SEAS WRITTEN REPRESENTATION OF THEIR
ISH2 ORAL REPRESENTATION on

LANDSCAPE & VISUALISATION, CULTURAL HERITAGE & DESIGN

SEA LINK: EN020026 **SEAS IP: F4BE0B552**
DEADLINE: 4 – 10 February 2026 **Date: 19 February 2026**

This document constitutes SEAS oral representation at ISH2 on Sea Link Landscape & Visualisation, Cultural Heritage and Design.

Introduction

SEAS Council [redacted] attended the Issue Specific Hearings (ISH2) on 28, 29 and 30 January and introduced expert [redacted] RIBA FRSA to speak on behalf of SEAS.

We herewith, as requested, present his full written evidence as follows:

We trust that this submission will assist the ExA in its ongoing consideration of the application.

AI Disclosure & Responsibility Statement: This submission is human-authored and human-verified. In preparing its evidence, SEAS in some instances utilises AI tools (ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Co-Pilot) for the summarisation of Examination Library documents and for organisational assistance. SEAS maintains full responsibility for the factual accuracy of this content.

SEALINK DCO EN020026 - DEADLINE 4A RESPONSE

Written Post-Hearing Submission – ISH2, Wednesday 28th January

IP – F062B0DA - [redacted] RIBA FRSA

Last Update: 18/02/2026
Status: Final

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. I attended the ISH2 at the ExCel Centre and spoke on behalf of SEAS and in a personal capacity, addressing the Landscape & Visual, Cultural Heritage and Design topics on the first Agenda [EV5-001] (**EN020026-002152**). Further questions were added in a Supplementary Agenda [EV6-003] (**EN020026-002153**) which were not addressed on the day. After the ISH2, Action Points were issued [EV6-033] (**EN020026-002429**). To avoid repetition, this written evidence combines my responses to all three requests from the ExA.

1.2. To keep this response short, I will not repeat the detail of my evidence submitted so far and request that it is absorbed here because it contains the factual justification for my summary responses below. In particular, I recommend [REP3-132] which has the most detailed responses and document references.

- RR 3944 – June 2025 [RR3944] [Unfortunately, the attachments and images have not been uploaded – available here in full https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/DUbFqV3WXz]
- OFH1 6 – November 2025 – Verbal and written submission [REP1A-148]
- Deadline 3 – 9 January 2026 – Written responses to ExQ1 [REP3-132]

2. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

ISH2 Agenda Item 9

Action Points AP39 to AP51

ISH2 9.2 Assessment of effects on landscape character in (Kent and) Suffolk

AP 39 Provide detailed response to landscape impacts at viewpoints (VP) identified in Suffolk and if any improved mitigation can be provided and secured within the order limits (VP1, VP2, VP4, VP5, VP20, VP21) including whether additional landscaping, either woodland or parkland trees, in the vicinity of the permanent access route to the west of Bloomfield's Covert.

2.1. Visual aspects were discussed first, with landscape character late in the day. All of the VPs selected have been assessed as causing Moderate or Major significant adverse effects in operation at Year 1, with which I agree. The images reviewed are those, where available, showing the proposed building with a simple volume (see Figures 1 to 4 below) and not the rectangular white 'parameter' volume of the whole site's area extruded upwards.

2.2. **VP1** – Whether the sides of the PROW are channelled or screened, the extent of the change and scale of the proposed converter station(s) will cause permanent significant harm to the character of the SCDC (ESC) Landscape Area L1. This applies to the other VPs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, & 21 in L1.

2.3. **VP2** – The elevated VP on the west side of the Fromus valley exposed the converter station in the broad gap in Bloomfield Covert on the eastern ridge. This is despite it

being sited at the lower end of the Site and as far south, trying to restrict views of the northern end of the proposed buildings. It will take many more than 15 years for the mitigation to achieve sufficient height to mask some or all. The night-time lighting will be visible.

The verified views seem to show the mass of the proposed project in different positions, using a telephone pole as a reference in the extracts below. Accuracy is critical and the applicant is requested to check if the CAD model has moved or changed, or if the camera positions are different.

Figure 1 VP2 – Year 1, winter

Figure 2 VP2 – Year 15 summer

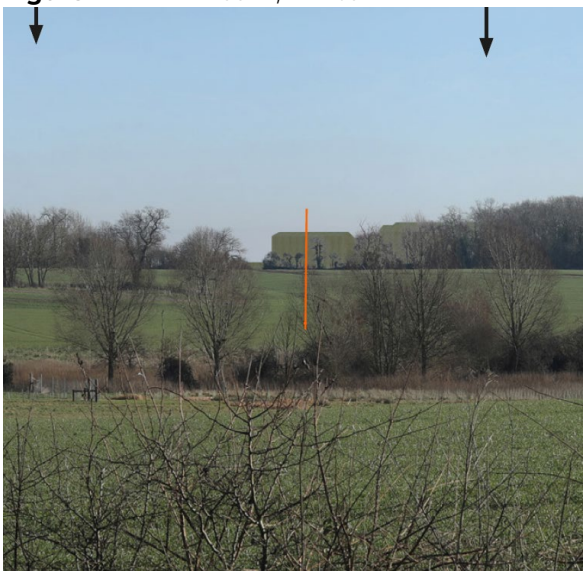


Figure 3 The red line is placed over the telephone pole in the Fromus valley

Figure 4 Either the Converter station has moved further north in relation to the telephone pole or the camera position is different

2.4. **VP4** – The dynamic visibility as in the VP from much of the B1119 will extend the extent of the permanent harm remaining unmitigated even after 15 years.

2.5. **VP5** – Another dynamic VP on an all-weather PROW with no planting proposed along its edge which would screen views of the proposed development. Looking up the contours to it on the horizon increases its exposure.

2.6. **VP19** – Another VP at the junction with a public footpath on a higher plateau looking north across the valley at the Site on the plateau opposite. The elevated VP exposes the full height of the proposed project with little obscuration from existing woodland. Mitigation planting will have very little effect.

2.7. **VP20** – A similar effect as VP19 with this VP to the west of the Fromus valley looking across at the gap in the Bloomfield Covert. The mass of the proposed project appears more visible through the tree canopy during in the winter.

2.8. **VP21** – Another dynamic view on this access track with no planting beside it until about 150m from the B1119.

2.9. **Summary:** The range of verified views above illustrate that the proposed visual and landscape mitigation is not a panacea for the residual harm which has not been eliminated by good design. Even after 15 years the proposed planting will not hide the high and widespread converter and substation buildings with attendant wirescapes, as demonstrated in the submitted verified views and proposed [**APP-037]** 2.12 Design and Layout Plans.

2.10. The landscape character is not merely what is seen from a few selective locations but what is perceived more widely. The area taken for developments at Saxmundham with 250m square plots and Friston on a plot 150m by 112m is extensive and full of wires, plant and huge sheds with no mitigation at all possible within their secure areas. Surrounding them with trees will not lose the perception when moving through the countryside of the sheer extent of the transformation. The rural character will be lost for ever.

AP45 **In terms of cumulative effects on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the applicant identifies significant residual cumulative effects on natural beauty indicators at construction in the Suffolk onshore inter-project effects – table 13.35. in relation to– landscape quality, scenic quality, relative wildness, relative tranquility. The assessment that has led to these conclusions lacks clarity. Provide an updated assessment clarifying how the conclusions have been arrived at.**

2.11. Please refer to my detailed comments on Natural Beauty Indicators to **ExQ1 – 1LVIA9** in [REP3-132], pages 11-12. The Applicant has not assessed scoped-out designated heritage assets in the Alde Estuary such as St. Botulph's Church, Iken and Martello Tower CC at Slaughden. For further relevant information, please refer also to **ISH2 11 and AP52** below.

AP46 **Heritage Coast – Notwithstanding the applicant's response to the written question, define the natural beauty and special character of the Heritage Coast**.

2.12. Please refer to my detailed comments on the definition of the Heritage Coast to **ExQ1 – 1LVIA11** in [REP3-132], pages 13-14.

AP47 **Having regard to paragraph 5.10.11 of National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1, can you explain whether you consider the development is compatible with the special character of the Heritage Coast?**

2.13. Even though the Site is not within the area identified in policy as the Heritage Coast, the potential effects on its undeveloped setting from the proposals for Saxmundham and Friston have not been fully assessed for either project. The whole of the Alde estuary is within the Heritage Coast. The application's Area of Search excluded all of it, so the Applicant has not identified receptors, nor assessed them, nor the effects on them from the proposed project. A desk-based assessment as proposed by the Applicant at ISH2 is not a robust methodology for the multiple designations covering the Alde estuary.

2.14. Please refer to my detailed comments on the historic, architectural and landscape significance of the Alde estuary in **Topic A** and **Appendix A** in my Relevant Representation – June 2025 [RR3944]

AP48 **If you consider the development is not compatible with the special character of the Heritage Coast, explain why not and suggest whether this could be overcome by mitigation and if so, provide details of suggested mitigation**.

2.15. The omission of the Grade II listed St. Botulph's Church, Iken from the ES has missed understanding of its historical interest which is directly related to the Saint's arrival in 654AD and establishment of his monastery on a coralline crag outcrop in the Alde estuary. The parallels with St. Augustine arriving at Richborough, Kent are striking and relevant. The historical significance of place and events in the setting there was the key reason for a planning inspector to uphold the refusal of planning permission for development within it.

2.16. Please refer to my involvement with and detailed comments on this case which is relevant to the inclusion of heritage assets within the heritage coast, can be found in **ExQ1 – 1CH3** in [REP3-132], pages 17-19. The Inspector's Decision can be found here:

https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3368475

AP49 **Having regard to paragraph 5.10.32 of the NPS EN-1 which sets out the exceptional circumstances in which the SoS may grant development consent in the AONB, can the relevant local authorities explain whether they think the circumstances are exceptional, and if not, why not?**

2.17. *The need for development:* There is a need to onshore the energy created offshore, but there is no need for it to be brought into East Suffolk which has no use for the power and is a huge exporter already. Finding users for the power is not necessary either as new industry would be entirely inappropriate in this countryside and agriculturally productive land.

2.18. *The cost of, and scope for, developing all or part of the development elsewhere etc.:* Options for taking the offshore power as HVDC to brownfield sites closer to where it will be used have never been explained convincingly by the applicant. This is demonstrated by the absence of any strategy for this area by the applicant and the multiple conflicting DCOs for over a decade.

2.19. *Any detrimental effects on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated*: The scale of this proposed development and others latching onto it will accumulate permanent harm on many diverse receptors. There are no recreational opportunities – studies have shown the development will upset the existing tourist trade, harming the local economy, and will not entice replacements.

AP50 **Kiln Lane substation mitigation. The overlay [AS-063] with SPR mitigation indicates much less landscape mitigation planting to the north of the Kiln Lane substation than is shown for the SPR landscape mitigation. Whilst it is understood that the SPR landscape mitigation has since evolved, if the SPR consented scheme did not come forward and or was not fully implemented (scenario 2), explain how the rest of the landscape mitigation would be secured as it is not shown in the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP). Provide an updated oLEMP for scenario 2 indicating the entirety of the outline landscape mitigation for Kiln Lane substation.**

ISH2 9.5 Landscape mitigation in (Kent and) Suffolk

- *Landscape mitigation for Kiln Lane substation*

2.20. The Friston ExA considered the harm of its Landscape & Visual effects should not be underestimated. Mitigation has in certain key respects been found to be only just sufficient, on balance. [para 28.4.5]
Even with the lack of sufficient information on Sea Link and LionLink, the ExA observed that the effects of the cumulative delivery of its proposed development with the other East Anglian development on the transmission connection site at Friston are so substantially adverse that the utmost care will be required in the consideration of any amendments or additions [28.4.5].

2.21. The ExA's Report for EA1N and EA2 [**EN010077-009800 Volume 2, 31.2.1**] drew attention to the "marginal compliance of ES topics flood risk, historic environment and landscape and visual character onshore." Therefore, it is essential that the landscape mitigation required in the Friston DCOs is implemented for the NGET substation which is part of the Sea Link DCO application.

2.22. This was the conclusion without having all the facts we now have before us now. It is the baseline for assessing the cumulative impact. Adding Sea Link's harm to Friston's tips the balance against Sea Link.

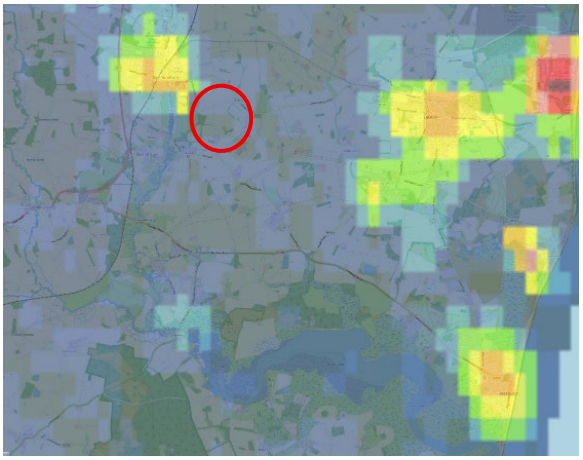
AP51 The ExA notes the applicant's comments in response to the first written question 1LVIA4 and the provision of the illustrated lux plots. However, there is insufficient information to assess the lighting effects in areas of relatively dark skies. A more detailed nighttime assessment is therefore requested.

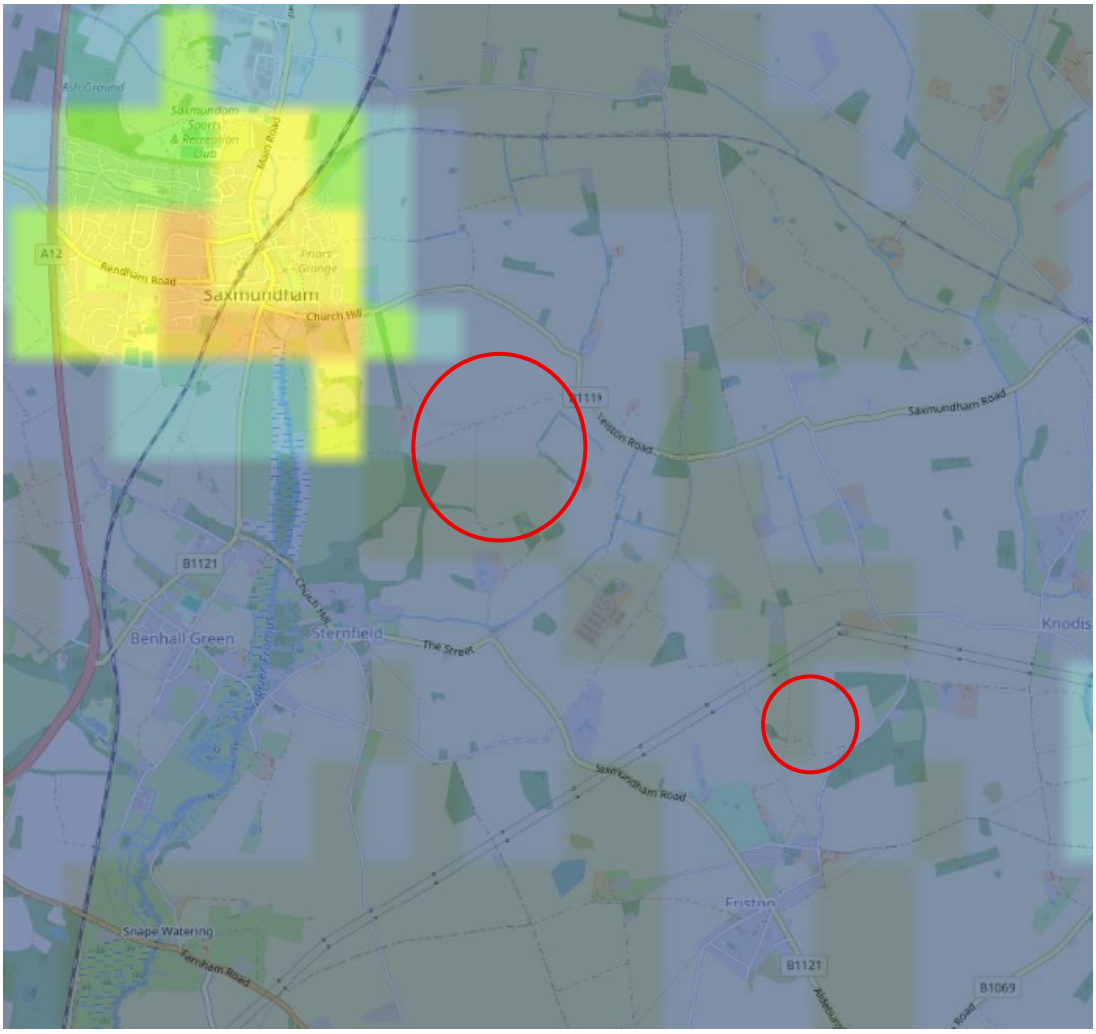
2.23. A Lighting Design Guide was published in July 2023 jointly by the Dedham Vale and Suffolk & Essex Coasts & Heaths AONBs National Landscapes. Its purpose is to protect the night sky by promoting good practice in external lighting and internal light spill. It provides guidance to anyone who is using, replacing, or installing new external lighting in or around the two National Landscapes. This includes householders, businesses and developers.
https://dedhamvale-nl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Lighting-Guidance-in-National-Landscapes.pdf

The extract (right) from the CPRE's light pollution – dark skies map shows the sky between Saxmundham and Leiston is some of the darkest and which includes the application Site. It is also dark southwards towards and over the Alde and Ore estuaries to Orford and the Ness.

The red area on the edge is Sizewell- not a good exemplar.

https://www.cpre.org.uk/light-pollution-dark-skies-map





3. GOOD DESIGN

Agenda Item 10 – Design

3.1. There is some overlap between ISH2 topics 10.1 and 10.2. To avoid repetition, I have split the topics as follows:

10.1 – **Design Controls**: the NSIP policies and the processes of the decision takers at all stages, from strategy to authorisation.

10.2 – **Design processes:** Of the developer, NGET, NESO, designers, consultants

ISH2 10.1 Adequacy of design controls (including in relation to converter stations, sub-stations, pylons, lighting)

3.2. The statutory regime of National Infrastructure Projects has evolved to speed up the planning process in order for investment to be made as soon as possible in the national interest. Planning powers have been taken away from LPAs, the planning balance has been altered in favour of NSIPs, and the Secretary of State can determine DCOs by overriding ExA recommendations.

3.3. To operate fairly in the absence of adopted local development plans, this requires all parties to operate efficiently and in the best interests of the taxpayer. Here is a selection of the key milestones in the Sea Link project which should be assessed because they have affected this DCO design and have caused the reactions of the Interested Parties.

- The co-ordination of NGET, NESO, Ofgem, DENZ and the SoS (current and predecessors)
- Principles and timing of the transition to Net Zero
- Overarching strategy for implementation over decades
- Co-ordination of offshore development of wind farms, onshore connections to the grid
- Planning for technical innovations and coordinating common specifications
- Aligning with the market in tendering Contracts for Difference
- Policy and Guidance
- Roles and remits of ExAs
- Application of the planning balance in favour of NSIPs where harms would be more than normally permissible under the 'secular' planning regime

3.4. The Sea Link project unfortunately is in some respects a poor example of how not to implement a NSIP.

- There has been no co-ordinated and effective strategy to onshore multiple projects into East Suffolk
- Consider the succession of independent DCOs needed for EA1, EA1N, EA2, EA3, Nautilus, Sea Link, LionLink and soon Helios, without any strategy to co-ordinate and consult upon locations of sub-stations and converter stations, grid connections, types of power cables, etc.
- Reliance on piecemeal Contracts for Difference bidding with no strategy for offshore and onshore layout and technical specification as part of the government's brief
- A muddle of inefficient HVAC and HVDC cabling resulting in power losses, extra cable expense, multiple trenching and no vision or long term plan for meshed AC and DC grids
- Location in the electrical design and final position of converter stations and substations, both offshore and onshore
- Repetitious DCO applications where cumulative harm is not assessed fairly
- No monitoring of non-material changes which could have been understood to be very material changes with active oversight
- ExAs who lack authority to question with good reasons prior DCOs which directly affect their own

3.5. The consequences are:

- East Suffolk is being subjected to a tsunami of NSIPs which it has never asked for, nor been consulted upon.
- It is fundamentally unfair, unreasonable, and a wasteful process which is affecting the well-being of the local people and businesses trying to bring reason and common sense at such a late stage
- The local planning authorities lack the resources to adequately challenge developers to meet standards of good design
- The Design Controls which have evolved over many political administrations have failed, primarily due poor strategy and those responsible not co-ordinating in the national best interest.

Please refer to my detailed comments on **ExQ1 – 1LVIA2** in [REP3-132].

ISH2 10.2 Embedding of good design in decision making process

3.6. Good design begins with the Client's Brief – if the constraints of sites and scopes of works are not fully understood and kept under constant review, projects end up in blind alleys and expensive changes.

3.7. The multiple guidance documents from PINS and the NIC stress the importance of good design encompassing all aspects within four principles: **Climate, People, Places** and **Value.**

3.8. *"Their purpose includes having an overarching vision with a locally contextual design narrative, being informed by affected people and groups, being inclusive and identifying opportunities for wider benefits and outcomes beyond the project itself.*

3.9. *For Climate these include carbon impact, environmental enhancement including nature recovery and climate resilience. Truly inclusive and accessible design that is sympathetic to the social and community context is important for People. Places should cover boosting a local sense of identity and stewarding the local landscape. For Value, it is important to look beyond the site boundary, working with partners to unlock additional value*."

3.10. The Applicant's own conclusions on the extent and levels of permanent harm caused by the Proposed Project have not achieved the NIC's principles of Good Design. This has been and is explained in SEAS's multiple submissions.

3.11. Good Design is raised 22 times in EN-1. It cites (3.3.81): *"It is especially important that the Secretary of State considers network projects as elements of a coherent and strategically necessary system, whether or not they are linked together in specific NSIPs"*. The amendments to the succession of apparently unrelated electrical infrastructure projects in East Suffolk demonstrates that NGET has had no good design strategy behind it.

3.12. A DCO is the same as a planning permission or listed building consent – its purpose it to control the approved development. The fewer details, the less control retained by the Secretary of State. The more latitude remains, then the applicant can vary design and location, resulting in lower quality and increased impacts on receptors.

3.13. It is possible and desirable for the DCO Order to allow **some** variation of the precise location or height following construction detailing. But not the design's fundamental volumes, locations and appearance in the landscape. The ExA and SoS need sufficiently detailed proposals to be confident that it can only be built with the fundamental character as permitted.

3.14. Paras. 5.4.18 to 5.4.26 of [APP-046] **EN020026-00231 6.2.1.5 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 5 – EIA Approach and Methodology** are an example of the Applicant's use of the **Rochdale Envelope** principles to postpone design decisions. The Applicant has not explained why and how it is not possible to specify and submit far more details of the Proposed Project.

3.15. For the ES to be the most accurate, it needs sufficient design parameters applicable to the characteristics of the Proposed Project. These should be used in the assessment and those parameters likely to result in the major or medium adverse effects be identified.

3.16. The inadequacies in the presentation of the submitted design have been noted in my response to **ExQ1 – 1LVIA2** in [REP3-132], pages 6 to 9. Despite my multiple requests, NGET still has not justified the paucity of information in the control documents. The ExA is requested to require the Applicant to commit to its building and landscape design in far more detail than the submitted sketch scheme.

SPECIFICALLY:

3.17. Many options for the co-location of converter stations are discussed in [APP-363] **EN020026-000203 7.10 Coordination Document**. Form, colour and materials were also explored in [**REP1A-029**] **EN020026-001621 7.11.1 Design Approach Document - Suffolk (Version B Tracked Changes)**.

3.18. CAD perspectives of the proposed Saxmundham converter station is illustrated in Plate 4.1 of the description of the proposed project [AS-094] **EN020026-000230 6.2.1.4 Part 1 Introduction Chapter 4 Description of the Proposed Project**.

3.19. Very detailed plans of the layout of the electrical equipment and footprints of the converter buildings form part of the drawings submitted for DCO consent **[APP-037] EN020026-000226 2.13 Design and Layout Plans**.

3.20. The Design Principles are developed and submitted in Section 3.3 of 7.12.1 **[REP4-073] EN020026-000204 7.12.1 Design Principles – SUFFOLK.**

3.21. Despite the design development, detailed plans and massing studies noted above, which are similar to a competent Design and Access Statement, the Applicant inexplicably has shied away from committing to a particular design of the buildings. This is why the verified views in the Landscape and Visual Figures are constrained to the simplest block with no form and materiality which can be scaled in the landscape and toned to the time and season of the baseline photos [APP-208] **EN020026-000339 6.4.2.1 ES Figures Suffolk Landscape and Visual Parts 1 to 7**.

3.22. Limiting the details restricts the scope and accuracy of the Environmental Assessment. Given the NSIP powers to overrule harm to prioritise the Net Zero target, this refusal to commit to design fundamentals undermines the justification for the special planning exemptions.

4. CULTURAL HERITAGE

Action Points AP52 to AP55

ISH2 Agenda Item 11

AP 52 Heritage assets listed by the applicant [REP3-070] which are scoped out of the ES include those which are described as experiencing an adverse impact, though less than substantial at the lower end of this scale. For example, asset ID 1215749 - Buxlow Manor in Suffolk. For this example and the others like it, provide additional information as to the potential impact to the significance of each asset and further justification as to why it was scoped out.

4.1. The applicant has scoped out many designated assets on the basis of less than substantial harm without showing how it has arrived at these conclusions. Firstly, evidence of the assessments should be submitted to confirm the conclusions. Secondly, it is possible that if a large number of heritage assets are affected at less than substantial harm, the accumulation of this harm may indicate an overall greater effect which is significant in the ES methodology.

4.2. The cluster of 16 listed buildings within Sternfield village has a Group Value from the long established community. They characterise a typical old Suffolk village whose time history is readable. The topographical context of its own valley and proximity to the River Fromus are special. The change in the character of the village's setting, from the proximity and the proposed project's scale and industrialisation of the countryside, will be fundamental and permanently harmful.

4.3. Historic England's response has not applied its own policy of Setting – *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, page 8, which give the approach to be followed for multiple assets. This was also covered in my detailed response in **ExQ1 - 1CH3** in [REP3-132], pages 19 to 21. Setting is not confined to views and intervisibility as stated by the applicant at ISH2.

4.4. The narrow area of search excluded the Alde estuary, St. Botuph's, Iken, and Martello Tower CC at Slaughden from where the PEIR ZTV plans showed Sea Link, EA2N and EA1 would all be visible. NGET have not produced a more complete set of ZTV plans despite multiple requests. They cannot scope the estuary out of the Landscape and Visual and Cultural Heritage without a proper baseline appraisal.

This lack of heritage assessment before eliminating multiple designated heritage assets undermines the basis of both topics within the ES.

AP53 For other heritage assets within the scoped-out list [REP3-070], there is sometimes the reason given that the asset was assessed as part of the consent for the East Anglia (EA)1 North and EA2 proposals and as no additional impacts were predicted it was considered a neutral impact. The ExA requests that for these heritage assets, it is also expressed as to the potential effect of the Sea Link proposed development alone, and not based on potential additional impacts over and above that assessed for the EA projects?

4.5. The design of Sea Link has larger buildings and more extensive development areas, different access, viewpoints and mitigation, all in a different location and surroundings from the approved EA1N and EA2 project. The heritage assets will be affected differently and should be assessed anew.

AP54 Applicant to provide a similar list of heritage assets to the scoped-out list in [REP3-070], but for all the heritage assets scoped in for any level of ES assessment, clearly stating the anticipated impact of both the Sea Link and cumulative impact to the significance of these assets.

4.6. See response to AP52 above.

AP55 Applicant to submit a more thorough and detailed assessment of the cumulative impacts on settings of cultural heritage assets and the historic wider landscapes.

4.7. If the whole of the approved DCO approvals of EA1N and EA2 are built, they will be cumulative schemes for Sea Link. Another way to measure the effects of the Friston sub-stations is to refer to the ExA's assessment of its overall effects and add those to the effects solely of the Saxmundham site without the NGET substation at Friston.

ISH2 11.4 Effects on setting of listed buildings, including Hurts Hall and Hill Farmhouse

4.8. Hurts Hall is a key feature in the landscape setting of the Fromus Valley. The valley has a long northward orientation with the Fromus running down the centre. Hurts Hall is a focal point in the views northwards and has heritage Group Value with St. John's whose tower is a visible landmark in gaps in the mature woodland to the north east. The B1121 is an historic road running parallel to the river into the southern edge of Saxmundham which retains its historic character and is part of the conservation area. This is an unspoilt historic approach of high quality which is rare.

4.9. The quality of Hurts Hall's architectural form, strength of its detailing and colours retain the eye. The change from the historic landscape shown in the old mapping has preserved the landscape qualities of the valley and added its own layers of interest.

4.10. The sides of the valley frame the view, with trees on the eastern crest partly framing the contours – the Converter station will be visible in the gap, especially at night.

4.11. The proposed bridge will have a Direct Effect on its setting. The existing B1121 is lined with hedges parallel to the valley and river. This will be broken on the eastern side to create the long turning curve needed for the large transformer vehicles. This will break the continuous visual link of the old road into Saxmundham with its landscape setting.

4.12. The new road will need a long embankment up the high bridge and the proposed planting either side will cut perpendicularly across the principal axis of the valley. The traffic moving on this permanent road and only access to the site will exacerbate the harm of the new road and bridge through the valley. This road will also be the access to the Lion Link site for construction and maintenance in operation.

4.13. The permanent access will then rise at a moderate gradient for the heavily loaded trailers up the eastern side of the Fromus Valley to the ridge going through a gap in Bloomfield's Covert. The existing break adds skyline interest and scale to the woodland as seen across the valley. Mitigation planting on the ridge would remove this aspect and would have to cover the whole of the eastern side to hide the road.

4.14. The effects of this proposal will harm the historic and architectural setting of Hurts Hall as well the highest quality entrance into Saxmundham.

5. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS
Action Points AP107 to AP112
Agenda Item 20

AP107 Update relevant Sea Link cumulative and in-combination assessments based on the new information released for LionLink, including but not limited to the Environmental Statement, Habitats Regulations, Marine Conservation Zone and WFD assessments.

5.1. Even with the lack of sufficient information on Sea Link and LionLink, the EA1N and EA2 ExA observed that the effects of the cumulative delivery of its proposed development with the other East Anglian development on the transmission connection site at Friston are so substantially adverse that the utmost care will be required in the consideration of any amendments or additions [28.4.5]

5.2. This was the conclusion without having all the facts we now have before us. It is the baseline for assessing the cumulative impact. Adding Sea Link's harm to Friston tips the balance against Sea Link.

AP111 Provide further justification for the applicant's approach to quantification of magnitude/degree of significance of effects in cumulative (intra-project) assessments and how the various effects interact with each other.

ISH2 20.1 Intra- and Inter-project cumulative effects

The origins of the Sea Link DCO

5.3. The origin of the harm to landscape, visual and heritage at Friston was initiated by ignoring the strategic options of using the capacity available in the permitted Bawdsey to Bramford underground ducts. Their use should have been the first option for EA1N and EA2, using the cheaper and electrically more efficient use of HVDC cables rather

than HVAC. SPR, National Grid, the ExA and SoS all did not begin with this first and obvious option as part of a comprehensive strategy.

5.4. The multiple DCO applications and no statement of a future strategy, starting with EA1's downgrading to Bramford, is evidence of the absence of proper planning and good design.

Level of detail in current submissions

5.5. The Applicant has submitted cumulative visualisations: [REP4-086] EN020026-002619-9.90 Applicant Response to January Hearing Action Points. There has been no change in the quality of visualisation from the simple block models originally submitted. No other details are included such as new landscaping, electrical equipment and wirescapes. The images will allow only the most basic assessment of effects. Given the huge scale and change to the character of the landscape and countryside, this is an inadequate method to assess cumulative effects.

The baseline of Landscape, Visual and Heritage receptors

5.6. The EA1N and EA2 ExA concluded the overall harm was on a knife edge in the planning balance. Adding Sea Link's acknowledged harm to the Friston baseline is the basis for recommending refusal.

Table 1: BAWDSEY – BRAMFORD: TABLE OF CABLE ROUTES, MODES, AND CAPACITIES

Date	Project	Event	Trenches	DC cables	MW	Total MW	AC cables	MW	Total MW
June 2104	EA1 Bawdsey - Bramford	SPR receive DCO	6	6	600	3600	0	0	0
June 2104	EA1 Bawdsey - Bramford	SPR only need	2	2	600	1200	0	0	0
March 2016	EA1 Bawdsey - Bramford	CfD only 714MW – **As Built**	2	0	0	0	2	357	714
7 August 2017	EA3 Bawdsey - Bramford	EN010056 DCO granted	4	4 max	1200	1200	0	0	0
31 March 2022	EA1N Thorpeness to Friston	EN010077 DCO granted	4	0	0	0	6	900	900
31 March 2022	EA2 Thorpeness to Friston	EN010078 DCO granted	4	0	0	0	6	960	960
Max possible as permitted	Any user: Bawdsey - Bramford	Use DC instead of permitted AC	3	3	1200	3400	0	0	0
Max possibility: New design of HVDC	Any user: Bawdsey - Bramford	Improved technology & meshed AC-DC Grids	6	6	1400	8400	0	0	0

Date	Project	Event	Trenches	DC cables	MW	Total MW	AC cables	MW	Total MW
Symmetric Bipole									

Visual Impact Assessment - Policy

5.7. In my responses to **ExQ1 – 1LVIA2** [REP3-132] I drew attention to the Applicant's commissioning of the 2014 Visual Impact Provision report by Gillespies and Land Use Consultants on using funds to reduce the visual impact of existing electricity transmission lines in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks. This document is almost invisible online so I attach it for the document records. It is relevant to the potential mitigation of existing landscape and visual harm from the pylons from Sizewell thought the AONB which could affect the planning balance positively.

5.8. This is relevant to the Sea Link DCO as it identified that two stages 4ZW.1 and 4ZX.1 of the 400kV pylons west from Sizewell through the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths AONB (S&EC&H) to Gromford harmed its visual qualities within and adjacent, and particularly for the users of the AONB's amenity. NGET has for 20 years had a fund agreed with OFGEM available to mitigate harm from existing overhead lines only. Between April 2021 to March 2026 this has amounted to £465m in 2018-19 prices within the RIIO-T2 price control (RIIO is Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs).

5.9. The Applicant's own latest policy is the version of its **Visual Impact Provision** which was approved by OFGEM in August 2023. Only the March 2021 version is available online:

https://www.nationalgrid.com/document/562886/download

5.10. The 2021 version notes the potential candidate areas have been identified, assessed for impacts with options for mitigation and final selection. The Guiding Principles are given and the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) set up. Engagement seeking the views of other stakeholders such as landowners and local planning authorities is also promised through NGET's Landscape Enhancement Initiative (LEI). It is unfortunate that many of the detailed reports referred to by OFGEM and even NGET are not available online – in particular neither NGET's own methodology, nor its policy for the LEI .
https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/visual-impact-provision

5.11. In February 2021 during the Covid-19 epidemic, OFGEM set out its Final Determination for the company allowances under the RIIO-2 price control, commencing 1 April 2021. This include a budget of £465m for VIP. It noted (para. 2.142) that as *"the cost of the visual amenity projects are paid for by consumers"* it had not agreed to the requests for a greater budget. I conclude this gives greater weight to the preferences of local stakeholders for mitigation of existing harm to landscape and visual amenity, and any proposals for worsening the baseline conditions. The 2014 Gillespies-LUC report found the worst affected receptors were local people, visitors and tourists. The socio-economic effects of increasing landscape and visual harm without mitigating existing harm have yet to be assessed in this DCO application.

5.12. In November 2023 OFGEM set out its views on NGET's revised Visual Impact Provision policy 2023. It fulfilled its purpose and included the required elements set out in NGET's licence. It supported National Grid implementing the policy and did not propose any changes. The Minutes of the VIP SAG contain no reference to discussions or funding for the S&ES&H AONB.

Visual Impact Assessment – Application to S&EC&H AONB

5.13. The SeaLink Landscape and Visual Assessment does not mention the Applicant's 2014 Report on the harm caused by the Sizewell-Gromford section of pylons. It has not used the NGET Visual Impact Policy as any guide to its own assessment of the existing harm in the Landscape and Visual baseline, not to the acknowledged need for its mitigation and the potential funds available.

5.14. There is no evidence in the Applicant's design that the existing harm has influenced either the siting or the overall design of the Proposed Project.

National Grid documents not available online on 15/02/2026

5.15. Sources and footnotes referenced in NGET's Visual Impact provision, March 2021:

https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/visual-impact-provision

Consistent error message found: *404 page: "Apologies, the page you are looking for does not exist or is temporarily unavailable."*

Source: National Grid – Visual Impact Provision, March 2021, 2022 revision

5.16. Footnote 7: The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology is based on the framework set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) (3rd Edition) (2013) published by Routledge on behalf of the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. A copy of our methodology can be found on our VIP website
https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/electricity-transmission/document/84136/download

National Grid – Visual Impact Provision - Stakeholder Engagement Principles

5.17. Footnote 9:
https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/electricity-transmission/document/81026/download
Footnote 19: The Landscape and Visual Impact Technical Report (October 2014) assesses the landscape and visual impact of existing electricity transmission infrastructure in nationally protected landscapes in England and Wales. The report was written by [redacted] acting as Independent Adviser to National Grid on the VIP project [Gillespies and Land Use Consultants]
https://www.nationalgrid.com/uk/electricity-transmission/document/84141/download

[redacted] RIBA FRSA
18 February 2026

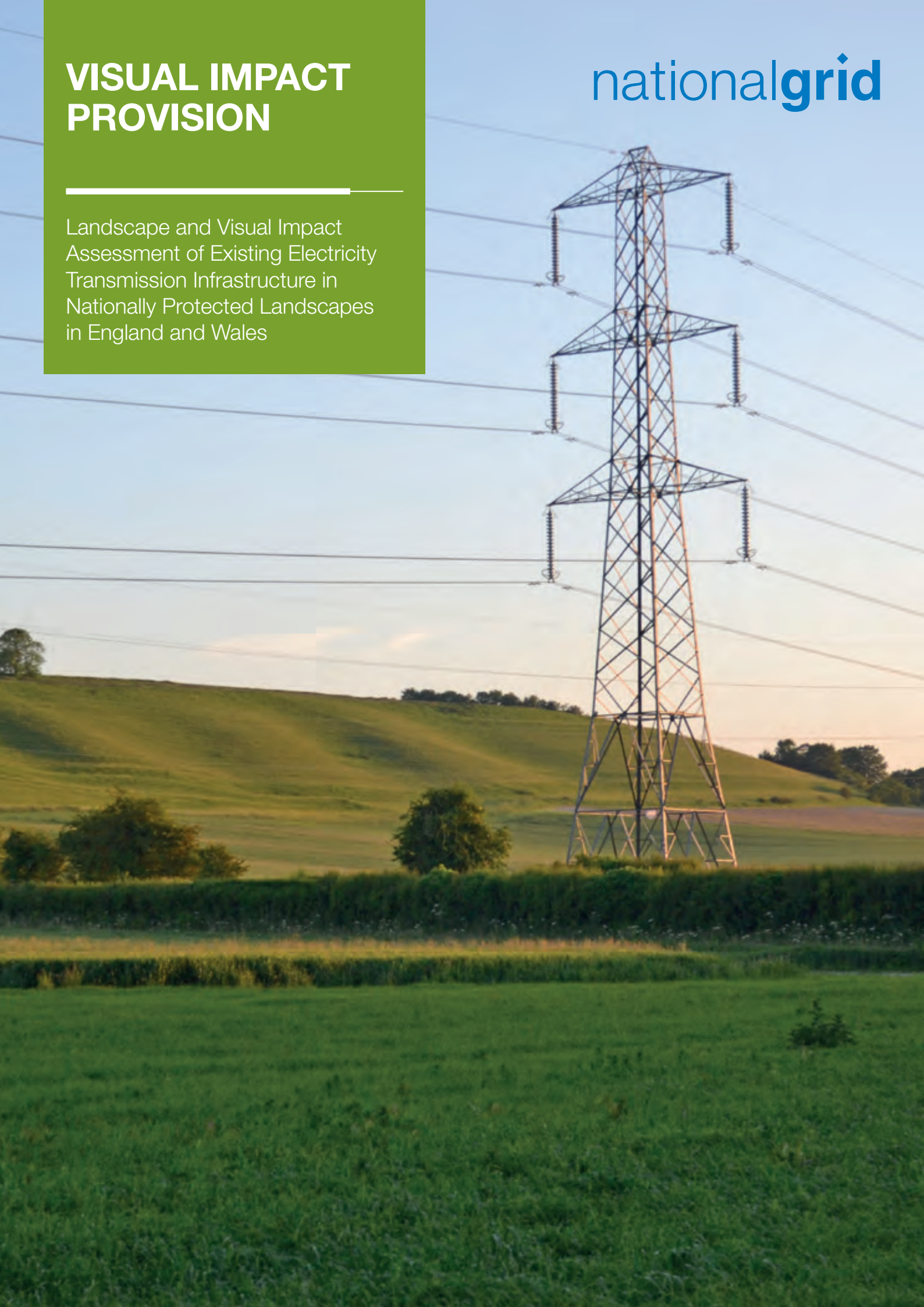
APPENDIX 1

2014 Gillespies-LUC report for NG 37291-Visual Impact Provision Technical Report

VISUAL IMPACT PROVISION

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Existing Electricity Transmission Infrastructure in Nationally Protected Landscapes in England and Wales

nationalgrid



nationalgrid

VISUAL IMPACT PROVISION

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Existing Electricity Transmission Infrastructure in Nationally Protected Landscapes in England and Wales

Technical Report

Professor [redacted]
Gillespies
Land Use Consultants

October 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been written by Professor Carys Swanwick acting as Independent Adviser to National Grid on the Visual Impact Provision Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment project, with contributions from the teams from Gillespies and Land Use Consultants who carried out the detailed field survey work for the project. We would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by [redacted] at National Grid, the helpful comments from members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, and the input from landscape staff of the authorities responsible for the National Parks and AONBs that were visited.

