and have informed the landscape assessment of impacts on relevant landscape designations and landscape character in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment.** Embedded mitigation measures are considered within the assessment.
5.10.5 *"Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have adverse effects*	Mitigation measures including those which are embedded in the design of the Suffolk

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
on the landscape, but there may also be beneficial landscape character impacts arising from mitigation".	Onshore Scheme are presented in the Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter. Landscape character, quality and value are considered in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline** and have informed the landscape assessment in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**. Embedded mitigation measures are considered within the assessment.
5.10.6 *"Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate".*	An iterative design process has informed the siting and routeing of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. Mitigation measures including those which are embedded in the design of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme are presented in the Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter.
5.10.7 *"National Parks, the Broads and AONBs have been confirmed by the Government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and natural beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes. Projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. For development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development".*	The assessment of effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is contained within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
5.10.12 *"Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally. Where a local development document in England or a local development plan in Wales has policies based on landscape or waterscape character assessment, these should be paid particular attention. However locally valued landscapes should not be used in themselves to refuse consent as this may unduly restrict acceptable development".*	The assessment of effects on landscape character is presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and contains judgements of landscape value. The landscape baseline within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline** has informed the overall assessment of effects on each Landscape Character Area (LCA). Local policies in relation to landscape character have also been taken into consideration.

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
5.10.13 *"All proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites."* 5.10.14 *"The Secretary of State will have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as local residents, and other receptors, such as visitors to the local area, outweigh the benefits of the project."*	The visual assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, has assessed the likely significant effects from the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Proposed Project. This has included a range of receptors, including local residents and visitors, as well as views experienced from recreational routes along the coast.
5.10.15 *"Coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to visual intrusion because of the potential high visibility of development on the foreshore, on the skyline and affecting views along stretches of undeveloped coast".*	The visual assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, has assessed the likely significant effects from the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. The visual assessment includes consideration of views in relation to coastal areas.
5.10.17 "*The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant's assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development plan documents in England and local development plans in Wales*".	Published landscape and seascape character documents have been used as a means of assessing the landscape effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. The baseline landscape and seascape character is presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**, and on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.5 Landscape Character - District** and **Application Document 6.4.2.1.6 Seascape Character – National, Regional and District**. The assessment takes account of relevant planning policy as identified in the Regulatory and Planning Context section of this chapter.
5.10.19 *"The applicant should consider landscape and visual matters in the early stages of siting and design, where site choices and design principles are being established. This will allow the applicant to demonstrate in the ES how negative effects have been minimised and opportunities for creating positive benefits or enhancement have been recognised and*	The evolution of the design has been informed by both environmental and technical desk studies and site surveys as well as consultation and stakeholder feedback. This has included landscape and visual matters. This evolution is documented in the **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered**.

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
incorporated into the design, delivery and operation of the scheme".	
5.10.20 (part) *"…The assessment should include the effects on landscape components and character during construction and operation. For projects which may affect a National Park, The Broads or an AONBs the assessment should include effects on the natural beauty and special qualities of these areas'".*	The landscape assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, has assessed the likely significant effects from the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project on landscape component and character, including the natural beauty indicators and special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.
5.10.21 *"The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include light pollution effects, including on dark skies, local amenity, and nature conservation".*	The visual assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, has assessed the likely significant effects from the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. The visual assessment makes reference to the effects resulting from lighting associated with the Proposed Project.
5.10.22 "*The assessment should also address the landscape and visual effects of noise and light pollution, and other emissions…..from construction and operational activities on residential amenity and on sensitive locations, receptors and views, how these will be minimised*".	Consideration of the landscape and visual effects of noise and light pollution during construction and operation is presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 3.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 3.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
5.10.25 *"In considering visual effects, it may be helpful for applicants to draw attention, in the supporting evidence to their applications, to any examples of existing permitted infrastructure they are aware of with a similar magnitude of impact on sensitive receptors. This may assist the Secretary of State in judging the weight they should give to the assessed visual impacts of the proposed development".*	Case study examples of existing permitted infrastructure are contained in Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document – Suffolk. Viking Link at Bicker Fen shares some similar sensitive residential and recreational receptors with a similar magnitude of impact.
5.10.26 *"Reducing the scale of a project can help to mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project. However, reducing the scale or otherwise amending the design of a proposed energy infrastructure project may result in a*	As part of the iterative process of design and assessment, the Limits of Deviation (LoD) for the converter station have been minimised as much as is technically feasible in order to reduce the potential landscape

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
significant operational constraint and reduction in function – for example, the electricity generation output. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances, where mitigation could have a very significant benefit and warrant a small reduction in function. In these circumstances, the Secretary of State may decide that the benefits of the mitigation to reduce the landscape and/or visual effects outweigh the marginal loss of function".	and visual effects. See **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered**. No other modifications to the scale of the Proposed Project are considered viable whilst still ensuring the project need is met.
5.10.27 *"Adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure within its development site and wider setting. The careful consideration of colours and materials will support the delivery of a well-designed scheme, as will sympathetic landscaping and management of its immediate surroundings."*	**Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered** identifies the environmental considerations, including landscape and visual considerations, which have informed the siting and outline design of the proposed Saxmundham Converter Station. The design of this structure, in terms of the building form and the external materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. The design principles developed by Scottish Power Renewables as part of the design of the same substation but for the East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two projects, have also been adopted under Friston Scenario 2. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed design of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1.
5.10.28 *"Depending on the topography of the surrounding terrain and areas of population it may be appropriate to undertake landscaping off-site. For example, when filling in gaps in existing tree and hedge lines would mitigate the impact when viewed from a more distant vista".* Part 5.10 also goes on to discuss developments outside nationally designated areas. It acknowledges that a landscape does not have to be designated to be valued locally and makes reference to local designations.	Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation.** Additional landscape planting, aside from landscape planting immediately around the permanent infrastructure, has been included in the design, including hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting along the B1119. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
	Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
5.10.32 *"The Secretary of State may grant development consent in these areas in exceptional circumstances. Such development should be demonstrated to be in the public interest and consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:* • *the need for the development, including in terms of national considerations, and the impact of consenting or not consenting it upon the local economy;* • *the cost of, and scope for, developing all or part of the development elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way, taking account of the policy on alternatives set out in Section 4.3; and* • *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated".*	The assessment of effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is contained within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. Further information on potential effects on the environment and recreational opportunities should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.2.10 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 10 Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism** and **Application Document 6.2.2.2 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity**. The needs case is of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.1.1Part 1 Introduction Chapter 1 Introduction** and the alternatives considered should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered**.
5.10.33 *"The Secretary of State should ensure that any projects consented in these designated areas should be carried out to high environmental standards, including through the application of appropriate requirements where necessary".*	Measure contained in **Application document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice** outlines the environmental management and mitigation requirements to be implemented throughout the construction period for the delivery of the Proposed Project. Measures contained in **Application document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice** provide a commitment to reinstate land within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB that would be affected by the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This is reflected within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk** which notes the commitment to managing the acid grassland reinstatement within the AONB.
5.10.34 (part) *"The duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for*	The Order Limits including the siting of the converter station have been developed through a detailed routeing and siting

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid harming the purposes of designation or to minimise adverse effects on designated landscapes, and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints…"	process. **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered** sets out how the Proposed Project has evolved to date, and the alternatives considered. This includes the decision to site the converter site away from the AONB to limit effects on its setting and a commitment to a trenchless technique for the landfall. The assessment of effects on the AONB and its setting is contained within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
5.10.35 *"The scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a very wide area. The Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project".*	The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) plans are presented within **Application Document 6.4.2.1.8 Representative Viewpoint Locations and Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sea Link and Friston Scenario 1** and **Application Document 6.4.2.1.9 Representative Viewpoint Locations and Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sea Link and Friston Scenario 2**. Beyond the extents shown on the ZTV and the identified study area, potentially significant landscape and visual effects are not considered likely.
5.10.36 *"In reaching a judgement, the Secretary of State should consider whether any adverse impact is temporary, such as during construction, and/or whether any adverse impact on the landscape will be capable of being reversed in a timescale that the Secretary of State considers reasonable".*	The landscape assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, has assessed the likely significant effects from the construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. The magnitude judgments consider the duration and reversibility of the impact.
5.10.37 *"The Secretary of State should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by appropriate mitigation".*	An iterative process of design and assessment has informed the siting and routeing of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme to minimise effects on landscape character and visual amenity. Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in the Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Landscape mitigation proposals

NPS EN-1 section	Where this is covered in the ES
	for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
Part 5.11 sets out information regarding land use including open space, green infrastructure, and Green Belt. This section is relevant primarily relating to mitigation. This includes ensuring that the: *"connectivity of the green infrastructure network is maintained" and "appropriate mitigation measures to address adverse effects on coastal access, National Trails and other rights of way".*	Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and consider connectivity with the green infrastructure network. Potential effects on rights of way, National Trails, and other longer distance recreational routes are considered in the visual assessment in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and are summarised in this chapter. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
Part 5.12 sets out information regarding noise and vibration, which will be referred to where relevant to inform the landscape and visual impact assessment such as relating to tranquillity.	Consideration of noise and vibration has informed the landscape value judgements relating to tranquillity. This is noted within the landscape baseline within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

Table 1.2 NPS EN-5 requirements relevant to landscape and visual

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
2.2.10 *"... As well as having duties under section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989, (in relation to developing and maintaining an economical and efficient network), applicants must take into account Schedule 9 to the Electricity Act 1989 , which places a duty on all transmission and distribution licence holders, in formulating proposals for new electricity networks infrastructure, to "have regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna and geological or physiographical features of special interest and of protecting sites, buildings and objects of architectural, historic or archaeological interest; and … do what [they]*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects are presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and are summarised in this chapter. Such assessments consider the effects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on natural beauty, including the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The key characteristics of the landscape character areas and their

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
reasonably can to mitigate any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, sites, buildings or objects."	value which together inform 'natural beauty' are contained in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**. Mitigation measures presented in **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** seek to minimise effects on landscape character and consequently on the natural beauty of the countryside.
2.2.11 "Depending on the location of the proposed development, statutory duties under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 11A of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended by Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995), and Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 may be relevant".	The assessment of effects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is set out within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**.
Part 2.5.1 "*When planning and evaluating proposed development's contribution to environmental and biodiversity net gain, it will be important – for both the applicant and the Secretary of State – to supplement the generic guidance set out in EN-1(Section 4.5) with recognition that the linear nature of electricity networks infrastructure can allow for excellent opportunities to:* *i. reconnect important habitats via green corridors, biodiversity stepping* *zones, and reestablishment of appropriate hedgerows; and/or* *ii. connect people to the environment, for instance via footpaths and* *cycleways constructed in tandem with environmental enhancements*".	The landscape mitigation proposals (**Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation** under Friston Scenario 2) for the Suffolk Onshore Scheme have been developed in collaboration with other disciplines, including Biodiversity Net Gain and ecological specialists. This design includes enhancement to the local green infrastructure network and providing enhanced recreational access where possible. Further information on Biodiversity Net Gain and Geology can be found in **Application Document 6.12 Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report**, **Application Document 6.2.2.2 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity** and **Application Document 6.2.2.6 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology**.
2.9.9 (part) *"…New substations, sealing end compounds (including terminal towers), and other above ground installations that serve as connection, switching, and voltage transformation*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.2.C Appendix 2.2.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
points on the electricity networks may also give rise to adverse landscape and visual impacts."	**Application Document 6.3.2.2.D Appendix 2.2.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and erection of two new towers.
2.9.10 *"Cumulative adverse landscape, seascape and visual impacts may arise where new overhead lines are required along with other related developments such as substations, wind farms and/or other new sources of generation…"*	The consideration of landscape and visual cumulative effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme in combination with other projects are set out within **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects**. This considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and erection of two new towers.
2.9.13 *"Where possible, applicants should ensure that the principles detailed in Sections 2.11.16-2.11.19 below [Holford Rules] are embodied in the design of their proposed overhead line route and its associated infrastructure. Applicants should also offer proposals (for instance those detailed in Section 2.10 below) for additional mitigation."*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and erection of two new towers. This has been undertaken with consideration of the Holford Rules.
2.9.24 *"In these cases, and taking account of the fact that the government has not laid down any further rule on the circumstances requiring use of underground or subsea cables, the Secretary of State must weigh the feasibility, cost, and any*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D**

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
harm of the undergrounding or subsea option against: • *the adverse implications of the overhead line proposal;* • *the cost and feasibility of re-routing overhead lines or mitigation proposals for the relevant line section; and* • *the cost and feasibility of the reconfiguration, rationalisation, and/or use of underground or subsea cabling of proximate existing or proposed electricity networks infrastructure."*	**Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and the erection of two new towers. The majority of the cables for the Proposed Project are underground with a very small element of overhead line works at Friston Substation (under Friston Scenario 2).
2.9.25 *"In such cases the Secretary of State should only grant development consent for underground or subsea sections of a proposed line over an overhead alternative if they are satisfied that the benefits accruing from the former proposal clearly outweigh any extra economic, social, or environmental impacts that it presents, the mitigation hierarchy has been followed, and that any technical obstacles associated with it are surmountable. In this context it should consider:* • *the landscape and visual baseline characteristics of the setting of the proposed route, in particular, the impact on high sensitivity visual receptors (as defined in the current edition of the Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment), residential areas, designated landscapes, valued landscapes, designated heritage assets and Heritage Coasts (including, where relevant, impacts on the setting of designated features and areas), noting the policy in EN-1 section 5.4.53 on regional and local designations;* • *the additional cost of the proposed underground … alternatives, including their significantly higher lifetime cost of repair and later uprating;* *the potentially very disruptive effects of undergrounding on local communities, habitats, archaeological and heritage assets, marine environments, soil (including peat soils), hydrology, geology, and, for a substantial time after construction, landscape and visual amenity. (Undergrounding an*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and the erection of two new towers. The majority of the cables for the Proposed Project are underground including the section of HVAC between Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation which could have comprised an overhead line alternative solution. There is only a very small element of overhead line works at Friston Substation.

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
overhead line will mean digging a trench along the length of the route, and so such works will often be disruptive – albeit temporarily – to the receptors listed above than would an overhead line of equivalent rating).	
2.10.5 *"In addition to good design in accordance with the Holford and Horlock Rules, and the consideration of undergrounding or rerouting the line where possible, the principal opportunities for mitigating adverse landscape and visual impacts of electricity networks infrastructure are:* • *consideration of network reinforcement options (where alternatives exist) which may allow improvements and/or extensions to an existing line rather than the building of an entirely new line;* • *selection of the most suitable type and design of support structure in order to minimise the overall visual impact on the landscape. In particular, ensuring that towers are of the smallest possible footprint and internal volume; and* • *the rationalisation, reconfiguration, and/or undergrounding of existing electricity networks infrastructure in the vicinity of the proposed development."*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and two new towers. The majority of the cables for the Proposed Project are underground including the section of HVAC between Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation which could have comprised an overhead line alternative solution. There is only a very small element of overhead line works at Friston Substation (under Friston Scenario 2).
2.10.6 *"(part) There are more specific measures that might be taken, and which the Secretary of State could mandate through DCO requirements if appropriate, as follows: Landscape Schemes comprising off-site tree and hedgerow planting, are sometimes used for larger new overhead line projects to mitigate potential landscape and visual impacts, softening the effect of a new above ground line whilst providing some screening from important visual receptors. These may be implemented with the agreement of the relevant landowner(s), or the developer may compulsorily acquire the land or land rights in question. Advice from the relevant statutory authority may also be needed"*	Landscape mitigation proposals are identified on **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation.** Within the Order Limits additional landscape planting beyond the converter station, and substation site boundaries has been identified to assist in reducing landscape and visual effects, which is set out within the assessment of effects detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D**

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
	Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment.
2.10.8 *"…since long-term management of the selected mitigation schemes is essential to their mitigating function, a management plan, developed at least in outline at the conclusion of the examination, and which sets out proposals within a realistic timescale, should secure the integrity and benefit of these schemes. This should also uphold the landscape commitments made to achieve consent, alongside any pertinent commitments to environmental and biodiversity net gain."*	**Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk** sets out the outline management plans for landscape and ecological mitigation proposals. The management plan has been produced to create a robust future plan to create a successful landscape mitigation scheme which includes adaptive techniques.
2.11.2 *"The Secretary of State should be satisfied that the development, so far as is reasonably possible, complies with the Holford and Horlock Rules (please see paragraphs 2.9.16 - 2.9.19) or any updates to them."*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and two new towers. The majority of the cables for the Proposed Project are underground including the section of HVAC between Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation which could have comprised an overhead line alternative solution. There is only a very small element of overhead line works at Friston Substation which applied the principles of the Holford Rules. The site selection and subsequent siting of the Converter Station was undertaken in accordance with the principles of the Horlock Rules to minimise effects on landscape character and views, avoiding designated landscapes and features and applying mitigation measures.
2.11.3 *"The Secretary of State should also be satisfied that all feasible options for mitigation – including the rationalisation, reconfiguration, or undergrounding of existing electricity networks*	An iterative process of design and assessment has informed the siting and routeing of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme to minimise effects on landscape

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
infrastructure, have been considered and evaluated appropriately."	character and visual amenity. Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Additional landscape planting aside from landscape planting immediately around the permanent infrastructure has been provided, including hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting along the B1119. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
2.11.4 *"In circumstances where it can be demonstrated that a mitigation measure and/or technological approach is appropriate and/or necessary for a project, including to limit landscape and visual impact as set out above, the Secretary of State should take this into account in decision making."*	Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Additional landscape planting aside from landscape planting immediately around the permanent infrastructure has been provided, including hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting along the B1119. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
2.11.5 *"Nationally designated landscapes have specific statutory purposes which help ensure their continued protection. The Secretary of State should have special regard to nationally designated landscapes, where the general presumption in favour of overhead lines should be reversed to favour undergrounding."*	The assessment of effects on the AONB is contained within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. The assessment considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and two new towers, however this is not located within the designated landscape.