The core project teams for the consultants were:

Gillespies

[redacted]

Land Use Consultants

[redacted]

Contact Details:

Professor [redacted] visualimpact@nationalgrid.com	**Gillespies** [redacted]@gillespies.co.uk	**Land Use Consultants** [redacted]@landuse.co.uk

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PART ONE

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Visual Impact Provision

1.1 Ofgem and National Grid have agreed a new set of price controls and incentives for the period from April 2013 to March 2021. This includes a provision of £500 million for electricity transmission owners to mitigate the visual impact of existing electricity infrastructure in nationally protected landscapes in Great Britain. For National Grid, which is the transmission owner in England and Wales, this means considering the effects of existing infrastructure on the visual amenity and landscapes of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). National Grid have referred to this as the **Visual Impact Provision (VIP)**.

1.2 In 2012-13 National Grid prepared a Visual Impact Provision policy setting out how the fund would be used and how stakeholders would be engaged in identifying opportunities for maximising benefits from it. After a public consultation on the draft between July and September 2013 the policy statement was presented to Ofgem for review. The policy statement made it clear that National Grid's objective:

"is to achieve the maximum enhancement to the landscape from the available funds whilst ensuring that no significant adverse impacts arise as a result".

1.3 The policy document included a set of guiding principles and a commitment to the creation of a Stakeholder Advisory Group consisting of stakeholders with national remits for England and Wales, and ways of engaging other stakeholders. National Grid is committed to using the VIP in a collaborative and transparent way.

1.4 In taking the VIP forward there have been two major strands of work so far:

- The establishment and operation of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, whose remit is to assist National Grid in deciding how best to use the VIP;
- The initiation and conduct of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment project to provide evidence to National Grid and the Stakeholder Advisory Group about the relative impacts of the different transmission lines to inform the decision making process.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group

1.5 The Stakeholder Advisory Group is chaired by independent environmental adviser and broadcaster, [redacted] and comprises senior representatives of fifteen groups with a national remit in the ongoing protection and enhancement of the landscape, as well as Ofgem and National Grid itself. The fifteen member organisations, in alphabetical order, are:

Cadw
Campaign for National Parks
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
English Heritage
Landscape Institute
National Association of AONBs
National Parks England
National Parks Wales
National Trust
Natural England
Natural Resources Wales
The Ramblers
Visit England
Visit Wales

1.6 In fulfilling its role in the first stage of the project the group is involved in:

- helping to identify priorities for use of the VIP;
- considering the technical outputs from the work;
- considering the views of wider stakeholders who are not represented on the group;
- identifying specific infrastructure and locations which would benefit most from the VIP.

1.7 In addition National Grid appointed [redacted] as their independent adviser on the technical aspects of the landscape and visual impact work required to inform deliberations about use of the VIP. She has been responsible for providing a link between National Grid and the technical aspects of the project, overseeing and liaising with the consultants appointed to carry out the detailed assessment work, and providing a link with the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

1.8 In order to assist the Stakeholder Advisory Group in helping to identify priorities for use of the VIP the Stakeholder Advisory Group has been involved in discussions about the approach to the landscape and visual impact assessment project and has received presentations and progress reports on the work.

The landscape and visual impact assessment project

1.9 The distribution of National Grid electricity transmission infrastructure in relation to designated National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), is shown in **Figure 1**. The purpose of the landscape and visual impact assessment project is to identify those sections of electricity transmission lines within in England and Wales that have the most important impacts on the landscape and visual amenity of these designated landscapes. The emphasis is on making a comparative assessment of the landscape and visual impacts of the sections of transmission lines that lie within the designated areas and identifying a possible shortlist of candidate schemes for consideration by the Stakeholder Advisory Group in order to decide which ones should be taken forward for more detailed technical assessment. The focus is on the transmission lines themselves but where appropriate it has also been necessary to consider the impacts of other transmission infrastructure (such as, for example, substations and sealing end compounds). In practice relatively few such situations occurred.

1.10 During the project consideration has also been given to the issue of transmission lines that lie outside, but in reasonable proximity to, designated landscapes. To address this the authorities responsible for each designated landscape were approached by National Grid and invited, if they so wished, to make a case for such lines to be assessed. Four cases were made and accepted and so lines adjacent to the Howardian Hills and the Quantock Hills AONBs and the Pembrokeshire and Northumberland National Parks have been assessed using the same method that was adopted for lines lying within the designated landscapes

1.11 Experienced landscape planning consultants have been appointed to carry out the detailed landscape and visual impact assessment work, in association with [redacted] as National Grid's independent adviser. Gillespies carried out work on designated areas in Wales, Northern England, Eastern England and the Midlands, interpreted here as including the Cotswolds and the Chilterns. Land Use Consultants carried out work in the South East and the South West. Allocation of the work sought to provide some parity in terms of the total lengths of transmission lines to be covered although those covered by Gillespie's work were geographically much more scattered than those covered by Land Use Consultants who worked on longer lengths of line in a smaller number of areas.

1.12 The scale of the work required in a short timescale has meant that each landscape practice has deployed two teams, each of two people, to carry out the desk study and field survey work. This has benefits in terms of timely completion of the work but poses additional problems in achieving consistency of approach. The alternative approach, of having one person assessing all of the relevant transmission lines, would largely overcome the problem of consistency but would have taken an unacceptably long time to complete the work.

1.13 Professional judgement is key to assessing landscape and visual impacts and there is a need for the judgements that are made to be as consistent as possible and based on clear and transparent methods. A key part of the process has therefore been to develop a shared understanding

between the different teams of consultants appointed, of the landscape and visual impact assessment method and its specific application to the VIP.

1.14 In order to achieve as much consistency as possible a number of steps have been taken:

- The method of assessment has been based on industry standard guidance adapted to suit the particular circumstances of the VIP (see Chapter 2 for details);
- The detailed method has been developed jointly between the teams of consultants and National Grid's independent adviser and described in a method statement;
- Application of the method was tested at the start of the project by a joint site visit in the North Wessex Downs AONB and a linked workshop which allowed benchmarking of judgements and further refinement of the method;
- The method statement was fine tuned during the early stages of the fieldwork and any proposed changes shared, discussed and agreed between all those concerned;
- Calibration meetings were held within the two practices to ensure as much consistency as possible and issues arising as the work progressed were resolved in discussion with the independent adviser;
- The project Principals for each team took responsibility for quality control, especially in the later writing up stages of the project;
- On completion of the fieldwork and initial draft write-ups of the survey records, a preliminary ranking of the transmission line sections and subsections was conducted and informed a two-day calibration workshop in which the evidence relating to each subsection was presented and all parties reviewed and amended the assessments where there were thought to be inconsistencies. National Grid sat in on the second day of the workshop.
- Independent peer review of the outputs from the work has been carried out by [redacted] who has also pulled together the conclusions, recommendations and supporting information in this report.

1.15 Landscape and visual issues are the clear focus of this project. We have not dealt separately with impacts of the transmission lines on historic environment/heritage assets and their settings in their own right. In anticipation of the VIP Project English Heritage commissioned a separate report on Power Transmission and the Historic Environment (ECUS Ltd, 2013) which mapped and commented on the proximity of power lines in the designated landscapes to important heritage assets. This report, and the related datasets, has been available to the landscape consultants carrying out the preliminary VIP work. In the LVIA we have touched on historic environment issues in two ways:

- by using map information on World Heritage Sites and Registered Parks and Gardens in our survey record maps of conservation interests, which in turn informed our judgments about relative landscape value at a local level where "conservation interests" is among the criteria (see **APPENDIX** for details)
- by considering visual impacts on visitors to historic environment/heritage sites as one of our groups of visual receptors. Battle Abbey and the Registered Battlefield which was the site of the Battle of Hastings in the High Weald AONB, and Plas Newydd, a National Trust property and Registered Park and Garden in the Anglesey AONB provide good examples of this.

This report

1.16 This report is part of the output from the landscape and visual impact assessment project. It sets out the approach and methods of assessment and the outputs from the work, explaining the steps taken to progress from the individual surveys of transmission line subsections to a possible shortlist of candidates for further technical investigation of mitigation options. Its purpose is **to provide evidence** to inform the discussions of the Stakeholder Advisory Group. It does not therefore make firm recommendations but simply sets out the findings of the work so far.

1.17 The report is set out in two parts each containing three chapters:

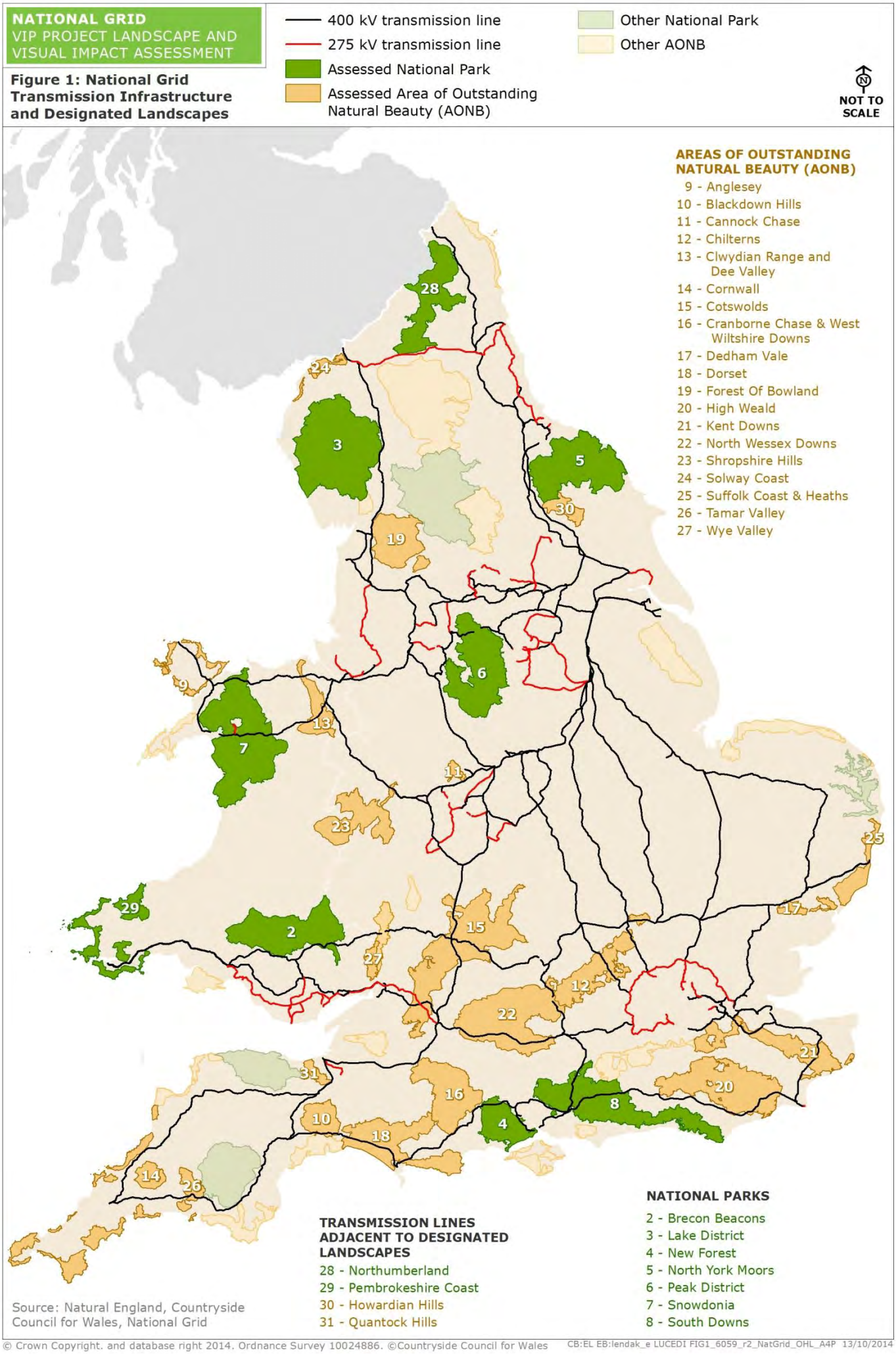
- **Part 1** provides an overview of the assessment and contains:
  - Introduction (**this Chapter**)
  - A detailed description of the assessment method (**Chapter 2**)
  - An explanation of the outputs of the assessment (**Chapter 3**)

- **Part 2** provides summary overviews of the assessments for each designated area, with whole area maps, divided into:
  - National Parks (**Chapter 4**)
  - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (**Chapter 5**)
  - Lines adjacent to designated landscapes (**Chapter 6**)

Appendix A demonstrates the way that the survey findings are recorded and the report is supplemented by a DVD containing the full set of survey record sheets and maps

NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Figure 1: National Grid Transmission Infrastructure and Designated Landscapes



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Chapter 2: Assessment Method

Overall approach to assessment

Origins of the method

2.1 The approach to the assessment of the existing transmission lines is based on the third edition of the published Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3).[1] The specific approach for VIP was developed by [redacted] for National Grid. It was initially outlined in the VIP Landscape and Visual Impact Methodology Statement, which accompanied National Grid's policy statement on using the VIP for the benefit of National Parks and AONBs. The methodology statement was amplified in the brief issued to consultants tendering to undertake all or part of the assessment work. A more detailed method statement, aimed at achieving as consistent an approach as possible to the field survey and assessment, was prepared jointly by the appointed consultants and Carys Swanwick when the assessment work began. It served as a working document and was updated on occasions in the light of initial experience. This chapter draws on both the original methodology statement, the expanded version in the brief and the working method statement to explain how the assessment has been carried out.

2.2 The overall approach is described as a 'reverse landscape and visual impact assessment' process, in that it applies the landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) approach to development which is already present in the landscape. There were considered to be considerable benefits in using the accepted and familiar approach of LVIA, which has been in existence for some time and has been scrutinised and debated through preparation and application of three editions of the published guidance between 1995 and 2013. It was, however, recognised that the general approach and methods had to be adapted to the specific needs of this project. Since the transmission lines in question are already present in the landscape, the assessment focuses on establishing the importance of an impact which is already known to exist. This is a fundamental difference to standard LVIA, where impacts, and their significance, can only be predicted.

Scope and definitions

2.3 For the purposes of this work "Visual Impact" has been interpreted as meaning landscape and visual impacts (or effects), as commonly understood in the process of landscape and visual impact assessment where:

- *landscape impacts* means impacts or effects on *"the landscape as a resource in its own right".* (GLVIA3 Para 2.21)
- *visual impacts* means impacts or effects on *"specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people".* (GLVIA3 Para 2.21)

The terms impacts and effects have been considered to be interchangeable for the purposes of this study but in general the term impacts has been used because of its prominence in the title of the Visual Impact Provision. Similarly we have used the term 'importance' to describe the level of impact, rather than 'significance', which has specific meanings related to formal Environmental Impact Assessment processes.

Overview of approach and method

2.4 The aim of the assessment project has been to identify the stretches of existing transmission lines in designated areas that have the most important adverse impacts on the landscape and on people's views and visual amenity. The overall process has been the same for both landscape and visual impacts, as defined above, but the detail has been different for each. The common steps are as follows:

- Define an appropriate study area, sufficient to cover all the potential landscape and visual impacts, for each section of line to be considered;

[1] Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition. Commissioned writer Carys Swanwick.

- Identify those aspects of the existing landscape or visual environment that are affected by the transmission line - these can be considered as the 'receptors' (in LVIA language) of the impacts;
- Identify, list and briefly describe the impacts of each specific subsection of transmission line;
- Assess the importance of each impact identified for each subsection, using a standard assessment framework
- Compare the level of importance of the impacts of each section.

Details of the assessment method

Development of the method

2.5 At the start of the assessment project a methodology development workshop was held, including joint site visits to see sections of transmission line in the North Wessex Downs AONB, to discuss and agree:

- How the reverse LVIA approach would be applied in detail; and
- Criteria and terminology for description and judgement of impacts

The workshop was attended by [redacted], as independent technical adviser to National Grid, and by staff of LUC and Gillespies, the two consultants appointed to undertake the project.

2.6 Following the workshop, a draft method statement was prepared to ensure a common approach to the assessment both between the two consultancies, and between different site assessment teams. The method was tested on site and updated as a result of the early experiences of field work.

Outline of the method

2.7 In summary the key stages in the method used were as follows:

Desk study

- Gather and map relevant baseline information on each of the sections of transmission line;
- Identify draft 'assessment subsections', based on the interaction of the line with the landscape types and character areas set out in published landscape character assessments;
- Identify the location and distribution of the visual receptor groups (groups of people) which are most affected by each subsection of the transmission lines; and
- In consultation with the National Park or AONB authority (as far as proved possible) identify appropriate representative and specific viewpoints in relation to each subsection;

Field survey

- Drive along the line and confirm or modify the assessment subsections, visual receptors and representative viewpoint locations;
- Undertake an assessment of the impacts of each subsection on the landscape, based on observations both travelling through the area and at viewpoints, and on visual receptors at selected viewpoints;
- Judge the importance of each impact using field survey sheets;

In the office

- Complete a summary sheet for each assessment subsection, including a judgement of the overall impact on the landscape and on each visual receptor group;
- Apply the agreed approach to scoring of impacts to arrive at a 'combined landscape and visual score' for each assessment subsection;
- Identify mitigation opportunities where appropriate; and
- Assemble field survey sheets, maps and photos for presentation.

Determining the appropriate scope for the work

2.8 The number of sections of transmission line, their combined length and their geographical distribution meant that the work involved was substantial. It was vital to focus resources on assembling sufficient evidence to inform the prioritisation of sections of line for mitigation, but not to become too detailed. The exercise, while based on LVIA, is not the same as a single project LVIA where a great deal of information about landscape and visual impacts is collected for usually a relatively restricted area. Bearing in mind the purposes of the VIP, and after discussion with the Stakeholder Advisory Group and with National Grid, we took two decisions to focus the work:

- The method development workshop and the site work that accompanied it, confirmed that the main impacts on landscape and visual amenity will occur within 5km of the transmission line, and the most important ones often within 2km. This is because of the decrease in visibility with distance in any situations. It was therefore agreed that the assessment would focus on receptors within 5km of the transmission line, and especially within 2km, unless exceptionally the survey team considers that there are important impacts between 5km and 10km from the transmission line (maps of each transmission line section/subsection show the extent of 1km, 2km and 5km distances from the line);

- The money that may be available through the VIP is to be spent for the benefit of the designated areas and the resident communities and visitors within them. It was therefore agreed with National Grid and the Chair of the Stakeholder Group that the focus must be on landscape and visual receptors inside the designated areas, even though some of the lines have an influence on landscape and people outside the areas. Communities outside but adjacent to the designated areas are nevertheless covered to some extent if they are users of the local footpath network extending into a designated area or if part of the settlement is actually inside the boundary. This same principle has been applied to additional lines included in the study that are outside though near to the designated areas. They have been assessed for their impact on the designated areas themselves and we have not used viewpoints outside the boundaries.

2.9 Viewpoints have been selected, aided by consultation with the National Park or AONB authority to represent the impact on key groups of visual receptors (see Paragraph 2.19). The number of viewpoints is not the same as might be expected in a single project LVIA but these are the viewpoints that it was felt would be most helpful in assessing the impact of the transmission lines and that could be covered in the time available.

Definition of assessment subsections

2.10 The sections of transmission line falling within designated landscapes range in length from 0.4km to 98km. Where these sections are over 5km in length, subdivision into shorter subsections has been necessary to reflect the varying relationships between the line and the landscape it passes through. Overlaying the route of the line on published landscape character assessments for the designated areas allowed judgements about appropriate subsections of line, initially as a desk exercise, but with confirmation, amendment or refinement on site.

2.11 The resulting segments of transmission line are referred to as 'assessment subsections' and the impact of each assessment subsection on landscape and visual receptors has been assessed. Each transmission line is identified by a National Grid code – for example, 4YX or VB – and subsections are numbered in sequence from 1 to 2, 3, or 4 or in the longest sections 1 to 8, roughly from west to east or north to south. Each subsection is then identified by three things – the name of the designated area, the section code and the subsection number - as in Cotswolds AONB 4YX.1, or South Downs National Park VB.2.

Desk study and baseline information

2.12 For each designated landscape the following information has been gathered and used to pre-populate the survey sheets with information about special qualities and the key characteristics of the relevant landscape character types or areas:

- The relevant 'special qualities' of the area, or the reasons for the designation, noting that these are not always precisely defined;

- Management plans or equivalents; and

- Landscape character assessments.

2.13 The maximum extent of a study area for each of the transmission line sections was defined as a 10km radius. Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) maps of each transmission line section, to a 10km radius, had already been prepared by National Grid and were issued to the consultants. They give an indication of areas of land which, theoretically, may be visually connected with the transmission line, based primarily on land form and topography.

2.14 For the 10km study area around each route section, the information listed below was gathered to inform the assessment process. The rationale for some of these sources of information is discussed further in Paragraphs 2.20 and 2.21):

- Nationally designated and regionally promoted walking routes, cycleways and bridleways;
- Nationally designated (or their equivalent) historic landscape assets (Registered Battlefields in England; Registered Parks and Gardens in England and Wales; and Registered Historic Landscapes in Wales) and other designated landscapes, including World Heritage Sites;
- Nationally and internationally designated natural heritage assets (Ramsar sites; SACs; SPAs; SSSIs and National Nature Reserves);
- Information about settlements, local rights of way and tourist accommodation
- tourist attractions and recreational sites identified from 1:25,000 OS maps and in discussions with officers in the designated areas;
- Scenic driving routes shown on the Philip's 2014 Road Atlas of Britain;
- Areas of recognised tranquillity, identified in tranquillity mapping produced by CPRE and in the *Wales Tranquil Areas Map* (CCW, 2009).

Identifying the landscape and visual receptors

2.15 In LVIA it is necessary to identify what are referred to (in Environmental Impact Assessment work in general and also in LVIA) as 'receptors', which are the things or people that receive or experience an impact. It this case it was important to interpret and define receptors in a way that was appropriate to the nature of the VIP project, remembering that this LVIA is concerned with structures that are already present. Receptors were identified by desk study but also reviewed in the field.

Landscape receptors

2.16 Landscape receptors are usually, especially in large planning scale work, the character of defined landscape character areas that may be influenced. The landscape receptor for each assessment subsection has been defined as the landscape which falls within the relevant ZTV and whose character is influenced by the transmission line. Early site work indicated that such landscapes are in general likely to lie within 2km of the transmission line, although they may extend further afield and it was for the assessor to determine the extent of the landscape which is significantly influenced.

2.17 Variations in landscape character were used to identify subsections of line. But it is possible that the area of landscape influenced by the transmission line may include more than one landscape character type or area which might in theory need to be considered as separate landscape receptors because the impacts of the line are different for each. However, it is also the case that different Landscape Character Assessments, which are the main sources of information about the nature of the landscape in the designated areas, often map landscape character at a different grain or level of detail. If these were used slavishly to identify impacts on all relevant landscape types identified, this could lead to overstatement of landscape effects in one case relative to another which has a less fine grained level of information available.

2.18 To overcome this the survey teams agreed that they would try to make one single assessment of landscape impact, taking an overview of relevant landscape types or areas. Decisions were made in the field on whether more than one landscape receptor should be assessed, if it proved that the relationship between the transmission line and the character of the landscape was too varied within the subsection to allow for one overall assessment. The survey sheets were designed to accommodate this but in practice this situation arose only infrequently. Where it did the highest

assessment of landscape impact was used as the overall landscape impact assessment (rather than averaging).

Visual receptors

2.19 Visual receptors are the people who live in or visit the landscape, and who experience views of the transmission line. The assessment has focussed on publicly accessible viewpoints, not on private views, and on those receptor groups who, in the language of GLVIA3, are likely to be most susceptible to the impacts of the transmission lines. The following six groups of people were considered to be the appropriate visual receptors for the assessment of impacts on views and visual amenity and were identified and assessed for each assessment subsection:

- Local communities (e.g. villages and settlements) where, given the emphasis on public benefit we considered clusters of dwellings, but not views from individual properties;
- People using nationally designated or regionally promoted footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways;
- Users of the local rights of way network and areas of open access land;
- Visitors at publically accessible sites including, for example, gardens and designed landscapes, historic sites, and other visitor attractions or outdoor recreational facilities where the landscape is an important part of the experience;
- Tourists staying at caravan parks, camp sites and other accommodation where the landscape may be an important part of the visitor experience;
- Travellers on recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes.

2.20 To ensure consistency, as far as possible, between survey teams, it was essential to use the same sources of information about the distribution of the different groups of people, rather than making use of local sources that would inevitable be highly variable as well as time consuming to access. The distribution of settlements, the extent of the rights of way network, areas of open access land, and visitor sites were determined from the 1:25,000 OS maps. National and regionally promoted trails, footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways were also identified from these maps, as was tourist accommodation, though supplemented by comments from local officers in a few cases.

2.21 The only nationally consistent source of information we could locate for scenic driving routes was the Philips 2014 Road Atlas of Great Britain. We contacted the publisher to determine the source of the scenic routes contained in the atlas. They replied that:

"they were compiled by a cartographic editor using a variety of sources - partly Ordnance Survey maps, but also general research including guide books and internet searches. So the data is subjective, but we think it is possibly the only source of scenic routes on a UK and European scale"

Viewpoint selection

2.22 Viewpoints have two roles to play in LVIA. Firstly, and most importantly, they are chosen to represent the views which are experienced by the groups of people listed above. Secondly they contribute to the assessment of landscape impacts, although they serve mainly to supplement a more general assessment made while travelling around the area. Our aim was to select a range of representative viewpoints, which covered all the different receptor groups and demonstrated the impact of the subsection of transmission line being assessed in each case. It was not our aim to identify every possible location that may have a view of the transmission line. Specific promoted viewpoints, for example those identified on the 1:25,000 OS maps were included among the viewpoints assessed. These viewpoints were discussed with officers of the National Park or AONB authorities to ensure that the most appropriate locations were considered, although it was not possible in some cases to consider every suggested viewpoint as they were too numerous.

2.23 The viewpoints used have been recorded on the maps which accompany the field survey sheets. Where possible viewpoints will be selected in places where they represent a number of different receptor groups (e.g. the edge of a settlement where a footpath leaves the village; at a car park and picnic site on a national trail; or at a trig point in an area of open access land which is also a specific promoted viewpoint).

Assessing the importance of the impacts

General framework

2.24 The key to the assessment project is judgements about the relative importance of the landscape and visual impacts identified. The approach is based on the framework set out in GLVIA3, adapted for assessment of existing transmission lines. In summary it consists of two broad steps:

Step 1: Assess against criteria

Make judgements about each identified impact in terms of four criteria:

- the **susceptibility** of the receptor to the specific impacts of the existing transmission line;
- the **value** of the receptor affected;
- the **size or scale** of the impact (how much of an effect it has);
- the **geographical extent** of the area that will be affected

Step 2: Combining the judgements

2.25 Take an overview of the different judgements made against these criteria to arrive at an overall assessment of the importance of the landscape and visual impacts of any given subsection of line. GLVIA3 suggests that judgements made against these criteria can be combined to reach a final overview judgement **either** by pair wise combinations (in which, for example, the judgements about susceptibility to change and value are combined to assess the sensitivity of the receptor; the judgements about the scale and extent of the impacts are combined to assess the magnitude of the impact; and combining the resulting judgements about sensitivity and magnitude to give an assessment of the overall importance of each impact), **or** by taking an overview of the profile of individual judgements against the criteria and bases on this making an informed professional judgement about the overall importance of each impact. Although the brief for the work referred to the first method, in practice, and based on experience in the method workshop and site visit, the final approach was based on taking an overview of the profile.

2.26 The paragraphs and tables below outline the meanings of the four criteria considered in judging importance and the way that they have been applied in the assessment when applied first to landscape impacts and then to visual impacts. In some cases a range of individual factors contribute to the judgments made against the criteria and these are spelt out in the tables. In making judgements against these various criteria and factors a verbal scale of very high, high, moderate and low has been used, requiring the surveyors to enter the appropriate code (VH, H, M or L) or tick the corresponding box in all the survey sheets while in the field, guided by the scale in the relevant table. In the tables below the colour coding of the headers matches the colour coding of the equivalent section of the survey record sheets used, which should help cross referencing.

Assessment of impacts on landscape

2.27 This means judging the impact of the subsection of transmission line on the landscape which falls within the relevant ZTV and whose character is influenced by the transmission line.

Susceptibility of the landscape receptor

2.28 Susceptibility of the landscape receptor is defined in GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.40) as:

"*the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation*."

This assessment project analyses the impacts of transmission lines which are already present, rather than a 'proposed development'. For these purposes the assessment of susceptibility therefore focuses on how well the landscape in question accommodates the existing transmission line.

2.29 **Table 2.1** sets out the factors which have been considered in judging the susceptibility of the landscape related to each assessment subsection - or its ability to accommodate the transmission line. The Table includes a note as to which of the factors are relevant to consideration of the Holford Rules, which have for a number of years been the principal guidance on routeing transmission lines. Judgments in the field use the four point verbal scale described above to

assess each factor on the extent to which it contributes to the scale from lower to higher susceptibility.

Table 2.1 Factors considered in judging the susceptibility of landscape receptors

Factor	Definition		
	Lower susceptibility	⇔	Higher susceptibility
Landform (*Holford Rules 4 and 5*)	Landforms that are smooth, regular and convex, or flat and uniform, are likely to be less susceptible to transmission lines than a dramatic or rugged landform with strong topographical variety. This is because the latter are more prominent and distinctive in character. Broad valleys and low rolling hills have greater potential to provide back clothing and enclosure, limiting the perceptibility of the transmission line.		
	The transmission line is accommodated within the landform	⇔	The transmission line conflicts with prominent or distinctive landforms
Land cover (*Holford Rules 5 and 6*)	Simple, uncluttered landscapes with sweeping lines and extensive areas of consistent ground cover are likely to be less susceptible to transmission lines than areas with more complex, irregular or intimate landscape patterns (for example, historic field systems), where pylons will be more prominent. Trees, woodlands and hedgerows although adding to complexity, may, however, help to screen views.		
	The transmission line is accommodated within the land cover	⇔	The transmission line interrupts distinctive land cover patterns
Scale	A large scale landscape, where tall pylons appear more in proportion, is likely to be of lower susceptibility than a small scale landscape, where the pylons are likely to be more dominant. Scale may relate to landform, e.g. an extensive plateau, or land cover, e.g. scale of field boundary patterns. Comparison of pylons with 'human-scale' landscape features such as individual trees and buildings may also emphasise the size of the pylons.		
	The transmission line is accommodated within the scale of the landscape	⇔	The transmission line appears out of scale within the landscape
Skylines (*Holford Rule 4*)	Landscapes that do not form a distinctive skyline or backdrop are typically less susceptible to transmission lines than those in which open, uninterrupted skylines are a distinctive feature. Pylons may be prominent on such skylines, and may interrupt the relationship between settlements and their landscape settings.		
	The transmission line does not affect skylines or settings	⇔	The transmission line affects prominent skyline(s) and/or interrupt important settings
Prominent landscape features	Landscapes with strong visual features and focal points, such as distinctive landforms or man-made landmarks such as hilltop monuments or church spires, will be more susceptible to transmission lines than landscapes which have fewer visual foci. Pylons may detract from or conflict with these prominent landscape features.		
	The transmission line does not conflict with prominent features of this landscape	⇔	The transmission line overwhelms the prominent features of this landscape
Human influence	The amount of human influence on the landscape (including nature of settlement and land use) may influence its susceptibility to the impact of transmission lines. Pylons are likely to be less intrusive in landscapes that are characterised by overt man-made structures or land use and/or by the presence of road or rail infrastructure. Commercial forestry may be seen as a more recent land use in upland landscapes that would otherwise seem more natural. The presence of transmission lines may be in conflict with more traditional settled and farmed landscapes and erode their rural character.		
	The landscape includes overt man-made structures or land use and the transmission line is relatively unobtrusive	⇔	The landscape does not include overt and the transmission line forms a substantial intrusion

Vertical infrastructure	Landscapes which are already affected by vertical built structures such as communications masts, other pylons, wind turbines, prominent chimneys, etc, may be less susceptible to the impacts of transmission lines. However, where these vertical structures are seen in close proximity to each other and to the pylons, there may be visual clutter. Other visual conflicts, resulting from the creation of a 'wirescape', may also result where multiple transmission lines converge.		
	The transmission line is seen in the context of other vertical infrastructure, but without visual clutter or visual conflicts	⇔	The transmission line is the only vertical infrastructure in this landscape or creates visual conflicts
Perceptual aspects and tranquillity (*Holford Rules 1 and 2*)	Landscapes that provide opportunities to experience a sense of relative wildness, remoteness and/or relative tranquillity, including a lack of overt man-made structures, freedom from visual and audible factors such as openness, and perceived naturalness may be more susceptible to transmission lines than landscapes that lack these qualities.		
	The transmission line does not alter the perception of this landscape, and does not erode tranquillity	⇔	The transmission line introduces man-made structures into a landscape which is otherwise remote, wild or tranquil, substantially eroding these perceptions

Value of the landscape receptor

2.30 The question of the value of landscape receptors has required careful consideration. By its very nature the work is concerned with designated landscapes judged to be of national value for their natural beauty. But the landscapes within designated areas do nevertheless vary in their character and quality. It is therefore appropriate to make a fine grained assessment of the relative value of the areas of landscape within the designated area whose character is influenced by the transmission line. This was agreed with the Stakeholder Advisory Group at the first meeting.

2.31 Assessment of relative value has drawn on statements about the special qualities contributing to the natural beauty of individual designated areas, and on appropriate interpretation of a range of established criteria/factors originally developed for the "Lakes to Dales" National Park extension project, which have subsequently been adopted by Natural England[2]. All these factors are summarised in **Table 2.2**. Judgements in the field again used the four point verbal scale described above to assess each factor in terms of the extent to which it contributes to placing the landscape on the scale from lower to higher value.

IMPORTANT NOTE

No reference to the value of an area of landscape, here or in any of the survey material, should be taken to imply that the landscape in question does not fulfil the criteria for designation as National Park or AONB.

[2] Natural England (2011) Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for Designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England. Appendix 1: Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty Criterion.

Table 2.2 Factors considered in judging value of landscape receptors

Factor	Definition		
	Lower value	⇔	Higher value
Special qualities	The extent to which the particular special qualities of the designated area are expressed in the landscape under consideration		
	The special qualities of the designated area are not clearly expressed in the area under consideration.	⇔	The special qualities of the designated area are clearly expressed in the area under consideration
Landscape quality	Intactness of the landscape is demonstrated by, among other things: presence of characteristic natural and man-made elements, which are generally in good condition; and absence of significant incongruous or detractive elements.		
	The area of landscape under consideration has relatively low landscape quality.	⇔	The area of landscape under consideration has relatively high landscape quality.
Scenic quality	General appeal of the landscape to the senses through, for example, combinations of some of the following: distinctive, dramatic or striking landform or patterns of land cover; strong aesthetic qualities which appeal to the senses, such as scale, form, colour and texture; or visual diversity which contributes to the appreciation of the landscape.		
	The area of landscape under consideration has relatively low scenic quality	⇔	The area of landscape under consideration has relatively high scenic quality
Conservation interests	The presence of nationally designated historic landscape assets: Registered Parks and Gardens; and Registered Historic Landscapes in Wales. The presence of internationally or nationally designated heritage assets: World Heritage Sites; Scheduled Monuments. The presence of internationally or nationally designated natural heritage assets: Ramsar sites; SACs; SPAs; SSSIs; and National Nature Reserves. Also ancient woodland.		
	The area of landscape under consideration has few conservation interests	⇔	The area of landscape under consideration has a high density of conservation interests
Recreational value	The extent to which experience of the landscape makes an important contribution to recreational use and enjoyment of an area. Indicated by the presence of Country Parks, visitor facilities such as car parks, and density of the local footpath network.		
	The area of landscape under consideration has low recreational value	⇔	The area of landscape under consideration has relatively high recreational value
Perceptual aspects and tranquillity	The extent to which the landscape provides opportunities to experience a sense of relative wildness, remoteness and/or relative tranquillity. This may be influenced by presence or lack of overt man-made structures, visual and audible intrusions, or perceived naturalness.		
	The area of landscape under consideration has a low relative wildness, remoteness and/or relative tranquillity, with overt man-made structures and/or visual and audible intrusion.	⇔	The area of landscape under consideration has a high relative wildness, remoteness and/or relative tranquillity, including a lack of overt man-made structures, freedom from visual and audible intrusion and a perceived naturalness.

Scale of the impact on the landscape

2.32 The scale of the impact is to a large degree self explanatory and required judgement on the degree to which the transmission line changes the character of the landscape, and how much it affects key characteristics. The scale of the impact has been judged in accordance with the scale in **Table 2.3**.

Table 2.3 Judging the scale of the impact on the landscape

Smaller scale	⇔	Larger scale
The transmission line does not alter perception of the landscape, or is accommodated satisfactorily within the landscape context (i.e. fits into the landscape). The transmission line has no impact on key characteristics.	⇔	The transmission line has a strong influence on perception of the landscape, and conflicts with, or overrides, key characteristics.

Geographical extent of the impact on the landscape

2.33 The geographical extent of the landscape which the transmission line influences is determined by the length of the route under consideration, and by the extent of the area over which its presence is apparent. This was partly indicated by the ZTV but also required consideration in the field. The geographical extent of the impact will be judged in accordance with the scale in **Table 2.4**.

Table 2.4 Judging the geographical extent of the impact on the landscape

Smaller geographical extent	⇔	Larger geographical extent
The transmission line is perceived only locally, with limited impact on wider landscape character.	⇔	The transmission line has a widespread influence on perception of the landscape, and its presence will be perceived across a wide area.

Overall importance of the impact on the landscape

2.34 The assessments against each of the individual criteria set out above (susceptibility, value, scale and geographical extent) and their contributing factors where appropriate (susceptibility and value) were then reviewed together to provide an overall profile of the impact on the landscape. Informed professional assessment of this overall profile determined the importance of the impact with **Table 2.5** providing guidance on how the four point verbal scale should be applied.

2.36 The overall assessment of the importance of landscape impacts was then carried forward into the final 'scoring' part of the process.

Table 2.5 Judging the importance of the impact on the landscape

Lesser importance	⇔	Greater importance
The transmission line is reasonably well accommodated within the landscape, and does not conflict with key characteristics. It does not substantially undermine the special qualities or valued characteristics of the landscape. The impact is small in scale, and limited in its geographical extent.	⇔	The transmission line conflicts with the character of the landscape, forming an intrusive feature which substantially erodes the valued characteristics or special qualities. The impact is large in scale, and widespread in its geographical extent.

Assessment of impacts on views and visual amenity

2.37 The assessment of impacts on visual amenity has been based on a two-stage process:

- Firstly representative viewpoints, chosen to represent the experience of one or more of the receptor groups listed in Paragraph 2.19, were visited, and at each location the value of the view and the scale and importance of the impact were judged. Susceptibility of the receptor groups is not assessed separately as all the groups included are, as defined in GLVIA3, considered to be highly susceptible by virtue of their degree of probable engagement with the landscape.
- Secondly, the impact on each receptor group was considered, with reference to both the individual viewpoint assessments representing that group and the distribution of the people in that group, to arrive at an overall judgement of the importance of the impact on each group.

Value of the view at individual viewpoints

2.38 Assessment of the value of a view is determined with reference to:

- Planning designations specific to views;
- Views which are important in relation to special qualities of the designated landscapes or which are identified in specific studies of views;[3]
- Views recorded as important in relation to heritage assets (such as designed views recorded in citations of Registered Parks and Gardens);
- Appearance of views in guide books or on tourist maps, or provision of facilities for their enjoyment such as parking and interpretation; and
- Judgements on site about the relative quality of the view.

Judgements on the value of views have been judged as of very high, high, moderate or low value guided by the scale in **Table 2.6**.

Table 2.6 Judging the value of the view from each viewpoint

Lower value	⇔	Higher value
Views which are not formally recognised or promoted, or are not associated with designated historic landscape assets or visitor facilities, but which are likely to be valued at a local community level	⇔	Views which are of recognised importance, including: • Designated views or scenic routes, advertised with road signs or highlighted on OS maps and/or in tourist information • Views recognised or protected in relation to the special qualities of the area, or nationally designated historic landscape assets

Scale of the impact on the view at individual viewpoints

2.39 This depends on:

- The dominance of the transmission line in the view, including the proportion of the view which it occupies, its proximity to the viewer, and whether views are full, partial or glimpsed;
- The number of pylons visible and whether they are seen side-on, 'stacked' against one another, skylined or back-clothed; and
- The degree of contrast, or integration, between the transmission line and the wider visual context, in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture.

2.40 Although the survey and assessment has been undertaken in spring and summer seasons the survey teams have needed to be alert to the worst-case situation during the winter when the

[3] For example, the Blackdown Hills AONB has published "What makes a view?", a study of public value attached to particular views.

scale of impact will potentially be greater with minimal screening of views by vegetation and deciduous trees. Allowance has also been made, as far as possible, for weather effects on visibility. Apart from a period after Easter at the start of the surveys, the weather has generally been good so this has not been a major obstacle, though some photographs are not as clear as they could be. Taking account of these factors the scale of the impact has been judged to be very high, high, moderate or low, guided by the scale in **Table 2.7**.

Table 2.7 Judging the scale of the impact at the viewpoint

Smaller scale	⇔	Larger scale
The transmission line is not a prominent feature within the view, or is reasonably well absorbed by the visual context. The transmission line may be relatively distant or seen at an oblique angle.	⇔	The transmission line is in close proximity to the viewer, in a direct line of vision, or affecting a substantial part of the view. The transmission line is prominent within, or contrasts with, the visual context, and detracts from its visual amenity.

Assessing the importance of the impact at the viewpoint

2.41 Assessment of the importance of the impact on views and visual amenity at individual viewpoints has been based on an overview of the value of the view and the scale of the impact. Appropriate weight has been given according to the aspects that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to the overall impact. **Table 2.8** provides guidance on judging the relative importance of each impact. It should be noted that while the assessments of value of views and scale of impact are carried forward into the assessment of the overall importance of the impact on visual receptors (see below) the overall assessment of the importance of the impacts at individual viewpoints is not. This information may however be useful if there are particularly adverse impacts at a viewpoint that could be mitigated by local measures.

Table 2.8 Judging the importance of the impact at the viewpoint

Lesser importance	⇔	Greater importance
The transmission line is accommodated within the view an/ or is a small feature within a view that does not have recognised value.	⇔	The transmission line is prominent or contrasting within the view, and/ or is a large feature within a view that is promoted or advertised.

Assessing the importance of the impact on visual receptor groups

2.42 For each of the six visual receptor groups listed in Paragraph 2.19, an overall assessment has then been made (Step 2 above) of the importance of the visual impact of the transmission line on that group. This has drawn on the assessments of value of the view and scale of impact at each viewpoint location which represents that group, and is based on an informed professional judgement, generalising from the relevant individual viewpoint assessments and drawing on guidance in GLVIA.

2.43 The overall value of views and scale of impacts for each of the visual receptor groups has been recorded on a summary visual impact sheet. The sheet has also been used to record a broad non-quantitative judgement on the number of people likely to be affected and the geographical extent over which the impact will occur, drawing on map information and observation. The judgements on geographical extent of the visual impact were guided by the scale in **Table 2.9.**

Table 2.9 Judging the geographical extent of the visual impact

Smaller geographical extent	⇔	Larger geographical extent
The transmission line, is seen at only one or two locations or by a relatively small number of viewers	⇔	The transmission line is seen at multiple locations across a wide area, or is seen continuously along a route, or by a large number of viewers

2.44 Finally, an overall assessment of the importance of the impact on each visual receptor group has been made. This was based on taking an overview of the overall profile resulting from the generalised assessment of scale of impact and value of views, in turn informed by the viewpoint assessments, combined with judgements about the numbers of people potentially affected and the geographical extent of the impact. Appropriate weight has been given according to the aspects which are considered to be making the greatest contribution to the overall impact and the scale in **Table 2.10** has provided guidance on judging the relative importance of each impact. The assessment of the importance of the visual impact on each of the six receptor groups has been carried forward into the final 'scoring' part of the process so that there will be a 'score' for each of the six visual receptor groups.

Table 2.10 Judging importance of the impact on visual amenity of the receptor group

Lesser importance	⇔	Greater importance
The transmission line, is seen at only a few locations, affects relatively few receptors and is limited in geographical extent. The transmission line is generally well accommodated in views and the impact is typically small in scale.	⇔	The transmission line, is seen at many locations, affects many receptors and is widespread in geographical extent. The transmission line is prominent in views and the impact is typically large in scale.

2.45 In assessing the overall profile of the impact on receptor groups across the assessment subsection, notes have been made of any locations (which may be only one or two towers near a community) where the transmission line may have a particularly important impact on visual amenity, even though the impact of the remainder of the transmission line in that particular subsection may be considered of lesser importance.

Assessing the overall importance of landscape and visual impacts on assessment subsections

2.46 At the end of the survey and assessment process each assessment subsection had been assessed in terms of:

- overall impact on landscape character, usually resulting in a single judgement for each assessment subsection;
- overall impacts on those of the six visual receptor groups (people) identified as being relevant for the subsection.

2.47 Although not generally recommended in LVIA, in this case some form of simple scoring was considered necessary in order to achieve the right level of differentiation between the landscape and visual impacts of different sections of transmission lines in different locations. This was essential to provide useful evidence to aid decision making. The final step in the process was therefore to convert these assessments into scores so that the assessment subsections can be rank ordered in terms of the overall level of importance of the impacts, allowing potential priorities to be identified. The 'scores' have been allocated to the different levels of landscape and visual impacts.

- Impacts of very high importance 10 points
- Impacts of high importance 6 points
- Impacts of moderate importance 3 points
- Impacts of low importance 1 points

2.48 These figures were selected to give a reasonable degree of differentiation between subsections without extending the scale unreasonably - hence a very high assessment scores 4 more than a high assessment which in turn is 3 points more than a moderate assessment, which in turn is 2 points more than a low assessment. Other figures or ranges could have been used but these seemed sensible and to provide useful outcomes. At the initial benchmarking and method development workshop it was agreed that assessments of very high impact, scoring 10, would be reserved for the worst cases of landscape or visual impact.

2.49 The scores for landscape and visual impact then form an assessment profile for each subsection, which has been recorded on the front overview page of each survey record. The fictional example below is based on a subsection judged to have a moderate impact on landscape character (Ls), a moderate visual impact on communities (COM) and on tourist accommodation (ACC), a high visual impact on users of rights of way or access land (ROW/OAL) and on visitors to publicly accessible sites and attractions where landscape is an important part of the experience (VIS) and a very high visual impact on users of promoted trails and cycleways (TC). There is no scenic route to experience visual impact. This results in an overall landscape score for this subsection of 3, an overall visual score, adding together all affected groups, of 28 and an overall combined score for both landscape and visual effects of 31.

Table 2.11 Example of scoring summary on survey record sheet

Importance of landscape impacts			**Importance of visual impacts**							**Combined L+V score**
Ls. Score	**Ls. score**	**Overall Ls. Score**	**COM**	**TC**	**ROW/ OAL**	**VIS**	**ACC**	**SR**	**Overall visual score**	
3		3	3	10	6	6	3	/	28	**31**

Identification of mitigation opportunities

2.50 The original brief for the assessment project did not include an assessment of mitigation opportunities. At the outset, however, it became clear that it would be a missed opportunity if the surveyors did not make some attempt to capture observations about what sort of mitigation might be desirable or appropriate. Initially the emphasis was on noting possible mitigation in cases where there were high or very high impacts either landscape or visual. This is what the subsection survey sheets focus on, with some mentions of the scope to mitigate high or very high impacts at specific viewpoints. These comments have been summarised in the individual accounts of designated areas in **Part 2** of this report.

2.51 After the work had commenced and the surveys were well underway, discussions in the Stakeholder Advisory Group led to the emergence of a new emphasis on the potential for the VIP to be used to fund wider landscape enhancements in the areas affected by the transmission lines but without necessarily having the highest levels of impact. General comments on this approach have been incorporated in the accounts of individual designated areas in **Part 2** of this report but not, on the whole, on the individual survey records.

2.52 References to mitigation opportunities can therefore be found either in the survey records or in **Part 2** of this report, and may touch on one or more of the following options:

Engineering options

- Undergrounding - only considered for assessment subsections which have high or very high levels of impacts on landscape or visual receptors or both;
- Modifications to transmission lines, for example by changes to alignment, by substituting different pylons (lower height designs or perhaps T-pylons) - usually only considered for

assessment subsections which have high or very high levels of impacts on landscape or visual receptors or both;

- Painting of pylons in lighter colours where the structures are seen mainly against the sky on skylines - although it is by no means clear whether or not that could be effective or practical and further research is needed.

Landscape options

- Tree planting or other forms of screening - considered for any cases where it might be feasible to mitigate visual impacts on visual receptor groups at specific viewpoints;
- Enhancements to the wider landscape by interventions that are in line with landscape strategies or management plans for the landscape character types/ areas - considered in very broad terms for any cases where such measures (e.g. planting to extend or recreate beech hangers in the Chilterns) might be feasible to mitigate landscape impacts on particular landscape character types/areas, especially if they would also contribute to mitigation of specific visual impacts. Mention of these opportunities is in the main generic rather than prescriptive.

Chapter 3: Outcomes of the Assessment

Assessment sections and subsections

3.1 A total of 50 sections of line have been assessed in 26 designated areas and have been further divided into 122 subsections, each separately assessed. In addition a further 6 sections of line that run adjacent to 4 additional designated landscapes have been assessed and divided into 8 subsections. The method of assessment outlined in Chapter 2 has been applied as consistently as possible to all the subsections identified and a full survey record sheet completed for each. An example is included as the **Appendix**, showing as far as possible how the different sections link together and inform the top overview sheet. The sheets are working field record sheets but in order to make them accessible all the entries have been retyped in the office to make them legible - a very time consuming procedure. The record sheets relating to these subsections add up to more than 1000 pages of text, photographs and maps and so are being made available electronically.

3.2 Each subsection record consists of:

- A set of colour coded survey record sheets, comprising:
  - An overview sheet summarising the landscape and visual context and the assessment;
  - Baseline sheets containing key information about the special qualities of the landscape and key characteristics of the relevant landscape character types or areas abstracted from appropriate documents, and a list of the viewpoints to be assessed in the field and the visual receptor groups that they represent;
  - Landscape assessment sheets comprising assessments of susceptibility and value and an overview sheet combining these with assessments of the scale and geographical extent of the impact on the landscape;
  - Visual receptor assessment sheets drawing on the individual viewpoint assessments to summarise judgements of the visual impact on relevance visual receptor groups;
  - Viewpoint assessment sheets assessing the impact of the transmission line on people at specific viewpoints;
- A selection of photographs taken from each viewpoint, with a limit of no more than two per viewpoint, with others filed for reference and available if required.

3.3 For each transmission line route section, the outputs also include:

- A set of maps illustrating:
  - The location and extent of assessment subsections and the viewpoint locations related to each subsection, showing approximate angle of view;
  - The character of the landscape through which the line passes, based on available landscape character assessments;
  - Other conservation interests in the area which contribute to an understanding of landscape value but may also be relevant at a later stage as constraints maps;
  - The extent of the ZTV (Zone of Theoretical Visibility) for the line section, including the number of pylons/towers visible in different locations.

Comparing relative importance of impacts by subsection

3.4 Summarising the evidence from the survey to show the relative importance of the landscape and visual impacts for each subsection of transmission line has been carried out through a 5 step process, summarised in the paragraphs below.

Step 1

3.5 All the individual scores for overall landscape impact, impact on different visual receptor groups, overall visual impact and combined landscape and visual impact have been abstracted from the overview sheet on the survey records for each subsection and entered into an Excel spreadsheet.

They were initially arranged in alphabetical order of designated area, then by section code and then by subsection number. This spreadsheet is included as **Table 3.1** at the end of this chapter and allows an overview of each designated area and the relative scoring of each subsection in that area. Based on this the subsections were initially divided into three categories based on the combined landscape and visual score - those scoring 0-9, those scoring 10-19, and those scoring 20 or more. Those scoring 20 or above were considered to have high or very high importance impacts.

3.6 The number of subsections scoring 20 or more was quite substantial in number at 29 and so the high-scoring subsections were further divided, using 25 as the break point between high and very high impacts. The final scoring bands were then converted into colour coding as shown on the table and the key. Purple denotes subsections scoring 25 or more, denoting very high combined landscape and visual scores. Red denotes subsections scoring from 20 to 24, denoting high combined landscape and visual scores.

Step 2

3.7 The resulting alphabetical and colour-coded list was then sorted and ranked, using the Excel custom sort function, by combined landscape and visual score for all the subsections. The resulting table is included as **Table 3.2** at the end of this chapter and gives an initial indication of the distribution of scores from highest to lowest, grouping together the highest scoring purple subsections and red subsections. Where scores were the same the subsections were listed alphabetically by the name of the designated area. In this first ranking exercise there were 15 purple subsections and 14 red subsections.

Step 3

3.8 The initial alphabetical and ranked tables were then examined in detail to understand the pattern of scores and to explore which individual scores were contributing most to the positions in the ranking. This led to two conclusions:

- High scores can arise either because one (or very occasionally more than one) of the impacts on landscape or visual receptors has been given a score of 10 signifying a very high impact, or because a score of 6, signifying a high impact, has been given to several of the receptors. Many of the subsections in the red and purple section have at least one score of 10, signifying a high or very high impact, although a number also have high impact scores across several receptors.
- Relatively few of the subsections had been given scores for impacts on users of tourist accommodation or users of scenic routes. This is because, as in Paragraphs 2.20 and 2.21, a rule of only recording those shown respectively on the 1:25,000 OS maps or the Phillips 2014 Road Atlas was applied to ensure consistency. Only 15 subsections were given a score for tourist accommodation and only 23 for scenic routes. The scores for these receptors, especially if scored at 6 for high impact, therefore seemed to have a disproportionate effect on final score and ranking.

Step 4

3.9 As a result a new alphabetical Excel spreadsheet was prepared, which excluded the scores for tourist accommodation and scenic routes. This too was then colour-coded and sorted by the combined landscape and visual score and the resulting tables are included as **Table 3.3** and **Table 3.4** (at end of this chapter). Once again where scores were equal the subsections were listed in alphabetical order by name of the designated area. This had the following effects:

- The total number of very high or high-scoring (purple and red) subsections decreased from 29 to 23;
- The number of very high scoring (purple) subsections decreased from 15 to 12;
- The number of high scoring (red) subsections decreased from 14 to 11;

3.10 The same twelve subsections emerged as purple in both the first and second approaches to the rankings but some subsections changed position in the rankings. Having reviewed both rankings at the final calibration workshop it was agreed that the second ranking method, and the second

set of Excel tables, excluding scores for tourist accommodation and scenic routes, is the most reliable source, although both sets of rankings may be helpful in informing discussions about a short list of subsections to be taken forward for more detailed investigation. **Table 3.5** compares the ranking position and colour coding of all the subsections that are purple or red in both ranking tables and shows how their position has changed. It should be noted that:

- Three subsections in the North Wessex Downs drop out of the purple range into red;
- Six subsections drop from the red range into the amber. All six had scores for tourist accommodation and scenic routes which, relative to the scores for impacts on other receptors, moved them up the list on the first ranking. They were:
  - Lake District ZX.1
  - Clwydian Range and Dee Valley ZK.2
  - Suffolk Coast and Heaths 4ZW.1/4ZX.1
  - Snowdonia XO.1
  - Cotswolds ZF.3
  - Kent Downs ZY.1

Table 3.5 Comparison of effects of different rankings on top ranked sections

Name of area	Line Section	Sub-section	Position First Ranking*	Position Second Ranking**	Change in Position
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	1	1	1	0
Peak District NP	4ZO	4	3=	2	Up 1
Dorset AONB	4YA	7	5=	3=	Up 2
Peak District NP	4ZO	2	5=	3=	Up 2
Peak District NP	4ZO	3	5=	3=	Up 2
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	3	11=	6=	Up 5
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	4	11=	6=	Up 5
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	1	5=	6=	Down 1
Dorset AONB	4VN	2	13=	9=	Up 4
Dorset AONB	4YA	5	13=	9=	Up 4
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	1	3	9=	Down 6
New Forest NP	4YB	2	2	9=	Down 7
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	2	16=	13=	Up 3
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	2	5=	13=	Down 8
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	1	16=	13=	Up 3
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	6	5=	13=	Down 8
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	2	16=	13=	Down 3
Chilterns AONB	ZL	2	22=	18=	Up 4
Dorset AONB	4YA	8	22=	18=	Up 4
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	5	13=	18=	Down 5
Snowdonia NP	ZK	1	16=	18=	Down 2
New Forest NP	4YB	1	16=	22	Down 6
Anglesey AONB	4ZA	1	26	23	Up 3

3.11 At this point it is also important to note that there are particular circumstances relating to the Lake District. The assessment used in the tables is based upon the impact of transmission line section ZX on the National Park with the boundary as currently defined. This boundary is,

however, currently under review under the "Lakes to Dales" National Park extension exercise. A public inquiry has been held and a recommendation submitted to the Secretary of State, but the final decision is still awaited. It may be imminent, or it may be delayed. To reflect this uncertainty an assessment has also been made of the impact of line ZX on the extended National Park. In this case two subsections have been identified – ZX.1 and ZX.2. In this assessment the landscape and visual impact score for ZX.1 increases to 27 including tourist accommodation and scenic routes, and to 21 excluding these scores. This would mean that in the first ranking approach, including all the scores, ZX.1 would be in the purple section of the ranking and in the second ranking approach it would be in the red section. At present in the absence of a final decision on the boundary the existing assessment is included in the tables but the alternative assessment is available should a decision on the boundary be announced in the near future.

3.12 Assessments have also been made of the additional lines adjacent to designated areas that were put forward by some authorities. Four areas were considered - the Howardian Hills and the Quantock Hills AONBs and the Pembrokeshire and Northumberland National Parks. In the first two cases there was a single line near to the boundary, in the Pembrokeshire National Park case there were two parallel lines, and in the Northumberland National Park case there were two separate lines in different locations. Exactly the same method of assessment was used as for the lines within the designated areas in that the focus was on the landscape and visual impacts on receptors within the designated area. The scoring of these lines is summarised in **Table 3.6**. It is clear that none of the subsections score highly enough to appear in the purple or red range alongside the lines within the designated areas that fall into these categories.

Table 3.6 Assessment table for lines adjacent to designated areas

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes				
Howardian Hills AONB	4VC	1	1	1	1	3	3	/	/	8	9	8.74	
Northumberland NP	XB	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	5.80	
Northumberland NP	XB	2	6	/	3	3	1	/	/	7	15	3.40	
Northumberland NP	4ZY	1	6	3	6	3	/	/	/	12	18	7.80	
Pembrokeshire NP	4YV/4YW	1	1	3	3	1	6	1	/	14	15	33.70	
Quantock Hills AONB	ZZ	1	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	3	4	9.10	
Quantock Hills AONB	ZZ	2	3	/	/	3	/	/	/	3	6	6.90	
Quantock Hills AONB	ZZ	3	1	1	3	1	1	/	/	6	7	6.10	

Step 5

3.13 Having reviewed and compared both versions of the ranking table, and considered the relative scores for the lines adjacent, the purple subsections in the second ranking have been used to suggest an indicative shortlist of subsections of line to be taken forward for further investigation.

As a further check separate listings were also made of subsections scoring 10, denoting very high impact, for either landscape impact or visual impact on one or more of the visual receptor groups. These are listed below:

Score of 10 for Landscape Impact

Dorset AONB	4YA.5
Dorset AONB	4YA.8
Kent Downs AONB	ZY.1
New Forest NP	4YB.2
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM.4
Peak District NP	4ZO.3
Snowdonia NP	4ZC.1

Score of 10 for Visual Impact on one or more groups

High Weald AONB	4ZJ.1
Peak District NP	4ZO.4
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU.3
Peak District NP	4ZO.3

3.14 The subsections with very high landscape scores are all in the purple ranked subsections with the exception of Dorset 4YA.8, which is red, and Kent Downs ZY.1 which is in the amber list. This latter subsection is a good example of a situation where the impact on the landscape is high but where there are only moderate visual impacts. The subsections with very high visual impacts on a particular group are all in the purple ranked subsections. There is one subsection, Peak District 4ZO.3, which scores 10 for both landscape and visual impacts, in this case on users of promoted trails and cycleways.

3.15 Some might argue that the scoring system is biased in favour of visual impacts on people rather than landscape impacts because the final assessment and ranking is based on one landscape score and a possible four visual receptor group scores. The reasons for only having one landscape score have been explained in Paragraphs 2.16 - 2.18. Options to remove any bias resulting from use of only one score for landscape would have been:

- To average the scores for visual impact rather than adding them together;
- To weight the one landscape score by multiplying it by four to match the number of visual scores.

3.16 Neither seemed to be desirable - the first would lead to a narrowing of the range of combined scores, making it much more difficult to arrive at a sensible ranking. The second would give disproportionately greater weight to the subsections scoring ten for landscape impact and relegate any with low landscape scores and one or more high visual impact scores. A test ranking based on 4x weighting of landscape scores showed that 11 of the original top twelve ranked subsections under the preferred ranking approach remained in the equivalent of the purple section, although in a different order, with all the subsections with very high landscape impact scores moving to the top. One subsection (High Weald ZJ.1) drops down to the amber list because it has a low landscape impact score but very high visual impact score for one group. Two subsections move up to the purple list, Dorset 4YA.8 and Kent Downs ZY.1, because both have very high landscape impact scores. Given that the Visual Impact Provision was initially aimed primarily at visual amenity, as indicated by the title, and given the pros and cons of alternative approaches to ranking, the approach adopted seems wholly appropriate in the way that it balances landscape and visual interests.

Suggested shortlist of subsections for further investigation

3.17 At the end of the assessment exercise twelve subsections have emerged as having the highest level of combined landscape and visual impacts. They represent eight designated landscapes, including four AONBs and four National Parks, and their distribution covers several different parts of England and Wales. The designated areas are, in alphabetical order:

AONBs	National Parks
Dorset	Brecon Beacons
High Weald	New Forest
North Wessex Downs	Peak District
Tamar Valley	Snowdonia

3.18 The twelve subsections, listed in order of combined landscape and visual impact score and by alphabetical order where scores are the same, are:

Designated Area	Subsection	Score
Tamar Valley AONB	YF.1	30
Peak District NP	4ZO.4	28
Dorset AONB	4YA.7	27
Peak District NP	4ZO.2	27
Peak District NP	4ZO.3	27
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU.3	26
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM.4	26
Snowdonia NP	4ZC.1	26
Dorset AONB	4VN.2	25
Dorset AONB	4YA.5	25
High Weald AONB	4ZJ.1	25
New Forest NP	4YB.2	25

3.19 Based only on the evidence from the landscape and visual impact assessment this list provides a basis for consideration by the Stakeholder Advisory Group leading to decisions on next steps. There are a number of points to note about the list:

- Some of the subsections are contiguous or in close proximity to other subsections of the same transmission line and may need to be linked to form appropriate study areas for further technical assessment;
- There are significant environmental designations in close proximity to some of these subsections. These will need to be carefully considered in considering potential environmental effects of any mitigation proposals;
- There are smaller distribution lines in reasonable proximity to some of the subsections, which means that if mitigation works are carried out to the transmission lines there will still be residual landscape and visual impacts from the distribution lines.

3.19 **Part 2** of this report contains summary overviews of the transmission lines and subsections by designated area together with maps showing the location of the transmission line sections and subsections colour coded with their score. Text and maps are based on the second ranking table, excluding scores for tourist accommodation and scenic routes and bold text indicates where there are very high or high impact assessments either for combined landscape and visual impact or for individual landscape impacts or for individual visual impacts, or both. Detailed maps showing the location and context of the sections and subsections, including landscape character, conservation designations and maps of Zones of Theoretical Visibility are available in the survey records.

3.20 For interpretation of Tables 3.1 – 3.4 please refer to the key below

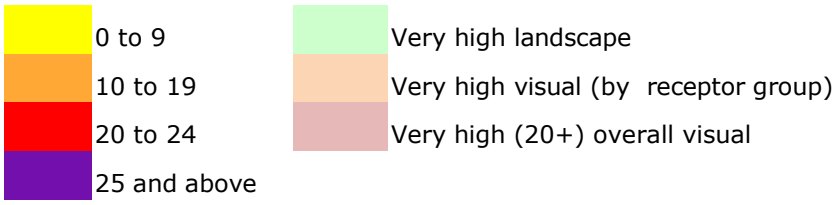

Table 3.1 Alphabetical assessment table (including accommodation and scenic routes)

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Anglesey AONB	4ZA	1	6	1	6	1	6	/	/	14	20	1.00		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	/	2	3	1.80		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	2	3	3	1	3	3	/	/	10	13	5.10		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	7.80		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	5.50		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	2	6	1	3	6	/	/	/	10	16	5.10		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	3	6	10	3	6	1	/	/	20	26	4.70		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	4	3	3	1	3	3	/	/	10	13	5.00		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	1	1	1	1	1	1	/	/	4	5	1.20		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	2	3	1	/	1	/	/	/	2	5	0.90		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Chilterns AONB	4TA	1	3	3	6	3	3	/	/	15	18	5.10		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	2	3	3	6	3	3	/	/	15	18	6.80		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	1	3	1	1	3	1	/	/	6	9	2.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	2	1	3	/	3	1	/	/	7	8	4.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	3	3	3	6	3	/	/	/	12	15	5.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	1	3	1	3	3	3	/	/	10	13	3.50		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	2	6	6	6	3	1	/	/	16	22	12.40		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	3	3	3	3	3	1	/	/	10	13	6.30		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	4ZB	1	3	3	6	6	/	/	/	15	18	2.50		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	14	17	13.50		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	2	6	3	3	3	3	1	3	16	22	4.30		
Cornwall AONB	4VW	1	3	3	1	1	/	3	/	8	11	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	1	6	3	6	3	1	/	/	13	19	17.80		
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	2	3	3	/	3	/	/	/	6	9	10.00		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	4.50		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	2	3	3	1	3	1	/	/	8	11	12.93		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	1	6	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	18	2.30		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	2	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	11.00		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	3	6	3	3	1	1	/	/	8	14	6.10		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	1	3	3	3	3	3	1	/	13	16	6.20		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	2	6	3	6	3	6	/	/	18	24	16.60		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	3	6	3	6	1	3	1	/	14	20	15.60		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	1	6	3	3	1	3	/	/	10	16	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	2	6	3	3	3	1	/	/	10	16	3.80		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4VN	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	1.70		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4YB	1	3	1	/	1	/	/	/	2	5	0.60		
Dedham Vale AONB	4YL	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	2.90		
Dorset AONB	4VN	1	6	3	6	3	/	/	/	12	18	2.70		
Dorset AONB	4VN	2	6	1	6	6	6	/	/	19	25	3.60		
Dorset AONB	4YA	1	3	/	3	3	/	/	/	6	9	1.50		
Dorset AONB	4YA	2	6	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	15	7.60		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Dorset AONB	4YA	3	3	1	3	3	/	1	3	11	14	3.90		
Dorset AONB	4YA	4	6	/	/	6	1	/	/	7	13	4.70		
Dorset AONB	4YA	5	10	6	/	6	3	/	/	15	25	2.60		
Dorset AONB	4YA	6	3	1	3	3	/	/	/	7	10	5.50		
Dorset AONB	4YA	7	6	3	6	6	6	/	/	21	27	5.10		
Dorset AONB	4YA	8	10	/	6	6	/	/	/	12	22	2.30		
Forest of Bowland AONB	4TC	1	3	3	3	3	1	/	1	11	14	0.91		
Forest of Bowland AONB	ZX	1	3	3	3	3	1	/	1	11	14	5.50		
High Weald AONB	4VM	1	3	1	3	3	/	/	/	7	10	6.30		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	1	3	3	6	3	10	3	/	25	28	4.50		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	2	3	1	3	3	/	/	/	7	10	7.90		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	3	6	1	/	1	/	/	3	5	11	8.80		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	4	6	1	6	/	/	/	/	7	13	5.30		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	1	3	3	3	1	1	/	/	8	11	3.70		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	2	1	1	/	3	/	/	/	4	5	0.96		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	3	1	1	3	3	1	/	/	8	9	2.00		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	4	1	1	1	1	1	/	/	4	5	3.30		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	5	3	3	/	3	/	/	/	6	9	3.50		
Kent Downs AONB	VO	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	2.50		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	1	10	3	3	3	/	/	1	10	20	8.70		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	2	1	3	/	1	1	/	1	6	7	3.50		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	3	3	3	6	3	/	/	1	13	16	3.00		
Lake District NP (current)	ZX	1	6	3	/	3	6	/	6	18	24	3.50		
New Forest NP	4YB	1	6	6	6	3	/	3	/	18	24	2.90		
New Forest NP	4YB	2	10	3	/	6	6	/	6	21	31	3.60		
New Forest NP	4YB	3	6	3	/	6	3	/	/	12	18	6.70		
New Forest NP	4YB	4	1	/	/	/	3	/	/	3	4	0.25		
New Forest NP	4YD	1	1	1	3	3	/	/	1	8	9	3.50		
New Forest NP	4YD	2	3	/	3	3	3	1	1	11	14	7.40		
New Forest NP	4YD	3	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	3	4	2.00		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	1	3	3	/	3	3	/	1	10	13	4.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	2	6	3	6	6	3	/	3	21	27	3.10		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	3	6	6	/	6	/	/	/	12	18	3.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	4	3	6	/	6	/	/	/	12	15	4.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	5	3	3	/	3	3	/	/	9	12	1.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	1	6	3	6	3	6	/	/	18	24	2.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	2	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	8.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	5.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	4	10	6	1	6	3	/	/	16	26	6.80		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	5	6	6	1	6	3	/	3	19	25	5.60		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	6	6	6	6	3	3	/	3	21	27	2.40		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	7	3	6	3	3	3	/	/	15	18	10.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	8	3	6	3	3	3	/	/	15	18	7.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	9	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	5.20		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	10	6	6	1	3	3	/	/	13	19	5.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	11	3	3	/	3	/	/	/	6	9	1.90		
North York Moors NP	4VC	1	3	1	1	1	/	/	/	3	6	0.80		
Peak District NP	4ZO	1	3	1	6	1	/	/	/	8	11	2.63		
Peak District NP	4ZO	2	6	6	6	3	6	/	/	21	27	2.37		
Peak District NP	4ZO	3	10	1	10	6	/	/	/	17	27	3.60		
Peak District NP	4ZO	4	6	3	10	6	3	/	/	22	28	5.56		
Peak District NP	4ZO	5	6	3	6	1	/	/	/	10	16	2.85		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	1	3	1	1	1	3	/	/	6	9	1.60		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	2	3	1	3	1	3	/	/	8	11	2.60		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	1	6	1	6	3	3	/	/	13	19	6.73		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	2	3	/	6	6	/	/	/	12	15	7.16		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	3	3	/	/	3	3	/	/	6	9	2.64		
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	1	10	3	6	6	1	1	/	17	27	7.07		
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	2	6	1	3	3	1	/	3	11	17	2.88		
Snowdonia NP	XO	1	6	3	1	3	3	1	3	14	20	6.84		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	1	6	1	3	6	6	1	1	18	24	11.49		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	2	6	1	/	3	3	/	/	7	13	6.88		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	3	3	3	/	6	1	1	/	11	14	5.25		
Solway Coast AONB	T	1	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	3	4	0.40		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Solway Coast AONB	ZV	1	3	1	1	3	3	/	/	8	11	0.40		
South Downs NP	4VF	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	10.50		
South Downs NP	4VF	2	6	3	3	3	1	/	3	13	19	6.40		
South Downs NP	4VF	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	/	11	14	7.30		
South Downs NP	4VF	4	3	3	3	3	1	/	1	11	14	6.20		
South Downs NP	4VF	5	3	1	3	3	6	/	1	14	17	6.20		
South Downs NP	4YC	1	3	3	3	1	/	/	/	7	10	2.50		
South Downs NP	4YC	2	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	7.30		
South Downs NP	4YE	1	1	/	3	3	/	/	/	6	7	2.00		
South Downs NP	VB	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	12.80		
South Downs NP	VB	2	6	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	18	4.00		
South Downs NP	VB	3	3	3	6	3	3	/	/	15	18	6.60		
Suffolk Coasts & Heaths	4ZW / 4ZX	1	3	3	6	3	3	3	/	18	21	11.50		
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	1	6	6	6	6	6	3	/	27	33	4.20		
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	2	6	3	6	/	/	/	/	9	15	3.60		
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	1	3	3	1	3	3	/	/	10	13	1.90		
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	2	6	6	3	6	3	/	/	18	24	4.00		

Table 3.2 Ranked assessment table (including accommodation and scenic routes)

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	1	6	6	6	6	6	3	/	27	33	4.20	1	
New Forest NP	4YB	2	10	3	/	6	6	/	6	21	31	3.60	2	
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	1	3	3	6	3	10	3	/	25	28	4.50	3=	
Peak District NP	4ZO	4	6	3	10	6	3	/	/	22	28	5.56	3=	
Dorset AONB	4YA	7	6	3	6	6	6	/	/	21	27	5.10	5=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	2	6	3	6	6	3	/	3	21	27	3.10	5=	

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	6	6	6	6	3	3	/	3	21	27	2.40	5=	
Peak District NP	4ZO	2	6	6	6	3	6	/	/	21	27	2.37	5=	
Peak District NP	4ZO	3	10	1	10	6	/	/	/	17	27	3.60	5=	
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	1	10	3	6	6	1	1	/	17	27	7.07	5=	
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	3	6	10	3	6	1	/	/	20	26	4.70	11=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	4	10	6	1	6	3	/	/	16	26	6.80	11=	
Dorset AONB	4VN	2	6	1	6	6	6	/	/	19	25	3.60	13=	
Dorset AONB	4YA	5	10	6	/	6	3	/	/	15	25	2.60	13=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	5	6	6	1	6	3	/	3	19	25	5.60	13=	
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	2	6	3	6	3	6	/	/	18	24	16.60	16=	
Lake District NP (current)	ZX	1	6	3	/	3	6	/	6	18	24	3.50	16=	
New Forest NP	4YB	1	6	6	6	3	/	3	/	18	24	2.90	16=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	1	6	3	6	3	6	/	/	18	24	2.90	16=	
Snowdonia NP	ZK	1	6	1	3	6	6	1	1	18	24	11.49	16=	
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	2	6	6	3	6	3	/	/	18	24	4.00	16=	
Chilterns AONB	ZL	2	6	6	6	3	1	/	/	16	22	12.40	22=	
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	2	6	3	3	3	3	1	3	16	22	4.30	22=	
Dorset AONB	4YA	8	10	/	6	6	/	/	/	12	22	2.30	22=	
Suffolk Coasts & Heaths	4ZW / 4ZX	1	3	3	6	3	3	3	/	18	21	11.50	25=	
Anglesey AONB	4ZA	1	6	1	6	1	6	/	/	14	20	1.00	26=	
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	3	6	3	6	1	3	1	/	14	20	15.60	26=	
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	1	10	3	3	3	/	/	1	10	20	8.70	26=	
Snowdonia NP	XO	1	6	3	1	3	3	1	3	14	20	6.84	26=	
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	1	6	3	6	3	1	/	/	13	19	17.80		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	10	6	6	1	3	3	/	/	13	19	5.50		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	1	6	1	6	3	3	/	/	13	19	6.73		
South Downs NP	4VF	2	6	3	3	3	1	/	3	13	19	6.40		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	1	3	3	6	3	3	/	/	15	18	5.10		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	2	3	3	6	3	3	/	/	15	18	6.80		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	4ZB	1	3	3	6	6	/	/	/	15	18	2.50		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	1	6	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	18	2.30		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Dorset AONB	4VN	1	6	3	6	3	/	/	/	12	18	2.70		
New Forest NP	4YB	3	6	3	/	6	3	/	/	12	18	6.70		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	3	6	6	/	6	/	/	/	12	18	3.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	7	3	6	3	3	3	/	/	15	18	10.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	8	3	6	3	3	3	/	/	15	18	7.10		
South Downs NP	VB	2	6	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	18	4.00		
South Downs NP	VB	3	3	3	6	3	3	/	/	15	18	6.60		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	14	17	13.50		
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	2	6	1	3	3	1	/	3	11	17	2.88		
South Downs NP	4VF	5	3	1	3	3	6	/	1	14	17	6.20		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	2	6	1	3	6	/	/	/	10	16	5.10		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	1	3	3	3	3	3	1	/	13	16	6.20		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	1	6	3	3	1	3	/	/	10	16	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	2	6	3	3	3	1	/	/	10	16	3.80		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	3	3	3	6	3	/	/	1	13	16	3.00		
Peak District NP	4ZO	5	6	3	6	1	/	/	/	10	16	2.85		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	7.80		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	3	3	3	6	3	/	/	/	12	15	5.00		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	2	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	11.00		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	4.50		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4VN	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	1.70		
Dorset AONB	4YA	2	6	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	15	7.60		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	2	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	8.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	5.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	4	3	6	/	6	/	/	/	12	15	4.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	9	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	5.20		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	2	3	/	6	6	/	/	/	12	15	7.16		
South Downs NP	4VF	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	10.50		
South Downs NP	VB	1	3	3	3	3	3	/	/	12	15	12.80		
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	2	6	3	6	/	/	/	/	9	15	3.60		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	3	6	3	3	1	1	/	/	8	14	6.10		
Dorset AONB	4YA	3	3	1	3	3	/	1	3	11	14	3.90		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Forest of Bowland AONB	4TC	1	3	3	3	3	1	/	1	11	14	0.91		
Forest of Bowland AONB	ZX	1	3	3	3	3	1	/	1	11	14	5.50		
New Forest NP	4YD	2	3	/	3	3	3	1	1	11	14	7.40		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	3	3	3	/	6	1	1	/	11	14	5.25		
South Downs NP	4VF	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	/	11	14	7.30		
South Downs NP	4VF	4	3	3	3	3	1	/	1	11	14	6.20		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	2	3	3	1	3	3	/	/	10	13	5.10		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	4	3	3	1	3	3	/	/	10	13	5.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	1	3	1	3	3	3	/	/	10	13	3.50		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	3	3	3	3	3	1	/	/	10	13	6.30		
Dorset AONB	4YA	4	6	/	/	6	1	/	/	7	13	4.70		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	4	6	1	6	/	/	/	/	7	13	5.30		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	1	3	3	/	3	3	/	1	10	13	4.90		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	2	6	1	/	3	3	/	/	7	13	6.88		
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	1	3	3	1	3	3	/	/	10	13	1.90		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	5.50		
Dedham Vale AONB	4YL	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	2.90		
Kent Downs AONB	VO	1	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	2.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	5	3	3	/	3	3	/	/	9	12	1.90		
South Downs NP	4YC	2	3	3	3	3	/	/	/	9	12	7.30		
Cornwall AONB	4VW	1	3	3	1	1	/	3	/	8	11	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	2	3	3	1	3	1	/	/	8	11	12.93		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	3	6	1	/	1	/	/	3	5	11	8.80		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	1	3	3	3	1	1	/	/	8	11	3.70		
Peak District NP	4ZO	1	3	1	6	1	/	/	/	8	11	2.63		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	2	3	1	3	1	3	/	/	8	11	2.60		
Solway Coast AONB	ZV	1	3	1	1	3	3	/	/	8	11	0.40		
Dorset AONB	4YA	6	3	1	3	3	/	/	/	7	10	5.50		
High Weald AONB	4VM	1	3	1	3	3	/	/	/	7	10	6.30		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	2	3	1	3	3	/	/	/	7	10	7.90		
South Downs NP	4YC	1	3	3	3	1	/	/	/	7	10	2.50		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	1	3	1	1	3	1	/	/	6	9	2.00		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB- SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS						OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites	Tourist Accommodation	Travellers on scenic routes					
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	2	3	3	/	3	/	/	/	6	9	10.00		
Dorset AONB	4YA	1	3	/	3	3	/	/	/	6	9	1.50		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	3	1	1	3	3	1	/	/	8	9	2.00		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	5	3	3	/	3	/	/	/	6	9	3.50		
New Forest NP	4YD	1	1	1	3	3	/	/	1	8	9	3.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	11	3	3	/	3	/	/	/	6	9	1.90		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	1	3	1	1	1	3	/	/	6	9	1.60		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	3	3	/	/	3	3	/	/	6	9	2.64		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	2	1	3	/	3	1	/	/	7	8	4.00		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	2	1	3	/	1	1	/	1	6	7	3.50		
South Downs NP	4YE	1	1	/	3	3	/	/	/	6	7	2.00		
North York Moors NP	4VC	1	3	1	1	1	/	/	/	3	6	0.80		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	1	1	1	1	1	1	/	/	4	5	1.20		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	2	3	1	/	1	/	/	/	2	5	0.90		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4YB	1	3	1	/	1	/	/	/	2	5	0.60		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	2	1	1	/	3	/	/	/	4	5	0.96		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	4	1	1	1	1	1	/	/	4	5	3.30		
New Forest NP	4YD	3	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	3	4	2.00		
New Forest NP	4YB	4	1	/	/	/	3	/	/	3	4	0.25		
Solway Coast AONB	T	1	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	3	4	0.40		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	1	1	/	1	1	/	/	/	2	3	1.80		