NPS EN-5 section	Where this is covered in the ES
2.11.6 *"Away from these protected landscapes and in locations where there is a high potential for widespread and significant adverse landscape and/or visual impacts, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the applicant has provided evidence to support a decision on whether undergrounding is or is not appropriate, having considered this on a case-by-case basis, weighing the considerations in paragraph 2.9.24 above."*	The assessment of landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers a scenario (Friston Scenario 2) that the consented Friston Substation may be constructed as part of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which would include a modification to the existing overhead line, the removal of one tower and two new towers. The majority of the cables for the Proposed Project are underground including the section of HVAC between Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation which could have comprised an overhead line alternative solution. There is only a very small element of overhead line works at Friston Substation (under Friston Scenario 2).

National Planning Policy Framework

1.2.15 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as revised in December 2024 (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024) sets out national planning policies that reflect priorities of the Government for operation of the planning system and the economic, social, and environmental aspects of the development and use of land. The NPPF has a strong emphasis on sustainable development, with a presumption in favour of such development. The NPPF has the potential to be considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's (SoS) consideration of the Proposed Project.

1.2.16 Table 1.3 below provides details of the elements of the NPPF that are relevant to this chapter, and how and where they are covered in the ES.

Table 1.3 NPPF requirements relevant to landscape and visual

NPPF section	Where this is covered in the ES
Paragraph 132 states: *"Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics…".*	Statutory consultation as part of the DCO process has enabled local communities to respond to and comment upon the landscape mitigation proposed. Consultation is

NPPF section	Where this is covered in the ES
	recorded in Application Document 5.1 Consultation Report.
Paragraph 135 *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:* • *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;* • *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;* • *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);* • *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;* • *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and* • *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*	The design of the Saxmundham Converter Station in terms of the building form and the external materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. The parameters for the Friston Substation components would be no larger than those consented as part of the East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two projects, should the substation be developed as part of Friston Scenario 2. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1.
Paragraph 139 states: *"Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:* • *development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or* • *outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in*	The design of the Saxmundham Converter Station, in terms of the building form and the external materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback as well as a Design Panel Review (refer to **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**). Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document**

NPPF section	Where this is covered in the ES
an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."	**7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** and **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document – Suffolk** Table 3.1.
This is further developed in paragraph 140 that states: *"Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used)."*	The design of the Saxmundham Converter Station, in terms of the building form and the external materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk Table 3.1**.
Paragraph 187 states: *"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:* • *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);* • *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;* • *maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;* • *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;* • *preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise*	Landscape and visual considerations have informed the development of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme (see **Application document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered**). Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and have been developed collaboratively with disciplines including cultural heritage and ecology. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**. **Application Document 6.12 Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report** sets out the improvements to biodiversity and ecosystem services within the Proposed Project and provides

NPPF section	Where this is covered in the ES
pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and • *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*	information on the delivery of biodiversity net gain. Further information on protection of ecology and biodiversity, water environment, geology and hydrogeology, agriculture and soils, noise and vibration and air quality should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.2.2 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity**, **Application Document 6.2.2.4 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 4 Water Environment**, **Application Document 6.2.2.5 Part 2 Suffolk Kent Chapter 5 Geology and Hydrogeology**, **Application Document 6.2.2.6 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 6 Agriculture and Soils**, A**pplication Document 6.2.2.9 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 9 Noise and Vibration** and **Application Document 6.2.2.8 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 8 Air Quality** respectively.
Paragraph 189 *"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues".*	The Order Limits including the siting of the converter station have been developed through a detailed routeing and siting process. **Application document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered** sets out how the Proposed Project has evolved to date, and the alternatives considered. This includes the decision to site the converter station away from the AONB to limit effects on its setting. The assessment of effects on the AONB and its setting is contained in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. Effects would be short term and temporary associated with the construction period and the immediate period of reinstatement as committed to within **Application document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice**.

NPPF section	Where this is covered in the ES
This is further expanded in paragraph 190 which states: *"When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:* • *the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;* • *the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and* • *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated."*	The assessment of effects on the AONB and its setting is contained **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. Effects would be short term and temporary associated with the construction period and the immediate period of reinstatement as committed to within **Application document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice**. Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Further information on potential effects on the environment and recreational opportunities should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.2.10 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 10 Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism** and **Application Document 6.2.2.2 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 2 Ecology and Biodiversity**. The needs case is of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.1.1 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 1 Introduction** and the alternatives considered should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.1.3 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 3 Main Alternatives Considered**.
Paragraph 191 states that "*Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 189), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the*	The assessment of the effects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on the Suffolk Heritage Coast is included within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C**

NPPF section	Where this is covered in the ES
importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character."	**Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and is summarised within this chapter.
Paragraph 198 states: *"Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:* • *mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;* • *identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and* • *limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation."*	Cumulative effects are considered in **Application Document 6.2.2.12 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 12 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Intra-Project Cumulative Effects**. The landscape and visual assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**, and summarised in this chapter has assessed the likely significant effects from the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme including potential effects from lighting on landscape character and visual amenity.

National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance for the Natural Environment

1.2.17 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for the 'Natural Environment' (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2016) under the subheading of Green Infrastructure, the PPG notes the importance of green infrastructure as a natural capital asset and should be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals.

1.2.18 Under the subheading of Biodiversity, geodiversity, and ecosystems, the PPG notes biodiversity opportunities in relation to green infrastructure provision.

1.2.19 Under the subheading of Landscape, paragraph 036 (Reference ID: 8-036-20190721) states:

"…plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside."

1.2.20 Paragraph 036 also notes:

"Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully."

1.2.21 Paragraph 037 supports the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for understanding the character of the landscape and the relevant management plans for designated landscape for further information on character and beauty.

1.2.22 Paragraph 040 sets out that Management Plans for AONBs help to *"set out the strategic context for development".*

1.2.23 Paragraph 042 gives information regarding development within the setting of National Parks, the Broads and AONBs. It states that:

"Land within the setting of these areas often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account."

1.2.24 Paragraph 043 (Reference ID: 8-043-20190721) gives information regarding Heritage Coasts. It states that:

"Heritage Coasts are stretches of our most beautiful, undeveloped coastline which are managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve access for visitors. Most of the defined Heritage Coast is covered (on land) by either Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Park designations."

1.2.25 Green infrastructure provision and landscape screening and integration measures have been considered early on as part of the development of landscape mitigation which are set out in Section 1.8 in this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and have been developed collaboratively with disciplines including cultural heritage and ecology.

1.2.26 Cumulative landscape and visual effects are set out in **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects**.

1.2.27 Published landscape character assessments have been used to inform the baseline landscape character and have been supplemented with site analysis presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**. This documentation also refers to the baseline for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and Suffolk Heritage Coast. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan is referred to within Section 1.2 of this chapter.

Planning Practice Guidance for Light Pollution

1.2.28 PPG for 'Light Pollution' (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2014) sets out that:

"Artificial lighting needs to be considered when a development may increase levels of lighting, or would be sensitive to prevailing levels of artificial lighting."

1.2.29 Relevant to landscape and visual matters, the PPG sets out factors that can be considered when assessing whether a development proposal might have implications for light pollution. This includes the following points:

"Will a new development, or a proposed change to an existing site, be likely to materially alter light levels in the environment around the site and/or have the potential to adversely affect the use or enjoyment of nearby buildings or open spaces?" and

"Is the development in or near a protected area of dark sky or an intrinsically dark landscape where new lighting would be conspicuously out of keeping with local nocturnal light levels, making it desirable to minimise or avoid new lighting?".

1.2.30 Effects of lighting on landscape and visual receptors during construction and operation from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme are presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023

1.2.31 The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (HM Government, 2023) amends the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (HM Government, 2000), replacing the current Duty of Regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing AONBs. It sets out a new, strengthened requirement that:

"In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty".

Local Planning Policy

1.2.32 The Suffolk Onshore Scheme (refer to **Application Document 2.2.2 Suffolk Location** within the jurisdiction of Suffolk County Council.

County Council Plans

1.2.33 County planning guidance which is relevant to a study of landscape and visual matters and has informed the assessment of preliminary effects in this chapter are summarised below.

Suffolk County Council Corporate Strategy for 2022 to 2026

1.2.34 The Suffolk County Council Corporate Strategy for 2022 to 2026 (Suffolk County Council, 2021) includes a section on Protecting and Enhancing Our Environment. This includes "*promoting biodiversity and conserving natural habitats and open spaces".* This has informed the landscape mitigation proposals for the Suffolk Onshore Scheme which is set out in **Section 1.7** of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**).

Suffolk's Nature Strategy

1.2.35 Suffolk's Nature Strategy (Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, RSPB and National Trust, 2015) sets out various recommendations and actions across three sections: natural environment, economic growth and health and wellbeing.

1.2.36 The Natural Environment section promotes partnerships and ensuring high quality in relation to protected landscapes, including Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. It also notes that:

"*New woodland planting should be of the right trees in the right places, particularly where they can buffer and expand designated sites, enhance landscape character or improve the extent of natural green space close to where people live".*

1.2.37 The Economic Growth section states that:

"New energy infrastructure should be sensitive to place. Relevant policies as well as national and local guidance, appropriate biological data and Suffolk's Landscape Character Assessment should be used to assess suitability of new energy infrastructures, and other developments, to particular places". The Health and Wellbeing section states that:

"Suffolk County Council should seek opportunities to improve the connectivity of the public access network and the development and improvement of the public rights of way network."

1.2.38 The themes set out in the Suffolk's Nature Strategy, including woodland planting, enhancing landscape character and sensitivity of design to place, has informed the landscape mitigation measures for the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. These measures are set out in **Section 1.7** of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation.**

Local Plans

1.2.39 The Suffolk Onshore Scheme (refer to **Application Document 2.2.2 Suffolk Location Plan**) lies within the jurisdiction of East Suffolk Council (ESC). Local planning policy for East Suffolk Council consists of two parts; the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (East Suffolk Council, 2020) and the Waveney Local Plan (East Suffolk Council, 2019). The Proposed Project is located outside of the area covered by the Waveney Local Plan.

1.2.40 The Suffolk Onshore Scheme lies within the boundary of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (adopted September 2020) (East Suffolk Council, 2020). Local Plan policies which are relevant to landscape and visual assessment matters and have informed the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) are detailed in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4 Local planning policies relevant to landscape and visual – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan

Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Policy	Where this is covered in the ES
2.2: Strategic Infrastructure Priorities This policy sets out various deliverables by the Council in relation to strategic	Opportunities of connecting to and enhancement of green infrastructure within the outline landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design

Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Policy	Where this is covered in the ES
infrastructure, including the "*provision of green infrastructure*".	and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
10.1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity This policy states that "*development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it maintains, restores or enhances the existing green infrastructure network and positively contributes towards biodiversity and/or geodiversity*". The policy notes the importance of creating new habitats, maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure links and the use of the mitigation hierarchy. The policy states that development should "*provide environmental net gains in terms of both green infrastructure and biodiversity*".	Opportunities for connecting to and enhancement of green infrastructure within the outline landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
10.3: Environmental Quality This policy sets out that all development proposals will be expected to protect environmental quality. This includes light pollution, noise pollution, and cumulative effects.	The proposed lighting for the Suffolk Onshore Scheme is described in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** and is considered alongside noise pollution where this affects landscape and visual receptors within the landscape and visual effects presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **6 Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. Cumulative effects are detailed within **Application Document 6.2.2.12 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 12 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Intra-Project Cumulative Effects**.
10.4: Landscape Character This policy states that proposed developments should be sympathetic to the	Effects on landscape character including lighting as a result of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme are presented in **Application**

Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Policy	Where this is covered in the ES
relevant published landscape character assessments and landscape evidence. The policy lists elements that the proposed development should protect and enhance, including special qualities and features, visual relationship around and landscape setting of settlements, distinctive landscape elements, sensitive views and green infrastructure network. The policy also notes the importance of the natural beauty and special qualities of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and its setting. The policy also seeks to protect and enhance the public right of way network, tranquillity, and dark skies.	**Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter. They are based on the characterisation contained in the Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment (SCLCA) (East Suffolk Council, 2018) published by East Suffolk Council in 2018 as well as the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators published (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership, 2016) by Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Partnership in 2016 (see **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**). Further information on the protection and enhancement of the public right of way network can be found within **Application Document 6.2.2.10 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 10 Socio-economics, Recreation and Tourism** and effects on noise to inform tranquillity can be found within **Application Document 6.2.2.7 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 7 Traffic and Transport**.
11.1: Design Quality This policy states that the Council "*will support locally distinctive and high-quality design that clearly demonstrates an understanding of the key features of local character and seeks to enhance these features through innovative and creative means*". The policy also notes that proposals should take any important landscape features into consideration, aim to retain and enhance natural and semi-natural features on-site, and use landscaping schemes to aid the integration of development into its surroundings.	The design of the Saxmundham Converter Station, in terms of the building form and the external materials, has been developed alongside consultation and stakeholder feedback including engagement with a Design Review Panel as explained in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document – Suffolk**. The parameters for the Friston Substation components would be no larger than those consented as part of the East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two projects, should the substation be developed as part of Friston Scenario 2. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1. Landscape mitigation proposals are identified in the

Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Policy	Where this is covered in the ES
	Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and have been developed collaboratively with disciplines including cultural heritage and ecology. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
11.2: Residential Amenity This policy sets out various criteria when considering the impact of development on residential amenity, this includes reference to visual aspects such as privacy and outlook.	Visual effects as a result of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme are considered in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
11.8: Parks and Gardens of Historic Landscape Interest This policy sets out statutory and non-statutory heritage assets and notes extensive coverage of the historic parklands within the landscape. The policy notes that the "*delineated boundary of each of these locally listed historic parklands includes the area currently forming the visual extent of the parkland*". The policy states that the Council will "*encourage the preservation and enhancement of these parks and gardens of historic interest and their surroundings*".	Effects on landscape character including locally designated landscapes, as a result of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
SCLP 12.29: South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood The proposed site for the converter station is located to the southeast of the settlement of Saxmundham. The policy sets out the strategy for a garden neighbourhood to the south of Saxmundham. The policy sets out requirements for the masterplan, including the "*provision of green infrastructure, including informal and formal open spaces, circular walks, and retention and enhancement of the natural features on the site such as trees, woodland and hedgerows to be incorporated into the layout of the*	The Suffolk Onshore Scheme would not directly affect the South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood as the Suffolk Onshore Scheme covers a different spatial extent. There would be indirect effects due to proximity and intervisibility. The outline landscape plan presented in **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** identifies the opportunity for wider green infrastructure connections which could connect with any future proposals to the south of Saxmundham. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within

Suffolk Coastal Local Plan – Policy	Where this is covered in the ES
development". This development would extend the settlement of Saxmundham further south adjacent to the A12.	**Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.

Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document

1.2.41 The Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (East Suffolk Council, 2022) was published in April 2022 by ESC. The document provides further detail and expands upon aspects within the adopted Local Plan. Relevant to landscape and visual matters, the document includes a section on the Natural Environment.

1.2.42 The Natural Environment section notes the importance of protecting and enhancing valued and designated landscapes. The section notes published guidance including the Local Plan and states that "*development proposals should include measures to enable a scheme to integrate into the landscape*". The section also makes reference to enhancing biodiversity, such as the provision of green corridors and tree planting, and the consideration of dark skies and tranquillity.

Environmental Guidance Note

1.2.43 The Environmental Guidance Note (East Suffolk Council, 2020) was published in November 2020 by ESC as a response to the climate change emergency. Relevant to landscape and visual matters, the document includes a section on Nature and Wildlife which states that "*where possible, existing trees and established vegetation should be protected and enhanced when designing the layout of new developments*" and encourages the use of wildlife corridors to integrate into the wider green infrastructure network.

Settlement Sensitivity Assessment

1.2.44 The Settlement Sensitivity Assessment Volume 2: Suffolk Coastal (East Suffolk Council, 2018) published in 2018 by ESC is based upon two development scenarios, which are housing and commercial developments. As such this publication is not directly relevant to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. However, of indirect relevance to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme is Peripheral Area: SX2, which is located to the south of Saxmundham. The Settlement Sensitivity Assessment states that this area is sensitive to change due to its rural character, valued views and historic associations. Further information is given within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**.