Table 3.3 Alphabetical assessment table (minus accommodation and scenic routes)

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Anglesey AONB	4ZA	1	6	1	6	1	6	14	20	1.00		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	1	1	/	1	1	/	2	3	1.80		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	2	3	3	1	3	3	10	13	5.10		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	3	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	7.80		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	1	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	5.50		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	2	6	1	3	6	/	10	16	5.10		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	3	6	10	3	6	1	20	26	4.70		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	4	3	3	1	3	3	10	13	5.00		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	5	1.20		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	2	3	1	/	1	/	2	5	0.90		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	1	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	5.10		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	2	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	6.80		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	1	3	1	1	3	1	6	9	2.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	2	1	3	/	3	1	7	8	4.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	3	3	3	6	3	/	12	15	5.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	1	3	1	3	3	3	10	13	3.50		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	2	6	6	6	3	1	16	22	12.40		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	3	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	6.30		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	4ZB	1	3	3	6	6	/	15	18	2.50		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	1	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	13.50		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	2	6	3	3	3	1	10	16	4.30		
Cornwall AONB	4VW	1	3	3	1	1	/	5	8	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	1	6	3	6	3	1	13	19	17.80		
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	2	3	3	/	3	/	6	9	10.00		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	4.50		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	2	3	3	1	3	1	8	11	12.93		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	1	6	3	3	3	3	12	18	2.30		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	2	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	11.00		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	3	6	3	3	1	1	8	14	6.10		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	6.20		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	2	6	3	6	3	6	18	24	16.60		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	3	6	3	6	1	3	13	19	15.60		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	1	6	3	3	1	3	10	16	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	2	6	3	3	3	1	10	16	3.80		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4VN	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	1.70		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4YB	1	3	1	/	1	/	2	5	0.60		
Dedham Vale AONB	4YL	1	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	2.90		
Dorset AONB	4VN	1	6	3	6	3	/	12	18	2.70		
Dorset AONB	4VN	2	6	1	6	6	6	19	25	3.60		
Dorset AONB	4YA	1	3	/	3	3	/	6	9	1.50		
Dorset AONB	4YA	2	6	3	3	3	/	9	15	7.60		
Dorset AONB	4YA	3	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	3.90		
Dorset AONB	4YA	4	6	/	/	6	1	7	13	4.70		
Dorset AONB	4YA	5	10	6	/	6	3	15	25	2.60		
Dorset AONB	4YA	6	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	5.50		
Dorset AONB	4YA	7	6	3	6	6	6	21	27	5.10		
Dorset AONB	4YA	8	10	/	6	6	/	12	22	2.30		
Forest of Bowland AONB	4TC	1	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	0.91		
Forest of Bowland AONB	ZX	1	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	5.50		
High Weald AONB	4VM	1	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	6.30		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	1	3	3	6	3	10	22	25	4.50		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	2	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	7.90		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	3	6	1	/	1	/	2	8	8.80		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	4	6	1	6	/	/	7	13	5.30		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	1	3	3	3	1	1	8	11	3.70		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	2	1	1	/	3	/	4	5	0.96		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	3	1	1	3	3	1	8	9	2.00		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Kent Downs AONB	TP	4	1	1	1	1	1	4	5	3.30		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	5	3	3	/	3	/	6	9	3.50		
Kent Downs AONB	VO	1	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	2.50		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	1	10	3	3	3	/	9	19	8.70		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	2	1	3	/	1	1	5	6	3.50		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	3	3	3	6	3	/	12	15	3.00		
Lake District NP (current)	ZX	1	6	3	/	3	6	12	18	3.50		
New Forest NP	4YB	1	6	6	6	3	/	15	21	2.90		
New Forest NP	4YB	2	10	3	/	6	6	15	25	3.60		
New Forest NP	4YB	3	6	3	/	6	3	12	18	6.70		
New Forest NP	4YB	4	1	/	/	/	3	3	4	0.25		
New Forest NP	4YD	1	1	1	3	3	/	7	8	3.50		
New Forest NP	4YD	2	3	/	3	3	3	9	12	7.40		
New Forest NP	4YD	3	1	1	/	1	1	3	4	2.00		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	1	3	3	/	3	3	9	12	4.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	2	6	3	6	6	3	18	24	3.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	3	6	6	/	6	/	12	18	3.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	4	3	6	/	6	/	12	15	4.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	5	3	3	/	3	3	9	12	1.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	1	6	3	6	3	6	18	24	2.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	2	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	8.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	3	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	5.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	4	10	6	1	6	3	16	26	6.80		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	5	6	6	1	6	3	16	22	5.60		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	6	6	6	6	3	3	18	24	2.40		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	7	3	6	3	3	3	15	18	10.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	8	3	6	3	3	3	15	18	7.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	9	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	5.20		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	10	6	6	1	3	3	13	19	5.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	11	3	3	/	3	/	6	9	1.90		
North York Moors NP	4VC	1	3	1	1	1	/	3	6	0.80		
Peak District NP	4ZO	1	3	1	6	1	/	8	11	2.63		
Peak District NP	4ZO	2	6	6	6	3	6	21	27	2.37		
Peak District NP	4ZO	3	10	1	10	6	/	17	27	3.60		
Peak District NP	4ZO	4	6	3	10	6	3	22	28	5.56		
Peak District NP	4ZO	5	6	3	6	1	/	10	16	2.85		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	1	3	1	1	1	3	6	9	1.60		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	2	3	1	3	1	3	8	11	2.60		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	1	6	1	6	3	3	13	19	6.73		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	2	3	/	6	6	/	12	15	7.16		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	3	3	/	/	3	3	6	9	2.64		
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	1	10	3	6	6	1	16	26	7.07		
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	2	6	1	3	3	1	8	14	2.88		
Snowdonia NP	XO	1	6	3	1	3	3	10	16	6.84		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	1	6	1	3	6	6	16	22	11.49		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	2	6	1	/	3	3	7	13	6.88		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	3	3	3	/	6	1	10	13	5.25		
Solway Coast AONB	T	1	1	1	/	1	1	3	4	0.40		
Solway Coast AONB	ZV	1	3	1	1	3	3	8	11	0.40		
South Downs NP	4VF	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	10.50		
South Downs NP	4VF	2	6	3	3	3	1	10	16	6.40		
South Downs NP	4VF	3	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	7.30		
South Downs NP	4VF	4	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	6.20		
South Downs NP	4VF	5	3	1	3	3	6	13	16	6.20		
South Downs NP	4YC	1	3	3	3	1	/	7	10	2.50		
South Downs NP	4YC	2	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	7.30		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
South Downs NP	4YE	1	1	/	3	3	/	6	7	2.00		
South Downs NP	VB	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	12.80		
South Downs NP	VB	2	6	3	3	3	3	12	18	4.00		
South Downs NP	VB	3	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	6.60		
Suffolk Coasts & Heaths	4ZW/4ZX	1	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	11.50		
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	1	6	6	6	6	6	24	30	4.20		
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	2	6	3	6	/	/	9	15	3.60		
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	1	3	3	1	3	3	10	13	1.90		
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	2	6	6	3	6	3	18	24	4.00		

Table 3.4 Ranked assessment table (minus accommodation and scenic routes) PREFERRED FINAL RANKING

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	1	6	6	6	6	6	24	30	4.20	1	
Peak District NP	4ZO	4	6	3	10	6	3	22	28	5.56	2	
Dorset AONB	4YA	7	6	3	6	6	6	21	27	5.10	3=	
Peak District NP	4ZO	2	6	6	6	3	6	21	27	2.37	3=	
Peak District NP	4ZO	3	10	1	10	6	/	17	27	3.60	3=	
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	3	6	10	3	6	1	20	26	4.70	6=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	4	10	6	1	6	3	16	26	6.80	6=	
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	1	10	3	6	6	1	16	26	7.07	6=	
Dorset AONB	4VN	2	6	1	6	6	6	19	25	3.60	9=	
Dorset AONB	4YA	5	10	6	/	6	3	15	25	2.60	9=	

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	1	3	3	6	3	10	22	25	4.50	9=	
New Forest NP	4YB	2	10	3	/	6	6	15	25	3.60	9=	
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	2	6	3	6	3	6	18	24	16.60	13=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	2	6	3	6	6	3	18	24	3.10	13=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	1	6	3	6	3	6	18	24	2.90	13=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	6	6	6	6	3	3	18	24	2.40	13=	
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	2	6	6	3	6	3	18	24	4.00	13=	
Chilterns AONB	ZL	2	6	6	6	3	1	16	22	12.40	18=	
Dorset AONB	4YA	8	10	/	6	6	/	12	22	2.30	18=	
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	5	6	6	1	6	3	16	22	5.60	18=	
Snowdonia NP	ZK	1	6	1	3	6	6	16	22	11.49	18=	
New Forest NP	4YB	1	6	6	6	3	/	15	21	2.90	22=	
Anglesey AONB	4ZA	1	6	1	6	1	6	14	20	1.00	23	
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	1	6	3	6	3	1	13	19	17.80		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	3	6	3	6	1	3	13	19	15.60		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	1	10	3	3	3	/	9	19	8.70		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	10	6	6	1	3	3	13	19	5.50		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	1	6	1	6	3	3	13	19	6.73		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	1	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	5.10		
Chilterns AONB	4TA	2	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	6.80		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	4ZB	1	3	6	6	3	/	15	18	2.50		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	1	6	3	3	3	3	12	18	2.30		
Dorset AONB	4VN	1	6	3	6	3	/	12	18	2.70		
Lake District NP (current)	ZX	1	6	3	/	3	6	12	18	3.50		
New Forest NP	4YB	3	6	3	/	6	3	12	18	6.70		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	3	6	6	/	6	/	12	18	3.10		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	7	3	6	3	3	3	15	18	10.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	8	3	6	3	3	3	15	18	7.10		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
South Downs NP	VB	2	6	3	3	3	3	12	18	4.00		
South Downs NP	VB	3	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	6.60		
Suffolk Coasts & Heaths	4ZW/4ZX	1	3	3	6	3	3	15	18	11.50		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	2	6	1	3	6	/	10	16	5.10		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	2	6	3	3	3	1	10	16	4.30		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	1	6	3	3	1	3	10	16	3.30		
Cotswolds AONB	ZFB	2	6	3	3	3	1	10	16	3.80		
Peak District NP	4ZO	5	6	3	6	1	/	10	16	2.85		
Snowdonia NP	XO	1	6	3	1	3	3	10	16	6.84		
South Downs NP	4VF	2	6	3	3	3	1	10	16	6.40		
South Downs NP	4VF	5	3	1	3	3	6	13	16	6.20		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	3	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	7.80		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	3	3	3	6	3	/	12	15	5.00		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	2	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	11.00		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	4.50		
Cotswolds AONB	ZF	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	6.20		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4VN	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	1.70		
Dorset AONB	4YA	2	6	3	3	3	/	9	15	7.60		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	3	3	3	6	3	/	12	15	3.00		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	4	3	6	/	6	/	12	15	4.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	2	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	8.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	3	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	5.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	9	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	5.20		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	2	3	/	6	6	/	12	15	7.16		
South Downs NP	4VF	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	10.50		
South Downs NP	VB	1	3	3	3	3	3	12	15	12.80		
Tamar Valley AONB	YF	2	6	3	6	/	/	9	15	3.60		
Cotswolds AONB	XL	3	6	3	3	1	1	8	14	6.10		

DESIGNATED AREA	LINE SECTION CODE	SUB-SECTION CODE	IMPORTANCE OF LANDSCAPE IMPACTS	IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS BY RECEPTOR GROUPS				OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF VISUAL IMPACTS	COMBINED LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL SCORE	LENGTH (Km)	RANK	SCORE COLOUR CODE
				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Kent Downs AONB	TP	1	3	3	3	1	1	8	11	3.70		
Snowdonia NP	4ZC	2	6	1	3	3	1	8	14	2.88		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	2	3	3	1	3	3	10	13	5.10		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	4	3	3	1	3	3	10	13	5.00		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	1	3	1	3	3	3	10	13	3.50		
Chilterns AONB	ZL	3	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	6.30		
Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB	ZK	1	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	13.50		
Dorset AONB	4YA	4	6	/	/	6	1	7	13	4.70		
Forest of Bowland AONB	4TC	1	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	0.91		
Forest of Bowland AONB	ZX	1	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	5.50		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	4	6	1	6	/	/	7	13	5.30		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	2	6	1	/	3	3	7	13	6.88		
Snowdonia NP	ZK	3	3	3	/	6	1	10	13	5.25		
South Downs NP	4VF	3	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	7.30		
South Downs NP	4VF	4	3	3	3	3	1	10	13	6.20		
Wye Valley AONB	4YU	1	3	3	1	3	3	10	13	1.90		
Brecon Beacons NP	4YU	1	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	5.50		
Dedham Vale AONB	4YL	1	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	2.90		
Kent Downs AONB	VO	1	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	2.50		
New Forest NP	4YD	2	3	/	3	3	3	9	12	7.40		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	1	3	3	/	3	3	9	12	4.90		
North Wessex Downs AONB	4YG	5	3	3	/	3	3	9	12	1.90		
South Downs NP	4YC	2	3	3	3	3	/	9	12	7.30		
Cotswolds AONB	4YX	2	3	3	1	3	1	8	11	12.93		
Peak District NP	4ZO	1	3	1	6	1	/	8	11	2.63		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	2	3	1	3	1	3	8	11	2.60		
Solway Coast AONB	ZV	1	3	1	1	3	3	8	11	0.40		
Dorset AONB	4YA	3	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	3.90		

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				Communities	Users of Trails and Cycle-ways	Users of Rights of Way and Open Access Land	Visitors to publicly accessible sites					
Dorset AONB	4YA	6	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	5.50		
High Weald AONB	4VM	1	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	6.30		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	2	3	1	3	3	/	7	10	7.90		
South Downs NP	4YC	1	3	3	3	1	/	7	10	2.50		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	1	3	1	1	3	1	6	9	2.00		
Cotswolds AONB	4TE	2	3	3	/	3	/	6	9	10.00		
Dorset AONB	4YA	1	3	/	3	3	/	6	9	1.50		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	3	1	1	3	3	1	8	9	2.00		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	5	3	3	/	3	/	6	9	3.50		
North Wessex Downs AONB	YYM	11	3	3	/	3	/	6	9	1.90		
Shropshire Hills AONB	ZZJ	1	3	1	1	1	3	6	9	1.60		
Snowdonia NP	4ZB	3	3	/	/	3	3	6	9	2.64		
Chilterns AONB	ZA	2	1	3	/	3	1	7	8	4.00		
Cornwall AONB	4VW	1	3	3	1	1	/	5	8	3.30		
High Weald AONB	4ZJ	3	6	1	/	1	/	2	8	8.80		
New Forest NP	4YD	1	1	1	3	3	/	7	8	3.50		
South Downs NP	4YE	1	1	/	3	3	/	6	7	2.00		
Kent Downs AONB	ZY	2	1	3	/	1	1	5	6	3.50		
North York Moors NP	4VC	1	3	1	1	1	/	3	6	0.80		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	5	1.20		
Cannock Chase AONB	ZN	2	3	1	/	1	/	2	5	0.90		
Cranborne Chase AONB	4YB	1	3	1	/	1	/	2	5	0.60		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	2	1	1	/	3	/	4	5	0.96		
Kent Downs AONB	TP	4	1	1	1	1	1	4	5	3.30		
New Forest NP	4YB	4	1	/	/	/	3	3	4	0.25		
New Forest NP	4YD	3	1	1	/	1	1	3	4	2.00		
Solway Coast AONB	T	1	1	1	/	1	1	3	4	0.40		
Blackdown Hills AONB	4YA	1	1	/	1	1	/	2	3	1.80		

PART TWO
DESIGNATED AREA SUMMARIES

Chapter 4: National Parks

Brecon Beacons National Park

4.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section 4YU** runs through part of the southern area of the National Park, initially entering the Park boundary to the north of Hirwaun before exiting and re-entering again approximately 20 km to the east above Ebbw Vale. From here the line runs along the lower slopes of Mynydd Llangatwg prior to dropping down and running along the Clydach Gorge to the Usk Valley, and then exiting the Park to the south west of Abergavenny.

4.2 **Section 4YU** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 2**, into 4 subsections. Subsection **4YU.1** enters the National Park just to the east of the A4059 above Hirwaun and runs in a direct line from east to west before exiting the Park approximately 1 km east of the A465. **4YU.2** enters the Park boundary just east of the B4560 to the north of Beaufort and Garnlydan and runs west to east up across the open slopes of Mynydd Llangatwg. **4YU.3** starts on the upper northern slopes of the Clydach Gorge near Blackrock from which point the line spans over the gorge to the south and then continues along the mid to upper southern slopes along the gorge towards the Usk Valley **4YU.4** starts at the south of Gilwern (north of Gilwern Hill) and follows the Usk Valley and A465 road corridor towards the north of the village of Llanffwyst where it then exits the National Park. One of the four subsections, **4YU.3** is judged to have **overall landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, while **4YU.1, 4YU.2** and **4YU.4** have combined impacts of moderate importance, albeit with some individual impacts which are of high importance.

4.4 **4YU.3** is judged to have **landscape impacts of a high level of importance** on the *Clydach Gorge* landscape character area. The complex nature of the landform has resulted in the requirement for an unusually high number of heavier angle pylons and a closer spacing between pylons, which increases the combined scale and importance of the impact of the pylon line on the landscape. The large scale of the pylons also conflicts with the human scale of the properties and scattered vegetation along the upper sides of the gorge and the pylons are the most notable vertical infrastructure in this landscape. The special qualities of the National Park are clearly expressed in this area, which is highly valued for its recreational value and industrial heritage. The pylon line runs through both the Clydach Gorge and Blaenavon Welsh Registered Historic Landscapes and is also close to the Blaenavon World Heritage Site. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts of a very high level of importance**. The impact of the pylon line on views is mostly experienced by the relatively large local community located within the Clydach Gorge, some of whom experience frequent and very close up views of the line with pylons often being highly visible and dominant features on the skyline, resulting in very high impacts on the community. The scale of the impact on people using local public rights of way and the nearby open access land varies; however, the overall importance of the impact is high due to the frequent and valued nature of the views afforded from many places.

Summary of Mitigation Options

4.5 The very high importance impact of subsection **4YU.3** on the Clydach Valley landscape could only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding although complex landform is likely to make this challenging in places. There is a high prevalence of trees in the landscape so planting would not be inappropriate to help screen views; however, there are many views of pylons from the densely dispersed community and while localised planting may help to screen some particularly prominent pylons this is unlikely to have much effect overall. A reduction in the height of pylons might also help reduce some visual impacts.

Lake District National Park

4.7 The Lake District National Park[4] is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section ZX** crosses the eastern edge of the National Park, entering approximately 8 km to the south of Shap near to the A6. From here the line skirts along the inside edge of the Park boundary and exists south of the Borrowdale valley. It has not been divided into further subsections and remains as one section **ZX.1**, as shown on **Figure 3**. **ZX.1** has combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, albeit with some individual impacts which are of high importance. High importance landscape impacts have been identified together with high importance visual impacts on visitors to Shap Summit and users of the A6 scenic route.

Summary of Mitigation Options

4.8 Localised planting could screen some views, although much of the landscape is very open and sites would need to be carefully selected. Planting could potentially block other longer views which are an important reason why people visit this area. The only mitigation that is likely to have any real effect on views and on landscape character is undergrounding the whole subsection of line. Notwithstanding the effects of ground disturbance, this may be challenging due to the complex landform.

New Forest National Park

4.9 The New Forest National Park is crossed by two sections of transmission line. **Section 4YB** crosses the northern part of the National Park, entering it just south of Breamore to the east of the A338 and exiting the park boundary (marked by the A36) at Plaitford. **Section 4YD** runs along the eastern boundary of the National Park, west of Southampton Water and eventually to Fawley Power Station.

4.10 **Section 4YB** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 4**, into 4 subsections. Subsection **4YB.1** runs from the point south of Breamore where the line enters the National Park across the floodplain of the River Avon and up the valley side north of Woodgreen. **4YB.2** starts in an area of woodland at Stricklands Plantation, at the top of the Avon Valley, and heads east into an area of open access land, rising onto higher ground and crossing an open heathland ridge at Hale Purlieu before crossing the B3080 and descending. **4YB.3** starts just east of the B3080 and enters a wooded area through Cloven Hill Plantation and Hamptworth Common. It passes close to the northern edge of Nomansland, crosses the B3079 at Landford Common, traverses Plaitford Common and exits the National Park by crossing the A36, which marks the boundary, at Plaitford. **4YB.4** includes just one pylon in the National Park – this is located adjacent to the A36/A3090 roundabout north of Paulton's Park.

4.11 Two of the four subsections. **4YB.2** and **4YB.1** are judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of very high (4YB.2) or high (4YB.1) importance**, while **4YB.3** has combined impacts of moderate importance, albeit with some individual impacts which are of high importance, and **4YB.4**, with only one pylon in the National Park, has combined impacts that are judged to be of low importance.

4.12 **4YB.2** is judged to have **landscape impacts of a very high level of importance** on the *Northern Forests and Heaths* landscape character area, an area of heathland and forest with very little overt man-made influence. It is a high quality landscape and contains many features that are recognised as forming the special qualities of the National Park. The scale of impact of the pylon line on this landscape is very high as it is prominent on the open heathland ridge and alters the unspoilt and tranquil nature of the landscape. The location of the pylons on a ridge means they are visible across long distances (although the scale of impact declines with distance). This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts that are of a high level of importance**. This is predominantly open access land and many people use this area for quiet recreation. They can access the landscape around and under the pylons and in some areas the impact of the pylons on people is therefore very large with the naturalistic character of the forest landscape emphasising the scale of impact of the pylons in the landscape. The presence of car parks is a visitor attraction

[4] Note that this section is based on the current Lake District National Park boundary and does not take account of the possible extension to the area.

in itself but also encourages people to access particular areas, some of which are very close to the pylon line. There are judged to be **visual impacts of high importance** both on those using open access land and visitors to the car parks in the area.

4.13 **4YB.1** falls entirely within the *Upper Avon Valley* landscape character area, an open floodplain landscape enclosed by wooded valley sides. It is a high quality landscape representative of the Avon Valley, and contains hidden villages and a sense of tranquillity which are noted as special qualities of the National Park, but does not express other perhaps more 'typical' special qualities (such as the areas of heath, common and ancient and ornamental woodland at the heart of the New Forest). The scale of impact of the pylon line is high - it is widely visible and alters the unspoilt and tranquil nature of the valley. The large size of the pylons also diminishes the apparent scale of the valley side. This subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance**. Most of the people affected by visual impacts are located on the valley sides where the community of Woodgreen, Sandy Balls Holiday Village, the Avon Valley Path and other footpaths all overlook the valley, as does the important viewpoint on Castle Hill. Woodgreen is particularly adversely affected as it is located so close to the pylon line. There are judged to be **visual impacts of high importance** on the community of Woodgreen and users of the Avon Valley Path.

4.14 **Section 4YD** passes through an area where in parts there is a strong contrast between the open and unsettled Forest heaths and the densely settled Waterside parishes. It has been divided, as shown on Figure XX, into three subsections. **4YD.1** enters the National Park where it crosses the A326 between Totton and Marchwood and follows the side of the A326, just within the park boundary and passing through some areas of ancient woodland, before turning further south and heading across the farmland. **4YD.2** follows the National Park boundary (which runs along the A326), just inside the National Park boundary, to Hardley before turning south and passing around the edge of Holbury and exiting the National Park south of Holbury. **4YD.3** enters the park to the east of Blackfield and passes through a rural farmland landscape towards Fawley Power Station.

4.15 **4YD.2** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts that are judged to be of moderate importance, largely by virtue of impacts on users of the open access land on the heaths (including visitors to the car parks that form a focus of activity and are a visitor attraction in their own right) and recreational walkers on the Solent Way, which are judged to be visual impacts of moderate importance. **4YD.1** and **4YD.3** are both judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts that are of low importance.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

4.17 The very high importance impact of subsection **4YB.2** on the heathland and forest landscape in the area could only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding, although the significant conservation constraints are likely to make this challenging. The pylons that result in greatest impact are those that cross the ridge at Hale Purlieu. If it is not possible to underground the lines painting the tops a lighter colour could possibly help them to recede into the sky better - also an option for **4YB.3** at Plaitford Common.

4.18 In the Avon Valley the high importance impacts of subsection **4YB.1** on the Avon Valley landscape could again only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding. The high importance impact on the visual amenity of the community of Wood Green could potentially be reduced by a diversion further from the village (although the resulting probable requirement for angle towers may be an issue) or by using lower height pylon designs if undergrounding is not an option. Elsewhere in the forest there may be some opportunities for additional tree planting, for example at some viewpoints for subsection **4YB.3**, but on the whole this is already a well wooded landscape and the scope is likely to be limited. There may also be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of landscape influenced by the transmission lines, such as reinstating areas of heathland through grazing and restoration work, including through the gradual conversion of conifer plantations within the Inclosures to create more open habitats and the removal of invasive species in line with the New Forest SAC plan.

North York Moors National Park

4.19 The North York Moors National Park is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section 4VC**, crosses a section of the western boundary of the National Park, 5 km to the east of Northallerton. The line enters the Park to the west of Thimbleby and runs south broadly following the A19 road corridor just inside the boundary before exiting to the west of Over Silton.

4.20 **Section 4VC** has not been divided into further subsections and remains as one section, **4VC.1**, as shown on **Figure 5**. **4VC.1** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of low importance, largely due to the fact that the line is relatively well accommodated in the landscape and does not give rise to any major conflicts with key characteristics or values. Furthermore, the line is generally viewed from a distance and is generally backclothed.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

4.21 Opportunities may exist for additional tree planting to screen specific views where pylons are viewed at closer range; however, it is considered that additional planting would have limited benefit overall in this location.

Peak District National Park

4.22 The Peak District National Park is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section 4ZO** crosses the northern part of the National Park, entering to the west of Penistone near the A616. From here the line skirts along the edge of the Park boundary to Dunford Bridge. It then diverts underground through the Woodhead Tunnels to emerge at the head of the Longdendale Valley, adjacent to the A628 Woodhead Pass, before running down the entire length of the valley and exiting the Park boundary just north of Tintwistle.

4.23 **Section 4ZO** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 6**, into 5 subsections. Subsection **4ZO.1** runs from the A616 west of Penistone where the line enters the National Park and continues for a short distance just past the point where line exits the Park boundary. **4ZO.2** then skirts along the outer boundary of the Park before re-entering for a short distance at Dunford Bridge, at which point it terminates and enters the Woodhead Tunnel by cable from a sealing end compound. **4ZO.3** starts at the head of the upper Longdendale Valley where the line emerges from the Woodhead Tunnel at a sealing end compound located just south of the A628 Woodhead Pass. This subsection then runs down the valley to the weir between the Woodhead and Torside Reservoirs. **4ZO.4** starts at the east of Woodhead Reservoir and runs along the south side of the Torside, Rhodeswood and Valehouse reservoirs in the lower Longdendale Valley, from Crowden down to Tintwistle. **4ZO.5** runs from the east of Tintwistle up to Arnfield Moor 2 km to the north where it then exists the National Park.

4.24 Three of the five subsections, **4ZO.2, 4ZO.3 and 4ZO.4 are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, while **4ZO.1** and **4ZO.5** have combined impacts of moderate importance, albeit with some individual impacts which are of high importance.

4.25 **4ZO.3** is judged to have **landscape impacts of a very high level of importance** on the *Dark Peak reservoir valleys with woodland*, and adjacent *Dark Peak moorland slopes and cloughs*, landscape character areas. The line is poorly accommodated in this landscape which has a distinctive sense of place and is highly valued, partly for its scenic quality and the fact that it displays a number of the special qualities of the Peak District, but also because it is has high conservation and recreational value. The interaction between the landform of the valley floor and moorlands slopes and cloughs is complex and has required the use of a relatively high number of heavier angle pylons which serves to increase the impact of the line along the entire upper Longdendale Valley.

4.26 This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts that are of a very high level of importance**. The impact of the pylon line on views is mostly experienced by recreational users of the Trans-Pennine Trail, National Cycle Route 62 and Longdendale Trail regional trail as the line runs very close to and broadly parallel with these routes along the entire length of the upper Longdendale Valley. The terminal tower, associated sealing end compound and concrete cable cover are particularly intrusive and have a very high scale of impact on views from nearby locations, which are

experienced by high numbers of trail users. It is also recognised that the A628 is popular as a driving route. After crossing the high Pennine moorland, road users travelling westwards follow the narrow valley of the River Etherow around Ironbower Moss and are suddenly presented with dramatic westerly views down the Longdendale Valley with its chain of reservoirs. On clear days, the skyline of Greater Manchester is visible in the distance. The line zig-zags down the valley which creates a stacking effect and increases the visibility and impact of the pylons, even though they are mainly backclothed. There are also judged to be **visual impacts of high importance** on people using open access land and local rights of way in the area.

4.27 **4ZO.4** runs through the *Dark Peak reservoir valleys with woodland* landscape character area, and partially through the *Dark Peak Western Fringe riverside meadows* and *Dark Peak Western Fringe valley pastures with industry* landscape character areas. This landscape is attractive and unsettled with areas of remoteness and tranquillity found up on the moors and in sheltered, well-wooded areas. The landscape has a distinctive sense of place and is highly valued, partly for its scenic quality and the fact that it displays a number of the special qualities of the Peak District, but also because it has high conservation and recreational value. The complex landform along the valley floor has required the use of a relatively high number of heavier angle pylons, which serves to increase the impact of the line on the landscape of the lower Longdendale Valley. This subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance**. The majority of people affected by visual impacts are the large numbers of walkers and cyclists on the Trans-Pennine Trail National Cycle Route 62 as the line runs very close and broadly parallel with this route along the entire length of the lower Longdendale Valley. There are judged to be **visual impacts of very high importance** on these trails and cycleways. There are also judged to be **visual impacts of high importance** on people using open access land and local rights of way in the area.

4.28 **4ZO.2** is judged to have **landscape impacts of a high level of importance** on the *Dark Peak moorland slopes & cloughs* and *Dark Peak Yorkshire Fringe slopes & valleys with woodland*, landscape character areas. This landscape is transitional in character with some of the special qualities of the National Park being displayed. Strong localised topographical variety around Dunford Bridge, together with the proximity of nearby areas of high conservation interest, recreational value and relative tranquillity, all serve to increase the value of the landscape. Although the impact of the line is geographically contained, the scale of impact is high with the terminal pylon and sealing end compound being locally dominant man-made features. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts of a high level of importance**. Dunford Bridge serves as a local gateway for visitors to the Pennine Moors. The pylons are skylined in views from visitors to the promoted Trans Pennine Trail car park, picnic area and walkers and cyclists on the Trans Pennine Trail National Cycle Route 62. The scale of visual impacts on the local community in and around Dunford Bridge is also considered to be high due to the proximity of the line and its elevated situation in relation to this settlement.

Summary of Mitigation Options

4.29 The very high importance impact of subsections **4ZO.3** and **4ZO.4** on the upper and lower Longdendale Valley could only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding. Notwithstanding the effects of ground disturbance, this may be very challenging due to the complexity of the landform and amount of tree cover which has already constrained the route of the pylon line and dictated high numbers of heavier angle pylons. Localised planting could help screen views from some locations, in particular along the Trans Pennine Trail and at the top of the valley near the Woodhead Pass.

4.30 At Dunford Bridge the high importance impacts of subsection **4ZO.2** could again only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding. The high importance impact on the visual amenity of the community of Dunford Bridge could potentially be reduced by screen planting in particular to filter views of the terminal pylon that results in greatest impact. Localised planting may also help reduce the scale of impact on views from users of nearby national and regional trails including the Trans Pennine Trail and visitors to the Dunford Bridge car park. Elsewhere there may be opportunities for larger areas of additional woodland planting to further enhance the landscape.

Snowdonia National Park

4.31 Snowdonia National Park is crossed by four sections of pylon line. **Section 4ZB** crosses the northern part of the National Park, entering it in the north west just above Llanllechid and exiting on the western slopes of the Conwy Valley near Llanbedr-y-cennin. **Section 4ZC** enters the Park from the west coast at the Dwryyd Estuary near Portmadog and runs eastwards, terminating at the former Trawsfynydd Power Station. **Section XO** emerges from Tanygrisiau Hydro Power Station (located within the Park to the south west of Blaenau Ffestiniog) and runs down past the settlements of Llan Ffestiniog and Gellilydan to the former Trawsfynydd Power Station. **Section ZK** emerges from the former Trawsfynydd Power Station adjacent to the A470 and runs eastwards, exiting the Park boundary as the line crosses the river Afon Tryweryn in the east (approximately 2 km north of Bala).

4.32 **Section 4ZB** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 7**, into three subsections. Subsection **4ZB.1** runs across the northern most part of the National Park from Llanllechid in the west, rising up over Fridd Ddu and then spanning over the Rhaedr-Fawr and Anafon river valleys (approximately 1.5 km from Abergwyngregyn) **4ZB.2** commences to the east of the Anafon Valley and runs along the remote *Northern Uplands* landscape character area before descending towards the more rural upper slopes of the Conwy Valley near Fron Haul Farm. **4ZB.3** runs down the pastoral slopes of the Conwy Valley from Fron Haul Farm to Tyddyn Bach farm (north of Llanbedr-y-cennin).

4.33 Two of the three subsections, **4ZB.1** and **4ZB.2** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance largely by virtue of impacts on users of local rights of way, open access land and regional trails and moderate to high landscape impacts, while **4ZB.3** has combined impacts that are judged to be of low importance.

4.34 **Section 4ZC** has been divided, as also shown on **Figure 7**, into two subsections. Subsection **4ZC.1** runs from the west coast at the Dwryyd Estuary near Portmadog past Cilfor before climbing up the rugged and complex landform towards the summit of Moel Tecwyn and beyond finishing at the western side of Ceunant Llennyrch valley (NNR). **4ZC.2** spans over the Ceunant Llennyrch valley then deviates around Craig Gyfynys before terminating at the former Trawsfynydd Power Station. Of the two subsections, **4ZC.1** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance overall. **4ZC.2** has combined impacts that are judged to be of moderate importance mainly due to lower impacts on visual receptors even though the importance of the impact on the landscape is judged to be high.

4.35 **4ZC.1** is judged to have **landscape impacts of a very high level of importance** on the *Ardudwy Coastal Hinterland* and a small part of *Morfa Harlech* landscape character areas. The line runs through a complex and dramatic landscape which represents the sharp contrast between the popular tourist coastline of the National Park and the adjacent upland areas. The special qualities of the National Park are clearly expressed in this landscape which also displays high scenic quality, conservation interests and recreational value. The line conflicts with the character of the landscape, eroding valued characteristics and forming an intrusive feature which is highly visible and consequently has a widespread influence on the perception of the landscape. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts that are of a high level of importance**. Impacts are particularly high on people using the Wales Coast Path regional trail, National Cycle Route 8, local rights of way and open access land because close up and frequent views of the pylon line are experienced, particularly in the west towards the coast. There are also some high impacts on the local community, in particular at Cilfor.

4.36 **Section XO** has not been divided into subsections and remains as one section **XO.1**, as shown on **Figure 7**. The pylon line emerges from Tanygrisiau Hydro Power Station (located within the National Park to the south west of Blaenau Ffestiniog) and runs down past the settlements of Llan Ffestiniog and Gellilydan to the former Trawsfynydd Power Station. **XO.1** has combined impacts that are judged to be of moderate importance mainly due to low to moderate impacts on visual receptors even though the importance of the impact on the landscape is judged to be high.

4.37 **Section ZK** has been divided into three subsections as shown on **Figure 7**. Subsection **ZK.1** emerges from Trawsfynydd Power Station and runs up sloping pastures towards the unsettled and open moorlands of the Mignient Uplands, through Ffridd Nant-Crethyll plantation to the Tryweryn Valley. **ZK.2** runs along the bottom of the Tryweryn Valley towards the south of Llyn Celyn (reservoir) and over open access land towards the small settlement of Llidiardau. **ZK.3** continues from Llidiardau and runs through some large pastures to the Afon Tryweryn in the east where it

exits the National Park. One of the three subsections, **ZK.1** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance**. **ZK.2** and **ZK.3** have combined impacts that are judged to be of moderate importance, albeit with some individual impacts which are of high importance.

4.38 **ZK.1** falls almost entirely within the *Mignient Uplands* landscape character area; a largely unsettled, highly scenic, remote and tranquil landscape which expresses may of the special qualities of the National Park. The line is not well accommodated in the landscape due to conflicts with prominent landscape features such as Tomen y Mur, Roman Fort/Roman Amphitheatre and the otherwise strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity of the open upland areas. This subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of a high level of importance**. Although the uplands are unsettled, people using the extensive local rights of way network and areas of open access land experience frequent and close up views of the pylon line over a relatively long distance. Furthermore, people visiting the promoted Tomen y Mur, Roman Fort/Roman Amphitheatre have close up views of the pylon line in the foreground which disrupt expansive and panoramic views over Llyn Trawsfynydd (reservoir) and mountains beyond. There are judged to be **visual impacts of a high level of importance** on users of local rights of way, open access land and visitors to historically important sites.

Summary of Mitigation Options

4.39 The very high importance impact of subsection **4YC.1** on the coastal hinterland landscape could only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding; although some significant conservation constraints and complex landform are likely to make this challenging in places. Trees are a feature of the landscape and could be used to help mitigate views of pylons where they cross the Dwryyd Estuary and near to Cilfor, although care would have to be taken not to block any important views of the wider landscape. One particular view (VP07) would really benefit from undergrounding a section of this route – this is the view from Llyn Tecwyn Uchaf towards the coast at Portmeirion. **ZK.1** could again only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding, in particular re-routing/undergrounding of western most part of the line would mitigate visual impacts from most visited/used parts of the landscape. It is considered that planting is not likely to be appropriate nor effective, particularly in the open upland areas.

South Downs National Park

4.40 Four sections of transmission line, all of which radiate out from the Lovedean sub-station, fall at least partially within the South Downs National Park. **Section 4YE** heads south-west from Lovedean sub-station and lies mostly outside the National Park boundary (only one pylon falls within the National Park). **Section 4YC** heads west from the sub-station, dipping in and out of the National Park, and passing to the south of Hambledon. **Section VB** heads north from the sub-station, crossing through the 'heart' of the National Park to the west of Petersfield. **Section 4VF** heads north-east from the sub-station, crossing the chalk Downs to the east of Queen Elizabeth Country Park before traversing the Rother Valley, skirting the southern edge of the Greensand Hills, and crossing into the Low Weald at its eastern end. **Section 4YE,** which lies mostly outside the National Park has combined impacts that are judged to be of low importance.

4.41 **Section 4YC** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 8**, into two subsections. Subsection **4YC.1** enters the National Park at Swanmore and heads east through a wooded area before crossing the narrow chalk valley of the River Meon. Subsection **4YC.2** starts at the east edge of the Meon Valley where it heads east across the wooded dip slope of the downs, following the southern edge of the National Park, dipping in and out of the protected landscape along its length, and terminating at the Lovedean substation, just outside the National Park. Both subsections are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance.

4.42 **Section VB** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 8**, into three subsections. Subsection **VB.1** enters the National Park just to the south of Alton at an altitude of 135m and heads up over a ridge (reaching 170m) before descending back down to about 140m AOD and then crossing a wooded downland landscape, in which the height of the constantly undulating land varies between about 150m AOD to 211m AOD (at Claypit Farm). Subsection **VB.2** encompasses the distinctive 'bowl' that lies to the east of East Meon, enclosed by scarp slopes to the north and south. Subsection **VB.3** starts at the top of the scarp slope to the east of Tegdown Hill and crosses a

narrow open ridge (reaching 220m AOD) before descending the gradual dip slope through a downland mosaic landscape of mixed farmland and woodland. It passes between Broadhalfpenny Down and Ludmore hanger which form part of a secondary escarpment near the southern edge of the National Park, before exiting the National Park and continuing to the Lovedean substation. All three subsections of line **VB** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, although **VB.2** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** where the pylon and line ascends/ descends the scarps, and **VB.3** is judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** on users of long distance trails (both the South Downs Way and Monarch's Way pass under the lines so scale of impact on views is high or very high for short sections of the trails).

4.43 **Section 4VF** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 8**, into five subsections. Subsection **4VF.1** heads north-east from Lovedean sub-station, crosses Clanfield (outside the National Park), and re-enters the Park at Lovedean Down where it skirts around the edge of Windmill Hill (two pylons are particularly prominent here) and passes between dense blocks of woodland close to the Queen Elizabeth Country Park. **4VF.2** starts at the top of the scarp close to Buriton from where it descends into the Rother Valley. It crosses the Greensand Terrace at the foot of the scarp before descending another 'mini' scarp and passing through the mixed farmland and woodland on the valley floor.

4.44 **4VF.3** crosses the sandy arable farmland that occupies the bottom of the Rother Valley before turning right and following the southern boundary of the Greensand Hills. **4VF.4** follows the southern edge of the Greensand Hills, gradually rising in altitude from 75m AOD to 135m north of Cowdray Park before dropping back down to about 80m at Leggatt Hill and passing into the Low Weald (and the final subsection of the line). **4VF.5** passes through the undulating Low Wealden landscape of farmland and woodland, until it exits the National Park east of Petworth. All five subsections of line 4VF are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, although **4VF.2** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** on the *Buriton to Arun Scarp* (due to the prominence of the line as it ascends the scarp), and **4VF.5** is judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** on visitors at publically accessible sites (due to the prominence of pylons on the distant skyline in an otherwise unspoilt view from Petworth Park).

Summary of mitigation opportunities

4.45 The very high importance impact of **subsection VB.2** on the Selborne Hangers to East Meon Scarp and the Saltdown to Butser Hill Scarp could only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding. If the pylons located on the scarps were to be undergrounded the adjacent pylons in the contiguous line sections **VB.1 and VB.3**, especially where they pass over ridges, would also need to be considered as part of the undergrounding. If undergrounding is not possible, the upper parts of skylined pylons could be painted a lighter grey to help them to recede against the sky.

4.46 The high importance impact of **subsection VB.3** on users of long distance trails (both the South Downs Way and Monarch's Way as they pass under the lines) could only practically be mitigated by undergrounding the subsection as a whole since undergrounding of the two pylons on the top of the Saltdown to Butser Hill Scarp at the northern end of the subsection together with the first pylon in **VB.2** would be impractical. An alternative option might be planting along a short section of the South Downs Way as it passes under the pylons at the top of the at the top of the Saltdown to Butser Hill Scarp to mitigate the worst visual impact, while making sure that there remain places to appreciate the long views across the East Meon Valley. Similar issues relate to the impact of **VB.3** on the Monarch's Way at the southern end of the subsection. Here, although undergrounding would potentially mitigate the impact, in practice since **VB.3** is seen in the context of **4VF** which runs immediately behind, and **4YC** as it approaches Lovedean substation, only if all three lines were undergrounded would there be any benefit to views from the Monarch's Way. Again, if undergrounding is not an option, painting the top of the skylined pylons a lighter colour might help to blend the pylons into the sky a little better.

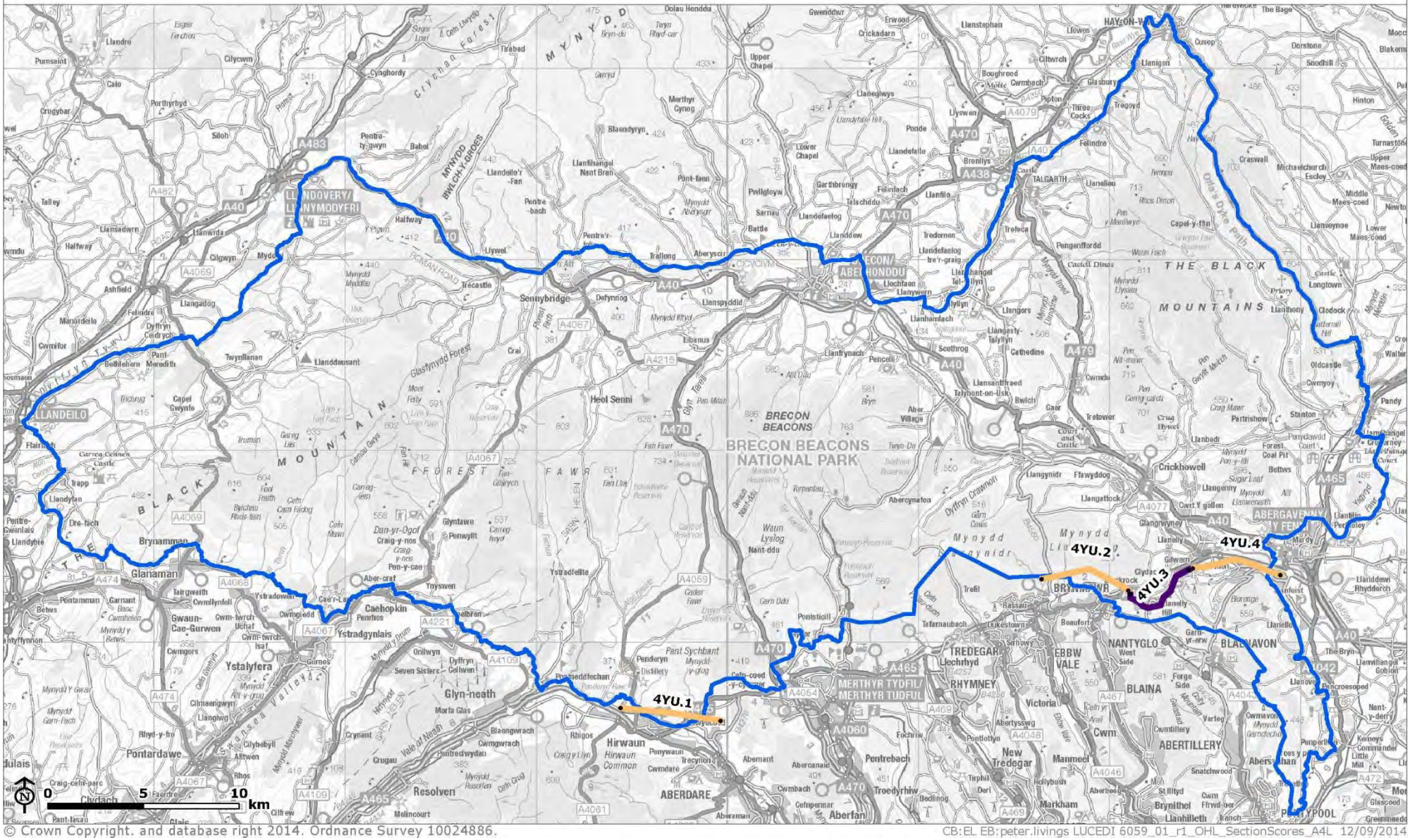
4.47 The high importance impact of **4VF.2** on the Buriton to Arun Scarp could only be mitigated by undergrounding (planting would not mitigate the impact). Undergrounding of the most prominent pylons in the view from Petworth Park would be the best mitigation solution for the high importance impact of **4VF.5** on visitors at publically accessible sites (Petworth Park). However, if

this is not feasible painting of the skylined sections of the nearest pylons could potentially reduce visibility a little.

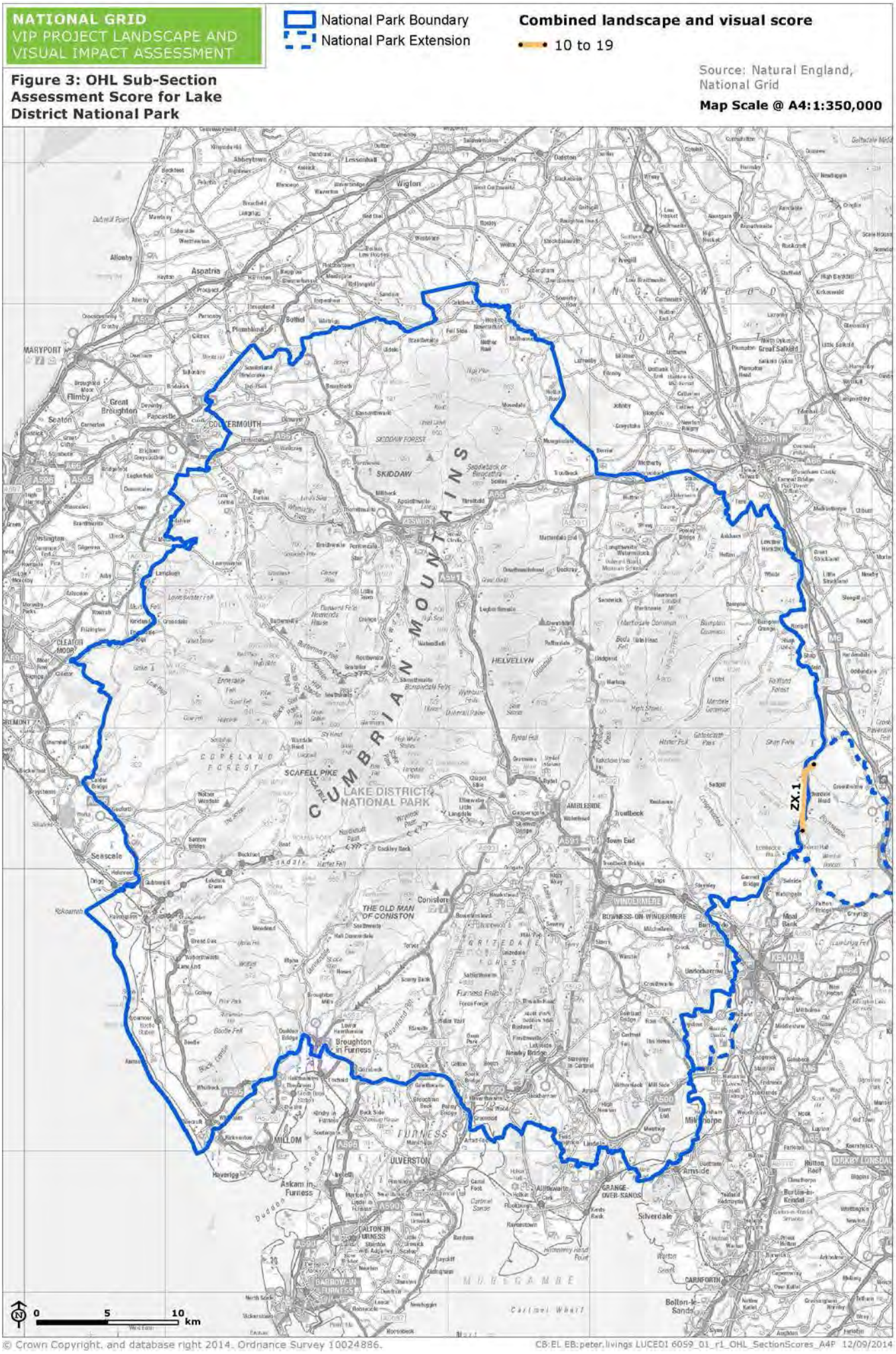
4.48 There may also be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of landscape influenced by the transmission lines, such as extending, linking and managing chalk grassland, woodland management to ensure diverse species and age structures (including introduction of traditional woodland management techniques), management of hedgerows (including gapping up and planting of hedgerow trees) and new woodland planting in more wooded parts of the downs.

NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Figure 2: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Brecon Beacons National Park



CB:EL EB:peter.livings LUCEDI 6059_01_r1_OHL_SectionScores_A4L 12/09/2014


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
National Park Boundary
National Park Extension
Combined landscape and visual score
10 to 19
Source: Natural England, National Grid
Map Scale @ A4:1:350,000
Figure 3: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Lake District National Park
ZX.1
LAKE DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK
CUMBRIAN MOUNTAINS
SKIDDAW
HELVELLYN
SCAFELL PIKE
THE OLD MAN OF CONISTON
COCKERMOUTH
KESWICK
PENRITH
AMBLESIDE
WINDERMERE
KENDAL
ULVERSTON
MILLOM
Askam in Furness
Broughton in Furness
Coniston
Seascale
0 5 10 km
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CB:EL EB:peter.livings LUCE01 6059_01_r1_OHL_SectionScores_A4P 12/09/2014

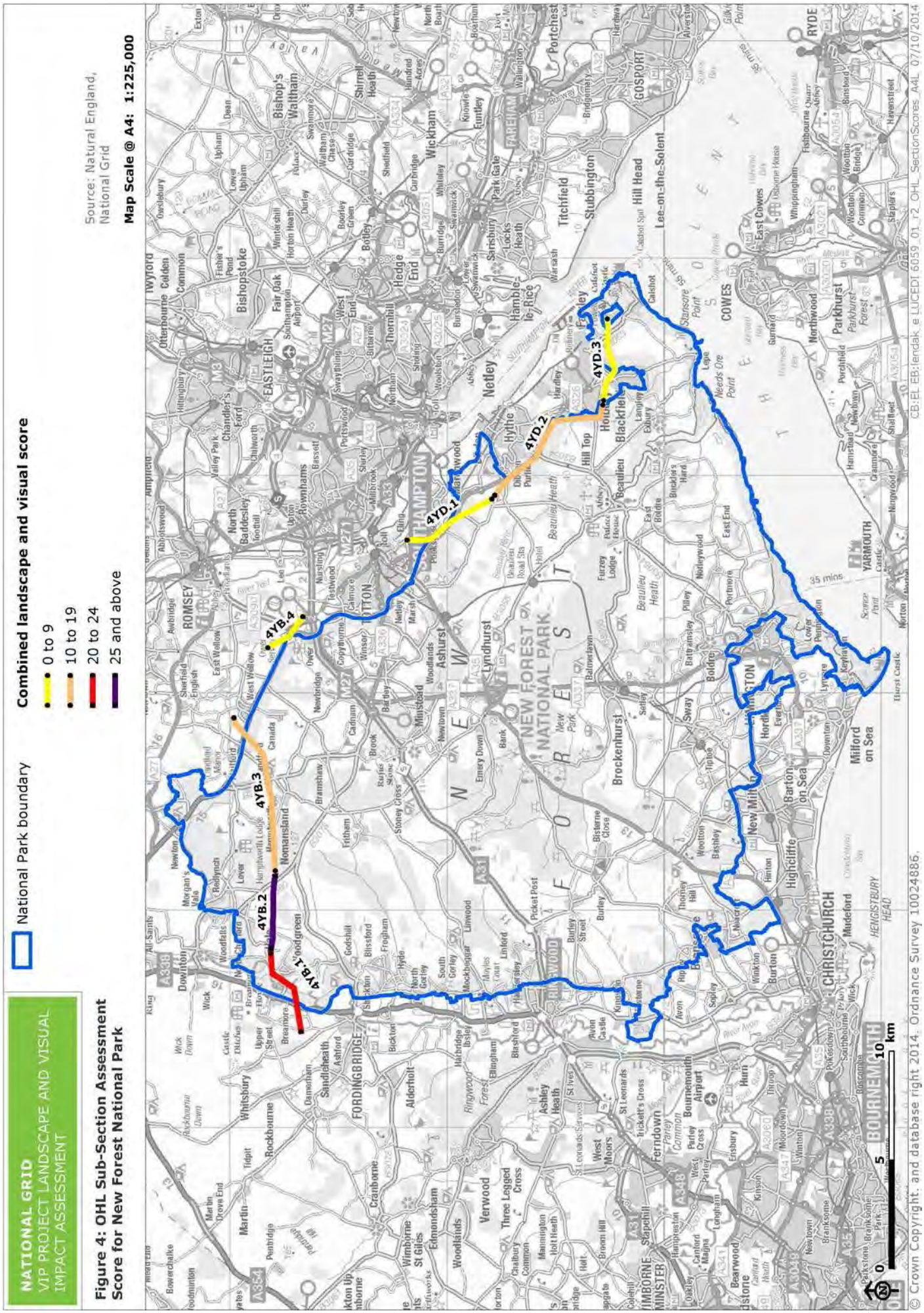


Figure 4: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for New Forest National Park

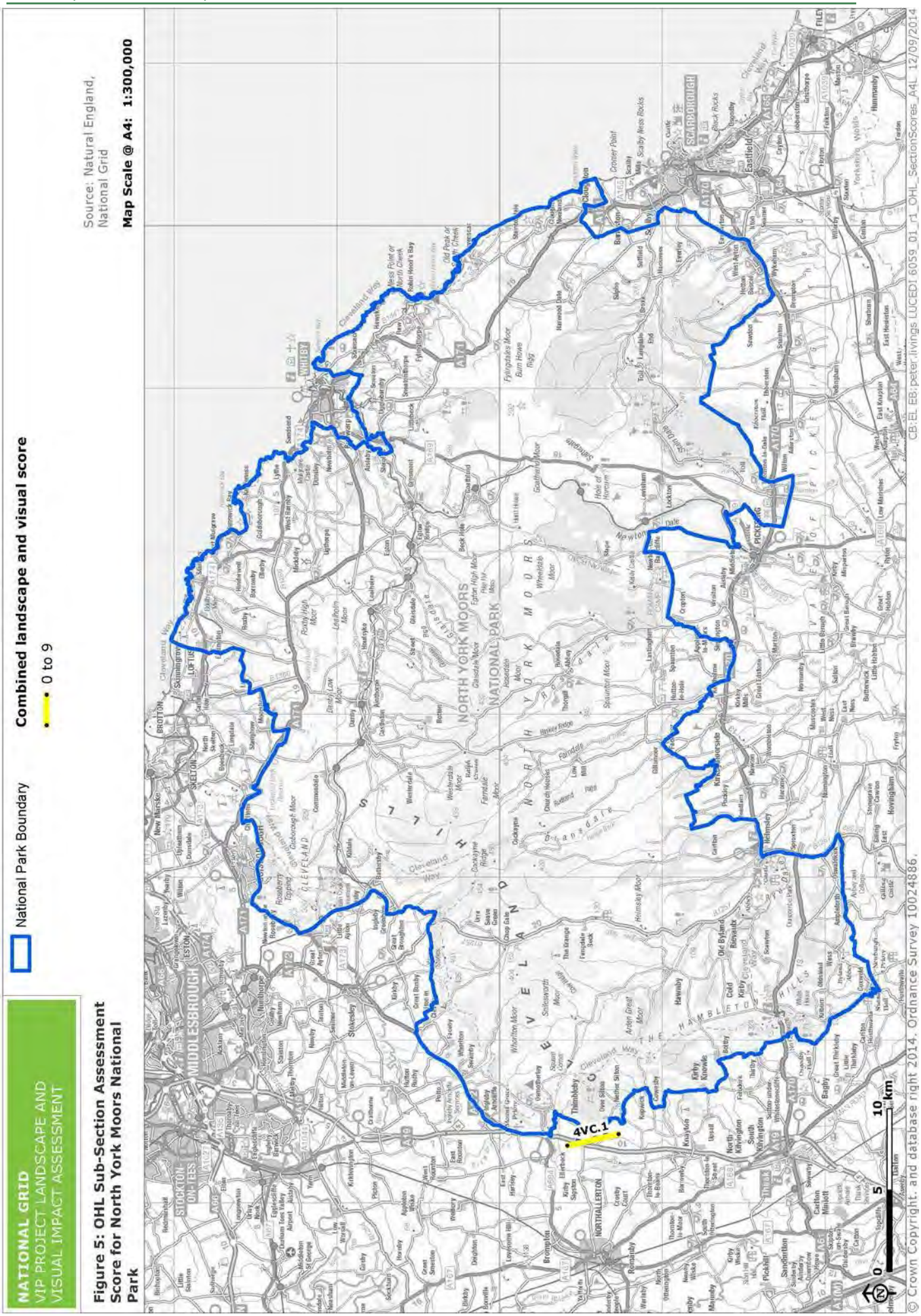


Figure 5: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for North York Moors National Park

NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Figure 6: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Peak District National Park

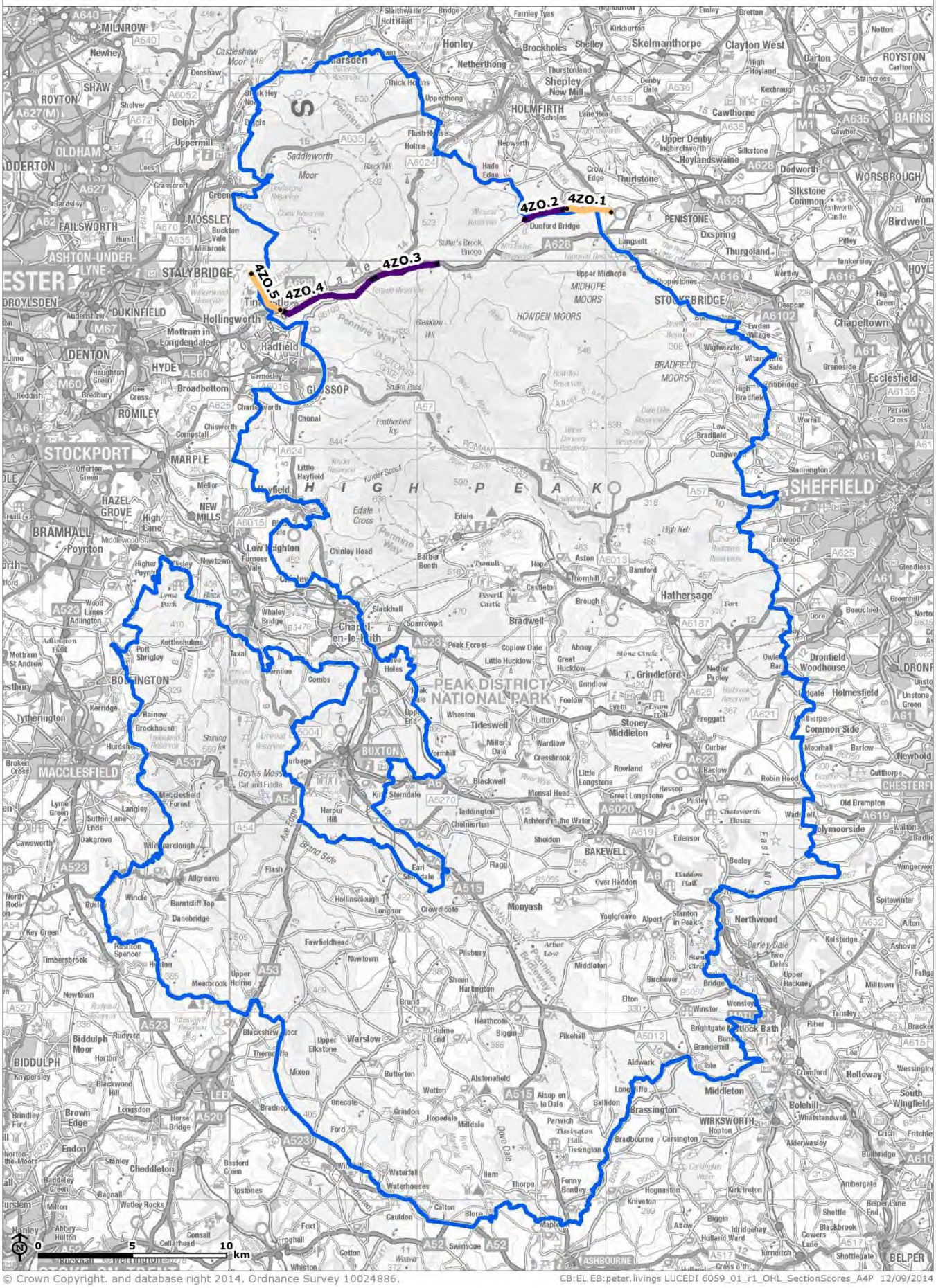
National Park Boundary

Combined landscape and visual score

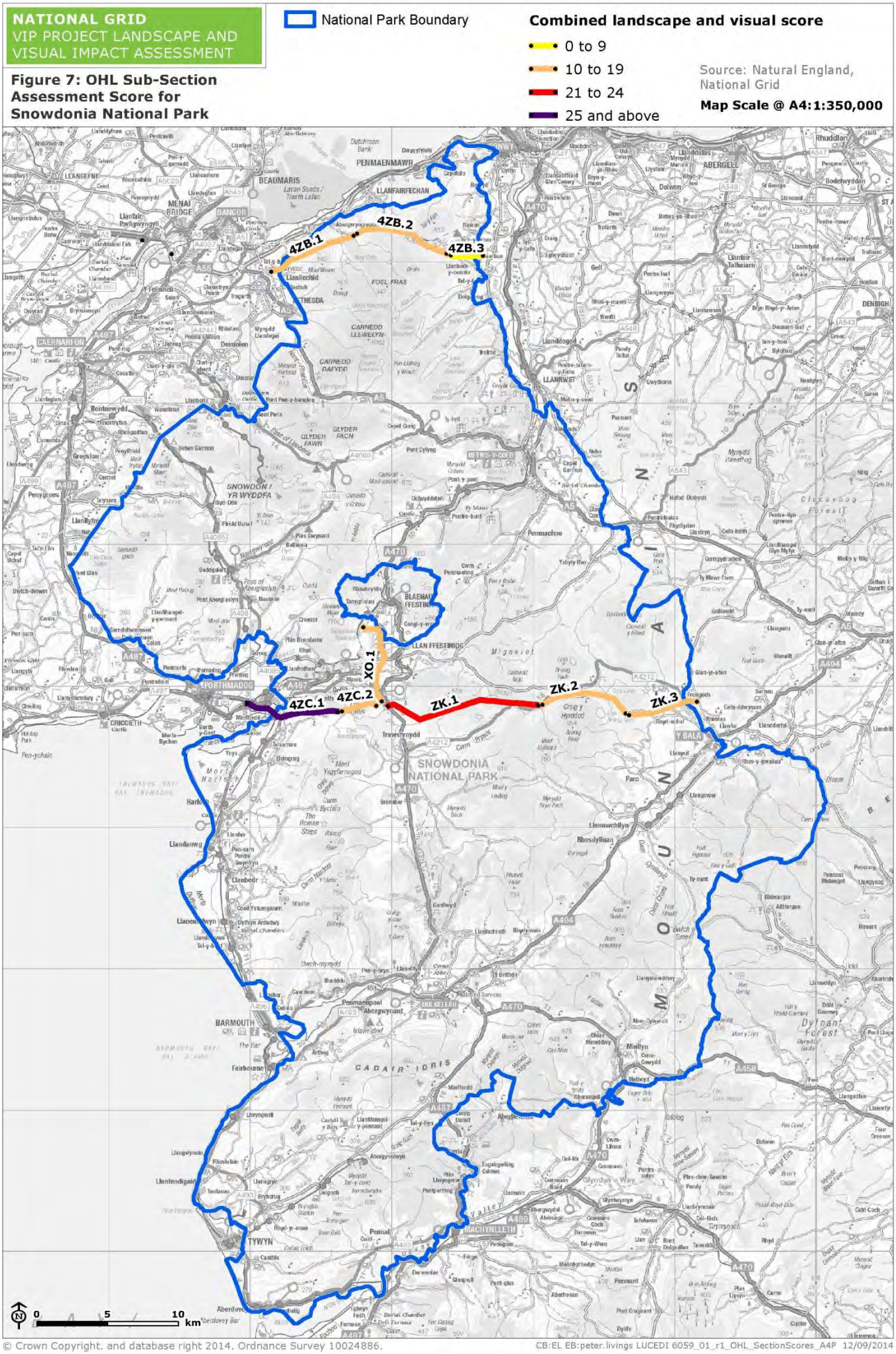
- 10 to 19
- 25 and above

Source: Natural England, National Grid

Map Scale @ A4:1:275,000



CB:EL EB:peter.livings LUCEDI 6059_01_r1_OHL_SectionScores_A4P 12/09/2014


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Figure 7: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Snowdonia National Park
National Park Boundary
Combined landscape and visual score
0 to 9
10 to 19
21 to 24
25 and above
Source: Natural England, National Grid
Map Scale @ A4:1:350,000
4ZB.1
4ZB.2
4ZB.3
XO.1
4ZC.1
4ZC.2
ZK.1
ZK.2
ZK.3
SNOWDONIA NATIONAL PARK
0 5 10 km
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CB:EL EB:peter.livings LUCEDI 6059_01_r1_OHL_SectionScores_A4P 12/09/2014

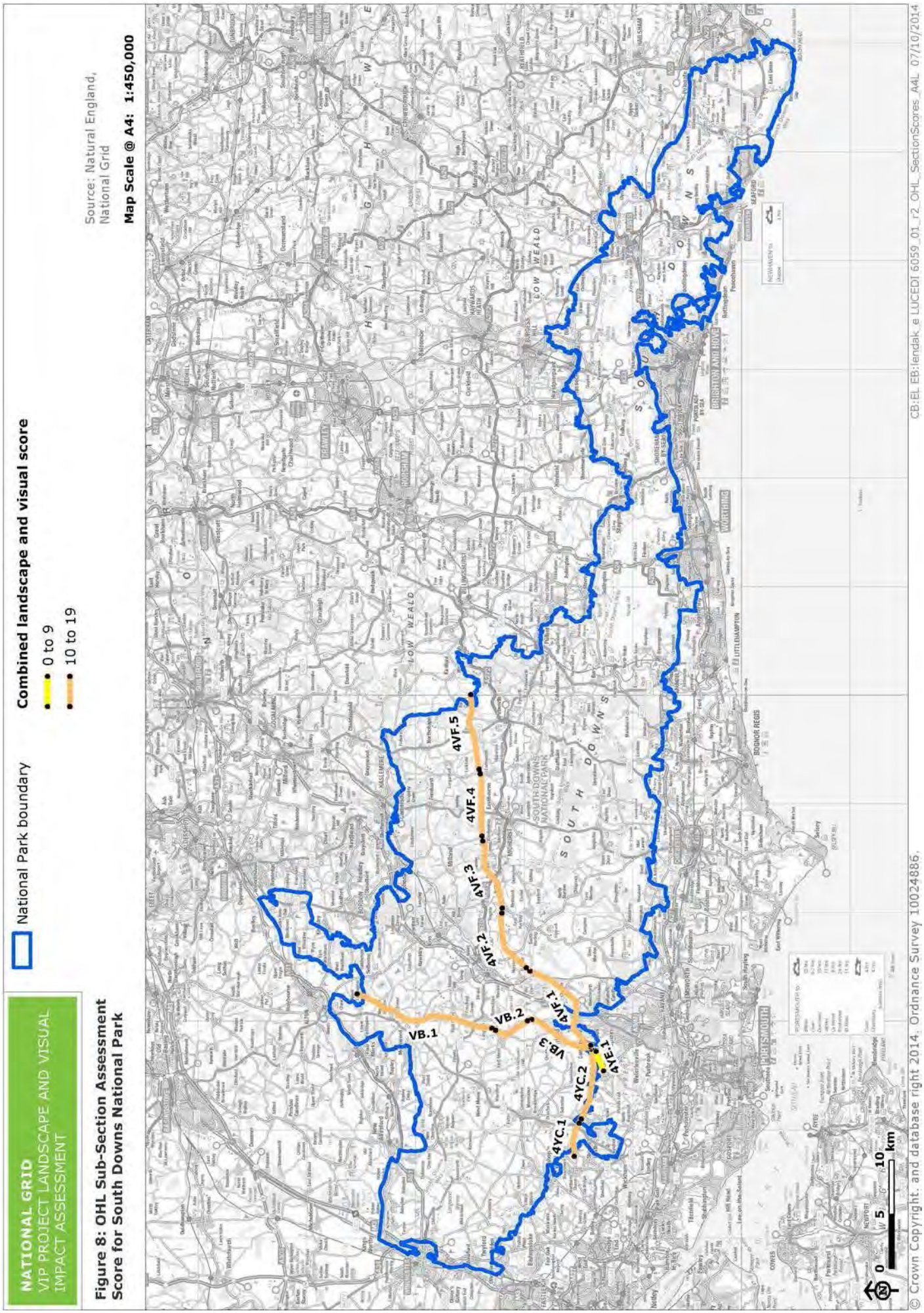


Figure 8: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for South Downs National Park

Chapter 5 : Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Anglesey AONB

5.1 Anglesey AONB is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section 4ZA** crosses the southern part of the AONB near the Menai Strait, entering from the north at Llanfair Pwllgwyngyll. From here the line broadly follows the route of the A55 and railway towards the Menai Strait where it spans over the water directly adjacent to Pont Britannia (Britannia Bridge). This is a narrow section of the AONB measuring just under 1km in width. **Section 4ZA** has not been divided into subsections and remains as one section **4ZA.1**, as shown on **Figure 9**.

5.2 **4ZA.1** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance**. It is judged to have **landscape impacts of a high level of importance on** the *Western Menai Straight* landscape character area. The pylon line is not accommodated particularly well in this landscape which has a distinctive sense of place and is highly valued, partly for its high scenic quality and because it displays the special qualities of the AONB, but also because it is has particularly high conservation interests and recreational value. The vertical nature of the pylons also conflict with a number of important landmarks in the locality, including Pont Britannia, the Marquess of Anglesey Column and the spire of St Mary's Church.

5.3 This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts that are of a high level of importance**. The impact of the pylon line on views is mostly experienced by recreational users of the Anglesey Coast Path/Wales Coast Path regional trails and people visiting a promoted viewpoint and other popular tourist attractions including stretches of the shore of the Menai Strait, St Tysilio church (Church Island), Nelson's Statue and also Plas Newydd (a Registered Park and Garden and National Trust property). Although the top of the Marquess of Anglesey column is not currently accessible by visitors, due to closure for essential repair, it is anticipated that the line would also be highly visible crossing the Menai Strait in the panoramic views from the top of the column once re-opened.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.4 The high level of importance of the impact of subsection **4ZA.1** on Anglesey AONB could only be fully mitigated by undergrounding although this would be complicated due to the Menai Strait. Locating terminal pylons and sealing end compounds would need careful consideration. There is some scope for hedgerow / tree planting to provide some localised screening; however, it may be difficult to mitigate views of the pylon line without also blocking valued views across the Menai Strait.

Blackdown Hills AONB

5.5 One section of transmission line passes through the Blackdown Hills AONB. **Section 4YA** runs north of Honiton, then crosses the southern part of the area, and leaves the AONB north of Axminster. It is 14.7km in length and has been divided, as shown on **Figure 10**, into three subsections. Subsection **4YA.1** runs along a short section of the edge of the AONB, to the north of Honiton and alongside the A30. The line then leaves the AONB briefly at Northcote. **4YA.2** runs from Northcote Hill, where the line re-enters the AONB, to the south of Spilcombe Copse and across the Umborne Valley. **4YA.3** begins at Coombes Head Farm and continues eastward, passing north of Dalwood and across the Yarty Valley, leaving the AONB south of Smallridge. **4YA.2** and **4YA.3** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance. **4YA.1** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of low importance.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.6 Although the overall impact of these lines is not considered high, there are individual pylons or groups of pylons which do form intrusive elements in the landscape. This is particularly the case where they stand on high ground above valleys. Woodland in the Blackdown Hills serves to limit

visibility of pylons, and enhancement of woodland or field boundary trees could further reduce the presence of the more visible pylons in some key views.

Cannock Chase AONB

5.7 Cannock Chase AONB is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section ZN** runs just inside the edge of southern boundary of the AONB, approaching from the east of Cannock and entering the AONB just north of the urban edge of Burntwood and exiting approximately 1 km to the north east. It is divided into two subsections, as shown on **Figure 11**. **ZN.1** enters the edge of Cannock Chase AONB to north east of the Boney Hay area of Burntwood and runs through an undulating area of heathland before terminating near the junction of two local roads which form the boundary of the open access land at Gentleshaw Hill. **ZN.2** commences from this junction, running north eastwards and exiting the AONB at a local right of way to the west of Chorley.

5.8 Both **ZN.1** and **ZN.2** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of low importance overall, largely due to the nature of the landscape, which is not strongly representative of the special qualities of either the AONB or the *Heathland* landscape character area through which is passes, and the screening afforded by trees and the undulating landform.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.9 The open aspect of the heathland offers limited opportunities for additional planting from key viewpoints although there may be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of landscape influenced by the transmission line.

Chilterns AONB

5.10 The Chilterns AONB is crossed by three sections of transmission line - **4TA, ZA** and **ZL.** The AONB is divided into two areas, split by the M1 corridor and Luton. **Section 4TA** crosses the smaller, northern AONB area centrally in a broadly west to east orientation. **ZA** is located within the larger, southern AONB area and runs in a broadly north west to south east orientation close to its north east boundary. **ZL** is also located within the southern AONB area, crossing it centrally in a broadly north west to south east direction.

5.11 **Section 4TA,** as shown in **Figure 12**, has been divided into two sections. Subsection **4TA.1** commences to the south of Upper Sundon in the west and runs in an easterly direction across the undulating rolling chalk farmland landscape before entering the next subsection above Galley Hill. **4TA.2** starts to the north of Galley Hill, and then continues its easterly route across undulating farmland before leaving the AONB to the east of Great Offley. Both **4TA.1** and **4TA.2** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall, albeit with some individual impacts which are of high importance.

5.12 **Section ZA,** as also shown in **Figure 12**, has been divided into three sections. Subsection **ZA.1** starts in the built up area of Dunstable, following the urban edge in a south easterly direction where it enters the next subsection. **ZA.2** starts to the south of Dunstable. It broadly parallels the A5 in a south-east direction for approximately 4 km before it meets the next subsection to the west of Markyate. **ZA.3** commences to the west of the village of Markyate and continues on in a south easterly direction before exiting the AONB to the south of the village of Flamstead. Both **ZA.1** and Z**A.2** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of low importance overall whilst **ZA.3** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance with some individual impacts which are of high importance.

5.13 **Section ZL**, as shown in **Figure 12**, has been divided into three sections. **ZL.1** enters the AONB to the south of Stoke Mandeville before running in a broadly south easterly direction through the Wendover Gap, before meeting the next subsection near the south western edge of Wendover. **ZL.2** continues to run through the Wendover Gap landscape in a southerly direction broadly parallel to the A413 and railway line. The line passes Great Missenden and Little Missenden before turning to a more south westerly direction and terminating at the substation located in Turkey Woods between Homer Green and Amersham. **ZL.3** emerges from the substation to the east of Holmer Green, running to the south past Coleshill before exiting the AONB boundary to the south

west of Chalfont St Giles. **ZL.2** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance**, while **ZL.1** and **ZL.3** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of low importance overall.