Leiston Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2029

1.2.45 The Leiston Neighbourhood Plan (Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council, 2017) was made in March 2017 to guide future development. The plan notes that the "*role of the energy sector in this location is important in the context of Leiston, the wider district and nationally*". The plan sets out a 'Vision for Leiston', which includes reference to protecting and enhancing the setting of the town and also in terms of the role of the town in relation to its rural hinterland. The policies set out within the plan are focused on

development within the settlement of Leiston and are not therefore relevant to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme.

Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan – Submission Draft 2022-2036

1.2.46 The Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan (Saxmundham Town Council, 2023) was made in July 2023 to guide future development. The plan makes reference to the South Saxmundham Garden Neighbourhood, as referred to within the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (East Suffolk Council, 2020) above. The plan sets out a 'Vision for Saxmundham' which notes the importance of enhancements to the green infrastructure network and biodiversity and ease of movement.

1.2.47 The plan also defines Objectives, including:

"To protect and enhance the conservation area, the town's heritage, green spaces, natural features and rural setting, and to address the challenges of climate change".

1.2.48 The plan includes Policy SAX1: General design principles, which notes the importance of retaining existing connections including natural features and public rights of way (PRoW). Policy SAX6: Improving connectivity notes the importance of retaining and improving connectivity, including reference to promoting green corridors to connect with neighbouring villages. Policy SAX7: Public Rights of Way states that existing PRoW should be protected and enhanced.

1.2.49 The plan includes Policy SAX12: Gateways, views and the landscape setting of Saxmundham which refers to 'Important local views (SAX12)'. Those relevant to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme includes the 'view towards the town from the B1119 (Leiston Road)', which states:

"The approach from Leiston is across a wide-open plateau. Looking west at a point about 400 m east of the access to Wood Farm the view of the tree line along the ridge becomes conspicuous, the town below is hidden, but the view of the trees and the change in the landscape is the first clear indication that the town is nearby."

1.2.50 Also relevant includes 'view from the B1121 looking across to Hurts Hall and St John's Church', which states:

"Looking northeast from a point approximately 200 m south of the milestone. This is a panoramic view which includes open farmland in the foreground, Hurts Hall and St John's Church in the middle distance backed by wooded rising land."

1.2.51 Policy SAX12 also makes reference to Green Gateways, which includes along the B1119 on the eastern approach to Saxmundham. The Policy states:

"Proposals that would enhance the visual appearance of an entrance or 'gateway' to the town will be supported however where 'green' gateways or substantially undeveloped entrances currently exist, these should be maintained as 'soft' entrances to assist with the urban to rural transition.

Where gateway enhancements are proposed, schemes should be designed to ensure that gateway enhancements do not detract from highway safety and visual amenity and should minimise the need for non-essential lighting.

Opportunities to improve the public realm at entrances to the town, through the use of appropriate hard or soft landscaping measures will also be supported where they include the use of vernacular materials and native planting."

1.2.52 Policy SAX13: Protection and enhancement of natural assets, refers to retaining existing features within the relevant published Landscape Character types and enhancement of biodiversity.

1.2.53 The landscape mitigation proposals are identified in Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation section of this chapter and **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation** and Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.

Planning Policy Relevant to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

1.2.54 The Suffolk Onshore Scheme study area (see details below) lies partially within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The following planning guidance documents are relevant to landscape and visual matters and are summarised below.

Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

1.2.55 The Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2023-28 (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Partnership, 2023) was published by Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership in 2023. The Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership is a partnership brought together to act as an advocate for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB referred to in these documents as the SECH Partnership.

1.2.56 The primary purpose of AONBs is to *"conserve and enhance natural beauty".* The document states that AONBs are *"designated for their natural beauty"* and that the natural beauty of this landscape is defined by the following seven characteristics:

- *"landscape quality;*
- *scenic quality;*
- *relative wildness;*
- *intrusiveness;*
- *natural heritage features;*
- *cultural heritage features; and*
- *associations".*

1.2.57 The 2023-28 Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB Management Plan represents the statutory purpose of *"conserving and enhancing its natural beauty"*. It also notes further guidance that states:

"In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities;

Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment; and

Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses".

1.2.58 Regarding the setting of the AONB, the document states that:

"There are areas adjacent to the AONB that are considered important for the context of the nationally designated landscape. These areas are valued landscapes as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework and are an important part of the setting of the AONB; and

Proposals for development considered under the Planning Act 2000 (and subsequent revisions) in the AONB and its setting, such as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, should have regard to AONB purpose and adhere to the mitigation hierarchy".

1.2.59 The document gives information regarding the relationship of the AONB with the Suffolk Heritage Coast. The objectives of the Heritage Coast include to *"conserve, protect and enhance the natural beauty of the coastline, their terrestrial, coastal and marine flora and fauna and their heritage features".*

Designation History Series Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

1.2.60 The Designation History Series Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (Countryside Commission, 1999) was published by the Countryside Commission[2] in 1999. This makes reference to the original area designated, including extensive saltings and marshes along the coast and inland sandy heathland and woodlands.

Development in the setting of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Position Statement

1.2.61 Development in the setting of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Position Statement (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership, 2015) was published by the SECH Partnership in 2015. With regard to the setting of the AONB, the document states that the AONB Partnership:

"considers the setting, including the views into and out of the AONB, to be the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature; size; scale; siting, materials or design can be considered to have an impact, positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the nationally designated landscape."

1.2.62 The document then states that:

"the setting of the AONB does not have a geographical border. The character, location, scale, materials or design of a proposed development or land management activity will determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB".

1.2.63 The document also sets out examples of adverse impacts; those relevant to landscape and visual matters are summarised as follows:

- *"development not appropriate to the landscape setting of the AONB;*
- *blocking or interference of views out of the AONB particularly from public viewpoints;*
- *blocking or interference of views of the AONB from public viewpoints outside the AONB;*
- *loss of tranquillity through the introduction of lighting, noise, or traffic movement;*

[2] The Countryside Commission became the Countryside Agency, which was then merged into English Nature, a forerunner to Natural England.

- *introduction of an abrupt change of landscape character;*
- *where development may be classified as temporary but would have long term (10-25 years) or medium-term impact as defined by Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;*
- *loss of biodiversity, particularly species of importance within the AONB;*
- *loss of features of historic interest, particularly if these are contiguous with features within the AONB;* and
- *reduction in public access to or within the AONB".*

Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan Summary

1.2.64 The Coast & Heaths AONB Nature Recovery Plan Summary (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership, 2023) was published in 2023 by the SECH Partnership. This document summarises a two-part document which provides an "*overview of how the AONB intends to address wildlife declines of priority species by 2030*". The report notes the importance of the creation of wildlife corridors as well as the creation of new habitats including priority habitats such as woodland and lowland heath and acid grassland.

Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators

1.2.65 The Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership, 2016) was published by the SECH Partnership in 2016. This document was developed by EDF Energy as part of preparatory work for the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station, which has now been consented, however the document notes that the Natural Beauty and Special Qualities Indicators set out in the document are described for the whole of the AONB and not just relating to Sizewell.

1.2.66 The document provides Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB indicators for each of the Natural Beauty criterion. Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB indicators relevant to landscape and visual matters and to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme are summarised within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**. Reference should also be made to **Application Document 7.1 Planning Statement** where full consideration of all AONB indicators are assessed.

Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development

1.2.67 Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership, 2019) was published by the SECH Partnership in 2019. The document splits the AONB into simplified Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and sets out the collection of colours identified during site survey work. It also offers colour guidance to aim to integrate new development into the landscape.

Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) State of the AONB Report

1.2.68 Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB State of the AONB Report (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership, 2019) was published by the SECH Partnership in 2018. The purpose of the report is to:

"provide a compilation of information from various data sources which can form a baseline against which to monitor future change, identify current and potential forces for change in the landscape, make informed recommendations for monitoring and management and form a robust evidence base to inform and underpin Management Plan Policies".

1.2.69 Those headline findings from the report relevant to landscape and visual matters are summarised as follows:

- considerable increases in tourism in recent years;
- minor changes to the agricultural landscape character in recent years;
- coastal erosion is a key force for change; and
- Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects are likely to have a considerable impact on the AONB.

1.2.70 The report includes a section on 'Visual and perceptual qualities', with levels of tranquillity, dark night skies, and number of pylons included as indicators. The report notes that the majority of the AONB is highly tranquil, notably along areas of undeveloped coast, but with some less tranquil areas including Aldeburgh. It notes that the majority of the AONB is characterised by dark night skies, with any light pollution concentrated around settlements. The report also sets out that 14 large scale pylons are located within the AONB and that large-scale pylons are *"visually prominent in the predominantly rural landscape of Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB".*

Lighting Design Guide Dedham Value National Landscape and Coast and Heaths National Landscape

The Lighting Design Guide Dedham Vale National Landscape and Coast and Heaths National Landscape (Darkscape Consulting, 2023) was published by the SECH Partnership in 2023. The report provides "*guidance to reduce light pollution and protect our dark skies*". The report notes that "*lighting on rural roads, village streets, houses and other developments have the potential to increase light pollution*" and that prominent sources of lighting for the Coast and Heaths include Sizewell Nuclear Power Station.

1.2.71 The report also states that "*it is important…that development both inside and outside the boundaries properly considers good lighting practice to limit the impact of light pollution and protect good intrinsic areas of darkness within each landscape boundary*".

1.2.72 The report outlines dark sky design lighting principles, which are summarised as follows:

- useful;
- targeted;
- low light;
- controlled;

- designed; and
- colour.

1.2.73 The principles note that zero upward light is essential, asymmetric lights to be used where possible along with the use of switches, timers, and sensors. Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation (for Friston Scenario 2). Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1.

1.2.74 The landscape assessment on the AONB, including reference to proposed lighting, is set out within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**.

Scoping

1.2.75 A Scoping Report for the Proposed Project was issued to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 24 October 2022 (**Application Document 6.14 Environmental Scoping Report 2022**) and a Scoping Opinion was received from the SoS on 1 December 2022 (**Application Document 6.15 Scoping Opinion**). Table 1.5 sets out the comments raised in the Scoping Opinion and how these have been addressed in this ES. The Scoping Opinion takes account of responses from prescribed consultees as appropriate. **Application Document 6.3.1.6.A Appendix 1.6.A Responses to Scoping Opinion** provides responses to the comments made by the prescribed consultees at scoping stage and how each comment has been considered.

Table 1.5 Comments raised in the scoping opinion

ID	Inspectorate's comments	Response
3.1.1	*Alteration to landscape character and visual amenity as a result of operational lighting at the converter station (operation)* The Scoping Report states this is to be scoped out on the basis that *"any additional lighting will be limited to maintaining site security and safety and would be within the context [of] existing settlement."* It also acknowledges that should the approach to lighting change, this aspect will be scoped into the landscape and visual assessments. The Inspectorate does not agree that operational lighting of the converter station can be scoped out at this stage due to the uncertainties regarding chosen location and in the absence of information confirming the type and location of any such lighting in the context of its surrounds. The ES should include an assessment of	The assumptions made about the lighting design that have informed the landscape and visual impact assessment are set out within this chapter. **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** provides details about the proposed lighting requirements at the Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation (for Friston Scenario 2). Potential effects associated with the proposed lighting on landscape character and visual amenity have been considered in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D**

ID	Inspectorate's comments	Response
	operational lighting on sensitive landscape and visual receptors, where likely significant effects could occur.	**Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
3.1.2	*Alteration to landscape character and visual amenity as a result of operational lighting to the operational extension to the proposed Friston Substation (operation)* This potential operational effect is scoped out on the basis that the extension will be minimal and within the context of existing energy infrastructure. However, it is acknowledged that should the design of the proposals at the proposed Friston Substation become more substantial operational effects will be scoped into the landscape and visual assessment. The Scoping Report contains limited detail with regards to proposed lighting at the substation. The ES should include a description of lighting and assess effects on landscape character and visual amenity as a result of lighting, where likely significant effects could occur.	The assumptions made about the lighting design that have informed the landscape and visual impact assessment are set out in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**. Potential effects associated with the proposed lighting on landscape character and visual amenity have been considered in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
3.1.3	*Alteration to landscape character and visual amenity as a result of the HVAC and HVDC underground cables (operation)* The Inspectorate agrees that in general the introduction of the underground HVAC and HVDC cables is unlikely to give rise to significant long-term effects on landscape character during operation of the Proposed Development. However, it is unclear whether any easement required would result in permanent landscape changes and the potential for such effects should be considered. The ES should assess the potential for significant short-term effects during the beginning of the operational phase, as proposed reinstatement measures mature along the cable route.	**Application document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice** commits to the reinstatement of the HVDC and HVAC cable corridor. The assessment of landscape and visual effects considers the operational year 1 and year 15 effects of the reinstatement of the HVDC and HVAC cable corridor, as requested by stakeholders. This is detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.2.D Appendix 2.2.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
3.1.4	*Permanent alteration to landscape character as a result of the operational converter station on the following receptors (operation): Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment (SCLCA) Local Character Area (LCA) 01 (Benhall Estate Sandlands) and Seascape Character Assessment of Suffolk, South Norfolk and*	Following a review of the iterative design process following the issue of the Scoping Report, it is considered that LCA 01 Benhall Estate Sandlands should be included within the assessment of effects. This is set out within the Baseline Conditions section of this chapter. The boundary

ID	Inspectorate's comments	Response
	North Essex (SCASNE) Seascape Character Type (SCT) 3 (Nearshore Waters). The Scoping Report proposes to scope out these landscape character receptors from the assessment of the permanent alteration to landscape character as a result of the operational converter station (for all five converter site options) on the basis that the *"Suffolk Scoping Boundary does not lie within the LCA and SCT. Whilst there is the potential for indirect effects on the perceptual qualities of the LCA and SCT there is less potential that the effects would be significant."* The Inspectorate considers that it would have been helpful to overlay the various site options with the landscape character areas and seascape types to aid interpretation of the scoping out of effects associated with the various sites. This similarly applies to the consideration of the AONB below. The Inspectorate is of the view that both SCLCA LCA 01 and SCASNE SCT 3 can be scoped out of the landscape assessment for these converter site options on the basis that potential effects are likely to be of limited scale or extent due to the relative distance between these character areas/types and the converter sites.	of the LCA is shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.5 Landscape Character – District** and the assessment of effects is included within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**.
3.1.5	*Permanent alteration to landscape character as a result of the operational converter station on the Coast and Heaths AONB* The Scoping Report proposes to scope out operational effects on the AONB as a result of the site 3 converter station locations (emerging preference and alternatives) on the basis of proximity. The Inspectorate is of the view that operational effects on the AONB from the operation of converter site 3 (emerging preference or alternatives) can be scoped out of the landscape assessment on the basis that potential effects are likely to be of limited scale or extent due to the relative distance between these features and the AONB.	The Applicant notes this comment.
3.1.6	*Study Area*	The study area for the landscape and visual assessment of the Suffolk

ID	Inspectorate's comments	Response
	The Inspectorate notes the current study area of 3 km from the two emerging preferred converter station areas and 1 km from the boundary for all other elements. It is unclear at this stage whether the Friston Substation would be included in the Proposed Development and thus whether a 3 km study area from this substation (if applicable) is also to be applied. The ES should confirm this information and the Applicant should keep the preferred study area under review as the design and location of the Proposed Development evolves, so that the introduction of any additional visually intrusive elements, which may affect sensitive receptors can be properly taken account of in the assessment. The Applicant should make efforts to agree the study area with relevant consultation bodies. The study area in the ES must be defined sufficiently so that all potentially significant effects are assessed.	Onshore Scheme comprises an area of 3 km from the Order Limits surrounding the proposed Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation, and 1 km from the Order Limits around the proposed landfall (denoted as the high-water mark) and HVDC and HVAC cable corridors. The study area is shown on the figures accompanying this chapter, including **Application Document 6.4.2.1.1 Topography**. The study area has been agreed with the relevant consultation bodies (see **Application Document 7.4.8 Draft Statement of Common Ground Between National Grid Electricity Transmission and East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council**).
3.1.7	*Suffolk Heritage Coast* The ES should include an assessment of effects on the Heritage Coast, where significant effects are likely.	The effects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on the Suffolk Heritage Coast are presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter.
3.1.8	*Seascape Character* Figure 2.2.5 includes regional seascape character area SCT01: Inland Navigable Waters, which is not identified in the chapter text. The ES should include consideration of all relevant seascape character types.	SCT 01 does not lie within the study area, and is not therefore considered in the assessment, as there are unlikely to be significant effects. This is set out within the Baseline Conditions section of this chapter.
3.1.9	*Receptors – England Coast Path National Trail* The Applicant's attention is directed to the comments of Suffolk County Council and Natural England at Appendix 2 to this Opinion with regards to the recent approval of the England Coast Path National Trail within Suffolk, which is located within the Suffolk Onshore Scoping Boundary. The ES should include an assessment of effects on this proposed National Trail, where likely significant effects could occur.	The visual assessment in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter, considers the potential effects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on views experienced by recreational users of the approved King Charles III England Coast Path National Trail. This includes representative viewpoint 13 (see **Application**