5.14 **ZL.2** is judged to have **landscape impacts of a high level of importance.** The *Upper Misbourne Chalk River Valley* landscape is a wide, shallow valley with rolling valley sides in mainly arable cultivation, whilst the valley floor through which the River Misbourne meanders displays a smaller scale field pattern of rough grassland, horse paddocks and pastures. The landscape is attractive and, away from the movement and noise of the road and rail corridor which follows the valley floor, has a strong sense of tranquillity. Although the landform helps accommodate the line into the landscape, overall the scale of impact of the pylon line is **high** as it is an intrusive feature in an area which represents many of the special qualities of the AONB. **ZL.2** is also judged to have **visual impacts of a high level of importance.**

5.15 This subsection of line is in a more settled landscape than the section to the north. Villages, small hamlets and farmsteads are dispersed along main roads which follow the valley floor. Some, like Great Missenden with its important historical buildings and churches, have become tourist attractions on account of their strong rural and picturesque character. At the southern end of this subsection, more modern settlement on the edge of Amersham encroaches into the valley. Overall the importance of **visual impacts on communities is considered high**.

5.16 The Icknield Way and Chiltern Way regional trails are crossed by the line south of Wendover and National Cycle Routes 03, 30 and 57 run parallel to and under the line. Given the high number and scale of impact on national and regional trails, the importance of impacts is considered **high**. There is a high density of local public rights of way through the valley, both on the valley floor and sides and the scale of impacts on these varies depending on the presence of intervening vegetation. Impacts are higher where the line is viewed in combination with a second high voltage tower line which connects into the substation in Turkey Wood. Outside the historic villages, there are few visitor attractions other than a car park and picnic area and the importance of impacts is considered low.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.17 High importance impacts have been identified for subsection **ZL.2** for visitors to local attractions and users of the trails and national cycleways. Trees are a feature of the landscape and there are opportunities for hedge and field corner planting to screen views of the line and mitigate some of the impacts on the landscape. The only mitigation that is likely to have any real effect is undergrounding to remove the landscape and visual impacts on this sensitive AONB landscape. Undergrounding of this pylon line would lessen some of the cumulative effects near Turkey Wood where a second line converges on the substation, but unless both lines are placed underground, important impacts on the landscape in this location will remain. There are many opportunities for hedge / field corner planting to give localised screening to reduce overall impact significance on the other lines within the AONB

Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

5.18 The Clwydian Range & Dee Valley AONB is crossed by two sections of pylon line. **Section 4ZB** crosses the northern part of the AONB, entering it in the north west just north of Tremeirchion and exiting just south of Bryngwyn Hall in the east. **Section ZK** enters the AONB from the west, north of the junction of the A5104 and the B5436 in the Morwynion Valley. It continues along the valley and passes through the undulating landform the to the north west, exiting the AONB near Llyn Cyfynwy.

5.19 **Section 4ZB** has not been divided into subsections and remains as one section, **4ZB.1**, as shown on **Figure 13**. Section **4ZB.1** runs eastwards across 2.5km of the northernmost part of the AONB from Tremeirchion in the west. **4ZB.1** has combined landscape and visual impacts that are judged to be of moderate importance. It has moderate impacts on the landscape but **some visual impacts which are of high importance**, notably on users of trails and cycleways and on users of rights of way and open access land..

5.20 **Section ZK** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 13**, into two subsections. Subsection **ZK.1** runs from the lower Morwynion Valley, entering above the junction of the A5104 and the B5436, from where it continues to run along the valley floor to the south of the A5104 for approximately 13.5 km before stopping just west of Llandegla. **ZK.2** continues from Llandegla then oversails the A5104 generally running in a north westerly direction as it zig-zags around the more undulating landform before exiting the AONB just north of Llyn Cyfynwy. Both subsections, **ZK.1 and ZK.2** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall, although ZK2 has **landscape impacts which are judged to be of high importance**. This is due to the more complex landscape around this subsection and its otherwise tranquil and highly scenic qualities.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.21 Localised planting could screen some views and would not be out of character in these landscapes, in particular within the Morwynion Valley and to the north of the Clwydian Range. There may also be scope for other forms of landscape enhancement in the area influenced bythe transmission lines. The only mitigation that is likely to have any real mitigating effect on views and on the landscape character of the area around **ZK.2** is undergrounding the whole subsection of line. Notwithstanding the effects of ground disturbance, this may be challenging due to the complexity of the landform and environmental constraints.

Cornwall AONB

5.22 The Cornwall AONB comprises 12 separate geographical areas. One section of transmission line passes through the Pentire Point to Widemouth area of the AONB. **Section 4VW** is part of a transmission line which runs south-west from near Holsworthy towards Camelford. It crosses part of the AONB east of Boscastle, on the high ground above the River Valency. **Section 4VW** is 3.3km in length and has not been subdivided further; it is shown on **Figure 14**. The sole subsection, **4VW.1**, runs from the A39 north of Otterham Down, where it enters the AONB, to Treslay Farm where it exits the AONB once more. The combined landscape and visual impact of this subsection is judged to be of low importance.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.23 There may be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement within the areas of the AONB influenced by the pylon line, which could also aid in screening certain views of the pylons. This could include reinstatement of hedgerow trees or expansion of small-scale woodland along the valley, as part of initiatives to enhance habitat connectivity.

Cotswolds AONB

5.24 The Cotswolds AONB is crossed by five sections of transmission line - **4TE, 4YX, XL, ZF** and **ZFB**, all shown on **Figure 15** with their subsections. **Section 4TE** crosses the central section of the AONB, entering to the north of Upper Coberley and running in a broadly north west to south east orientation before exiting the AONB to the north east of Eastleach Turville. **Section 4YX** is located to the south of the AONB, entering it to the north of the village of Hinton and running in a broadly eastwards direction before reaching The Gibb where it turns southwards before exiting the AONB above Biddestone. **Section XL** is also located to the south of the AONB, entering it to the north of the village of Little Sodbury where it runs in a broadly north west to south east orientation before leaving the AONB to the north of Rudloe. **Section ZF** is located to the north west of the AONB, entering it to the east of Ashton under Hill from where it runs broadly southward, leaving and re-entering the AONB before heading south, finally leaving the AONB to the north of Cirencester. **Section ZFB** is located centrally in the AONB. The line enters this section to the north of Shurdington and runs in a south easterly direction before turning eastwards at Salterley and terminating at its junction with two other transmission lines at Needlehole.

5.25 **Section 4TE** has been divided into two subsections. Subsection **4TE.1** starts at the junction of the three transmission lines to the north of Upper Coberley where it runs broadly east passing

between Withington and Chedworth Woods and crossing the valley of the River Coln. It then turns south east as it nears Northleach from the west, ending to the south west of Larkethill Wood. Subsection **4TE.2** starts south west of Larkethill Wood, continuing in a south east direction before turning south of Aldsworth and leaving the AONB near Eastleach Turville. **4TE.1** is judged to have overall combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall, albeit with **landscape impacts which are of high importance** and **visual impacts of high importance** on users of trails and cycleways. **4TE.2** has overall impacts of low importance.

5.26 **Section 4YX** has been divided, into two subsections. Subsection **4YX.1** enters the AONB in the west from the flat agricultural landscape to the north of the village of Hinton and rises up the escarpment to the High Wold Dip Slope where it runs east to subsection 2. **4YX.2** enters this subsection south of Tormarton and runs eastwards across the Dip-Slope Lowland before turning south and exiting the AONB above Biddestone. Both subsections **4YX.1 and 4YX.2** are judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall.

5.27 **Section XL** has been divided into three subsections. Subsection **XL.1** starts in the west to the north of the village of Little Sodbury End, from the flat agricultural unwooded vale landscape north-east of Yate and rises up the escarpment to the High Wold Dip-Slope where it turns south east to enter subsection 2. **XL.2** starts at the top of the escarpment east of Little Sodbury before turning to the south-east and running for approximately 10km where it enters the next subsection at North Wraxall. **XL.3** starts to the north of North Wraxall. The line then runs south through the wooded valley landform for approximately 5km before leaving the AONB to the north of Rudloe. All three subsections **XL.1, XL.2 and XL.3** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall although **XL.1** and **XL.3** both have landscape impacts which are of high importance.

5.28 **Section ZF** has been divided into three subsections. Subsection **ZF.1** commences to the east of Ashton under Hill where it runs broadly southward before leaving the AONB to meet subsection 2 to the north-east of Dixton. **ZF.2** runs back into the AONB from the north-east of Dixton and heads in a southerly direction, rising up to Prescott where it turns south-east across high ground before descending into subsection 3 south-east of Cheltenham. **ZF.3** starts to the south-east of Cheltenham at the top of the scarp slope at the junction with ZFB and 4TE. It runs broadly south-east through the undulating High Wold and High Wold Valley landscape, crossing the River Churn valley and paralleling the western side of the valley before it again crosses the river at Bagendon. It runs next to the A417 before leaving the AONB to the north of Cirencester.

5.29 **ZF.2** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance overall**, while two of the subsections It has **landscape impacts of high importance.** The large scale landscape has few overt human influences, is of high quality and contains many features that are representative of the special qualities of the AONB. Expansive views across sparsely settled farmland and the distinctive skylines of the escarpments give the area a high scenic quality. The pylon line is a prominent feature which alters the rural qualities and tranquil nature of the landscape.

5.30 In terms of visual impacts , although the scale of impact of **ZF.2** varies, pylons are clearly visible from many locations. This subsection is therefore judged to have **visual impacts that are of a high level of importance**. The nearby town of Winchcombe and some small dispersed settlements have views of the pylon line, but the wide geographical spread of these impacts and the numbers of people affected means that overall the importance of visual impacts on communities is considered to be moderate. Local public rights of way are mainly concentrated around the scarp slopes with fewer footpaths on the high ground. Although in places pylons are very visible, overall the importance of impacts on these receptors is also considered to be moderate. The Cotswolds Way National Trail runs along the top of the scarp and there are also a number of regional trails in the area. **High importance impacts are recorded for these recreational receptors**. There are also a number of visitor locations within this subsection including Sudeley Castle and other heritage sites, panoramic viewpoints and a number of car parks. The presence of these encourages people to access the area and visitors over a wide area are affected by views of pylons. **High importance visual impacts are recorded for these receptor groups**.

5.31 **ZFB** has been divided into two subsections. **ZFB.1** commences from the settled unwooded vale landscape to the north of Shurdington on the A46 before it rises up the wooded escarpment to the south east and then turns east-south of Salterley Grange and enters subsection 2. **ZFB.2**

commences from the scarp landscape to the south west of Salterley Grange and runs across the gently rolling well wooded arable farmland to where the line ends at its junction with two other transmission lines at Needlehole. Both subsections **ZFB.1 and ZFB.2** are judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.32 High importance impacts have been identified for visitors to local attractions and users of the trails including the Cotswolds Way in subsection **ZF.2**. Trees are a feature of the landscape and there are opportunities for hedge and field corner planting to screen views of the line and mitigate some of the impacts on the landscape. This treatment would be appropriate in a number of the other sections of line within the Cotswolds AONB. There may also be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of landscape influenced by the transmission line, in accordance with the landscape character assessment for the area and the related management strategy and guidelines.

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB

5.33 Two sections of transmission line pass through small areas on the south-east boundary of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. **Section 4VN** dips in and out of the AONB to the north-west of Wimborne Minster. **Section 4YB** clips the edge of the AONB west of Sandleheath.

5.34 **Section 4VN** is 1.7km in length and has not been subdivided further; it is shown on **Figure 16**. The sole subsection, **4VN.1**, enters the AONB at its southern point as the line crosses the Stour Valley. The line then leaves the AONB again to pass through the Pamphill area, which is part of the wider designed landscape of Kingston Lacy to the north. The line re-enters the AONB as it crosses the B3082, then leaves again as it crosses the River Allen to the north. This subsection has a very peripheral impact on the AONB, though it does have some impact on the Kingston Lacy designed landscape outside the AONB. The combined landscape and visual impact of this subsection is judged to be moderate.

5.35 **Section 4YB** is 0.6km in length and has not been subdivided further; it is also shown on **Figure 16**. The sole subsection, **4YB.1**, cuts across a corner of the AONB to the west of Sandleheath. The line crosses the wooded valley of the Ashford Water, and is generally absorbed into the wider landscape at this point. The combined landscape and visual impact of this subsection is judged to be low.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.36 This is already a well-wooded landscape, which assists in absorbing the transmission line into the landscape. The impact of these lines on the AONB is limited, and no clear mitigation opportunities have been identified, though there may be some scope for localised landscape enhancement in the area of the AONB affected by the transmission lines.

Dedham Vale AONB

5.37 Dedham Vale AONB is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section 4YL** crosses the northern edge of the AONB entering to the north of the village of Leavenheath, and then running north-west, before leaving the AONB to the south of the village of Polstead Heath. The line runs parallel to a smaller steel tower distribution line.

5.38 **Section 4YL** has not been divided into subsections and remains as one section **4YL.1**, as shown on **Figure 17. 4YL.1** is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance. It influences the Valley Meadowlands, Rolling Valley Farmlands and Ancient Rolling Farmlands LCAs. The landscape expresses some of the special qualities of the AONB and has a relatively high scenic quality. The scale and geographic extent of the impact on the landscape are considered to be moderate as overall the pylon line is reasonably well accommodated in this farmed landscape and does not give rise to any major conflicts with the special qualities of the AONB, or key characteristics or values in the landscape. Overall the visual impacts are also

considered to be of moderate importance although there are some individual impacts of high importance particularly in views to the north where the pylons are closer to receptors and can dominate the skyline. The settlements of Stoke by Nayland and Lower Raydon along with numerous scattered farmsteads and properties are the main community receptors in this area and there are also views from trails and cycleways and numerous public rights of way.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.39 Localised additional planting, ideally by reinforcing existing woodland and hedgerows, could be implemented to provide mitigation from some viewpoints. In addition there may be other opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of landscape influenced by the transmission line.

Dorset AONB

5.40 Two sections of transmission line pass through the Dorset AONB. **Section 4YA** enters the area east of Axminster, crossing Marshwood Vale and passing north of Bridport. This section leaves the AONB to the north-west of Weymouth. **Section 4VN** runs north-east from Weymouth, entering the AONB near Bincombe and leaving it again east of Broadmayne.

5.41 **Section 4YA** is 33.4km in length has been divided, as shown on **Figure 18**, into eight subsections. Subsection **4YA.1** enters the AONB from the west on high ground, and crosses a ridge south of Lambert's Castle Hill. **4YA.2** begins where the line descends into Marshwood Vale, and continues eastward as far as Salwayash. Subsection **4YA.3** begins to the south of this settlement, and crosses the Brit Valley to a ridge south of Mangerton. Continuing to the east, **4YA.4** traverses wooded hills to the north of Loders and Uploders. **4YA.5** begins near Askerswell and carries the line across the West Dorset Escarpment, at the top of which **4YA.6** begins, crossing the downland as far as Winterbourne Abbas. From west of this settlement, subsection **4YA.7** runs to the south-east as far as the South Dorset Escarpment. The final subsection, **4YA8**, carries the line over the escarpment and onto the lower ground outside the AONB to the south.

5.42 Subsections **4YA.5** and **4YA.7** are **both judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, and **4YA.8** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance**. Subsections **4YA.2**, **4YA.3**, **4YA.4** and **4YA.6** are judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, while **4YA.1** is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of low importance.

5.43 In more detail, subsection **4YA.5** is judged to have **landscape impacts of very high importance** where the line cuts across the distinctive chalk grassland slopes of the West Dorset Escarpment. The line passes through a coombe, indented into the escarpment, which contains a classic ensemble of chalk downland landscape features, including the open chalk grassland slopes characteristic of the area. The transmission line interrupts this landscape and detracts substantively from the character of the chalk landscape. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** affecting the settlement of Askerswell and users of the footpath network around the line. From Askerswell, the pylons are large features on the skyline, standing above the viewer, while the local footpath network offers a range of views of the line passing through the coombe and across the downland.

5.44 Subsection **4YA.7** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** particularly where the line crosses through a small valley close to Winterbourne Abbas. This and other small valleys in the downland are more susceptible to the impacts of the line, while the open nature of the downland means that the impact extends across a large geographical area. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** affecting users of the National Cycle Route and South Dorset Ridgeway, users of local footpaths and access land, and visitors to the landmark Hardy Monument. The transmission line passes close to Winterbourne Abbas and is prominent above the settlement. Two steel tower distributor lines flank the transmission line south of Winterbourne Abbas, and the smaller size of these pylons emphasise the height of the transmission pylons in views. There is a high scale of impact where the line crosses over the National Cycle Route. The scale of impact on elevated views from the South Dorset Ridgeway

and from Hardy's Monument is lower, although these are highly-valued views and very popular with visitors to the area.

5.45 Subsection **4YA.8** is judged to have **landscape impacts of very high importance** where the line cuts directly across the parallel ridges of the South Dorset Escarpment. Although routed across a low point on the ridges, the pylons impact on the scale of the landscape. The large scale of the pylons is emphasised by the low hills of the southern ridge, and by the small distributor pylons. The line interrupts the skyline and detracts from the character of this key landscape feature at the edge of the AONB. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** affecting walkers on the South Dorset Ridgeway and Jubilee Trail, and users of the footpath network along the escarpment. The transmission line is a prominent feature traversing the escarpment, and appears on the skyline in views both from and to the escarpment, and looking along the ridges. The nearby distributor lines create visual clutter and tangles of wires in views where they overlap.

5.46 Of the remaining subsections, **4YA.2** and **4YA.4** are judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance**, and **4YA.4** is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** on users of the local footpath network.

5.47 **Section 4VN** is 8km in length and has been divided, as shown on **Figure 18**, into two subsections. **4VN.1** enters the AONB from the south, running from north of Broadwey past Bincombe and on to the South Dorset Escarpment. **4VN.2** continues north-east across the high ground, then descends through a shallow vale to exit the AONB near Broadmayne. Subsection **4VN.2** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, and **4VN1** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance**.

5.48 Subsection **4VN.2** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** where the line crosses the open high ground above the South Dorset Escarpment. The line crosses over the open downs, where the pylons are prominent features on the high ground. Within Holcombe Bottom, on the north side of the escarpment, the pylons are large features in a relatively small scale landscape. This subsection is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** affecting walkers on the South Dorset Ridgeway, users of local footpaths, and visitors to the White Horse viewpoint. The South Dorset Ridgeway passes under the line and has close views of the line from around 3km of the route. There are several walking routes and bridle paths which also pass under the line, or which have open views of the pylons crossing the skyline of the downs. Visitors to the White Horse car park have clear views of the pylons on the skyline to the north-west, and although not in the immediate context of the hillside feature, the value of this view indicates a high importance of impact.

5.49 Subsection **4VN.1** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** as it cuts across the South Dorset Escarpment, and **visual impacts of high importance** affecting walkers on the South Dorset Ridgeway.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.50 Undergrounding of key sections of the lines within the Dorset AONB would mitigate the impacts particularly on the characteristic open chalk grassland landscapes of the escarpments. Removal of the pylons would enhance the appreciation of these distinctive landscape features within the context of the downland as well as the adjacent landscapes to west and particularly to the south of the southern escarpment (**4YA.8**). The situation is made complex by the presence of distribution lines near to subsections **4YA.7** and **4YA.8**. Removal of the distributor lines alone would reduce the cumulative wirescape element of the visual impact, but would not mitigate the landscape impacts of the transmission line. Removal of the transmission line but not the distributor lines would also fail to entirely mitigate landscape and visual impacts.

5.51 The openness of the chalk downland is a distinctive characteristic of the AONB landscape and part of its special character. The introduction of woodland planting to act as screening in such open landscapes would often be inappropriate. However, there may be scope to enhance tree cover within valleys and the wooded hills landscape character type (**4YA.7**), where woodlands are more characteristic. It may be possible to tie this into landscape and biodiversity enhancement schemes in the area influenced by the pylon lines, for example improving habitat connectivity while also reducing visual impacts of the transmission line on key receptors such as Askerswell and Winterbourne Abbas.

Forest Of Bowland AONB

5.52 The Forest of Bowland AONB is crossed by two sections of transmission line. **Section 4TC** and **Section ZX** skirt along the very outer western boundary of the AONB, with much of **Section 4TC** lying outside the boundary and **Section ZX** weaving in and out from Knots Wood (east of Lancaster) down to Blackwood (south east of Lancaster).

5.53 **Section 4TC** has not been divided into subsections and remains as one section **4TC.1**, as shown on **Figure 19**. **4TC.1** approaches the AONB from Lancaster in the west heading towards Quernmore, but terminating on the AONB boundary. The landscape which the line influences is very much on the western fringe of the AONB. **4TC.1** is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance at most, due to the line being relatively well accommodated in this settled landscape which is already influenced by a variety of modern developments including telecommunications masts, wind turbines, the M6 motorway corridor and urban developments associated with Lancaster, although there are some more notable visual impacts where the line terminates and ties in with **ZX.1**.

5.54 **Section ZX** has not been divided into subsections and remains as one section **ZX.1**, as shown on **Figure 19**. **ZX.1** skirts just inside and outside the Forest of Bowland AONB boundary from the north east of Lancaster, entering the AONB in two locations to the west of Quernmore and then exiting at Long Lang near Blackwood End and continuing outside the AONB to the south; broadly paralleling the M6 motorway. **ZX.1** is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance. The line is relatively well accommodated within the landform, land cover and scale of the landscape and does not particularly alter the overall perception of the landscape which is already affected by other existing vertical and other infrastructure present.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.55 There is scope for localised tree planting to screen/filter views of line **4TC.1** especially where it terminates and ties in with **ZX.1**. Larger blocks of woodland planting may also help to reduce the overall moderate impacts of line **ZX.1** on the local community, including the village of Quernmore.

High Weald AONB

5.56 The High Weald AONB is crossed by two sections of transmission line. **Section 4VM** crosses the south eastern portion of the AONB, entering it in the west near Cowbeech and continuing south east along low lying land close to the southern border of the AONB. It exits the AONB to the north east of Boreham Street at the A271, at the point where the Nunningham stream flows into the Pevensey Levels. **Section 4ZJ** is a longer sub section and enters the AONB in the south east at Henley Down and runs roughly north east through the typically well wooded ridge and valley landscape towards the north east of Iden, where it drops onto the low lying Rother Levels.

5.57 **Section 4VM** has one sub section 4VM, as shown on **Figure 20**. **4VM.1** is judged to have landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall. In this area the pylon line is relatively well routed within an area of lower lying land close to the southern boundary of the AONB. Although this is a largely undeveloped valley it is not remote and is close to settlement on the adjacent ridge (outside the boundary of the AONB). The ridge also provides a degree of backclothing for the pylons. While the line section overlooked, these views are largely from settlements outside the AONB, and there are relatively few receptors.

5.58 **Section 4ZJ** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 20**, into four subsections. Subsection **4ZJ.1** runs from the south eastern corner entering the AONB at Henley Down and heads north east through wooded landscape enclosed by the Battle Ridge to the north. The section then continues up to the ridge north of Crowhurst Park. **4ZJ.2** runs north east through the Brede Valley consisting of a series of valleys and ridges up to Brede Green. **4ZJ.3** from Brede Green heads to the east to the point where the higher wooded land of Flackley Ash drops to the Rother Levels. **4ZJ.4** runs eastwards along the low lying Rother Levels between two areas of higher ground (Isle of Oxney and Rye) exiting the AONB north east of Iden at the point where the levels join the more extensive area of Romney Marsh. Despite running through an area of broadly similar

character, the combined landscape and visual impacts for the four subsections of line 4ZJ range from low, moderate to very high.

5.59 Sub section **4ZJ.1** is judged to have a **combined landscape and visual impact of very high importance**. This is primarily as a result of the **very high importance of visual impact** recorded for visual receptors at Battle Abbey, a well visited English Heritage site, Scheduled Monument, Registered Park and Garden and Battlefield - site of the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The Abbey and associated terrace is located on high ground orientated to commemorate and look out over the battlefield – this view is contained in the mid-distance by the ridge forming the skyline and horizon. The pylon line runs along the entire part of the ridge in the view with the pylons viewed rising above woodland against the sky. A total of 11 pylons are visible in the middle distance in an almost 180 degree view over approximately 2 kilometres filling the whole of the view south from the Abbey. This is otherwise a totally undeveloped wooded backdrop, and the view to the pylons considerably influence the perception of this landscape. **High importance visual impacts** are also recorded for users of trails within this subsection, specifically the 1066 County Trail.

5.60 **Landscape impacts of high importance** are recorded for sub sections **4ZJ.3 and 4ZJ.4.** Within **4ZJ.3** this is due to the high scenic quality of the area, notably the small scale and strong sense of remoteness which pervades. Within **4ZJ.4**, the pylons are dominant in this relatively confined area of Levels and diminish the sense of scale rising above the slopes of the surrounding landform and have a strong influence on the perception of tranquillity. The combined importance of landscape and visual impacts are recorded as moderate for 4ZJ2 and 4ZJ4 and low for 4ZJ3. The overall low for 4ZJ3 is, despite high landscape impacts, a result of its remoteness and consequently the limited visual receptors.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.61 For subsection **4VM**, the line is in a reasonable location in this part of the AONB, and a location outside the AONB may conversely increase impacts within the AONB. For section **4ZJ** the landform and high degree of woodland cover of the High Weald generally provide a good level of screening, albeit the contrasting flat and unwooded character of the Levels landscape of **4ZJ.4** offers few opportunities for planting or screening. The key opportunity for mitigation relates to the very high importance visual impacts experienced in **4ZJ.1** from the terrace at Battle Abbey. There is a key opportunity to remove the 11 pylons visible in the view from Battle Abbey. This would greatly benefit perception of this area for the many visitors to this historic site. Undergrounding would be one way to achieve this, but an alternative would be to drop the line down the ridge so it does not appear on the skyline. A lower less intrusive pylon design may also possibly be beneficial here. It is unlikely that further planting would be of benefit as the Abbey is positioned to command views out over the landscape and screening would be detrimental to its character.

5.62 In landscape terms, a key special quality of the High Weald that is affected by the pylons is the strong sense of remoteness that pervades. Although the extent of woodland and ridge topography does provide considerable screening, where the pylons can be seen on the ridge skylines or extending up and down the landform above the trees they create a very obvious intrusion. There may be opportunities to implement wider measures to enhance the character and special qualities of the High Weald for those landscapes impacted by the transmission lines.

Kent Downs AONB

5.63 The Kent Downs AONB is crossed by three sections of transmission line. **Section TP** is located within the north western part of the AONB, entering it near Cobham just south of Gravesend before heading south eastwards, climbing the open downs to the steep wooded scarp above the Medway, where it exits the AONB to cross the Medway valley. This section re-enters the AONB on the east side of the valley and the line continues north eastwards to the AONB boundary near Meresborough. **Section ZY** runs in the eastern part of the Kent Downs and extends southwards from the AONB boundary close to Bridge just south of Canterbury to Stowting at the southern boundary of the AONB. The short **Section VO** runs across the southern outlier of the AONB on the secondary scarp just south of Aldington descending the slopes and running southwards over a short stretch of lower lying land to the AONB boundary and continuing out across Romney Marsh.

5.64 **Section TP** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 21**, into 5 subsections. Subsection **TP.1** runs from south west of Cobham where the line enters the AONB on lower lying ground and climbs rapidly up onto the chalk downs and south east to the crest of the steep wooded slopes above the Medway valley. Subsection **TP.2** comprises the steeply wooded scarp above the Medway valley, with the base of the slope marking the edge of this part of the AONB. The line crosses the Medway Valley and subsection **TP.3** re-enters the AONB on the eastern valley side, just south of Kit's Coty. This small subsection covers the line as it ascends the slopes before it flattens as subsection **TP.4** which runs north eastwards across a very open chalk plateau. **TP.5** begins near Bredhurst Wood and extends north east along a small valley to the M2 boundary near Meresborough.

5.65 The overall landscape and visual impacts for **TP.1** are judged to be of moderate importance within this area of open downland. For sub sections **TP.2, TP.3, TP.4, TP.5** the combined landscape and visual impacts are judged to be of low importance, largely because of the edge location and the fact that the pylons are seen in the context of other urban fringe influences within this part of the AONB, plus the fact that they are accommodated to an extent by the landform. One pylon on the crest of the scarp in **TP.2** has high landscape impacts considered in the wider context (seen from the Medway Valley – non AONB) but affects only a very small part of the AONB due to its edge location.

5.66 **Section ZY** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 21**, into three subsections. **ZY.1** enters the AONB south of Canterbury, it crosses the Pett Bottom dry valley and for the rest of this subsection runs along the crest of the eastern side of the valley on the border of a more open arable plateau. The combined landscape and visual impacts of **ZY.1** is judged to be of moderate importance but **ZY.1** is judged to have **landscape impacts of very high importance** due to its effects on the special qualities of the Kent Downs AONB including the strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and the dramatic landform of intimate dry valleys. The pylon line runs along the crest of the dry valley and is very prominent rising above the trees and diminishing the scale of the landform. The visual impacts are of moderate importance.

5.67 Subsection **ZY.2** has been defined where the line turns to the west close to Stelling Minnis and crosses the valley and runs across an area of flatter wooded plateau before descending the scarp at Stowting. Here combined landscape and visual impacts are judged as being of low importance with the pylon line largely being contained within the flat topography and dense plantation woodland with few views, the exception being one pylon on the dry valley crest at Stelling Minnis.

5.68 Subsection **ZY.3** begins at the point the pylon line emerges from the flatter plateau at the scarp top and descends the scarp at Stowting Common. The pylons extend across the open rolling slopes of the vale to the boundary of the AONB where they continue south westwards. The overall importance of landscape and visual impacts is judged to be moderate, although one pylon is judged to have a high visual impact in relation to its very prominent location on the North Downs Way National Trail.

5.69 **Section VO** is a short section of line, defined as one subsection, as in **Figure 21**, running through an outlier of the AONB. The pylon line crosses and descends the gentle rounded slopes of the wooded scarp and out across the flat landscape of Romney Marsh, beyond the AONB boundary. The combined landscape and visual impacts are judged to be of moderate importance. Visually the line is a prominent feature on the slopes and is visible as a prominent vertical feature when seen in the context of long views out across the flat marshes, but these pylons are beyond the AONB boundary.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.70 **Section TP** runs in the north east part of the AONB either side of the Medway valley and in close proximity to the Medway towns. This area is also cut by the M2 and the high speed rail line. It therefore already has a fragmented fringe character in places which the presence of multiple pylon lines reinforces. It is recognised that undergrounding may not be a pragmatic option here since the combined landscape and visual impacts are judged to be moderate/low importance. However, there would be great benefit in implementing a wider scheme of landscape and habitat enhancement to improve the character, quality and experience of this important part of the AONB. For subsection **TP.2**, one pylon located at the crest of the wooded scarp has a very high landscape and visual impact for people viewing from the valley outside the AONB. This is an example where relocation of one pylon away from the crest would be beneficial in theory but impractical in reality.

5.71 For **section ZY**, the very high landscape impacts for **ZY.1** would in theory make this a candidate for consideration of undergrounding, but this subsection does not feature in the priority list because it has low score for visual impact. The pylon line is particularly prominent at this location on the crest of the dry valley, where its scale is magnified within the small scale, intimate and contained landscape. To the east the landscape is part of a large scale open plateau where the pylons could potentially be assimilated more easily although re-routing would potentially impinge on other sensitivities here. Alternatively painting the skylined pylons may be an option. Any mitigation considered for **ZY.1** would also apply to the first pylon in subsection **ZY.2** which is similarly located on the dry valley side. The line within the greater part of subsection **ZY.2** is reasonably well accommodated by virtue of the flatter landform and dense woodland and no further mitigation is proposed. Similarly, the pylon line in subsection **ZY.3** is reasonably located with respect to the landform and takes a route which steps down the contours of the scarp and largely avoids the skyline. One mitigation option would be to consider relocation of the pylon located directly in the framed sightline from the National Trail.

5.72 The short section of **ZO** is highly visible but this mainly relates to the long stretch of line that continues beyond the AONB across Romney Marsh. There would be little merit in undergrounding or mitigating the section of the route within the AONB without considering the impact of the line on Romney Marsh to the south. This might be an area where there may be an opportunity for implementing wider landscape and habitat enhancements in te area influenced by the line.

5.73 The pylon lines within the Kent Downs AONB do not collectively merit the highest scores in terms of importance of landscape and visual impacts. Nevertheless, there may be opportunities to contribute to wider landscape enhancements in line with objectives in the AONB Management Plan for those areas adversely affected by transmission lines. This would be a key opportunity for the area around the Medway towns where the pylon lines reinforce the 'fringe' character of this part of the AONB.

North Wessex Downs AONB

5.74 Two sections of transmission line (YYM and 4YG) run through the North Wessex Downs AONB. **Section YYM** runs in an overall east to west direction through the southern half of AONB while **Section 4YG** runs in a general north-northwest to south-southeast direction, close to the northeastern edge of the AONB.

5.75 **Section YYM** enters the AONB to the north of Devizes then heads east through the low-lying Vale of Pewsey and then up onto the Downland with Woodland landscape type of the Chute Forest, Litchfield Downs and Hannington Downs before dropping down into the Lowland Mosaic of the Ewhurst Parklands, before exiting the AONB near West Heath. Where the line passes from the lowland Vale of Pewsey to the higher Chute Forest landscape, it rises up the Walbury Hill–Watership Down Scarp slope.

5.76 **Section 4YG** extends out from Didcot Power Station in the north before entering the AONB close to East Hagbourne, northeast of Blewbury. The line then heads southeast passing through the low-lying landscapes of Downs Plain and Scarp Moreton Plain and the Vale of the Thames Floodplain. It rises again onto the Downs Plain and Scarp south of Cholsey and runs through to Moulsford, crossing the footslopes of the Open Downland of Blewbury Down. A 2.6 kilometre section is then undergrounded at Goring Gap, thus avoiding traversing over the high Open Downland of Lough Down. The line re-emerges from the undergrounded section close to Stichens Green and heads southeast over the Downland and Woodland landscape of the Ashampstead Downs, before dropping down into the lower Lowland Mosaic landscape of the Hermitage Wooded Commons and the River Valley of the Pang Valley. It exits the AONB north of Theale.

5.77 **Section YYM** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 22**, into 11 subsections. Subsection **YYM.4** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, and **YYM.1, YYM.5 and YYM.6** are judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance**. Subsections **YYM.2, YYM.3, YYM.7, YYM.8, YYM.9 and YYM.10** are judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, while **YYM.11** is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of low importance.

5.78 Subsection **YYM.4** runs from Pewsey in the west through to Burbage to the east. It has **the most important combined landscape and visual impacts** of all the subsections. It is judged to have **landscape impacts of very high importance**. As the line runs east, it passes from the

broad flat vale up onto the slightly more elevated foot slopes below the scarp of Pewsey Hill, Milton Hill and Easton Hill, where it runs parallel with a local distribution line. The surrounding landscape is considered to have a high value with the distinctive landscape features of Pewsey Hill, Fyfield Down, Milton Hill Clump and Easton Clump providing strong scenic qualities. As the pylons sit higher in the landscape, and closer to the scarp than in the more westerly subsections, they detract from these valued landscape features, with a wirescape being seen in front of the distinctive scarp face. The presence of a local distribution line running in parallel to the YYM line creates a cumulative effect with high degree of stacking and a landscape cluttered with manmade vertical structures along the foot of the scarp. The subsection is seen largely from springline villages in the Vale, such as Easton Royal, and from rights of way. This subsection is judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** on these visual receptors.

5.79 Subsection **YYM.1** enters the AONB on the southern slopes of Roundway Hill (part of the Open Downland landscape of Horton Downs), to the north of Devizes, and runs along the foot of the scarp, and partly on the scarp slope, until it briefly exits the AONB as it passes over the A361. Its **combined landscape and visual effects are of high importance**. This subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance**. Due to its elevated position on the foot of the scarp, the line partially loses the backcloth provided by the downland that encloses the vale and is a prominent feature within the surrounding landscape in this area. There are panoramic views from the scarp, a very high value landscape, and from the recreational assets located there (including a popular car park and the Devizes White Horse visitor attraction), with the lines being clearly seen at close proximity, but backclothed from the higher ground. When looking up towards the lines from scarp footslope villages, they break the skyline. overall landscape and **visual impacts of high importance**.

5.80 Subsection **YYM.5** runs from south of the village of Burbage in the west through to the springline scarpfoot village of Marten to the east and its **combined landscape and visual effects are of high importance**. This subsection of line follows the Vale of the Vale of Pewsey east as it narrows, and the vale floor becomes more undulating, passing over the gently rolling low hills of Grafton Fields and close to the footslope of Wexcombe Down. This subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance**. The landscape within which the transmission line is located is considered to have relatively high value, with the distinctive landscape features of Wexcombe Down providing strong scenic qualities. There also **visual impacts of high importance** on communities, especially the villages of East and West Grafton, and on users of rights of way in the area. Although a degree of backclothing is provided by Wexcombe Down and Tidcombe Down, the pylons extend above the skyline when seen in views from the open landscape around the A338 east of East Grafton, they create a strong visual contrast that detracts from the visual amenity.

5.81 Subsection **YYM.6** runs east from the village of Marten in the the Vale of Pewsey, rising directly up the scarp of Botley Down and onto the elevated plateau of the Chute Forest-Faccombe and has **combined landscape and visual effects are of high importance** . The varied landscape through which the transmission line passes is considered to have relatively high value, with the distinctive landscape features of Great Botley Copse, Tidcombe Down and Wexcombe Down providing a high quality landscape with strong scenic qualities. The line exerts a strong influence, and is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance**. There are also **visual impacts of high importance** on communities, for example the village of Marten, and on users of promoted trails, in this case the Mid Wiltshire Way.

5.82 Subsections **YYM.7 to YYM.8** run from the village of Oxenwood in the west through to the where the north-south running A34 dissects the landscape in the east. Overall the combined landscape and visual impacts are moderate but there are **high importance visual impacts** locally for example where the line passes close to a hamlet, for example at Vernham Street where it is seen close to properties. The first three or four pylons of **YYM.7** are particularly intrusive.

5.83 Subsection **YYM.9** runs from the A34 in the west through to Cannon Heath in the east and is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance with no individual impacts judged to be of high importance. Subsection **YYM.10** runs from Cannon Heath in the west through to the A339 in the east and is also judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance. However there are judged to be **visual impacts of high importance** on the village of Hannington.

5.84 Subsection **YYM.11** runs from A339 in the west through to where it exits the AONB at Stony Heath (Baughurst Road) in the east. This short subsection is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of low importance, reflecting the fact that this is a very short section where there are few receptors.

5.85 **Section 4YG** has been divided, as shown on **Figure 22**, into 5 subsections. Subsection **4YG.2** is **judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance**, and **4YG.1, 4YG.3** and **4YG.4** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, although **4YG.3** and **4YG.4** have individual impacts of high importance.

5.86 Subsection **4YG.2** runs south-southeast from Cholsley to Moulsford Downs, where, at a sealing end compound, it enters a section which is underground. The line runs through a transitional landscape between the Open Downland landscape of Blewbury Downs to the south and the lower lying Downs Scarp and Plain and clay vale to the north. It is a varied, gently rolling landscape that includes gentle ridges with skylines formed by downland outliers, giving it a distinctive character. The higher areas include spurs of downland. The transitional nature of the landscape and varied landform provides a high scenic quality and a medium to high landscape value. As the transmission line rises up over the low undulating foothills and outliers of the Cholsey and Moulsford downs, the pylons are frequently seen against the sky and appear to conflict with the rolling landform and rural character of this landscape, when seen from Cholsey and the Ridgeway national Train west of Streatley. This subsection is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of **high importance.**

5.87 Subsections **4YG.3 and 4YG.4** both have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance. For **4YG.3** the **landscape impacts are judged to be of high importance** mainly due to localised effects on a landscape characterised by strong topographical variation with extensive interconnected semi-natural woodland forming a dense mosaic with arable farmland, creating an intimate, enclosed landscape which is of high value, with strong aesthetic qualities. There are also **visual impacts of high importance** on communities, due to localised impacts on hamlets such as Stichens Green and Hook End Farm. For Subsection **4YG.4** there are localised **visual impacts of high importance** on communities such as Upper Basildon.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.88 The very high importance combined landscape and visual impacts of subsection **YYM.4** running from Pewsey to Burbage through the Vale of Pewsey could only be realistically be mitigated by undergrounding. However, the high scale of impact is partly due to the cumulative impact of the line running in parallel with the nearby distribution line, and so the undergrounding of this part of the transmission line would still leave the impact of the local distribution lines. The high importance of the combined landscape and visual impact of subsection **YYM.5** and of the part of subsection **YYM.6** as it rises up the scarp slope from Marten could also best be mitigated by undergrounding, and arguably the whole length of **YYM.4** to **YYM.6** and the first few pylons of **YYM.7** should all be considered together in terms of technical feasibility.

5.89 The transmission line is particularly visible from the A338 and the lanes to the south of West Grafton, East Grafton and Marten, where hedgerows are weak and gappy. Here it may be worth considering a programme of hedgerow enhancement locally around these villages to help mitigate the impacts and contribute to meeting landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of AONB landscape influenced by the transmission line.

5.90 The high importance landscape and visual impacts of subsection **YYM.1** on the visitor attraction of Devizes White Horse could be mitigated by undergrounding or re routeing the lines so they are lower on the scarp, and further away from it. However, the close proximity of the lines to Devizes would be a key consideration in doing this. Planting would not be an option here as this could restrict the very high value panoramic views experienced from the Devises White Horse, and would be out of character with the open landscape.

5.91 The high importance of impact of subsection **4YG.2** could only realistically be mitigated by undergrounding. However, it should be noted that the undergrounding of the transmission line at Goring Gap already prevents what would otherwise be a very high scale of impact occurring further to the south of this subsection. If undergrounding is considered, the need for a sealing end compound in a potentially more visible location to the north of the existing compound, near to Cholsey could be a constraint. Re-routeing or tree planting is unlikely to be helpful in mitigating impacts in this area. Replacement of the corner pylons which are of heaver

construction where the direction of the route alters, could be considered but is unlikely to be feasible as they have a specific function. The corner pylon nearest to Cholsey is an example.

5.92 In addition to the longer sections with very high or high impacts overall, there are a number of localised places where a single pylon or a short run of pylons, which have notable landscape of visual impacts, merit mitigation. This could potentially be achieved in theory by localised relocation of a pylon to take if off prominent ground or to move it further from a hamlet, or possibly by use of a different pylon design, or by planting.

Shropshire Hills AONB

5.93 The Shropshire Hills AONB is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section ZZJ** crosses the AONB centrally in a north west to south east orientation, entering the AONB from the west near Upper Longwood, then running south west of the Wrekin and exiting the AONB to the east just south of Morell's Wood. As shown on **Figure 23**, it is divided into two subsections. Subsection **ZZJ.1** enters the AONB to the south west of the Wrekin and runs broadly south-east through an undulating area of farmland before terminating south of Neves Castle. **ZZJ.2** starts just south of Neves Castle and continues in a broadly south-east direction before exiting the AONB just south of Morrell's Wood.

5.94 **ZZJ.2** is judged to have landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall. This is largely due to the high intervisibility of the line with adjacent landscape character areas. **ZZJ.1** is judged to have landscape and visual impacts of low importance overall, mainly because the line is reasonably well accommodated within the landscape due to the relatively high tree cover and undulating landform.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.95 There is some scope to supplement and reinforce hedgerow and/or field corner planting to provide localised screening opportunities, particularly to mitigate the moderate impacts of **ZZJ.2**. More generally there may be opportunities to contribute to wider landscape enhancements in line with AONB management objectives for those areas adversely affected by the transmission line.

Solway Coast AONB

5.96 Solway Coast AONB is crossed by two sections of transmission line. **Section ZV** and **Section T** run broadly parallel to one another across the very outer north east edge of the AONB. The lines briefly enter the AONB boundary at the eastern most part of the Inner Solway (approximately 3.5 km south of Gretna).

5.97 **Section ZV** has a single pylon located within the Solway Coast AONB boundary. The pylon is located at the point where the river Esk meets the estuary near Rockliffe Marsh where it runs broadly parallel to the east of line **T** and to the west of the railway and M6 motorway. The line spans over the river Esk and continues south towards Carlisle. **Section T** also has just a single pylon located within the Solway Coast AONB boundary; this line runs parallel and to the west of line **ZV**. The pylons along line **T** are notably smaller in size than those of line **ZV**. Neither line has been divided into subsections so they are assessed as **ZV.1** and **T.1** as shown on **Figure 24**.

5.98 **ZV.1** is judged to have a combined level of landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, mainly due to the cumulative impact of this pylon line in conjunction with infrastructure to the east of the line, including the smaller pylon line **T**, the railway and the M6 motorway and associated bridges, all of which are visually prominent and erode the more tranquil and remote qualities of the AONB. **T.1** is judged to have overall landscape and visual impacts of low importance, mainly due to the greater impact of infrastructure to the east including line **ZV** and the very limited visual impacts of **T.1**. The landscape and visual impacts of line **T** are considered to be lower than those of line **ZV**, due to the pylons being much smaller and therefore much less prominent.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.99 Due to the open nature of the estuary and salt marsh landscapes it is considered that additional planting to the west of the two pylon lines may not be appropriate or in keeping with landscape character. Blocks of woodland planting to the east (between the pylon lines, railway and M6 corridor) may however help to backcloth the lines further and so reduce the cumulative impact of the lines and the infrastructure corridor. This might be achieved as part of wider landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by the transmission lines that are in line with AONB management objectives.

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

5.100 The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is crossed by two sections of pylon line. **Sections 4ZW** and **4ZX** have been assessed jointly as they run directly parallel to each other approximately 50 m apart and the pylons are perceived as being the same in size and design. The pylon lines originate within the AONB at Sizewell Power Station on the coast and from here they run south for approximately 1 kilometre before exiting the AONB boundary near the dismantled railway to the south east of Leiston. The lines then run in a broadly south westerly direction inland past the settlements of Knodishall, Friston and Gromford, all of which lie outside the AONB.

5.101 **Section 4ZW** and **4ZX** have not been divided into subsections and remain as individual sections, **4ZW.1** and **4ZX.1**, as shown on **Figure 25**. **4ZW.1** and **4ZX.1** are jointly judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, albeit with individual impacts which are of high importance. **High importance visual impacts** have been identified affecting users of regional trails and cycleways in the AONB.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.102 The reinforcement of existing woodlands and hedgerows could help to further screen views of the pylons, in particular providing appropriate mitigation for some viewpoints in close proximity to the lines. Due to the flat nature of the landscape however, it is likely that the tops of pylons would still be visible when the lines are viewed over a longer distance. Such planting and reinforcement might be achieved as part of wider landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by transmission lines that are in line with objectives in the AONB Management Plan.

Tamar Valley AONB

5.103 One section of transmission line passes through the Tamar Valley AONB. **Section YF** runs eastward from the substation near Ellbridge, crossing the Tamar and Tavy rivers, and leaving the AONB north-west of Tamerton Foliot. It is 7.8km in length and has been divided, as shown on **Figure 26**, into two subsections. Subsection **YF.1** enters the AONB as it crosses the minor road east of Ellbridge. It is carried across the River Tamar on a pair of very tall pylons to Weir Quay, where it turns southward along the Bere Peninsula. Subsection **YF.2** begins west of Bere Ferrers and crosses the River Tavy on a second pair of very tall pylons, before continuing east to the AONB boundary. Subsection **YF.1** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, while **YF.2** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall, albeit with some individual impacts of high importance.

5.104 Subsection **YF.1** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** on the open estuarine valley, classified as falling within the *Middle Tamar Valley* and *Lower Tamar and Tavy* landscape character areas. The river-crossing pylons in particular are out of proportion to and intrusive in the medium-scale valley landscape especially as the transmission line cuts across steep sections of the valley sides. **YF.1** is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** on the communities of Cargreen and Weir Quay, users of the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail, users of local footpaths, and visitors to the Tamar Valley and Tavistock section of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. Again these impacts arise from the dominant presence of the river-crossing pylons, which are highly visible from waterside locations which look out across

or along the estuary. In the Cargreen area there are views of the river crossing pylons to the north, and pylons traversing the Bere Peninsula to the east. The Tamar Valley Discovery Trail follows the riverside and users have frequent close range views of the line. A promoted viewpoint at the former silver mine is directly adjacent to one of the river crossing pylons. This view is considered to exemplify the qualities of the AONB, and is affected by a very high scale of impact.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

5.105 Undergrounding of subsection would be the only way to mitigate the impact of the river-crossing pylons, although the need to tunnel or drill under the river may make this challenging and raise issues about other environmental impacts. A distributor line crosses the Tamar around 2.5 kilometres to the south, on similarly large pylons. Removal of the transmission line would not therefore remove pylons from the estuary altogether. The openness of the estuary landscape means that screen planting along the riverside is unlikely to be appropriate or effective but there may be wider scope to achieve landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by the transmission line, that are in line with objectives in the AONB Management Plan.

Wye Valley AONB

5.106 The Wye Valley AONB is crossed by one section of transmission line. **Section 4YU** runs centrally through the AONB broadly from west to east; entering north east of Ruxton Green it runs just past Brelston Green, to the west of the River Wye, where it then diverts through an existing section of undergrounding, designed to avoid impacts on the main stretch of the River Wye as it passes through the Upper Wye meadows landscape and views from Goodrich Castle. The section emerges east of the River Wye at Coughton Marsh before running past Coughton and exiting the AONB to the east of Chase Hill.

5.107 **Section 4YU** has been divided into two subsections, as shown on **Figure 27**. Subsection **4YU.1** enters the AONB to the north east of Ruxton Green, then runs east before terminating near to the settlement of Brelston Green. **Section 4YU.2** commences at Coughton Marsh, near to Warryfield Farm. The line heads broadly east following the edge of higher ground near Chase Wood to the edge of Penyard Park before leaving the AONB near Coleraine Farm. **4YU.2** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of high importance. 4YU.1** has combined landscape and visual impacts that are judged to be of moderate importance mainly due to lower impacts on both landscape and visual receptors.

5.108 **4YU.2** runs through the the undulating farmland of the *Walford Lowlands* landscape character area in the west and the steeper, well-wooded landscape of the *Wye Gorge* landscape character area in the east. The landscape contains many of the features that are recognised as forming special qualities of the AONB. The importance of the impact of the pylon line varies from moderate in the *Walford Lowlands* to high in the *Wye Gorge*, where the prominence of the pylon line conflicts with the more diverse landscape of the gorge as reflected in the requirement for a number of angle pylons. Overall the subsection is considered to have **landscape impacts of high importance**.

5.109 **4YU.2** is also judged to have **visual impacts of a high importance**. The impact of the pylon line on views is mostly experienced by the local community, principally the settlement of Coughton which is dominated by views of nearby pylons - in particular the angle pylons which are heavy in appearance. People using the relatively dense network of local public rights of way are also affected by views of the pylon line and high importance impacts are recorded for these receptors. The scale of visual impacts on nearby visitor attractions and people using regional trails is considered to be moderate due to a combination of distance from the line and intervening vegetation.

Summary of Mitigation Options

For subsection **4YU.2** high importance visual impacts have been identified for the local community (particularly Coughton) and users of local rights of way. Localised planting may help to screen views of the most prominent pylons although this is unlikely to have a significant effect overall. A reduction in the height of pylons as the pylon line cuts up through woodland at Chase Wood might reduce the impacts in this location, but the only mitigation that is likely to have any significant effect in mitigating the high importance landscape and visual impacts is undergrounding.

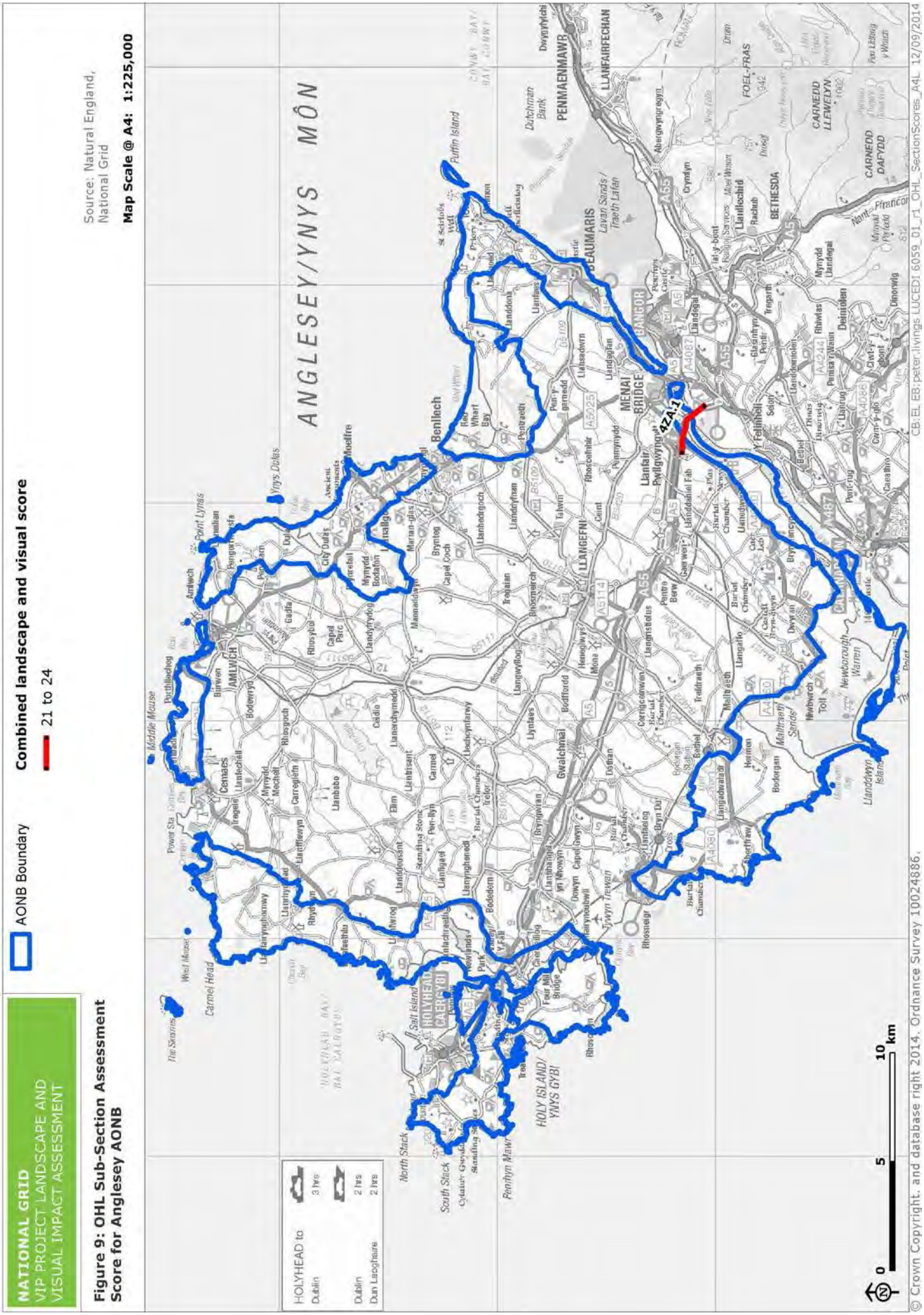


Figure 9: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Anglesey AONB

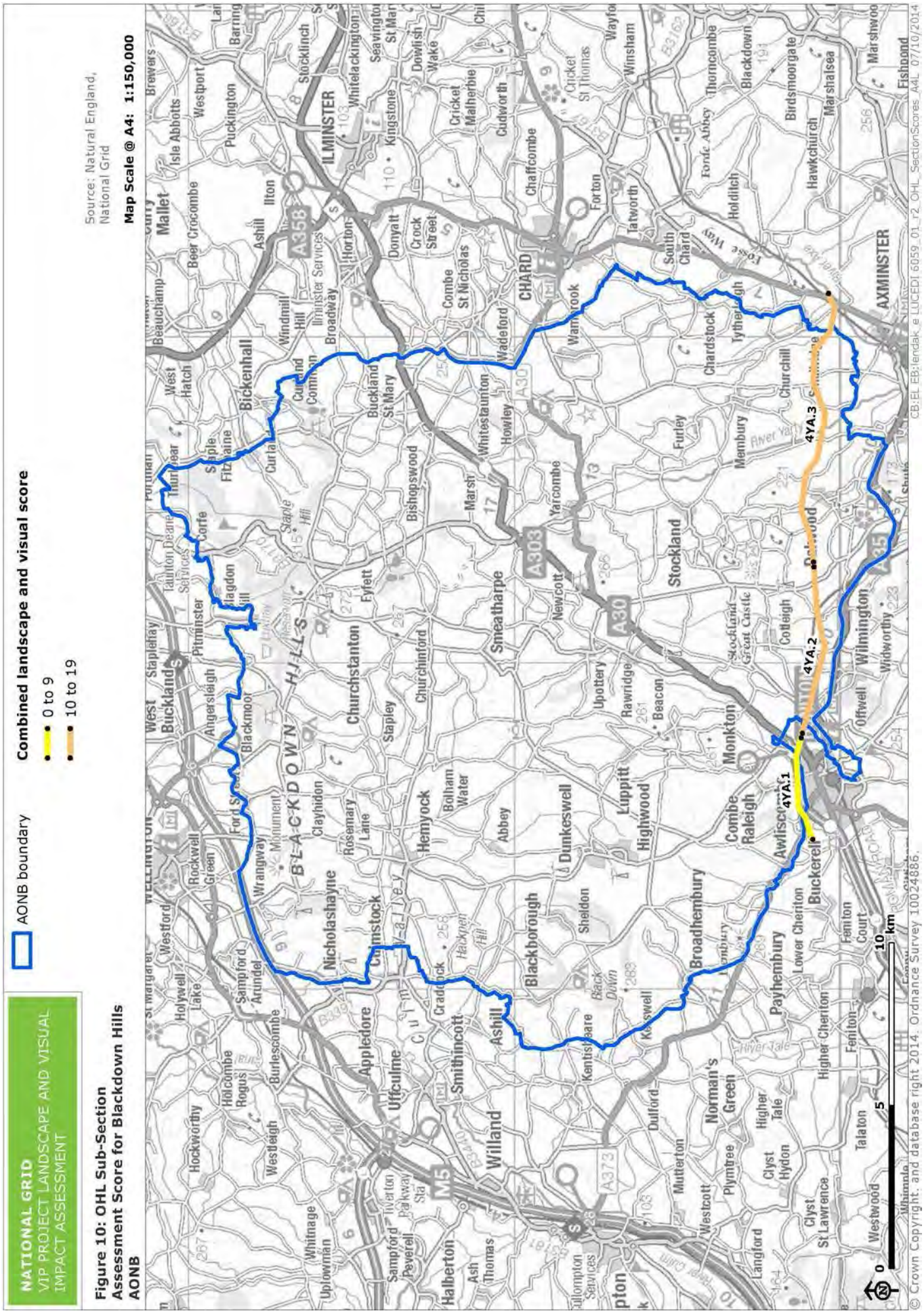
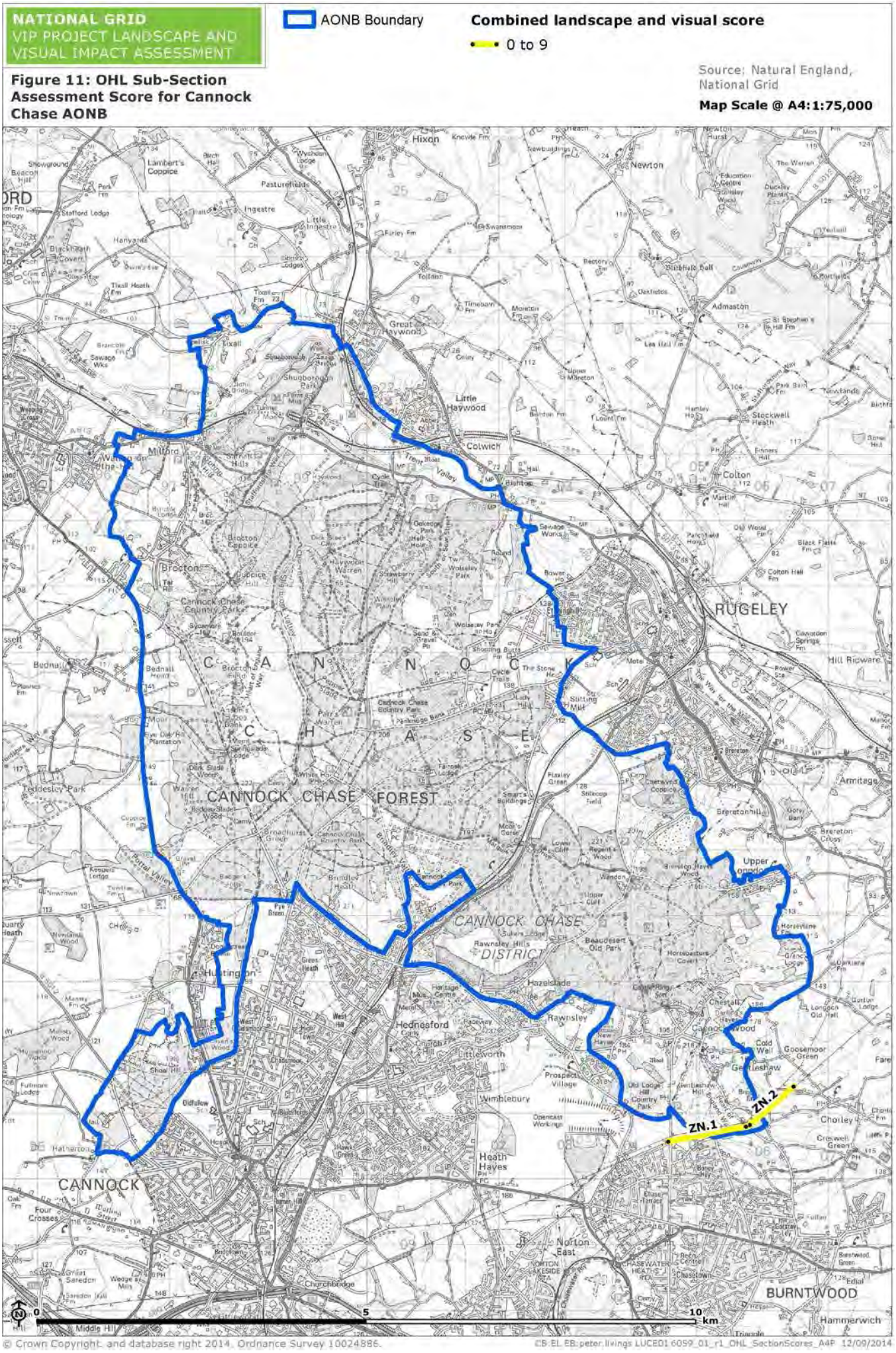


Figure 10: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Blackdown Hills AONB


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AONB Boundary
Combined landscape and visual score
0 to 9
Source: Natural England, National Grid
Map Scale @ A4:1:75,000
Figure 11: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Cannock Chase AONB
CANNOCK CHASE AONB
CANNOCK CHASE FOREST
CANNOCK CHASE DISTRICT
RUGELEY
CANNOCK
BURNTWOOD
ZN.1
ZN.2
0
5
10
km
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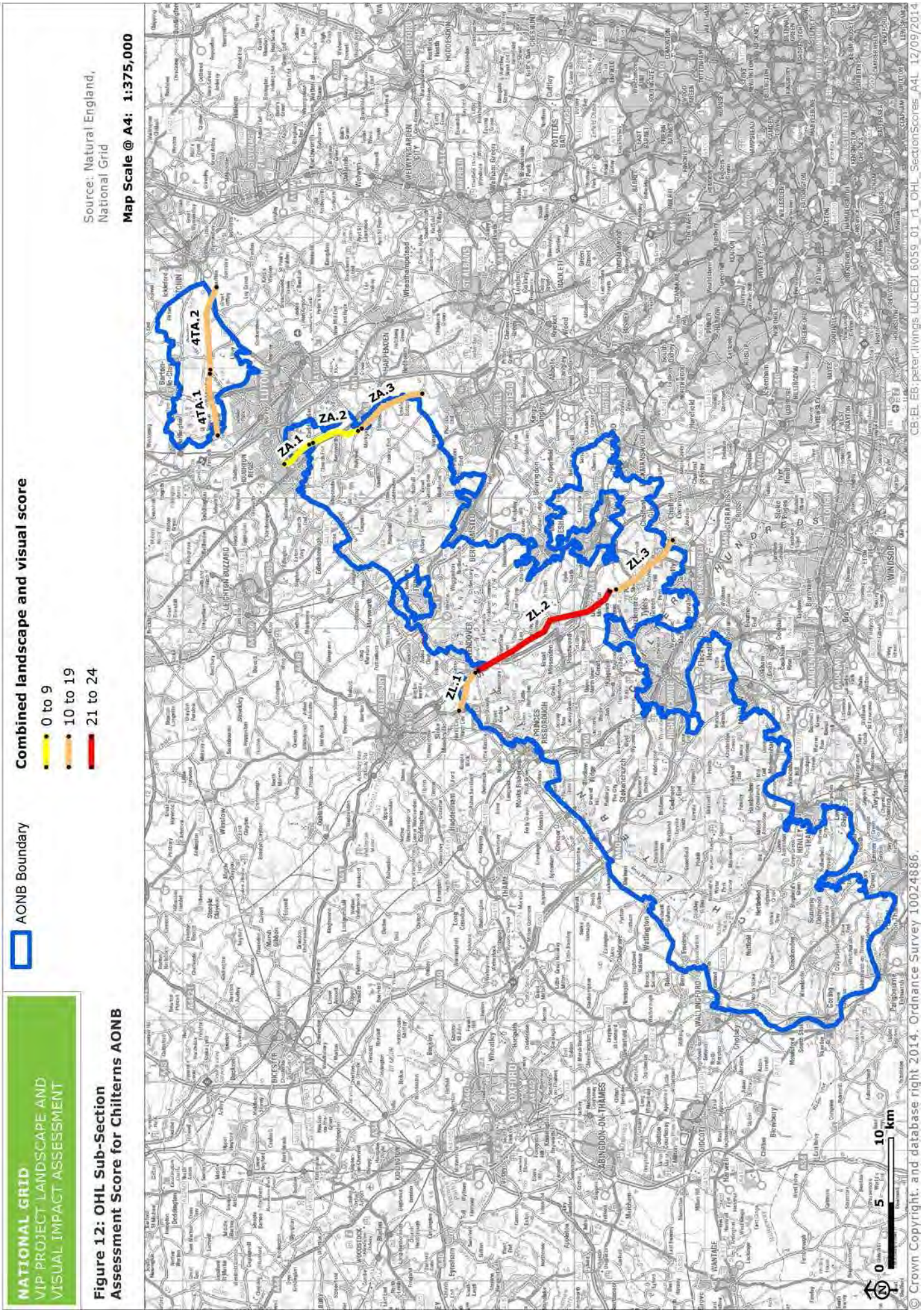


Figure 12: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Chilterns AONB

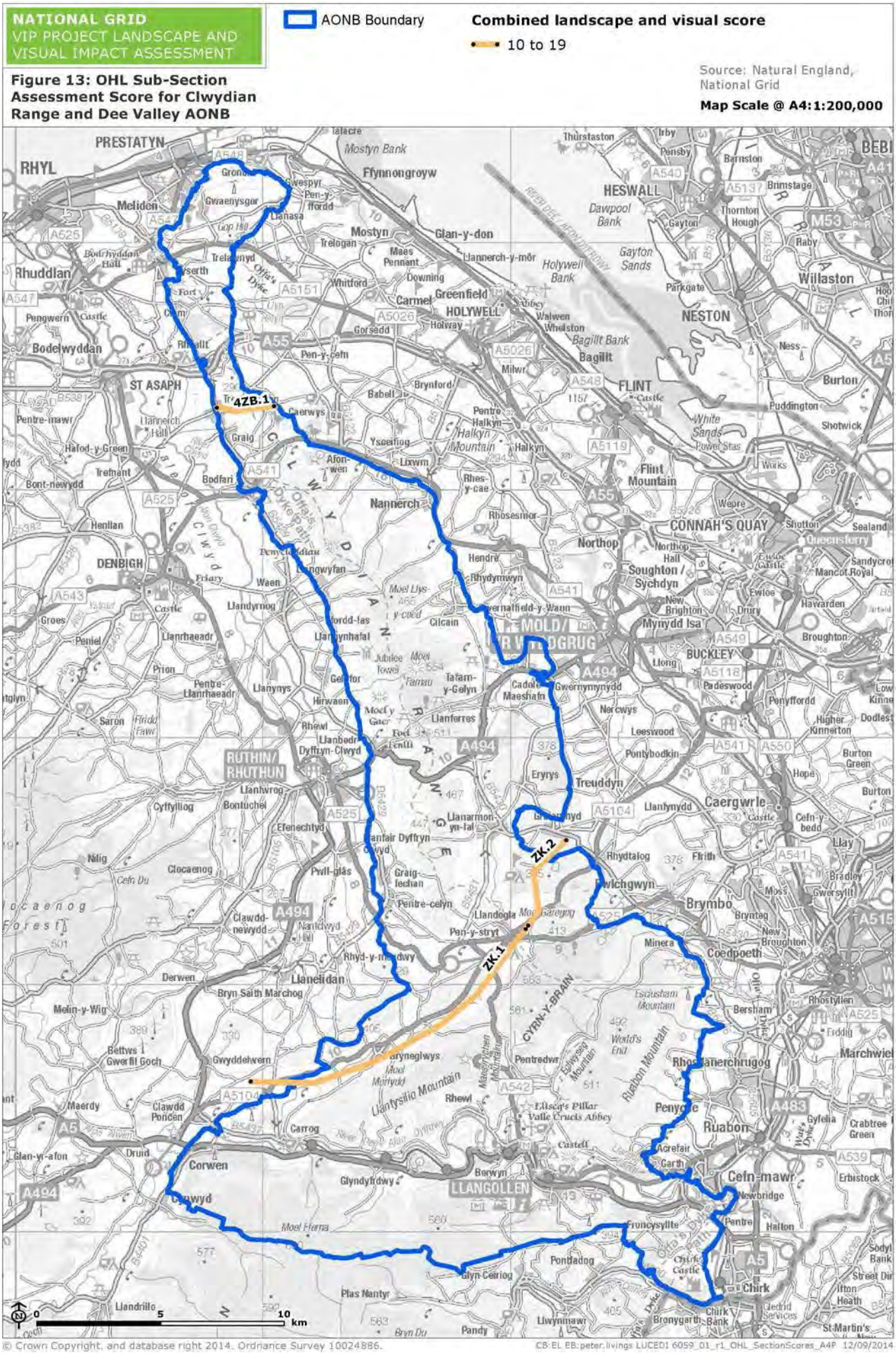


Figure 13: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

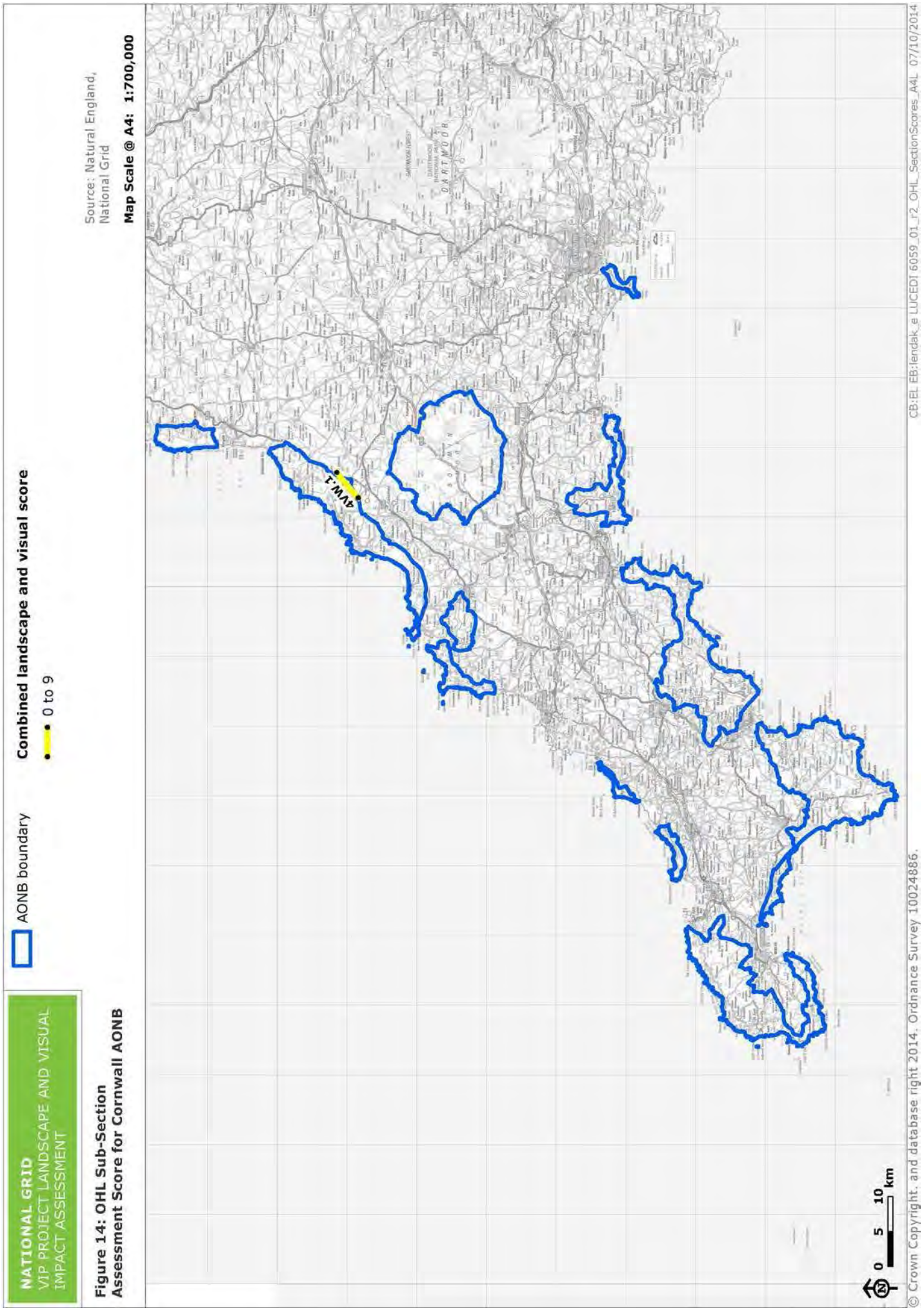
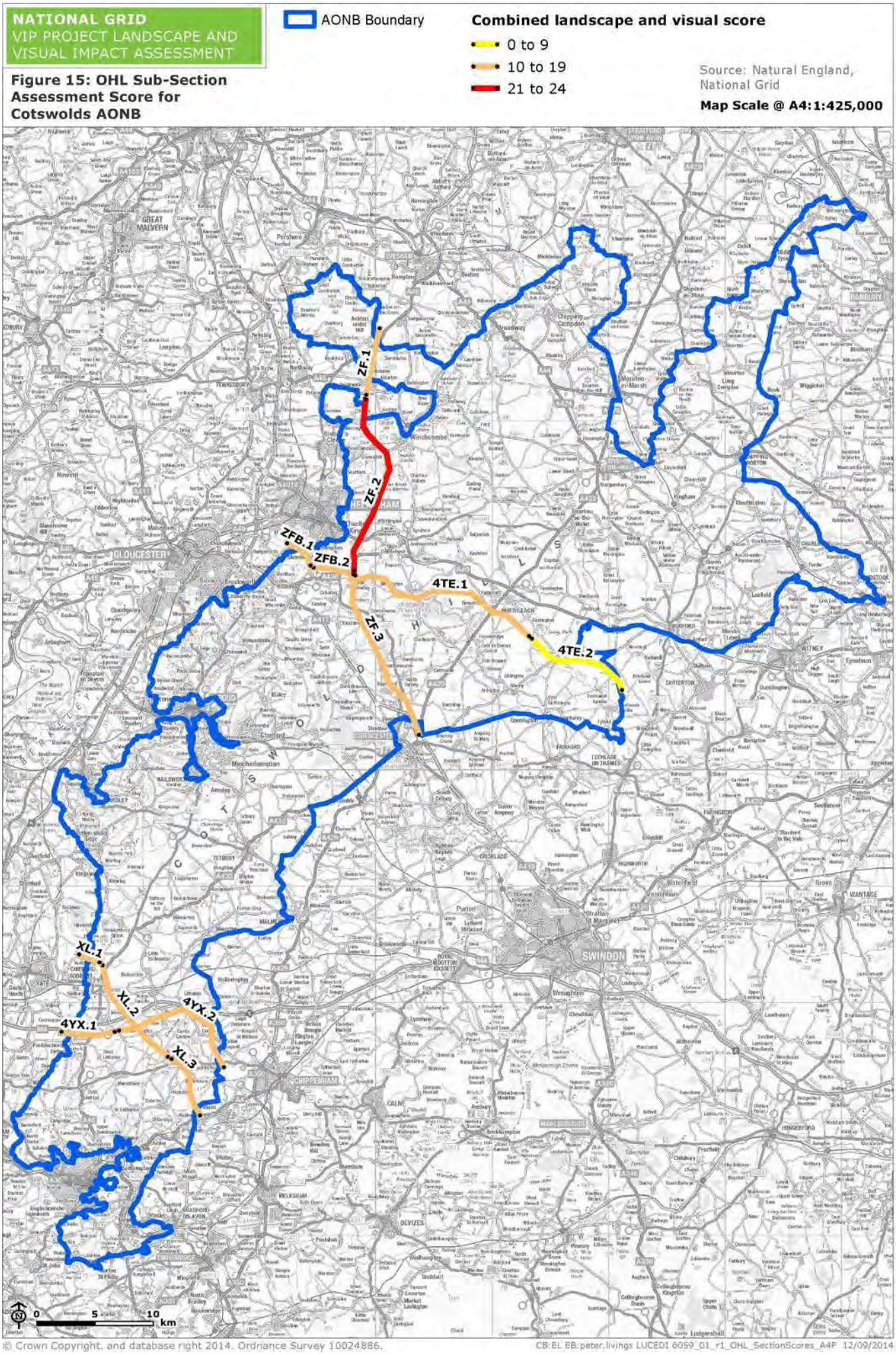