ID	Inspectorate's comments	Response
		Document 6.4.2.1.7 Representative Viewpoint Locations).
3.1.10	*Representative viewpoints* The viewpoints to be used for assessment should be agreed with the relevant consultation bodies, including the Local Authorities and Natural England. It is unclear whether the works to the Friston Substation (whether the extension or entire build) have been included in the consideration of viewpoints, which focuses on the converter stations. The ES should include an assessment of impacts resulting from the proposals at Friston Substation.	The representative viewpoints have been shared with Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council, Natural England and the SECH Partnership as part of various landscape thematic meetings held throughout 2024. There have also been additional focused meetings between National Grid, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council to discuss additional viewpoints that were requested. East Suffolk Council have agreed to the viewpoints on 23 January 2025. Suffolk County Council have agreed to the viewpoints with the exception of five additional viewpoints which they requested, but which have not been adopted. The SECH Partnership have deferred agreement of viewpoints to Suffolk County Council. No feedback has been received from NE on the proposed viewpoints. Further details are provided within **Application Document 7.4.8: Draft Statement of Common Ground Between National Grid Electricity Transmission and East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council**. As noted in paragraph 2.2.4.20 of the Scoping Report, visual receptors have been identified to include potential effects from the proposed Friston Substation, as well as the other elements of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. Representative viewpoints 6, 7, 8, 9, 22 and 23, shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.7 Representative Viewpoint Locations**, have the potential to experience combined visibility of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme with Friston Scenario 2. The visual assessment contained in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter

ID	Inspectorate's comments	Response
		assesses two different assessment scenarios for the Friston Substation (Friston Scenario 1 and 2).
3.1.11	*Viewpoints and cultural heritage receptors* The Applicant is advised to include heritage specific viewpoints, as appropriate, to support the heritage assessment. Suitable cross referencing between the LVIA aspect chapter and Cultural Heritage aspect chapter should be included.	**Application Document 6.2.2.3 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage** identifies heritage specific viewpoints. Cross-referencing between this chapter and **Application Document 6.2.2.3 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage** has been carried out where appropriate to inform judgements on landscape value and historic landscape characterisation (see **Application Document 6.3.3.1.B Appendix 3.1.B Landscape Baseline**).
3.1.12	*Receptors* The Inspectorate notes that impacts of alterations to PRoW and users of PRoW are not identified in the potential impact pathway tables. It is further noted that Paragraph 2.2.1.3 does not reference the other aspect chapters that should be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual chapter. The ES should include appropriate cross-references to other relevant aspect chapters, such as Cultural Heritage, Traffic and Transport, and Noise and Vibration aspect chapters.	The landscape and visual assessment presented in **Application Document 6.3.3.1.C Appendix 3.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.3.1.D Appendix 3.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment,** and summarised in this chapter, cross-refers to various other chapters where relevant.
3.1.13	*Visualisations* The Inspectorate notes the statement that no visualisations are proposed for the extension works to the proposed Friston Substation as the works are considered to be minor. The ES should include visualisations where the DCO application includes for the construction of the Friston Substation in full.	Visualisations are presented in **Application Document 6.4.2.1.10 Representative Viewpoint Visualisations**. Representative Viewpoint Photography and Photomontages reflect the indicative maximum parameters of Friston Substation (for Friston Scenario 2) and the Saxmundham Converter station.

Statutory Consultation

1.2.76 Statutory consultation for the Proposed Project took place between 24 October and 18 December 2023. A further Targeted Consultation exercise on the main changes to the Proposed Project introduced after the 2023 statutory consultation, was undertaken between 8 July and 11 August 2024. In addition, a project update and a local engagement exercise took place between 22 November 2024 and 12 January 2025,

focusing on design amendments made following the Targeted Consultation. A summary of relevant feedback received during consultation relating to landscape and visual is provided below. Further details on how consultation responses have informed the assessment is provided in **Application Document 5.1 Consultation Report** and **Application Document 5.1.9 Appendix H Summary 2023 Response**.

1.2.77 Feedback from statutory consultation was extensive for landscape and visual matters. Table 1.6 sets out the stakeholders that were involved in Statutory Consultation, a summary of their feedback, and a summary of National Grid responses.

Table 1.6 Key topics raised at statutory consultation and National Grid responses

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
Suffolk County Council	Landscape planting strategy and collaboration with other disciplines	The landscape mitigation planting has been developed as part of the iterative design process and in collaboration with relevant disciplines including cultural heritage, biodiversity, and ecology. This is presented on **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Landscape mitigation proposals for Friston under Friston Scenario 2 are set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
	Assessment of cable route impacts	The assessment of effects on landscape and visual receptors includes reference to operational year 1 and year 15 effects of the cable routes as requested by stakeholders. This is detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and is summarised within this chapter.
	Community engagement on opportunities for recreation	Opportunities for recreational access have been developed using public consultation and stakeholder feedback as part of the iterative design process. This has included consideration of the provision of permissive access land surrounding the Saxmundham Converter Station, as shown on

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation. This would be further developed at the detail design stage should the Suffolk Onshore Scheme be consented and if possible given the safety, security and operational constraints associated with the Converter Station area.
	Aspects of the methodology, such as significant effects threshold and reasoning for sensitivity judgements	It is generally accepted in LVIA that effects above moderate adverse are significant. The reasoning for the sensitivity judgements made for both landscape and visual receptors is set out in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology**.
	Request for additional information within the LCA baseline for LCAs D4, J4, and K3	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline** includes requested information within the LCA baselines for D4, J4, and K3. Where relevant, information from National Grid's site visits has been included to supplement the information within the relevant published study.
	Additional viewpoint requests and specific queries on viewpoints and visualisations	The additional viewpoint requests and specific viewpoint and visualisation queries have been taken into account and discussed further with SCC during the Thematic Landscape and Visual meetings. This has included additional representative viewpoints and altering the presentation of visualisations. This issue is detailed within **Application Document 7.4.8 Draft Statement of Common Ground Between National Grid Electricity Transmission and East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County**.
	Requests for information on growth rates, maintenance p**Counc**plans and aftercare period	Information on planting heights, maintenance and aftercare are provided in **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and**

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		Photomontage Methodology. This has included the revision of planting heights that have been used within the visualisations based on information relating to a nearby site supplied by stakeholders.
	Requests for assessment to include cumulative visual sequential effects	The assessment of cumulative effects presented in **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects** includes consideration of cumulative sequential visual effects.
	River Fromus bridge design and location	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter provides an assessment of the River Fromus bridge design and location on landscape character and visual amenity. This would be further developed, including materiality, at the detail design stage should the Suffolk Onshore Scheme be consented. Regarding the design of the River Fromus bridge, the Design Approach Document and Design Principles should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Table 3.1). Principles to reduce the landscape and visual impacts of the bridge and integrate it more into the landscape are also included in **Application Document 7.5.3.2 Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments.**
	Acid grassland restoration and enhancement	Details regarding the parcel of land within the AONB identified for acid grassland restoration and enhancement should be referred to within **Application Document 7.5.7.1**

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk.
East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two North	Effects on East Anglia One North and East Anglia Two North landscaping and proposals	Under Friston Scenario 1, the Sea Link landscape proposals take into consideration the consented landscape scheme. This is set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk**.
Natural England	Reasoning for the exclusion of paragraph 178 from the NPPF and assessment of the Suffolk Heritage Coast	It is assumed that the paragraph reference relates to paragraph 184 which has relevance to Heritage Coasts. Paragraph 184 has been included within the Regulatory and Planning Context and National Policy sections of this chapter and an assessment of potential effects on the Heritage Coast is set out within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**.
	Magnitude of effect on Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and Suffolk Heritage Coast	The landscape assessment provided in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised in this chapter sets out the effects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on the AONB and Heritage Coast.
	Confidence in prediction relating to the assessment	The confidence ratings presented within the PEIR were due to the information available at the time of writing. This is no longer relevant for the assessment contained within the ES.
	Cumulative Effects regarding the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.	The assessment of cumulative effects relating to the landscape and visual matters arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme is set out within **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects**. This includes reference to sequential cumulative visual effects through the study area

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		including through the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.
East Suffolk Council	Effects from landfall, cable corridor, Converter Station and Substation. Request for information on growth rates.	Assessment of landscape and visual effects arising from the landfall, cable corridor, Converter Station (including access routes) and the Substation (under Friston Scenario 1 and Friston Scenario 2) are set out within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**. Information relating to a nearby site has been supplied by stakeholders to inform discussions around planting heights and these are presented in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology**.
	Converter Station design	Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent - refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk Table 3.1**. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals for the structure.
	Value of visual receptors	The methodology for determining the value of visual receptors is included in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology** and details about these values are set out within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
	Query differences between maintenance and operation	The assessment scenarios used at the PEIR stage have been reviewed. The assessment of effects presented within the ES contains an assessment of construction effects and then maintenance and operational effects

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		combined. This is set out within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology**.
	River Fromus bridge design and location	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter provides an assessment of the River Fromus bridge design and location on landscape character and visual amenity. This would be further developed, including materiality, at the detail design stage should the Suffolk Onshore Scheme be consented. Regarding the design of the River Fromus bridge, the Design Approach Document and Design Principles should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Table 3.1). Principles to reduce the landscape and visual impacts of the bridge and integrate it more into the landscape are also included in **Application Document 7.5.3.2 Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments**.
	Interface with Friston Substation	The **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk** should be referred to for further information on the interface with the consented landscape planting at Friston Substation by Scottish Power Renewables.
	Advanced planting	The proposed advanced planting is shown on **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 3 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline**

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		Landscape Mitigation - Timing of Planting.
SECH Partnership	Effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB are downplayed	The effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on the AONB are detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**. This includes the consideration of the reinstatement assumptions of the cable route included in this chapter.
	Compliance with policy	**Application Document 7.1 Planning Statement** sets out how National Grid pays regard to furthering the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB. This detail of this update to policy is set out within the Regulatory and Planning Context section of this chapter.
Friston Parish Council	Converter Station and Substation architectural finishes	Design Principles have been provided with the application for development consent. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of the structure. Refer to **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Tables 3.1 and 4.1.
Saxmundham Town Council	Concerns about visual impacts from important views and vistas and the future growth of Saxmundham	An additional representative viewpoint has been included within the assessment of visual effects. This is shown as representative viewpoint 20 in **Application Document 6.4.2.1.7 Representative Viewpoint Locations**. The potential effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme are detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised within this chapter, including from Important Views identified in the Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan. The future growth of Saxmundham is considered within the Future Baseline scenario detailed within the Baseline Conditions section of this chapter.

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
	River Fromus bridge design and location	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter provides an assessment of the River Fromus bridge design on landscape character and visual amenity. The visual assessment includes reference to the Important Views as set out within the Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan. The cumulative impacts should be referred to within **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects**. Details on landscape mitigation, including strengthening areas of existing planting to provide greater biodiversity and screening function around the River Fromus Bridge, is set out within **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**. Regarding the design of the River Fromus bridge, the Design Approach Document and Design Principles should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Table 3.1).
Aldeburgh Town Council	Concerns over Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and Suffolk Heritage Coast	The likely effects on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and Suffolk Heritage Coast are detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and summarised within this chapter.
	River Fromus bridge design	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D**

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment and summarised in this chapter provides an assessment of the River Fromus bridge design on landscape character and visual amenity. This includes reference to views from the southern approach to Saxmundham. Regarding the design of the River Fromus bridge, the Design Approach Document and Design Principles should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Table 3.1).
Kelsale-cum-Carlton Parish Council	Concerns around the impact of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme on quiet lanes	Representative viewpoint 7 is located on a quiet lane and is assessed within the visual assessment in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment.** The effects on landscape character, including tranquillity, are detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment**.
	River Fromus bridge design	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter provides an assessment of the River Fromus bridge design on landscape character and visual amenity. This would be further developed, including materiality, at the detail design stage should the Suffolk Onshore Scheme be consented. Regarding the design of the River Fromus bridge, the Design Approach Document and Design Principles should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and **Application Document**

Stakeholder	Key topics by stakeholder	SummaSummary of response from National Grid
		7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk Table 3.1).
Benhall and Sternfield Parish Council	Concerns over impacts on PRoW	The diverted PRoW to the west of the Converter Station would allow continued connection between Sternfield and Saxmundham. This is shown on **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation**.
	Request for additional viewpoint along Red Lane/ Kiln Road	An additional representative viewpoint has been included within the assessment of visual effects. This is shown as representative viewpoint 19 in **Application Document 6.4.2.1.7 Representative Viewpoint Locations**. The effects are detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised within this chapter.
	River Fromus bridge design and location	**Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** and summarised in this chapter provides an assessment of the River Fromus bridge design and location on landscape character and visual amenity. This contains information on the local landscape character pattern. Regarding the design of the River Fromus bridge, the Design Approach Document and Design Principles should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk** Table 3.1).

Further Engagement

1.2.78 Landscape and visual thematic meetings have been held every eight weeks from 27 February 2024 up until DCO submission. Stakeholders that have typically been present

at these thematic meetings include Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council, Natural England and the SECH Partnership. A summary of key matters discussed during the landscape and visual thematic meetings is outlined below:

- study area for the landscape and visual assessment;
- LVIA approach and methodology and photomontage methodology;
- Landscape and Seascape Character receptors as a basis for the landscape assessment;
- representative viewpoint locations as a basis for the visual assessment;
- photosheet layout to present the baseline photography and photomontages;
- sequential cumulative visual assessment;
- outline landscape mitigation design;
- structure of the Outline LEMP;
- assessment of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and Suffolk Heritage Coast; and
- planting heights and indicative species mix for landscape mitigation planting.

1.2.79 Indicative planting heights for the year 15 visualisations included within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology** and used in **Application Document 6.4.2.1.10 Representative Viewpoint Visualisations** have been developed based on site information provided by East Suffolk Council. Further information is provided within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology**.

Summary of Scope of Assessment

1.2.80 This section details what aspects have been scoped in and scoped out of the assessment through the scoping process and consultation with stakeholders.

Aspects scoped into the assessment

1.2.81 The scope of this assessment covers the temporary impacts on landscape character and visual amenity during the construction stage.

1.2.82 The permanent effects on landscape character and visual amenity during Year 1 of the operational phase have been considered in this assessment including the permanent operational infrastructure and the reinstatement of landscape features along the cable route. Longer term effects on landscape and visual receptors at Year 15 of operation are also considered when landscape mitigation planting would begin to establish.

1.2.83 It is considered that the effects at decommissioning would be no greater than the effects identified at construction. Therefore, this project stage is considered to be no different to the findings of the construction stage assessment and is consequently not considered separately.

Aspects scoped out of the assessment

1.2.84 Two published landscape character areas (LCAs) (Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment (SCLCA) LCAs B5 and J4) and one published seascape

character type (SCT) (Seascape Character Assessment of Suffolk, South Norfolk and North Essex (SCASNE) SCT 01) have been scoped out of the landscape assessment of effects due to a lack of inter-visibility with the Suffolk Onshore Scheme such that effects on the setting or perceptual qualities of these LCAs and SCT would be limited with no significant residual effect. This is set out within the Baseline Conditions section of this chapter and has been agreed with stakeholders through thematic meetings.

1.3 Approach and Methodology

1.3.1 **Application Document 6.2.1.5 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 5 EIA Approach and Methodology** sets out the overarching approach that has been used in developing the ES. A full explanation of the LVIA method and criteria used to assess sensitivity, magnitude of effect and classification of landscape and visual effects is included in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology** and summarised in this section. This includes where terminology differs from the standard approach, such as the reference to magnitude of effects.

Summary of Landscape Assessment Methodology

1.3.2 In assessing and classifying the predicted effects from any likely impacts to the landscape resulting from the Proposed Development, the following criteria have been considered:

- landscape character baseline characteristics;
- landscape sensitivity;
- magnitude of landscape effects; and
- resulting significance of landscape effects.

1.3.3 Landscape receptors are described as components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the Proposed Development. These can include overall character and key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.

1.3.4 The relationship between sensitivity and magnitude of effect allows an assessment of the relative significance of predicted landscape effects to be made. The sensitivity of the landscape to change is a combination of the value of the LCA combined with the degree to which a particular LCA or feature can accommodate changes or new features, without unacceptable detrimental effects to its key characteristics. Overall sensitivity has been described as very high, high, medium, low, and negligible.

1.3.5 The magnitude of landscape effect relates to the size/scale, extent or degree of change likely to be experienced as a result of the Proposed Development. The magnitude takes into account whether there is a physical change resulting in the loss of landscape components, or a change beyond the land-take of the Proposed Development that might have an effect on the character of the area, the duration of the effect, and whether the impact is permanent or temporary. Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of GLVIA3 Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 (Landscape Institute, 2024) notes that the size/scale of effect is likely to be the most important factor with geographical extent and duration/reversibility considered as ‘modifiers’. The levels of landscape magnitude of effect are described as being very large, large, medium, small, negligible, and none.

1.3.6 The combination of the sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of landscape effect determines the significance of landscape effects. For the purposes of this assessment, moderate and major effects have been deemed 'significant'. Where significant environmental effects are identified, measures to mitigate these effects are proposed (where feasible) and remaining residual effects are identified.

Summary of Visual Assessment Methodology

1.3.7 The assessment of visual effects is structured by receptor groups (e.g., residential, recreational and road users). Individual receptors are identified through the analysis of the ZTV, within which views of the Proposed Development are likely to be possible, and field survey.

1.3.8 Individuals are subsequently categorised into receptor groups within different areas and representative viewpoints have been selected. Views from each identified representative viewpoint are recorded, considering the receptor type, a baseline description of the existing views and the value of the view.

1.3.9 Sensitivity of visual receptors has been defined through an appraisal of the viewing expectation, or value placed on the view as identified in the baseline study, and its susceptibility to change. Overall visual sensitivity has been described as very high, high, medium, low, and negligible.

1.3.10 Visual magnitude of effect relates to the extent to which the Suffolk Onshore Scheme would alter the existing view and is an expression of the size or scale of change in the view, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of GLVIA3 Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 (Landscape Institute, 2024) notes that not all components of magnitude of effect are equally weighted. It is considered that the scale of change and degree of contrast are likely to be the most important factors with the nature of view, angle of the view and duration/reversibility considered as ‘modifiers’. The levels of visual magnitude of effect are described as being very large, large, medium, small, negligible and none.

1.3.11 The sensitivity of a receptor and the magnitude of effect on that receptor have been combined to determine the significance of effect that the Proposed Development is predicted to have on existing baseline visual conditions for that given receptor. For the purposes of this assessment, moderate and major effects have been deemed 'significant'. Where significant environmental effects are identified, measures to mitigate these effects are proposed (where feasible) and remaining residual effects are identified.

Assumptions and Limitations

1.3.12 No technical difficulties or practical problems were encountered in producing the landscape and visual ES chapter and appendices. Fieldwork was undertaken in weather with good to moderate visibility of at least 3 km.

1.3.13 Site visits to inform the landscape and visual impact assessment contained within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment** have been conducted in both Winter and Summer, therefore allowing a comparison of the landscape and visual baseline over two seasons. This allows an assessment based on broadleaf vegetation being not in leaf and represents the most open views. Potentially significant differences between

seasonal views have been outlined where relevant within the assessment and taken into consideration in assessing the impacts and reaching conclusions.

1.4 Basis of Assessment

1.4.1 This section sets out the assumptions that have been made in respect of design flexibility maintained within the Proposed Project and the consideration that has been given to alternative scenarios and the sensitivity of the assessment to changes in the construction commencement year.

1.4.2 Details of the available flexibility and assessment scenarios are presented in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** and **Application Document 6.2.1.5 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 5 EIA Approach and Methodology**.

Flexibility Assumptions

1.4.3 The environmental assessments have been undertaken based on the description of the Proposed Project provided in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**. To take account of the flexibility allowed in the Proposed Project, consideration has been given to the potential for effects to be of greater or different significance should any of the permanent or temporary infrastructure elements be moved within the Limits of Deviation (LoD) or Order Limits.

1.4.4 The assumptions made regarding the use of flexibility for the main assessment are set out in Table 1.7 below.

Table 1.7 Flexibility assumptions

Element of flexibility	How it has been considered within the assessment
Lateral LoD HVDC/HVAC cables	The maximum flexibility has been assessed under the assessment within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
Lateral LoD Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation	Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation could be constructed anywhere within their associated lateral LoD, which has been assessed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

Element of flexibility	How it has been considered within the assessment
Vertical LoD Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation	The maximum flexibility has been assessed under the assessments within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
Lateral and Vertical LoD overhead line (where Friston Substation is built as part of the Proposed Project).	The maximum flexibility has been assessed under the assessments within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 3.1.C Landscape Designation** and **Landscape Character Assessment and Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 3.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
Order Limits – temporary construction works	Temporary construction works proposed within the Order Limits have been assumed to be up to the closest proximity to viewpoints. It is assumed that vegetation clearance could occur anywhere within the Order Limits; however, this would be limited to the extents set out in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**, taking into account any commitments included in **Application Document 6.10 Arboricultural Impact Assessment** and **Application Document 7.5.3.2 CEMP Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)**.

Consideration of Scenarios

1.4.5 The following scenarios with regards to Friston Substation have been considered in the assessment as explained in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** and within the Assessment Assumptions section of this chapter:

- Friston Scenario 1: Friston Substation is installed under the development consent Scottish Power Renewable (SPR), pursuant to 'The East Anglia ONE North (EA1N) Offshore Wind Farm Order 2022' and 'The East Anglia TWO (EA2) Offshore Wind Farm Order 2022'; or
- Friston Scenario 2: Friston Substation is built as part of the Proposed Project.

1.4.6 Friston Scenario 1 and 2 have been considered for all landscape and visual receptors. A magnitude of effect and significance of effect under Friston Scenario 2 has only been

identified where the receptor has the potential to be affected. The two scenarios are not considered to affect the magnitude of effect and significance of effect unless stated within the text within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment.**

1.4.7 The following options with regards to the proposed bridge over the River Fromus have been considered in the assessment as described in **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** and within the Assessment Assumptions section of this chapter:

- Option 1 - a bridge height of approximately 4 metres (from the ground level at the abutment to the top of the parapet) with 42 metre long approach ramps; or
- Option 2 - a bridge height of approximately to 6 metres (from the ground level at the abutment to the top of the parapet) with 62 metre long approach ramps.

1.4.8 The two River Fromus bridge options have been considered within the assessment of effects on landscape character and visual amenity. They are not considered to affect the magnitude of effect and significance of effect unless stated within the text within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.4.9 There is also optionality regarding the Saxmundham Converter Station construction compound location. Any one of the three areas of land included within the Order Limits (S02, S03 and S04/05), as illustrated in **Application Document 2.14.1 Indicative General Arrangement Plans – Suffolk**, could be used for this purpose. The construction part of the assessment considers all three options for the construction compound location, but recognises that only one would be used.

Sensitivity Test

1.4.10 Under the terms of the DCO, construction could commence in any year up to five years from the granting of the DCO which is assumed to be 2026. Consideration has been given to whether the effects reported would be any different if the works were to commence in any year up to year five. Where there is a difference, this is reported in Section 1.11.

1.5 Study Area

1.5.1 The extent of the study area has been informed by a review of the design of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, desk-based research, field-based appraisal, ZTV mapping, and professional judgement. This has been developed to ensure a proportionate approach is followed which focusses on likely significant effects. It is important to note the study area defines the area within which it is judged that significant landscape and/or visual effects could occur, rather than the area from which the Suffolk Onshore Scheme would be visible.

1.5.2 The study area for the landscape and visual assessment of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme comprises an area of 3 km from the Order Limits surrounding the proposed Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation, and 1 km from the Order Limits around the proposed landfall (denoted as the high-water mark), and HVDC and HVAC cable corridors. Whilst the study area includes the construction access routes and the

limited re-stringing works under Friston Scenario 2, the 1 km study area is not set from these scheme components as neither of these aspects are considered to have any potential to lead to a significant landscape and visual effect. This is mainly due to the context of the existing towers and OHL and limited spatial extent of the works. The study area is shown on the accompanying figures to the landscape and visual chapter, including **Application Document 6.4.2.1.1 Topography**.

1.5.3 The study area was agreed with statutory consultees at the scoping stage and was reconfirmed during the thematic landscape meeting held on the 24 May 2023 (with LPAs and NE in attendance).

1.5.4 The computer generated ZTVs (**Application Document 6.4.2.1.8 Representative Viewpoint Locations and Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sea Link and Friston Scenario 1** and **Application Document 6.4.2.1.9 Representative Viewpoint Locations and Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sea Link and Friston Scenario 2**) were produced including the Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation (for Friston Scenario 2 only). This is based on a maximum heights above existing ground level of 26 m for the converter station and 18 m for the substation.

1.5.5 The ZTVs have been used to inform the assessment of effects and used the following data:

- digital terrain model (DTM) generated using Ordnance Survey (OS) Terrain 5 DTM;
- existing buildings have been incorporated into the DTM from OS Open Map Local with an assumed height of 7.5 m; and
- woodland from the National Forest Inventory (NFI) has also been incorporated into the DTM with an assumed height of 10 m.

1.5.6 The ZTVs indicate areas from where it may be possible to view part of or the entire converter station site and/or the Friston Substation (under Friston Scenario 2 only). However, the use of the ZTVs needs to be qualified by the following considerations:

- the ZTVs are limited by the detail of the digital terrain model data used and do not take account of local topographic variations;
- some areas of theoretical visibility may comprise woodland (not accounted for in the NFI) or agricultural land, where there is effectively no public access and the likelihood of views being experienced is consequently low; and
- the ZTVs do not take account of the likely orientation of a viewer, such as the direction of travel and there is no allowance for reduction of visibility with distance, weather or light.

1.5.7 These limitations mean that the ZTVs tend to overestimate the extent of the visibility of the converter station (and substation under Friston Scenario 2). Consequently, the ZTVs should be considered as a tool to identify areas of potential visibility for further targeted survey and assessment, and not a measure of the likely visual effect.

1.6 Baseline Conditions

Location and Context

1.6.1 The landscape varies considerably within the study area, which is illustrated on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.1 Topography**. It includes parts of the low-lying and

gently undulating coastline comprising marshland and heathland, within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Further inland, medium to large-scale agricultural fields dominate across relatively higher, undulating land.

1.6.2 The landscape of the study area is settled, with a variety of towns (including Leiston and Aldeburgh) smaller villages (including Friston and Knodishall) small clusters of dwellings, and scattered properties. Settlement is more frequent around the major road corridors that cross the landscape, including the A1094 and B1121, and along the North Sea coast.

1.6.3 The land use within the eastern and southern parts of the study area is largely associated with ecological conservation and comprises large areas of fenland and marshland alongside the coastline and River Alde. The land use within the remainder of the study area is predominantly agriculture and in particular arable crops.

1.6.4 The vegetation within the eastern part of the study area typically comprises heathland and scrubland, with large areas of mature woodland vegetation, including to the south-west of Thorpeness surrounding the Hundred River. The vegetation within the southern part of the study area largely consists of low-level scrub associated with the floodplain of the River Alde. The pattern of vegetation in the remainder of the study area is variable with pockets of woodland. The field boundaries comprise of a mixture of non-vegetated, hedgerow, hedgerow trees and individual trees.

Landscape Designations

1.6.5 Landscapes can be designated for their special landscape or scenic qualities. These areas may be identified in development plans at the national, regional or local scale.

1.6.6 The following landscape designations have been identified within the study area and their locations are shown in **Application Document 6.4.2.1.2 Landscape Context and Designations**. Further detail on these landscape designations is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.2.B Appendix 2.2.B Landscape Baseline**.

- Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB;
- Suffolk Heritage Coast;
- Parks and Gardens of Historic Landscape Interest;
- Ancient Woodland; and
- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

Landscape and Seascape Character

National Landscape Character

1.6.7 Natural England has identified and mapped landscape character at the national level by identifying National Character Areas (NCAs) (Natural England, 2014) in 2013-15. Those NCAs that the study area falls within are shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.3 Landscape Character - National and Regional**. The NCAs are not specifically assessed in relation to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme due to their scale but are described to provide context. Further detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

Regional Landscape Character

1.6.8 At the regional scale, Landscape East published the East of England Landscape Character Typology (Landscape East, 2010) in 2010. The study defines LCTs which provide a regional level landscape characterisation. Those LCTs that the study area falls within are shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.3 Landscape Character - National and Regional**. These LCTs are not specifically assessed in relation to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme due to their scale but are described to provide context. Further detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

County Landscape Character

1.6.9 At the county scale, Suffolk County Council published the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (Suffolk County Council, 2011) in 2011. The study defines LCTs which provide a county level landscape characterisation. Those LCTs that the study area falls within are shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.4 Landscape Character – County** and are not specifically assessed in relation to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme due to their scale but are described to provide context. Further information is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

District Landscape Character

1.6.10 At the district scale, East Suffolk Council has published the Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment (SCLCA) (East Suffolk Council, 2018). The study defines LCTs and LCAs which provide a district level landscape characterisation that has been used as the basis of the landscape character assessment. Those LCAs that the study area falls within are shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.5 Landscape Character – District**. Value judgements are given as follows for those LCAs scoped into the assessment of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme (see Landscape and Seascape baseline for assessment) and further detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

- B4: Fromus Valley: **High**;
- D4: Thorpeness to Aldeburgh: **Very high**;
- K3: Aldringham and Friston Sandlands: **Very high**;
- L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands: **Medium**; and
- O1: Benhall Estate Sandlands: **High**.

Historic Landscape Character

1.6.11 The historic landscape character context within the landscape and visual study area includes various designated assets. These include listed buildings, both within the surrounding settlements and more rural settings outside of the main settlement areas. A review of non-designated assets has revealed evidence of human activity in the area from the early prehistoric period through to the modern period, including both finds and cropmarks. Further information regarding these can be found in **Application Document 6.2.2.3 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage**.

1.6.12 Regarding the agricultural heritage of the area, more intensive arable agriculture which began in the mid-20th century has resulted in areas of woodland and field boundaries being removed to create large fields (for example the Converter Station Site near

Saxmundham). For further details reference should be made to **Application Document 6.2.2.3 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage**.

National Seascape Character

1.6.13 At the national scale, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) published the Seascape Character Assessment of the East Inshore and East Offshore Marine Plan Areas (Marine Management Organisation, 2012) in 2012. The study defines Seascape Character Areas (SCAs). The SCA that the study area falls within is shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.6 Seascape Character – National, Regional and District**. Further detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

Regional Seascape Character

1.6.14 At a regional scale, Suffolk County Council published the Seascape Character Assessment of Suffolk, South Norfolk and North Essex (SCASNE) (Suffolk County Council, 2018) in 2018. The study defines Seascape Character Types (SCTs). The SCTs that the study area falls within are shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.6 Seascape Character – National, Regional and District**. Value judgements are given as follows for the SCT scoped into the assessment of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme (see Landscape and Seascape baseline for assessment) and further detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline.**

- SCT 03: Nearshore Waters: **High**.

District Seascape Character

1.6.15 At the district scale, the Touching the Tide Partnership published the Touching the Tide Landscape Character Assessment (TTLCA) (Touching the Tide Partnership, 2012) in 2012. The study defines Coastal Character Areas (CCAs) which cover the coastline and extend inland. These CCAs largely duplicate the relevant LCAs set out within the Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment. Therefore, these CCAs are not specifically assessed in relation to the Suffolk Onshore Scheme but they have been used to inform the landscape baseline and the assessment of effects on landscape character. Further detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.B Appendix 2.1.B Landscape Baseline**.

Landscape and Seascape baseline for assessment

1.6.16 The published district level landscape character assessment and district level seascape character assessment information form the basis of the landscape baseline for assessment of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. Table 1.8 sets out which LCAs and CCAs are screened in and out of the assessment of effects on landscape character at construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning which has been agreed during landscape and visual thematic meetings with the relevant statutory stakeholders.

Table 1.8 LCAs screened in and out of the assessment of effects on landscape character

Project Phase	Screened in	Screened out
Construction and decommissioning	SCLCA: LCAs B4, D4, K3, L1 and O1 SCASNE: SCT 03	SCLCA: LCAs B5 and J4 SCASNE: SCT 01
Operation and maintenance	SCLCA: LCAs B4, D4, K3, L1 and O1 SCASNE: SCT 03	SCLCA: LCAs B5 and J4 SCASNE: SCT 01

Visual Amenity Baseline

Visual amenity baseline

1.6.17 Visual amenity is defined in the GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment , 2013), p.158 as:

"the overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area".

Summary of visibility

1.6.18 The screened ZTVs (shown on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.8 Representative Viewpoint Locations and Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sea Link and Friston Scenario 1** and **Application Document 6.4.2.1.9 Representative Viewpoint Locations and Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility – Sea Link and Friston Scenario 2'**) indicate theoretical visibility within the landscape and visual study area. This shows the majority of theoretical visibility lies within the central part of the study area characterised with dispersed woodland blocks and larger scale field enclosures.

1.6.19 Visibility is considerably limited towards the coast and Alde Estuary to the south due to intervening built form and blocks of woodland. Pockets of visibility extend into the northern and western parts of the study area, again screened where built form and blocks of woodland are intervening. Where theoretical visibility extends beyond the study area to the northeast and southwest, a combination of distance and intervening localised landform and vegetation would limit actual visibility of the converter station. The theoretical visibility has been tested during fieldwork (refer to Section 1.3.13) to inform the baseline and the assessment of potential effects.

Representative Viewpoint Locations

1.6.20 Table 1.9 outlines the 23 representative viewpoints chosen to represent the range of receptors within the landscape and visual study area, including the value for the visual receptors at each of the viewpoints. The methodology for determining the visual value is detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology**. These are illustrated on **Application Document 6.4.2.1.7 Representative Viewpoint Locations**. Further

detail is given in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.6.21 The representative viewpoints have been shared with Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council, Natural England and the SECH Partnership as part of various landscape thematic meetings held throughout 2024. There have also been additional focused meetings between National Grid, Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council to discuss additional viewpoints that were requested. East Suffolk Council have agreed to the viewpoints on 23 January 2025. Suffolk County Council have agreed to the viewpoints with the exception of five additional viewpoints which were requested, but which have not been adopted to maintain proportionality and the fact there is considered to be adequate representation by existing viewpoint locations. The SECH Partnership have deferred agreement of viewpoints to Suffolk County Council. The representative viewpoints have been discussed with stakeholders and agreed where possible through landscape thematic meetings (see **Application Document 7.4.8: Draft Statement of Common Ground Between National Grid Electricity Transmission and East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council**).

1.6.22 Cultural heritage viewpoints have been identified and are assessed within the Cultural Heritage chapter for effects of the Proposed Development on historic aspects of the landscape (**Application Document 6.2.2.3 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 3 Cultural Heritage**). References to cultural heritage assets have been made where relevant.

Table 1.9 Representative viewpoint locations

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
Representative Viewpoint 1: Public footpath (Saxmundham 460, route 23), east of Saxmundham	263028	639225	Representative of users of the local road network, including the B1119, on the approach to the settlement of Saxmundham, the local PRoW network to the east of Saxmundham and residents within properties on the eastern edge of Saxmundham. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 2: B1121, south of Saxmundham	262392	638551	Representative of users of the local road network and local PRoW network between the settlements of Saxmundham and Benhall Green. It is also representative of road users along the B1121. Located within SCLCA LCA B4: Fromus Valley.	**High**

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
Representative Viewpoint 3: Public bridleway (Sternfield 491, route 29), east of Saxmundham	262730	640724	Representative of residents within a nearby residential property off the B1119 and recreational users of the local PRoW network to the east of the settlement of Saxmundham. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 4: Public bridleway (Sternfield 491, route 10) south of the B1119, southeast of Saxmundham	262430	640520	Representative of recreational users of the local PRoW network between Saxmundham and Friston, road users along the B1119 and residents within nearby residential properties. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**High**
Representative Viewpoint 5: Public bridleway (Sternfield 491, route 10), east of Sternfield	261620	640035	Representative of recreational users of the local PRoW network to the north of the settlement of Friston and residents within a property in close proximity. Located within SCLCA LCA B4: Fromus Valley, near to the boundary of SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 6: Public footpath (Friston 260, route 17), east of Sternfield	261651	640885	Representative of recreational users of the local PRoW network within the landscape to the north of Friston, as well as receptors within nearby residential and commercial buildings. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
Representative Viewpoint 7: Grove Road, north of Friston	261596	641768	Representative of users of the Suffolk Coastal Cycle Way and the local road network, including Grove Road, on the approach to the settlement of Friston and nearby residential receptors off Grove Road but noting that these properties are generally well screened by vegetation. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 8: Public bridleway (Friston 260, route 2), east of Friston	260508	641640	Representative of recreational users along the Sandlings Walk recreational route, the local PRoW network, Suffolk Coastal Cycle Route, Wolf Way cycle route and residential receptors on the northeastern edge of the settlement of Friston. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 9: Knodishall Common and public footpath (Knodishall 354, route 18), west of Knodishall	260991	642939	Representative of recreational users within Knodishall Common within CRoW Access Land and the local PRoW network. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 10: Aldeburgh Road (A1094), and public bridleway (Aldeburgh 103, route 12a)	258963	643012	Representative of users of the local road network between the settlements of Aldeburgh along the coastline and Friston, the local PRoW network to the south of Knodishall and residents in nearby properties limited to upper storey views. Representative of receptors on	**High**

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
			the boundary of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	
Representative Viewpoint 11: Public footpath (Aldeburgh 103, route 16), north of Aldeburgh Golf Club	258633	644522	Representative of recreational users of the local PRoW network between the settlements of Aldeburgh and Knodishall Common, users of the golf course on the northern edge of Aldeburgh and receptors within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Users of the golf course and the PRoW network have long distance views over the Alde Estuary to the south of the viewpoint. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**Very high**
Representative Viewpoint 12: Leiston Road, north of Aldeburgh	258336	645585	Representative of local road users and residents within properties in close proximity. It is also representative of users of the Suffolk Coast Path and Sailors' Path recreational routes, albeit views are screened along stretches of the route. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Friston Sandlands.	**Very high**
Representative Viewpoint 13: Approved King Charles III England Coast Path route, south of Thorpeness	258602	646899	Representative of recreational users of the approved King Charles III England Coast Path (National Trail) between the settlements of Thorpeness and Aldeburgh, residential receptors on the edge of Thorpeness and of receptors within the Suffolk Coast and	**Very high**

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
			Heaths AONB and the Suffolk Heritage Coast. Located within SCLCA LCA D4: Thorpeness to Aldeburgh.	
Representative Viewpoint 14: Public footpath (Saxmundham 460, route 37), north of Saxmundham	264235	638155	Representative of recreational users of the local PRoW network between the settlements of Carlton and Saxmundham. It is also representative of residential receptors on the edge of Carlton and of users of Carlton Park, Kelsale, locally designated as a Park and Garden of Historic or Landscape Interest. Located within SCLCA LCA B4: Fromus Valley.	**High**
Representative Viewpoint 15: Clayhills Road and public footpath (Kelsale-cum-Carlton, route 34), east of Carlton	264155	639646	Representative of users of the local road network and recreational users of the local PRoW network to the east of the settlement of Carlton. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands, near to the boundary of SCLCA LCA B4: Fromus Valley.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 16: Abbey Lane to north of Knodishall Green	264046	641493	Representative of users of the local road network between Saxmundham and Leiston and nearby residential receptors. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 17: Saxmundham Road (B1119) and public footpath (Leiston-cum-Sizewell, route	262745	643121	Representative of users of the local road network, PRoW network on the edge of the settlement of Leiston.	**Medium**

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
3), on the edge of Leiston			Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	
Representative Viewpoint 18: Suffolk Coast Path recreational route, east of Snape	258253	640797	Representative of recreational users of the Suffolk Coast Path and Sailors' Path recreational routes to the east of the settlement of Snape, within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and on the edge of the Suffolk Heritage Coast. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**High**
Representative Viewpoint 19: Red Lane/Kiln Lane to southeast of Sternfield	260908	639507	Representative of recreational users of the local PRoW network within the landscape to the south of Sternfield, the Sailors' Path recreational route and users of the Wolf Way cycle route. The viewpoint is also representative of those using the local road network, including along Red Lane, between Sternfield, Benhall Green and Friston. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 20: Public footpath (Saxmundham 460, route 18)	262658	638401	Representative of users of the local PRoW network between the settlements of Saxmundham and Benhall Green and users of the Sailor's Path recreational route. It is also representative of users of the East Suffolk railway line between Saxmundham and Wickham Market, albeit noting the intervening mature vegetation network. Located within SCLCA LCA O1: Benhall Estate Sandlands.	**High**

Viewpoint description	Approximate Northing	Approximate Easting	Reason for Selection	Value
Representative Viewpoint 21: Public footpath (Saxmundham 460, route 8) near to Wardspring Farm	263060	640267	Representative of a nearby residential property off the B1119, albeit partially screened by intervening mature vegetation, and recreational users of the local PRoW network within the landscape to the east of the settlement of Saxmundham. Located within SCLCA LCA L1: Heveningham and Knodishall Estate Claylands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 22: B1121 Saxmundham Road, north of Friston	260860	640475	Representative of users of the local road network, including Saxmundham Road, on the approach to the settlement of Friston, and residential properties along Saxmundham Road (B1121), albeit views are partially screened by intervening vegetation. The viewpoint is also representative of users of the Wolf Way cycle route. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**Medium**
Representative Viewpoint 23: Church Road, Friston	260538	641315	Representative of residential receptors on the edge of the settlement of Friston, users of the local PRoW network on the northern edge of Friston, the Wolf Way cycle route, the Suffolk Coastal Cycle Route and users of the local road network through Friston. Located within SCLCA LCA K3: Aldringham and Freston Sandlands.	**Medium**

1.6.23 Winter and summer baseline photography has been captured from all of the above representative viewpoints and is contained in **Application Document 6.4.2.1.10 Representative Viewpoint Visualisations**. Winter viewpoint photography was

captured on the 6 and 7 April 2024 and summer viewpoint photography was captured on the 13 and 14 September 2023 and 30 July 2024.

Summary of visual receptor groups

1.6.24 The below sets out a summary of the different types of visual receptors within the landscape and visual study area.

Residential receptors – settlement

- the settlements of Kelsale, Benhall, Sternfield, Carlton, and Saxmundham in the western part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 1 and 14**);
- the settlement edges of Snape, Snape Watering, and Church Common in the southern part of the study area;
- the settlement of Friston in the central part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 23**);
- the settlement of Knodishall in the eastern part of the study area; and
- the western settlement edge of Leiston in the eastern part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 17**).

Residential receptors – scattered properties

- scattered properties interspersed within the landscape across the study area, typically adjacent or near to the local road network (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 3 – 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 21 and 22)**.

Recreational

- users of the PRoW network:
  - the King Charles III England Coast Path (National Trail), which runs north to south on the eastern part of the study area along the coast (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 13**);
  - the Sailors' Path recreational route, which runs westwards from the coast towards Saxmundham and overlaps with part of the Suffolk Coast Path recreational route (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 12 and 18 - 20**);
  - the Suffolk Coast Path, which runs north to south on the eastern part of the study area along the coast and around the western boundary of Aldeburgh (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 12 and 18**);
  - the Sandlings Walk, which runs east to west through the study area, from Friston to Thorpeness (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 8**); and
  - users of the local PRoW network within the study area, including public footpaths and public bridleways (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 1 - 6, 8 - 11, 15, 17, 19 - 21 and 23**).
- users of cycling routes:
  - the Wolf Way cycling route (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 8, 19, 22 and 23**); and

- the Suffolk Coastal Cycle Way (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 7, 8, 17 and 23**).

- recreational aspects of the study area, including those using or visiting:
  - the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and Suffolk Heritage Coast, which is located within the southeastern part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 10 - 13 and 18**);
  - Aldeburgh Golf Course, which is located within the southeastern part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 11**);
  - Knodishall Common, which is located within the eastern part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 9**); and
  - Aldeburgh Holiday Park, which is located within the eastern of the study area, on the northern settlement edge of Aldeburgh.

Road and railway users

- major 'A' roads, including the users of:
  - A1094, which runs northwest to southeast in the southern part of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 10**).
  - 'B' roads and the local (unclassified) road network, including:
  - B1119, which runs north to south in the northern part of the study area between Saxmundham and Leiston (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 1, 4, 17 and 21**);
  - B1121, which runs northwest to southeast in the western and central parts of the study area (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 2 and 22**); and
  - the local road network (refer to **Representative Viewpoints 7, 12, 15, 16, 19 and 23**).
- passengers on the railway route between Saxmundham and Ipswich and Saxmundham and Leiston (refer to **Representative Viewpoint 20**).

Future Baseline

1.6.25 Predicting the future baseline involves a degree of speculation and uncertainty as acknowledged at paragraph 5.33 in GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment , 2013). It requires projecting forward any trends in change and considering how they may affect the landscape over time. The nature of the future baseline is influenced by a combination of natural and human processes, including climate change. Scoping and consented development proposals are able to influence the future baseline and are discussed in the cumulative assessment in **Application Document 6.2.2.13 Part 2 Suffolk Chapter 13 Suffolk Onshore Scheme Inter-Project Cumulative Effects**.

1.6.26 As noted in the Consideration of Scenarios section of this chapter, under Friston Scenario 1, Friston Substation would be built by SPR, so would form part of the future baseline in the operational phase for Sea Link. This is not relevant to Friston Scenario 2. Further information should be found within the Assessment Assumptions section of this chapter.

1.6.27 The landscape of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme study area is predominantly characterised by arable farmland. The landscape has varied sized pockets of woodland, which are typically larger in the southern and western part of the study area. Hedgerows and other types of vegetation are sometimes sparse, which allows long distance framed views across the typically flat or gently rolling wider landscape, though with screening available from settlement areas and woodland blocks. The layered vegetation network will continue to mature but the inherent character and the contribution that it makes to views and visual amenity is unlikely to substantially change.

1.6.28 Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (East Suffolk Council, 2020) notes that the *"Suffolk Coast is at the forefront of electricity energy generation across the country both in respect of onshore and offshore energy. It is essential that major energy infrastructure projects are delivered in a planned way which takes into account the potential impact of constructing, operating and decommissioning large and nationally significant infrastructure in East Suffolk".* It is therefore likely that energy related infrastructure has the potential to expand in this area.

1.6.29 The coastline around Thorpeness and Aldeburgh will continue to be managed to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area due to its nationally designated status as within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Actions set out within the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Partnership, 2023) are likely to have an impact on the AONB landscape.

1.6.30 It is understood that some of the plantation woodland to the west of the River Fromus would be felled prior to construction of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme and the remaindering of the woodland would be felled by Operation Year 1. This has been considered as part of the future baseline and has informed the landscape and visual assessment as well as the development of mitigation options around the River Fromus.

1.7 Proposed Project Design and Embedded Mitigation

1.7.1 The Proposed Project has been designed, as far as possible, following the mitigation hierarchy in order to, in the first instance, avoid or reduce landscape and visual impacts and effects through the process of design development, and by embedding measures into the design of the Proposed Project. The Design Approach Document should be referred to (**Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**).

1.7.2 As set out in **Application Document 6.2.1.5 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 5 EIA Approach and Methodology**, mitigation measures typically fall into one of three categories: embedded measures; control and management measures; and additional mitigation measures. Embedded and control and management measures are set out below. Additional mitigation measures are discussed in Section 1.9.

Embedded Measures

1.7.3 Embedded measures have been integral in reducing, and where possible avoiding, the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Project These measures include those set out in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk**. Measures that have been incorporated are:

- sensitive routeing and siting of infrastructure and temporary works;

- relevant embedded measures set out within **Application Document 7.5.3.2 CEMP Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC)**;
- the design of the Saxmundham Converter Station, in terms of the building form and the external materials, reflected in the Design Principles presented in **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk Table 3.1**. The Design Principles provide guidance regarding the design intent and design principles that would be adopted and embedded into the detailed proposals of this structure. These would include:
  - locating the Saxmundham Converter Station as far as practicable within the southern extent of the site, away from the B1119 and the gateway approach into Saxmundham and to maximise the opportunity for landscape integration planting and screening to improve landscape fit and minimise visual impact;
  - consideration of the orientation and massing of the Saxmundham Converter Station in order that existing landscape features can be retained and enhanced; and
  - designing and arranging the converter station building to be sympathetic to their surroundings and be integrated into the landscaped setting of the site. Buildings will be clad in appropriate material and colours designed to appear recessive within the landscape, to help integrate the building into the landscape and views.
- the design of the River Fromus bridge, in relation to its sensitive landscape and historic setting reflected in **Application Document 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk** and the following measure in **Application Document 7.5.3.2 CEMP Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC):**
  - LV14: The River Fromus bridge design shall be as visually recessive as possible whilst conforming with the Critical Design Constraints, as set out in **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles - Suffolk**, noting two potential heights are currently illustrated in Drawing Reference DCO/S/DE/SS/1210 of the **Application Document 2.13.1 of the Design Drawings - Suffolk**. A technical statement, including plan, sections, elevations, and 3D renders of the bridge design in key view VP02 and CH02, should be prepared by National Grid, and submitted to the local planning authority to demonstrate compliance with the mitigation commitment, addressing the following key areas of design showing how they reduce impacts:
  - Relationship with the landscape mitigation proposals with aim to blend into the landscape, including planting of the banks to the ramps;
  - Selection of material, colour and texture palette, (in line with the process established in Design Principle ID.3 in Table 3.1 of **Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles - Suffolk**), including material and colour samples;
  - Articulation of the spanning structure for slenderness and elegance;
  - Design of the abutment walls to soften their appearance; and
  - Parapet railings that are as open as possible to reduce the apparent height of the bridge.
- the design of the Friston Substation (under Friston Scenario 2), in terms of the building form and materials, reflected in the Design Principles presented in

Application Document 7.12.1 Design Principles – Suffolk Table 4.1. The outline landscape mitigation plan which accompanies Friston Scenario 2 is contained in **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk and Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**;

- landscape design opportunities within the AONB: the temporary works within the AONB associated with the landfall and HVDC would be fully reinstated in accordance with Control and Management Measures and further outlined in **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk**;
- landscape design principles: an outline landscape strategy has been prepared for Saxmundham Converter Station which provides a collaborative approach to delivering landscape and ecological mitigation (**Application Document 7.5.7.1 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan – Suffolk and Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation)**. This outline strategy has been developed in recognition of the local landscape policies and landscape character, considering the opportunities for local landscape and biodiversity enhancement. It has been developed as part of the iterative process of design and assessment. The principles of the outline landscape strategy seek to:
  - integrate the Suffolk Onshore Scheme into the existing landscape pattern as far as practicable by utilising and following existing features, including vegetation;
  - replace habitat lost as a result of construction of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme and enhance habitats through the creation of woodland, hedgerow, grassland and riparian habitats;
  - protect existing vegetation wherever possible, including the veteran and ancient trees at the River Fromus bridge crossing;
  - strengthen the existing landscape framework of the site, extending and enhancing the woodland planting along the western and southern boundaries with native woodland planting to provide structural screening to the Saxmundham Converter Station;
  - introduce native hedgerow and tree planting along sections of the B1119 to create vegetative layers within the landscape and partially screen views of the Saxmundham Converter Station, whilst maintaining some views of the planted edge of Saxmundham (identified in the Saxmundham Neighbourhood Plan as an important aspect of the setting and in views when approaching along the B1119 from the east);
  - consider opportunities for providing permissive access across the Saxmundham Converter Station site and establishing an attractive amenity value for users of the permanent PRoW diversions;
  - to provide an integrated drainage solution with attenuation ponds planted with marginal wetland species set within a wider context of native scrub planting to improve the biodiversity value across the site;
  - to strengthen areas of existing planting to provide greater biodiversity and screening function around the River Fromus Bridge;

- to establish native woodland planting within the areas previously planted with willow plantation to integrate and partially screen views of the River Fromus Bridge within the valley landscape;
- to integrate the permanent access route within the historic parkland landscape with hedgerow and occasional tree planting;
- to consider opportunities for advanced planting to provide early establishment of woodland planting; and
- monitoring and maintenance of new planting and seeding to ensure successful establishment.

Control and Management Measures

1.7.4 Measures relevant to the control and management of impacts during construction have been included within **Application Document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice** and **Application Document 7.5.3.2 CEMP Appendix B Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC).** The following measures have been taken into account in assessing the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Project:

- GG02: A CEMP, Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and Construction Traffic Management and Travel Plan (CTMTP) will be produced and submitted to the relevant authority for approval prior to construction of the relevant stage of the Proposed Project to which it relates. The plan produced will be substantially in accordance with the outline versions submitted as part of the application for development consent. In accordance with the Requirement 6 of Schedule 3 of the draft DCO, the contractor will need to comply with the approved plans (including any amendments to the plans subsequently approved);
- GG04: A suitably experienced Environmental Manager will be appointed for the duration of the construction phase. In addition, a qualified and experienced Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) will be available during the construction phase to advise, supervise and report on the delivery of the mitigation methods and controls outlined in the CEMP. The ECoW will monitor that the works proceed in accordance with relevant environmental DCO requirements and adhere to the required good practice and mitigation measures. The ECoW will be supported as necessary by appropriate specialists, including ecologists, soil scientists and arboriculturists;
- GG06: A full photographic/aerial footage and descriptive record of condition (pre-condition survey) will be carried out of the working areas that may be affected by the construction activities prior to these works commencing. This record will be available for comparison following completion of reinstatement works to ensure that the standard of reinstatement at least meets that recorded in the pre-condition survey, or as agreed in the LEMP or if the DCO provides otherwise, then in accordance with the DCO;
- GG07: Land used temporarily will be reinstated (bearing in mind restrictions on planting and land use) to its pre-construction condition and use, unless agreed otherwise, save where the DCO provides otherwise, in which case such reinstatement will be in accordance with the DCO. This is subject to the provisions of Article 27 of the draft DCO. Hedgerows, fences and walls (including associated

earthworks and boundary features) will be reinstated to a similar style and quality to those that were removed where possible, with landowner consultation;

- GG08: Where sensitive features will be retained within or immediately adjacent to the Order Limits, an appropriate protective area will be established using appropriate fencing and signage and will be inspected, repaired and replaced as necessary. The protective areas will be shown on the Retention and Reinstatement Plans contained within the LEMP;
- GG19: Earthworks and stockpiled soil will be protected by covering, seeding or using water suppression where appropriate;
- GG21: Construction lighting will be of the lowest levels necessary to safely perform each task. It will be designed, positioned and directed to reduce the intrusion into adjacent properties, protected species and habitats e.g. watercourses;
- GG26: Where working areas are fenced, the type of fencing installed will depend on the area to be fenced and will take into consideration the level of security required in relation to the surrounding land and public access, rural or urban environment and arable or stock farming. Consultation on the type of fencing will be undertaken with the relevant landowner and tenant where required. For some locations the fence used may also serve to provide acoustic and visual screening of the work sites and reduce the potential for disturbance of users in the surrounding areas. Fencing will be regularly inspected and maintained and removed as part of the demobilisation unless otherwise specified;
- LV01: The contractor(s) will retain vegetation where practicable. Where vegetation is lost and trees cannot be replaced in situ due to the restrictions associated with land rights required for operational safety, native shrub planting approved by National Grid will be used as a replacement, in accordance with the outline vegetation reinstatement plans included within the Outline Landscape Environment Management Plan;
- LV02: The contractor(s) will apply the relevant protective principles set out in British Standard (BS) 5837:2012: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. This will be applied to trees within the Order Limits which will be preserved through the construction phase, and to trees outside of the Order Limits where such measures do not hinder or prevent the use of the relevant working width for construction. All works to high grade trees, including trees under Tree Preservation Orders and veteran trees, will be undertaken or supervised by a suitably qualified arboriculturist;
- LV05: Subsoil and topsoil will be separated and stored to ensure no degradation in quality and reinstatement undertaken as soon as possible after completion of construction of each section/area of works;
- LV06: Temporary and separate placement of topsoil and subsoil will be stored adjacent to the trench where possible with the additional height of the subsoil storage used on whichever side requires greater screening benefit, where practicable. In some locations stockpiles will be remote from the trench, such as at pinch points where the corridor has been narrowed, and the additional height of the storage will be sensitively placed as far as possible;
- B04: To control the spread of invasive weeds in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, any plant or machinery that has been used in areas infested with invasive species (both terrestrial and aquatic), such as Japanese knotweed and

Himalayan balsam, will be thoroughly cleaned. Water used to clean vehicles will be controlled to prevent the spread of the plant (through seeds, rhizomes, fragments, etc.). The area will be cordoned off to prevent any inadvertent spreading;

- B07: Where the works require the crossing or removal of hedgerows, the gap will be reduced to a width required for safe working. Where hedge removals are necessary, 'dead hedging' should be used, where practicable, in the interim periods to retain connectivity during construction. Dead hedging can comprise vegetation arisings or artificial provision, such as willow screening panels or Heras fencing covered in camouflage netting. New hedgerow planting will contain native, woody species of local provenance;
- B11: Minimising the width of the cable corridor at ditch and hedgerow crossings to 20 m where possible (between the Saxmundham Converter Station and Friston Substation the HVAC and HVDC cables will both be in trench resulting in a minimum gap of 39m);
- B12: Mature vegetation removed from hedgerows and ditches will be retained as close to the area of removal as possible, retaining intact root balls, where feasible and desirable, such that it can be re-used;
- W03: Riverbank and in-channel vegetation will be retained where not directly affected by installation works. Where ditches retaining seasonal flows are crossed, culverts in waterbodies will either preserve the natural bed or be box culverts with inverts sunk a minimum of 300 mm below the hard bed of the watercourse and natural / existing bed material placed across the inside of the culvert, to maintain existing channel gradients and habitat for aquatic invertebrates, as well as to ensure continued passage for in channel species;
- TT03: All designated Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) will be identified, and any potential temporary and/or permanent diversions applied for/detailed in the DCO. All designated PRoWs crossing the working area will be managed with access only closed for short periods while construction activities occur. Any required diversions will be clearly marked at both ends with signage explaining the diversion, the duration of the diversion (for temporary diversions) and a contact number for any concerns. This is outlined in the Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plans;
- A01: All tree work will follow the principles of BS3998:2010 Treework – Recommendations (BS3998:2010) (British Standards Institute) and will be carried out by suitably qualified and insured contractors;
- A02: A pre-construction check will be undertaken of trees within the Order Limits and remedial works actioned where appropriate (e.g. where they pose an unacceptable risk to people or property). Trees will be monitored during the construction period, and during operation where they pose a risk to infrastructure constructed as part of the Proposed Project. All staff operating on the Site are to be made aware of the need to look out for obvious signs of tree defects and to report them to the Site Manager who will seek further advice as necessary;
- A03: A banksman will be used where the movement of plant or long reach machinery occurs within 5m of any part of a retained tree to ensure no damage is sustained;
- A04: All storage or mixing of materials will take place in agreed allocated areas at least 5 m from the edge of the RPA of retained trees and at least 5 m from the edge of an ancient woodland buffer zone;

- A05: Retention of all veteran and ancient trees within or immediately adjacent to the Order Limits; and
- A06: All tree works required which are not identified within the Arboricultural Method Statement and final Tree Protection Plans will require consent from the relevant local planning authority.

1.8 Assessment of Impacts and Likely Significant Effects

1.8.1 The assessment of the effects of the Proposed Project on landscape and visual receptors considers the assessment scenarios, assessment assumptions, embedded, control and management measures described in this section. The detailed assessment findings are reported in **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment.**

Assessment Assumptions

1.8.2 There are several assessment assumptions set out below which are considered in the landscape and visual assessments detailed within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.8.3 Advanced planting assumptions:

- advanced planting would occur as part of the enabling works package, however, at Year 1 operation the landscape and visual assessment assumes that the growth of advanced planting would not be of a sufficient height to have a material change in the view or contribution to landscape character. However, by Year 15 operation, it is assumed that advanced planting would be fully established.

1.8.4 Planting height assumptions:

- the assumed maximum height of the landscape mitigation planting at Year 15 operation are outlined within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.A Appendix 2.1.A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Photomontage Methodology.** These planting heights have been agreed with stakeholders and have been developed based on local site information provided by ESC. They have been used to inform the height of mitigation planting shown in the visualisations and considered within the landscape and visual assessment.

1.8.5 Assumptions regarding construction lighting requirements:

- associated lighting is expected to be localised and limited to temporary task lighting at the construction compound and potentially individual working areas during the construction period.

1.8.6 Assumptions regarding operational and maintenance lighting requirements for Saxmundham Converter Station (and Friston Substation under Friston Scenario 2):

- associated lighting is expected to be limited to external column and building mounted lighting. It would be controlled manually as required during periods of low light or darkness and has been designed to minimise light spill.

- there would also be security lighting on sensors within the access gate area / entrance gates which would automatically turn on lighting at the gate when approached in sufficient darkness.
- should maintenance activities be required to be undertaken in poor light conditions, additional temporary task lighting would be brought to site.

1.8.7 Assumptions on seasonal differences at operation for the visual assessment:

- the operational part of the assessment considers Year 1 winter (where the mitigation planting would be young, not established and the existing deciduous vegetation would not be in leaf) and Year 15 summer when mitigation planting would have established and would be in leaf; and
- unless stated in the assessment text, it is assumed that there would be no difference in the magnitude of effect between winter and summer. For Year 15 winter, it is assumed that there would be the same height of mitigation planting as for summer and it would not be in leaf, so visualisations have not been prepared.

1.8.8 Assumptions for users of public bridleways:

- it is acknowledged that a number of the representative viewpoints are representative of users of the public bridleway and therefore would have slightly elevated views compared with a pedestrian. This is limited to representative **viewpoints 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10**. It should be assumed that there would be no change to the magnitude of effect or significance of effect reported for the respective representative viewpoint unless stated in the assessment text within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.8.9 Assumptions for options relating to the River Fromus Bridge:

- Assumptions for River Fromus Bridge Option 1:
  - a bridge height of approximately 6 m (from the ground level at the abutment to the top of the parapet) with 62 m long approach ramps.
- Assumptions for River Fromus Bridge Option 2:
  - a bridge height of approximately 4 m (from the ground level at the abutment to the top of the parapet) with 42 m long approach ramps.
- the two River Fromus Bridge Scenarios, as set out within **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**, are not considered to affect the magnitude of effect and significance of effect unless stated within the text within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.
- Assumptions for scenarios relating to oAssumptions for Friston Scenario 1:
  - SPR fully construct Friston substation, pursuant to the consented SPR DCOs, before Sea Link commence their tie in construction scenarios;
  - Sea Link to undertake fit out works only (internal to the fenced compound);
  - no additional temporary compound required as contractor to use internal area of the substation plus an area of the cable compound near Snape Road;

- all construction traffic would access the substation via the haul road from Snape Road;
- Sea Link HVDC and HVAC corridors would remove some of the SPR mitigation planting including some advanced woodland planting. Full reinstatement of SPR planting is proposed other than woodland over the cable
- construction assessment 2026 – future baseline includes FricorriFriston Substation being constructed by SPR at the same time as Sea Link are undertaking other construction works (e.g. converter station, HVDC cables);
- operation Y1 assessment Q2 2031 – future baseline includes SPR Friston Substation and SPR DCO landscape proposals partially established; and
- operation Y15 assessment 2046 – future baseline includes SPR Friston Substation and SPR DCO landscape proposals fully established.

- Assumptions for Friston Scenario 2:
  - Sea Link construct a substation at Friston, pursuant to the Sea Link DCO, based on the LoD in the Order Limits including all OHL works and permanent access road;
  - this assumes that SPR will start the construction of their two other substations immediately south of the proposed Friston Substation, after the Proposed Project have completed all works at Friston Substation. The SPR works would be additional to the Friston Substation constructed under the Proposed Project DCO and would not form part of the Proposed Project consent. Any landscape mitigation planting required for the SPR's additional two substation would be implemented under SPR's consent;
  - landscape proposals implemented as part of the Proposed Project in the vicinity of Friston Substation are based on SPR DCO scheme and adjusted to reflect the Proposed Project's smaller substation footprint and HVDC and HVAC corridors;
  - area of land that SPR would build their substations on in the future would be temporarily returned to agricultural use until such time that SPR start construction of their substations; and
  - the baseline scenario for the construction and operational assessments would be the same as the current baseline.
- the two Friston Scenarios, as set out within **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**, are not considered to affect the magnitude of effect and significance of effect unless stated within the text within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.8.10 Saxmundham Converter Station construction compound assumption:

- the construction part of the assessment considers that there would be three options for the construction compound location but only one would be used. This is because the area is sized to allow one of three locations to be used; flexibility that is required to allow for co-location with other projects, which may seek to locate permanent infrastructure in one or two of the three compound locations (further detail can be found in **Application Document 7.10 Coordination Document**). It is assumed that there would be no change to the magnitude of effect or significance of effect

reported for the respective landscape character area or representative viewpoint unless stated in the assessment text within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** or **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

1.8.11 All aspects of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme have been reviewed in considering their potential to have landscape and visual effects. The key elements that are considered as part of the landscape and visual impact assessment are summarised below. See **Application Document 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project** for detailed information about the Suffolk Onshore Scheme.

- During construction:
  - construction compounds, including site offices, welfare facilities, parking, storage areas, hard standing and cranes. The maximum height of construction plant is assumed to be approximately 70 m at the Saxmundham Converter Station (and approximately 20 m at Friston Substation and approximately 65 m at the overhead line works in Friston Scenario 2 only;
  - security fencing located around working areas
  - hoarding around long-term construction works and Heras fencing with acoustic barriers around short-term works;
  - earthworks consisting of cut and fill at the Saxmundham Converter Station site, proposed access route and attenuation ponds (and Friston Substation site for Friston Scenario 2 only);
  - construction of bellmouths, haul roads, and the bridge crossing over the River Fromus;
  - construction of HVDC and HVAC cable corridors, which would consist of a haul road on one side of the proposed corridor with occasional movement of vehicles and use of excavators;
  - drilling rigs for the trenchless technique at the landfall;
  - temporary task lighting at construction compounds and individual working areas including at the joint bays and the trenchless drill site;
  - utility diversions, including taking down wood pole lines;
  - presence of near shore vessels off the coast between Thorpeness and Aldeburgh;
  - potential for screening or hoarding where there is residential development within 100 m – 200 m of construction activity (see **Application Document 7.5.3.1 CEMP Appendix A Outline Code of Construction Practice** for further information); and
  - temporary closure of PRoW.
- During operation:
  - The presence of the Converter Station (**Application Document 2.7.1 Access, Rights of Way and Public Rights of Navigation Plans – Suffolk**). and Friston Substation for Friston Scenario 2 only);

- external lighting on the Converter Station (and Friston Substation for Friston Scenario 2 only) comprising LED bulkheads on external walls of buildings and column mounted lanterns to illuminate gate entrances. Those on buildings would be switched on manually and those on gate entrances would be activated by movement;
- permanent access road and bridge crossing over the River Fromus;
- kiosks along the HVAC cable corridor; and
- landscape mitigation planting at Saxmundham Converter Station (and Friston Substation for Friston Scenario 2 only) (see **Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 1 Saxmundham Converter Station Outline Landscape Mitigation and Application Document 7.5.7.1 Figure 5 Friston Substation Outline Landscape Mitigation**).

- Maintenance:
  - maintenance access would be by way of a light vehicle, using existing access routes.

Construction (including Decommissioning) Phase

1.8.12 The likely landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Project are set out in Table 1.10.

Table 1.10 Summary of likely landscape and visual effects (Construction including Decommissioning)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Suffolk Heritage Coast	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA B4	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)
SCLCA LCA D4	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA K3	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA L1	Medium	Adverse impact on landscape character	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
SCLCA LCA O1	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCASNE SCT 03	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 1	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 2	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 3	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 4	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 5	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 6	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Small Friston Scenario 2: Large	Friston Scenario 1: Minor adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 7	Medium	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Small Friston Scenario 2: Medium	Friston Scenario 1: Minor adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2 Effect: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 8	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Small Friston Scenario 2: Small	Friston Scenario 1: Minor adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 9	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 10	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 11	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 12	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 13	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 14	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 15	Medium	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 16	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 17	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 18	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 19	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 20	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 21	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 22	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Small Friston Scenario 2: Large	Friston Scenario 1: Minor adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 23	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Medium	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)

Operation and Maintenance Phase

1.8.13 The likely landscape and visual effects as a result of the Proposed Project are set out Table 1.11 and Table 1.12.

Table 1.11 Summary of likely landscape and visual effects (Operation and Maintenance (Year 1))

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Suffolk Heritage Coast	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA B4	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)
SCLCA LCA D4	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA K3	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA L1	Medium	Adverse impact on landscape character	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
SCLCA LCA O1	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCASNE SCT 03	High	No change on landscape character	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 1	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 2	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 3	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 4	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very Large	Major adverse(significant)
Viewpoint 5	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very Large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 6	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Large	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 7	Medium	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Medium	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 8	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Small	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 9	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 10	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 11	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 12	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 13	Very high	No change on visual amenity	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 14	Very high	No change on visual amenity	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 15	Medium	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 16	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 17	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 18	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 19	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 20	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 21	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very Large	Major adverse (significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 22	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Medium	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 23	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: None Friston Scenario 2: Small	Friston Scenario 1: No change (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Minor adverse (not significant)

Table 1.12 Summary of likely landscape and visual effects (Operation and Maintenance (Year 15))

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Suffolk Heritage Coast	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA B4	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA D4	Very high	No change on landscape character	None	No change (not significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
SCLCA LCA K3	Very high	Adverse impact on landscape character	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
SCLCA LCA L1	Medium	Adverse impact on landscape character	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
SCLCA LCA O1	High	Adverse impact on landscape character	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
SCASNE SCT 03	High	No change on landscape character	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 1	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 2	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 3	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 4	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 5	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Very Large	Major adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 6	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Large	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 7	Medium	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Medium	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 8	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Small	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 9	High	No change on visual amenity	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 10	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 11	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 12	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 13	Very high	No change on visual amenity	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 14	Very high	No change on visual amenity	None	No change (not significant)
Viewpoint 15	Medium	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)

Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Impact	Likely Significant Effect	
			Magnitude	Significance
Viewpoint 16	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Small	Minor adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 17	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 18	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Negligible	Negligible adverse (not significant)
Viewpoint 19	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 20	Very high	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Medium	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 21	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Large	Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 22	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible Friston Scenario 2: Medium	Friston Scenario 1: Negligible adverse (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Moderate adverse (significant)
Viewpoint 23	High	Adverse impact on visual amenity	Friston Scenario 1: None Friston Scenario 2: Small	Friston Scenario 1: No change (not significant) Friston Scenario 2: Minor adverse (not significant)

1.9 Additional Mitigation

1.9.1 As landscaping proposals have responded to the design of the Proposed Project throughout its development, the embedded mitigation within the design has addressed visual effects wherever possible. As such no additional mitigation measures have been identified in addition to the embedded measures.

1.10 Residual Effects and Conclusions

1.10.1 As there were no additional mitigation measures identified, the residual landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Project are as reported in Table 1.10, Table 1.11, and Table 1.12 in Section 1.8. It is considered that the effects at decommissioning would be no greater than the effects identified at construction. Therefore, this project stage is considered to be no different to the findings of the construction stage assessment and is consequently not considered separately.

Summary of significantly affected landscape receptors

1.10.2 There would not be any significantly adversely affected designated landscapes within the landscape and visual study area arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme.

1.10.3 Detailed assessment information for landscape and visual receptors is provided within **Application Document 6.3.2.1.C Appendix 2.1.C Landscape Designation and Landscape Character Assessment** and **Application Document 6.3.2.1.D Appendix 2.1.D Visual Amenity Baseline and Assessment**.

Construction

1.10.4 Under Friston Scenarios 1 and 2, at construction, two out of the six landscape and seascape receptors within the landscape and visual study area would experience a moderate (significant) adverse effect arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. These are LCAs L1 and B4 within which the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, notably the Saxmundham Converter Station and bridge over the River Fromus, respectively, would be constructed.

1.10.5 Regarding LCA L1 under Friston Scenario 1, the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, in particular the Saxmundham Converter Station, would be constructed within a large-scale agricultural field enclosure near to the edge of the LCA. This would adversely affect the rural character of the LCA due to the intrusion of large-scale construction activity, however noting that the part of the LCA that this activity would be taking place in has existing influence from busy road networks including the B1119, the existing pylons and OHL, large-scale agricultural buildings and land uses, such as a Christmas tree plantation, are not typical of the arable farmland characteristic across the wider LCA. This context somewhat reduces the alteration to the existing aesthetic aspect of the landscape, but the alteration would still be a substantial change in the locality due to the scale of change from arable farmland. The wider LCA and perceptual qualities would be largely unaffected by construction activity. This is due to the flat landform and layered vegetation network resulting in limitations to perceptual change across the wider landscape.

1.10.6 Regarding LCA L1 under Friston Scenario 2, additional to the above, Friston Substation would be constructed within a very small part of the edge of LCA L1. This would affect

the rural nature of the LCA and there would be localised effects on the perceptual qualities such as relative tranquillity and scenic quality. The works associated with the Friston Substation would occur within part of the LCA with existing influence of the existing OHL and towers which lessens the magnitude of change.

1.10.7 Regarding LCA B4, the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, in particular the bridge over the River Fromus, would be constructed within a part of the LCA that has a degree of separation from the wider LCA. This would result in construction activity directly affecting a small part of the distinctive valley landform and creating a gap in the vegetation network adjacent to the River Fromus. The construction activity would have an adverse impact upon the scenic southern approach to Saxmundham however noting that this has an existing influence from the road, rail, and industrial infrastructure. The construction activity would not affect the historic connection between Hurts Hall and St John's Church, Saxmundham, which is noted within the published LCA.

Year 1 – Operation and Maintenance

1.10.8 Under Friston Scenarios 1 and 2, at Year 1 of operation and maintenance, two out of the six landscape and seascape receptors within the landscape and visual study area would experience a moderate (significant) adverse effect arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. These would again be LCAs L1 and B4 within which the Saxmundham Converter Station and the bridge over the River Fromus, respectively, would be permanently located.

1.10.9 Regarding LCA L1 under Friston Scenario 1, the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, in particular the Saxmundham Converter Station, would be permanently located within a large-scale agricultural field enclosure near to the edge of the LCA. This would adversely affect the rural character of the LCA due to the incongruent large scale and nature of the development. This to a degree would be tempered by the existing influence from busy road networks including the B1119, the existing pylons and OHL, large-scale agricultural buildings and land uses such as a Christmas tree plantation, not typical of the arable farmland characteristic across the wider LCA. The flat landform and layered vegetation network typically screen long distance views of the ground plane and lower parts of the Saxmundham Converter Station limiting widespread effects across the LCA and the associated geographic extent of change. The perceptual qualities present across the wider LCA would therefore remain largely unaffected.

1.10.10 Regarding LCA L1 under Friston Scenario 2, additional to the above the permanent infrastructure of the Friston Substation would be directly located in a very small part of the edge of the LCA. This would result in a localised increase in energy infrastructure which is not present currently in the rural land use of the LCA but within part of the LCA which is influenced by detracting features such as the existing OHL and towers. The geographic extent of change would be lessened due to the flat landform and layered vegetation network resulting in limitations to perceptual change across the wider landscape.

1.10.11 Regarding LCA B4, the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, in particular the bridge over the River Fromus, would be permanently located within a part of the LCA that has a degree of separation from the wider LCA, limiting the geographical extent of change. This would be an incongruous addition to the landscape, a permanent gap in the vegetation network adjacent to the River Fromus and alteration to the distinctive valley landform in a localised area. The operational infrastructure would have an adverse impact upon the scenic southern approach to Saxmundham, however noting that this has existing influence from road, rail and industry infrastructure which reduces the alteration to the

existing aesthetic aspect of the landscape. The permanent infrastructure would not impact upon the historic relationship between Hurts Hall and St John's Church, Saxmundham, which is noted within the published LCA.

Year 15 – Operation and Maintenance

1.10.12 Under Friston Scenarios 1 and 2, at Year 15 of operation and maintenance, one out of the six landscape and seascape receptors within the landscape and visual study area would experience a moderate (significant) adverse effect arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This is LCA L1 within which the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, notably the Saxmundham Converter Station, would be permanently located.

1.10.13 Regarding LCA L1 under Friston Scenario 1, the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, in particular the Saxmundham Converter Station, would be permanently located within a large-scale agricultural field enclosure near to the edge of the LCA. By year 15, the proposed landscape mitigation planting around the Suffolk Onshore Scheme would provide partial screening and landscape integration within the immediate landscape context. Due to the location of the Saxmundham Converter Station being set back from the B1119, by Year 15 it is considered that there would be only a slight alteration to the setting of the settlement of Saxmundham. Overall, however, the scale and nature of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme within a localised area of the LCA would remain a large alteration to the key characteristics of the LCA, including the deeply rural character and the limited intrusion from modern development.

1.10.14 Regarding LCA L1 under Friston Scenario 2, additional to the above there would remain a localised increase in large-scale energy infrastructure, but landscape planting would have matured to provide a degree of partial screening and landscape integration within the immediate landscape context.

Summary of significantly affected visual receptors

Construction

1.10.15 Under Friston Scenario 1, at construction, nine out of the 23 representative viewpoints within the landscape and visual study area would experience moderate or major (significant) adverse effects arising from construction of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This comprises receptors from representative **viewpoints 1, 3, 4, 5, 15, 19, and 21**, which are all located in the local landscape around the Saxmundham Converter Station from all directions, and representative **viewpoints 2 and 20** which are to the west of the River Fromus bridge crossing. Due to the proximity of such receptors, there would be views of the construction activity and plant associated with the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, including the Saxmundham Converter Station, often occupying a large proportion of the horizontal extent of the view. The views would either be direct views of all, or part, of the construction works, depending upon the positioning of the receptor and the amount of intervening built form, landform, and vegetation.

1.10.16 The construction works associated with the Saxmundham Converter Station would introduce large-scale uncharacteristic machinery and material into views of otherwise arable land and would obstruct long-distance views across arable farmland, depending on the angle of the view. Despite the construction works being in the context of the busy B1119 road, with frequent vehicle movements and the presence of existing towers and OHL in the distance, the introduction of the construction works would noticeably increase the degree of contrast and alter the composition of the existing view.

1.10.17 The construction works associated with the River Fromus bridge crossing would result in permanent loss of mature vegetation on the eastern edge of the River Fromus, however noting the existing gaps in this network. This would further open up views to construction activity associated with the permanent access route. There would also be views of construction works associated with the Saxmundham Converter Station in the middle distance. It should be noted that the construction works associated with the River Fromus bridge crossing would result in significant visual effects for localised visual receptors to the west, notably along the PRoW network in this locality, but would have limited perceptibility elsewhere within the landscape and visual study area due to intervening vegetation and built form.

1.10.18 Under Friston Scenario 2, an additional four representative viewpoints within the landscape and visual study area would experience significant adverse effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This comprises receptors from representative **viewpoints 6, 7, 22 and 23** which are all located in the local landscape around the Friston Substation. Due to the proximity of such receptors and some receptors experiencing direct views due to a lack of intervening vegetation from such locations, there would be views of construction works associated with the Friston Substation. This would typically be within the context of the existing towers and OHL which partially lessens the degree of contrast.

Year 1 – Operation and Maintenance

1.10.19 Under Friston Scenario 1, at year 1 of operation and maintenance, nine out of the 23 representative viewpoints within the landscape and visual study area would experience a moderate or major (significant) adverse effect arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. These would again be receptors from representative **viewpoints 1, 3, 4, 5, 15, 19, and 21** which are all located in the local landscape around Saxmundham Converter Station from all directions, and representative **viewpoints 2 and 20** to the west of the River Fromus bridge crossing. Due to the proximity of such receptors, there would be views of the operational infrastructure associated with the Suffolk Onshore Scheme, including the Saxmundham Converter Station, occupying a proportion of the horizontal extent of the view. The views would either be direct views of all, or part, of the operational infrastructure dependent on the positioning of the receptor and the amount of intervening built form, landform, and vegetation.

1.10.20 The operational Saxmundham Converter Station would introduce a large-scale uncharacteristic feature within the view of otherwise arable land and would obstruct long-distance views across arable farmland dependent on the angle of the view. Despite the construction works being in the context of the busy B1119 road with frequent movement and the existing pylons and OHL in the distance, the introduction of the Saxmundham Converter Station would typically noticeably increase the degree of contrast and alter the composition of the existing view as it would break the skyline. The scale and mass of the Saxmundham Converter Station would be emphasised from some viewpoints in comparison to smaller scale buildings in the view, including Wood Farm.

1.10.21 The operational River Fromus bridge crossing (under both River Fromus Bridge Option 1 and 2), would result in an incongruent addition into the view and would result in the permanent loss of a section of mature vegetation along the eastern edge of the River Fromus, however this would not be entirely uncharacteristic due to existing gaps in the mature vegetation network. Whilst Option 2 would appear comparatively smaller within the view, it would not be sufficient to change the overall magnitude judgement. There

would be views of the permanent access route as a new linear element dividing the large-scale arable field in two which would contrast with the existing landscape pattern in the view. There would also be views of the operational Saxmundham Converter Station in the middle distance. The Saxmundham Converter Station would typically appear due to its apparent scale as a prominent feature against the skyline. It would appear out of character in the context of Hurts Hall set within the parkland landscape. Such receptors to the west of the Fromus bridge would typically experience views of the River Fromus bridge crossing, permanent access route and Saxmundham Converter Station, all within a similar part of the view and not affecting the wider view.

1.10.22 Under Friston Scenario 2, an additional three representative viewpoints within the landscape and visual study area would experience significant adverse effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This comprises receptors from representative **viewpoints 6, 7 and 22** which are all located in the local landscape around the Friston Substation. Due to the proximity of such receptors and some receptors experiencing direct views due to a lack of intervening vegetation from such locations, there would be views of the operational Friston Substation. This would typically be within the context of the existing towers and OHL which partially lessens the degree of contrast typically seen within a small part of the wider horizontal extent of the view. The duration of change for all activity would be long-term.

Year 15 – Operation and Maintenance

1.10.23 Under Friston Scenario 1, at Year 15 of operation and maintenance, nine out of the 23 representative viewpoints within the landscape and visual study area would experience moderate or major (significant) adverse effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This comprises receptors from representative **viewpoints 1, 3, 4, 5, 15, 19, and 21** which are all located in the highly localised landscape around Saxmundham Converter Station from all directions, and representative **viewpoints 2 and 20** to the west of the River Fromus bridge crossing. The permanent infrastructure of the Suffolk Onshore Scheme would remain permanently visible in a proportion of the horizontal extent of view from nearby receptors, with the remainder of the panorama unaffected.

1.10.24 By Year 15, the proposed landscape mitigation planting around the Suffolk Onshore Scheme would provide partial screening and landscape integration within the immediate landscape context. The planting around the Saxmundham Converter Station would have matured and some would be located on bunding, providing some additional height and screening benefit. This would aid the softening of views in the direction of the permanent infrastructure; however, the upper extents of the Saxmundham Converter Station would remain visible and a noticeable change in the composition of the view would remain, due to the scale and massing of the infrastructure. The planting associated with the River Fromus bridge would create new green infrastructure links and assist in partially restoring the permanent tree loss along the River Fromus including replacement of plantation woodland with native woodland.

1.10.25 Under Friston Scenario 2, an additional three representative viewpoints within the landscape and visual study area would experience significant adverse effects arising from the Suffolk Onshore Scheme. This comprises receptors from representative **viewpoints 6, 7 and 22** which are all located in the local landscape around the Friston Substation. The permanent infrastructure of the Friston Substation would remain to be permanently visible in a proportion of the horizontal extent of view from nearby receptors, with the remainder of the panorama unaffected. This would typically be within the context of the existing towers and OHL which partially lessens the degree of

contrast. By Year 15, the proposed landscape planting around the Friston Substation on bunding would consist of native planting which would contribute to the softening of views towards the permanent infrastructure.

1.10.26 The duration of change for all activity would be long-term.

1.11 Sensitivity Testing

1.11.1 There are not considered to be any differences in the likely landscape and visual effects if construction commences in any year up to five years from the granting of the DCO, which is assumed to be 2026.

1.12 References

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National Grid plc
National Grid House,
Warwick Technology Park,
Gallows Hill, Warwick.
CV34 6DA United Kingdom

Registered in England and Wales
No. 4031152
nationalgrid.com