Figure 14: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Cornwall AONB


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AONB Boundary
Combined landscape and visual score
0 to 9
10 to 19
21 to 24
Source: Natural England, National Grid
Map Scale @ A4:1:425,000
ZF.1
ZF.2
ZF.3
ZFB.1
ZFB.2
4TE.1
4TE.2
XL.1
XL.2
XL.3
4YX.1
4YX.2
GLOUCESTER
CHELTENHAM
SWINDON
WANTAGE
0
5
10
km
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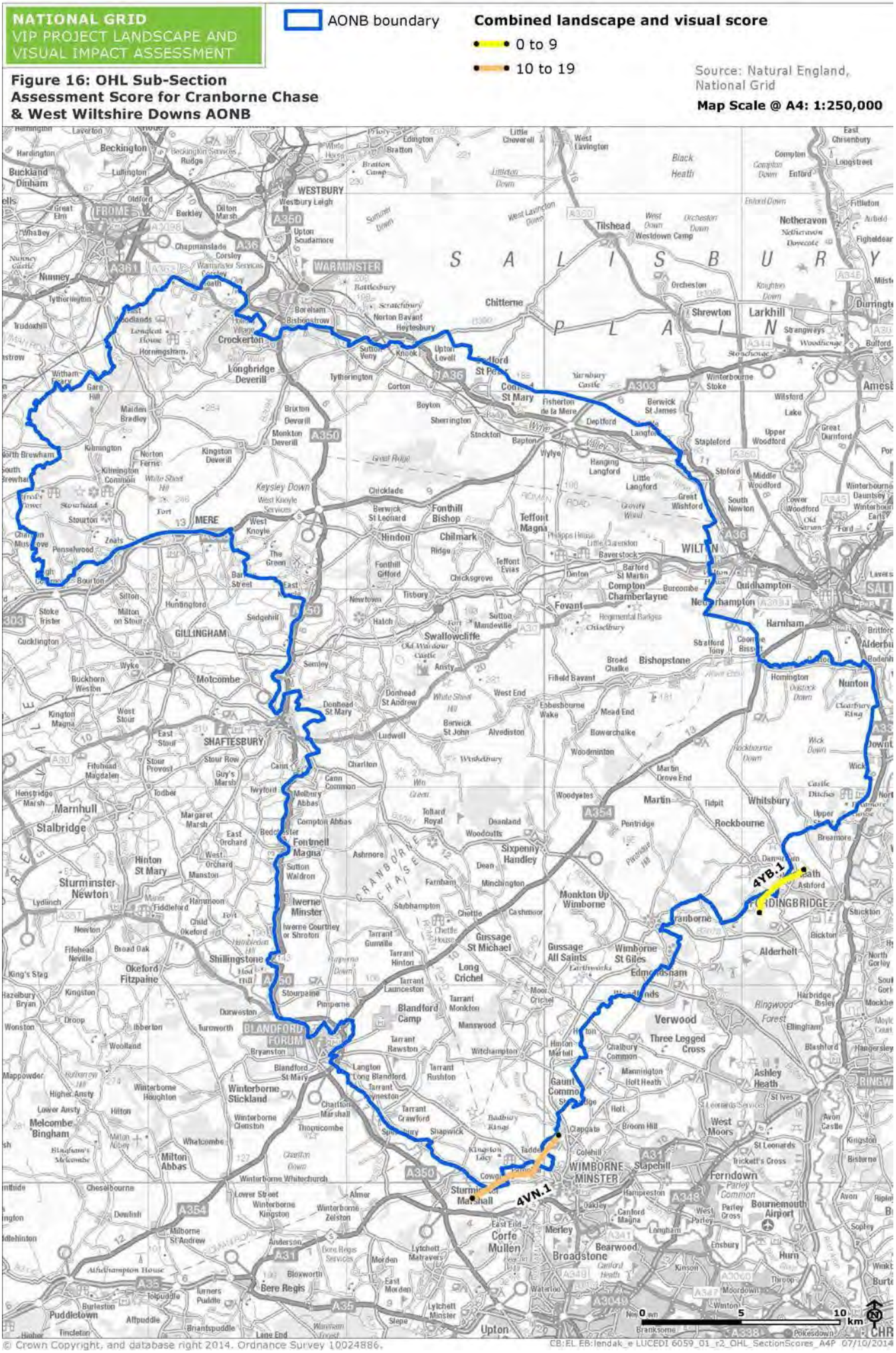


Figure 16: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB

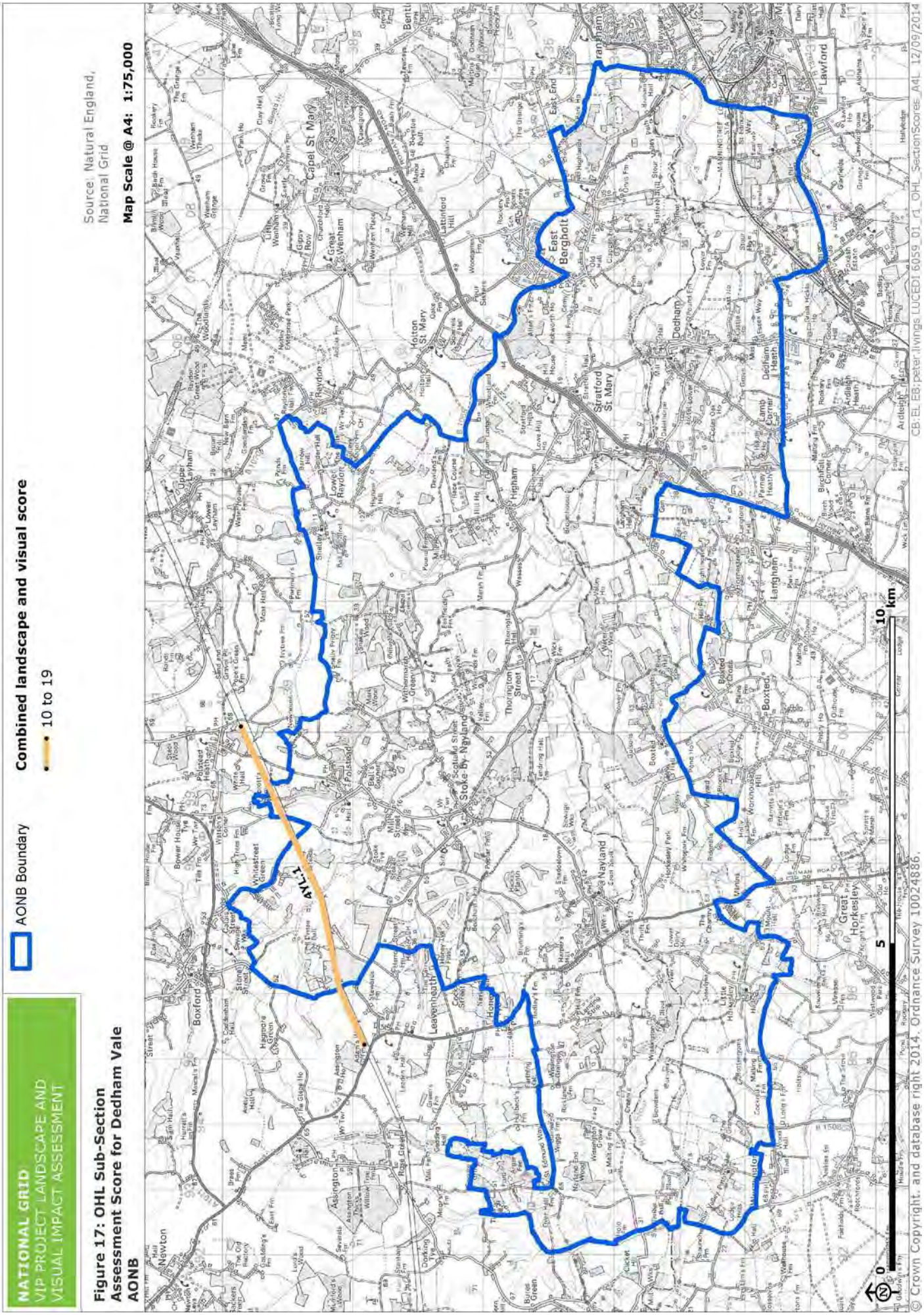


Figure 17: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Dedham Vale AONB

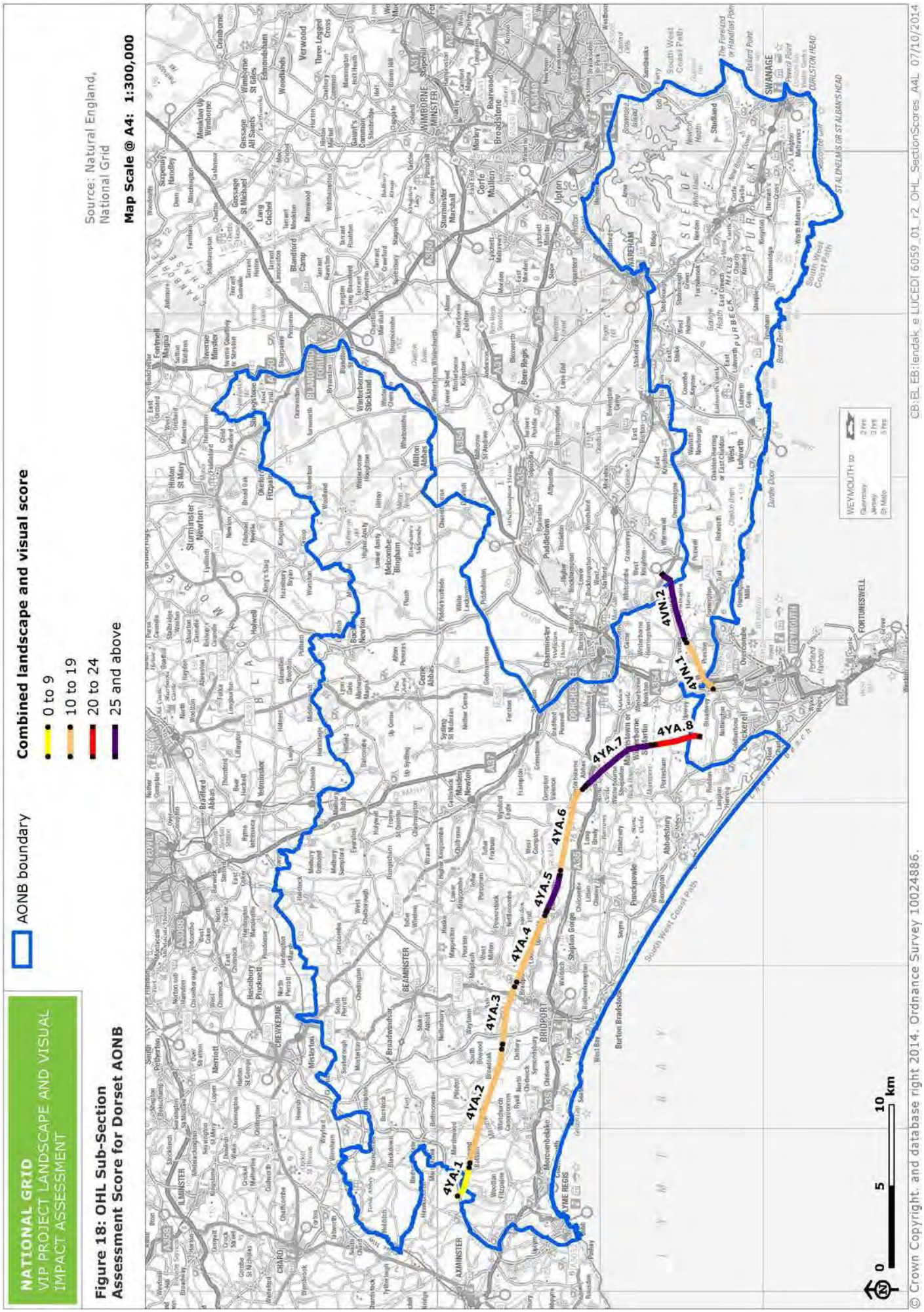


Figure 18: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Dorset AONB

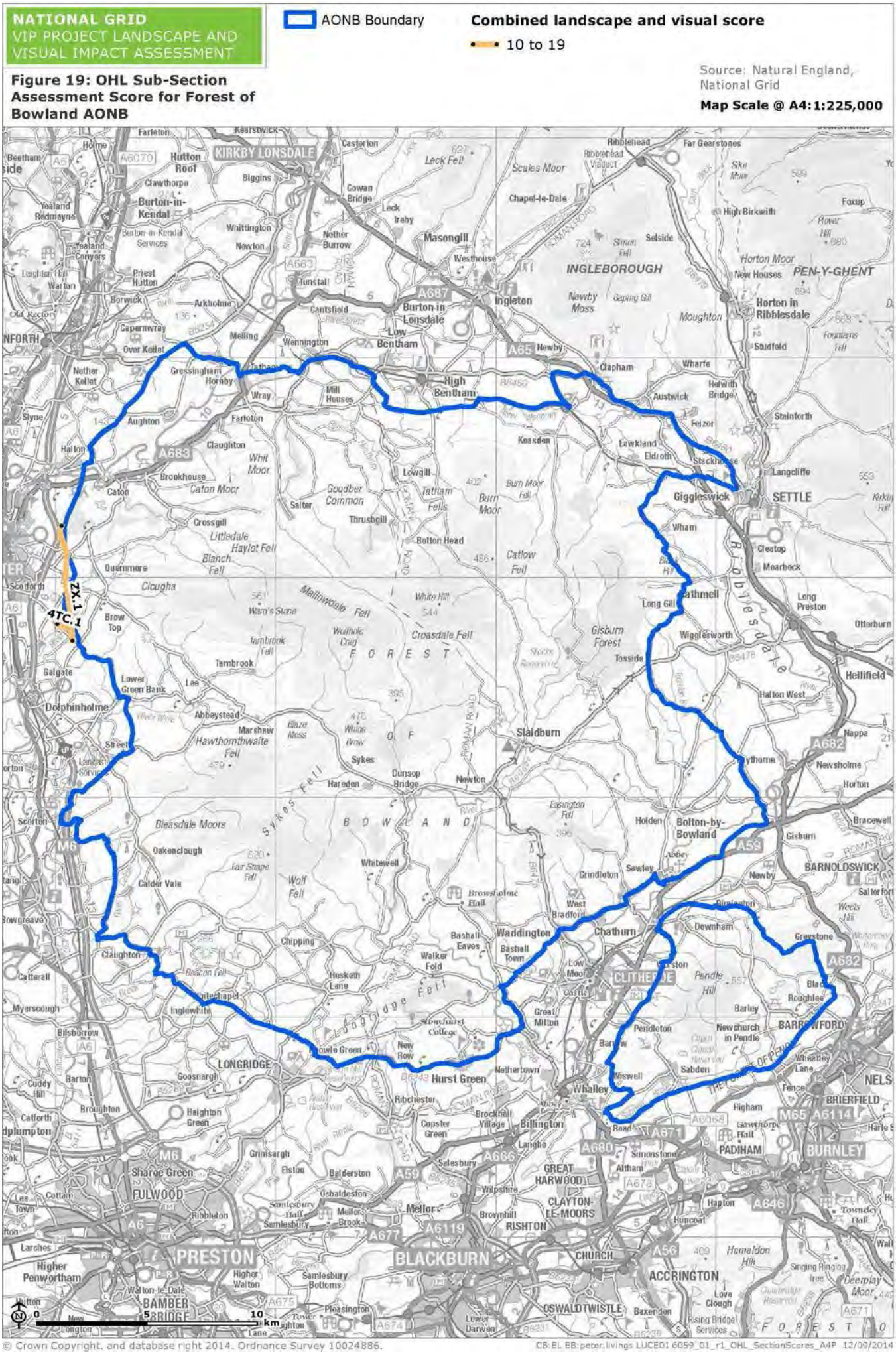


Figure 19: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Forest of Bowland AONB

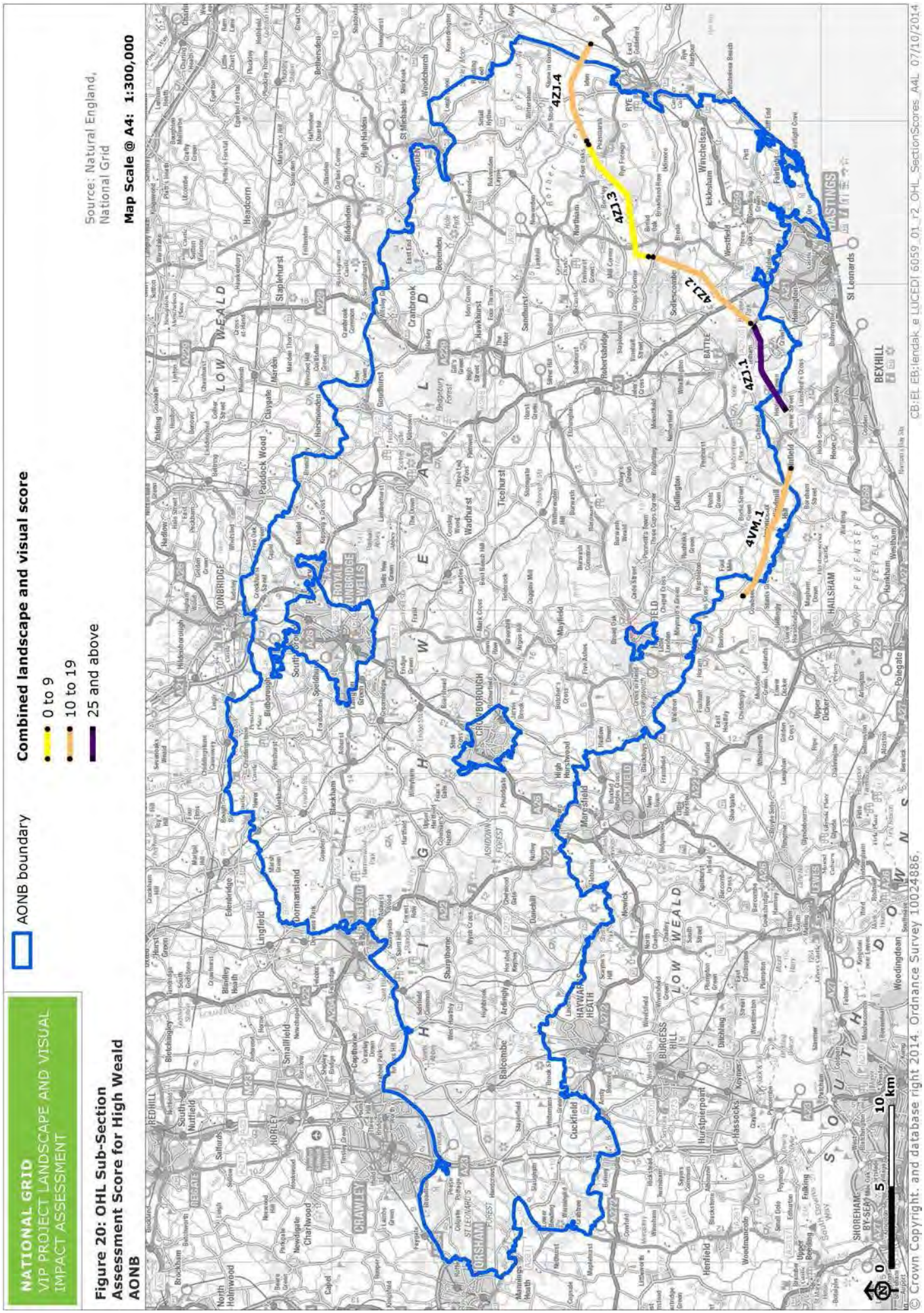


Figure 20: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for High Weald AONB

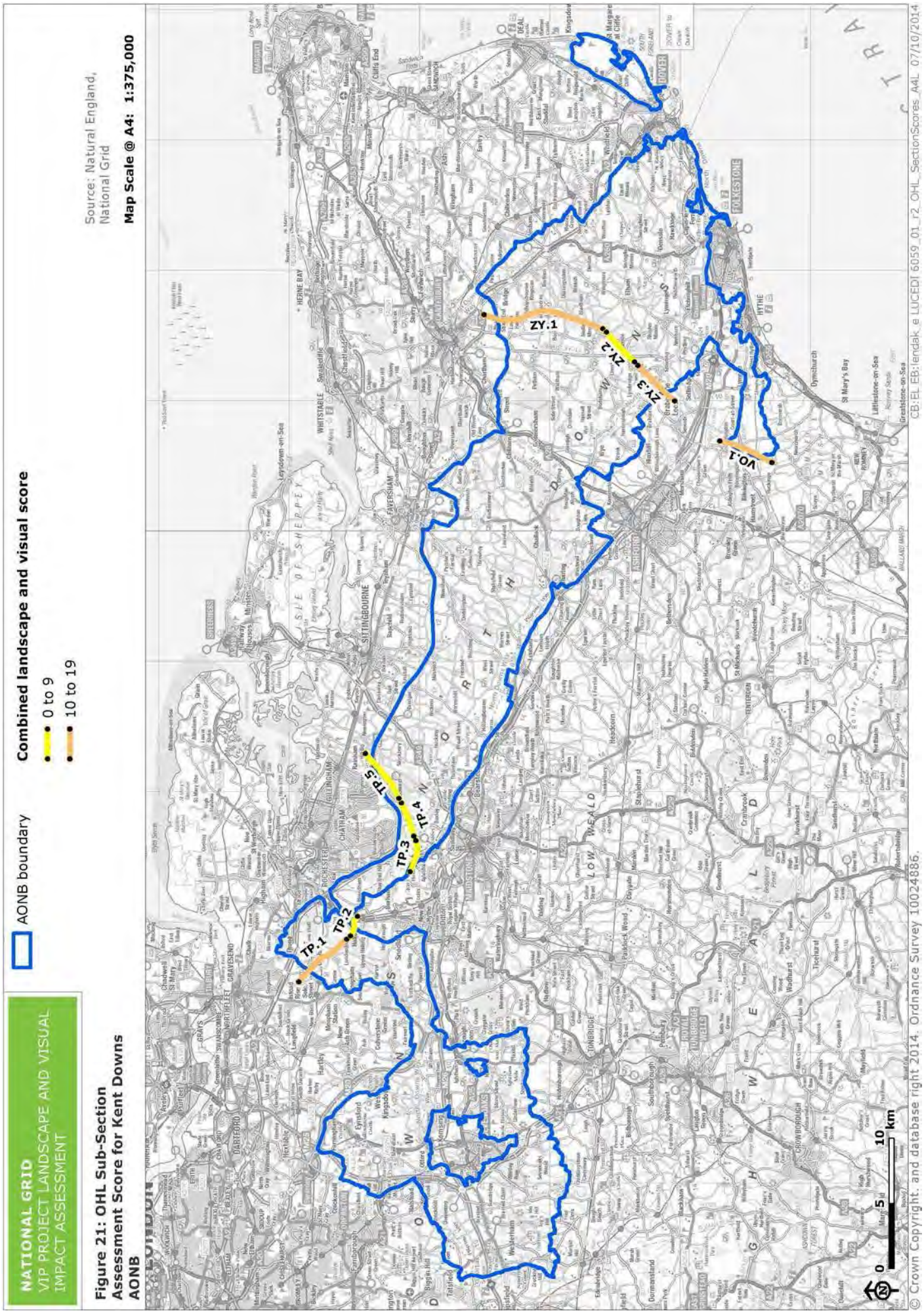


Figure 21: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Kent Downs AONB

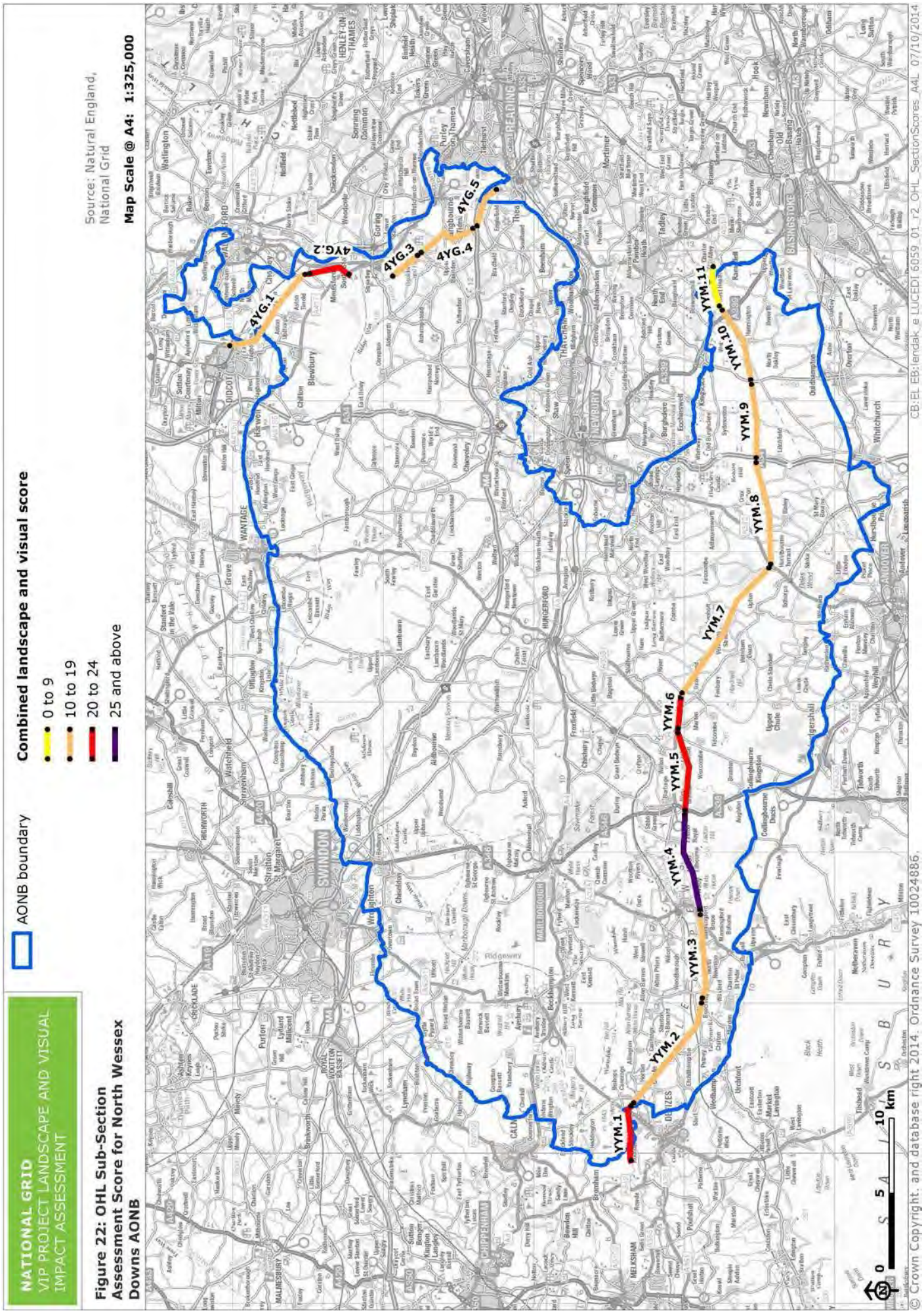


Figure 22: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for North Wessex Downs AONB

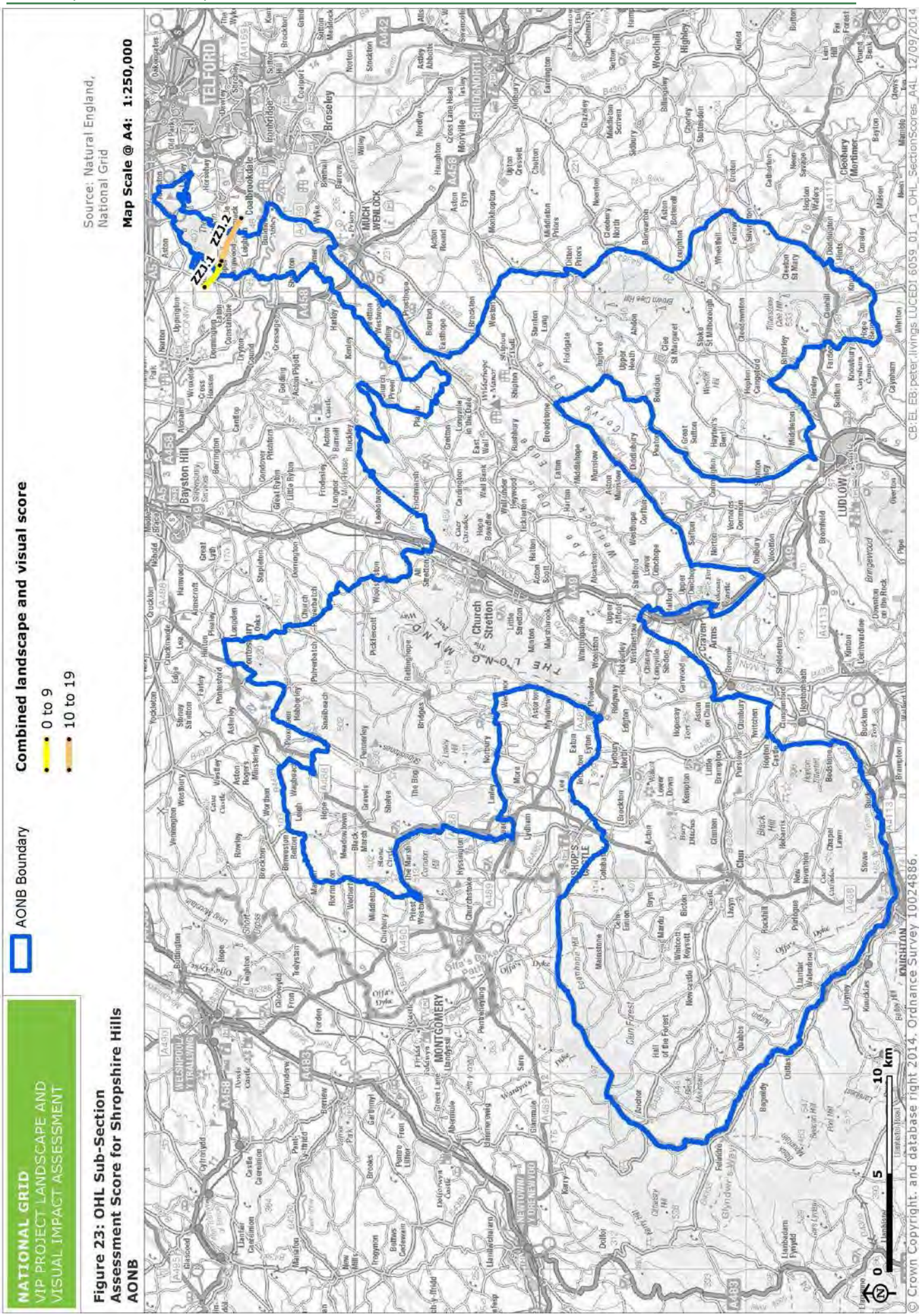


Figure 23: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Shropshire Hills AONB

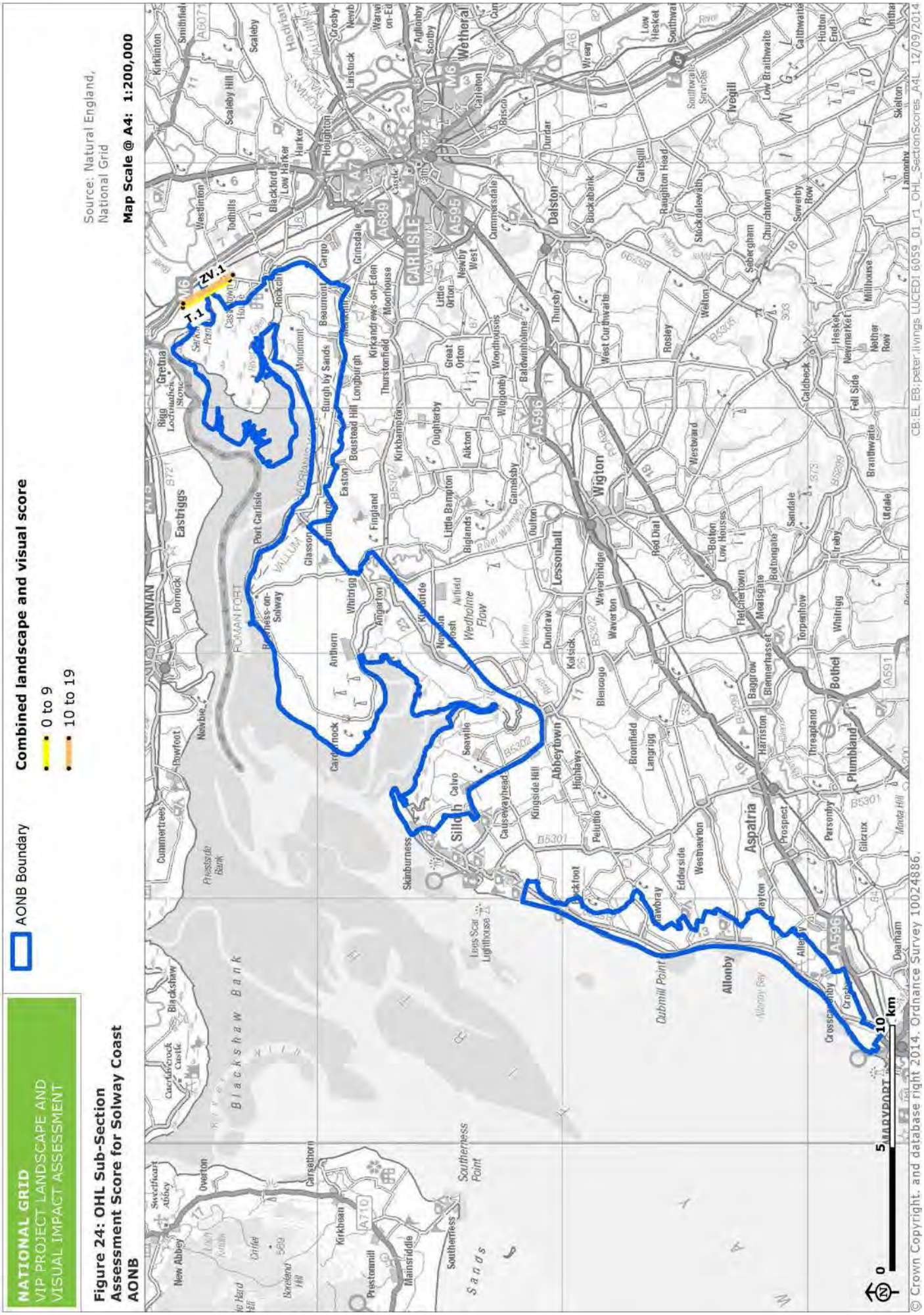


Figure 24: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Solway Coast AONB

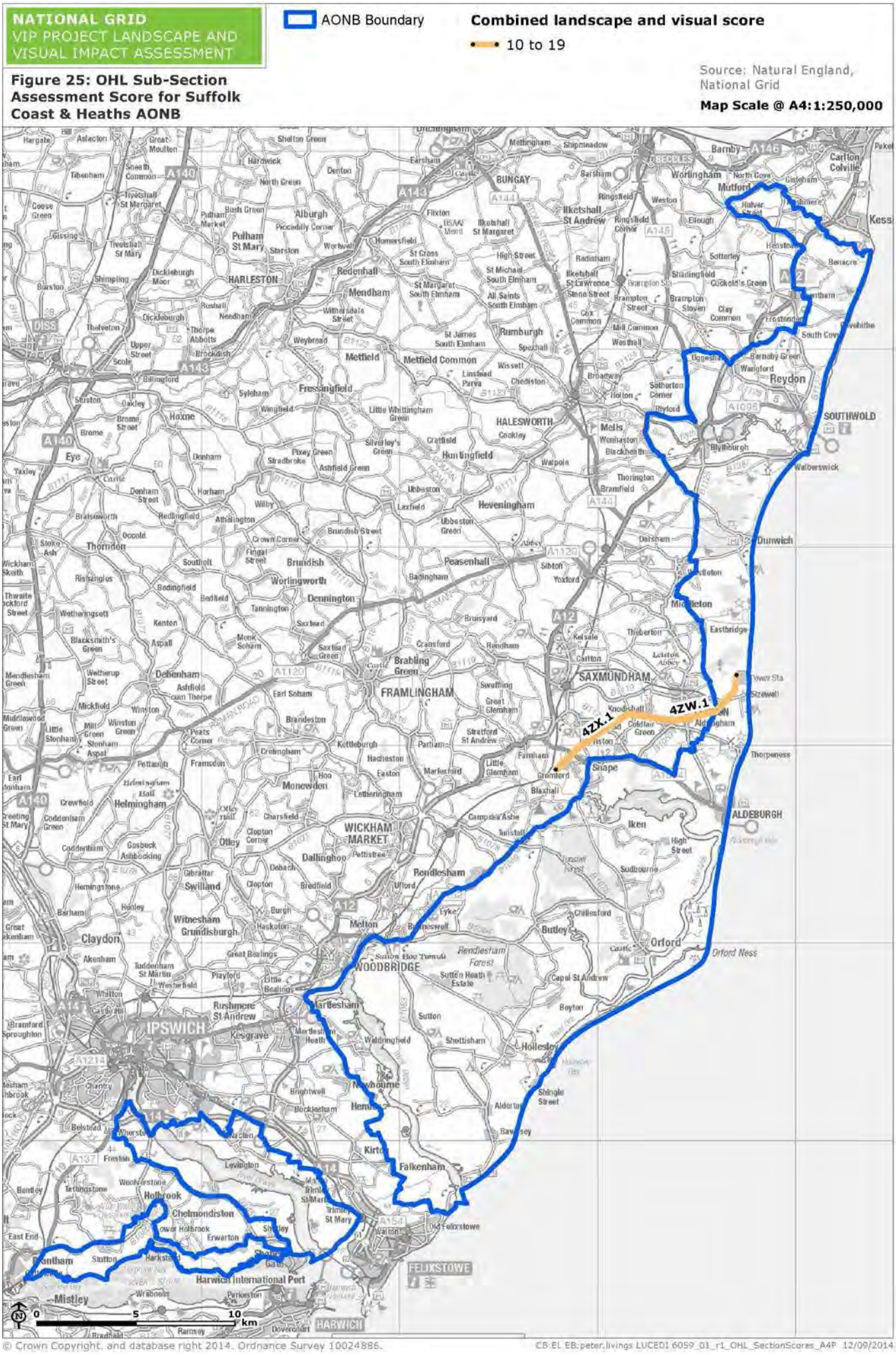
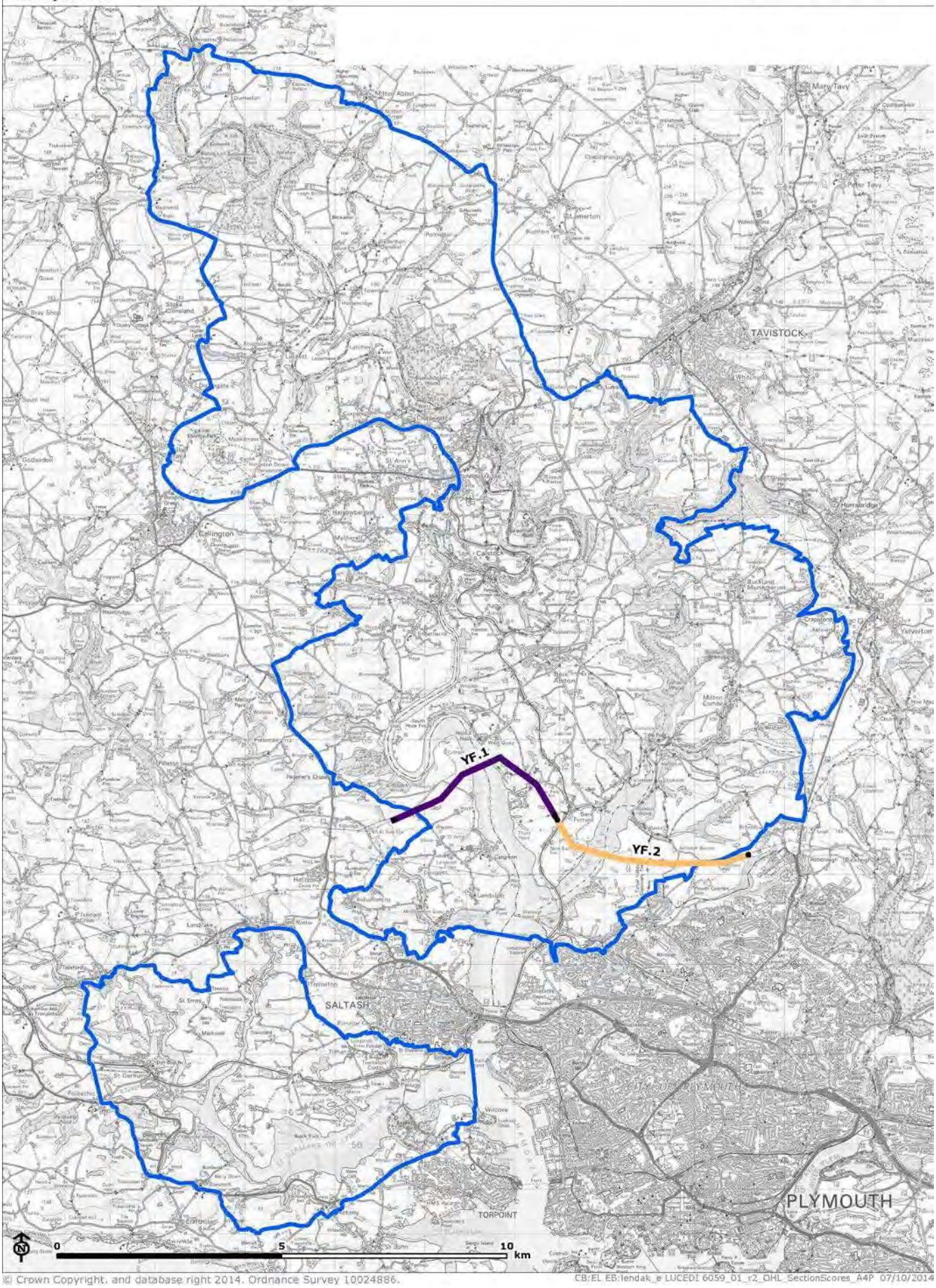


Figure 25: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB

NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Figure 26: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Tamar Valley AONB



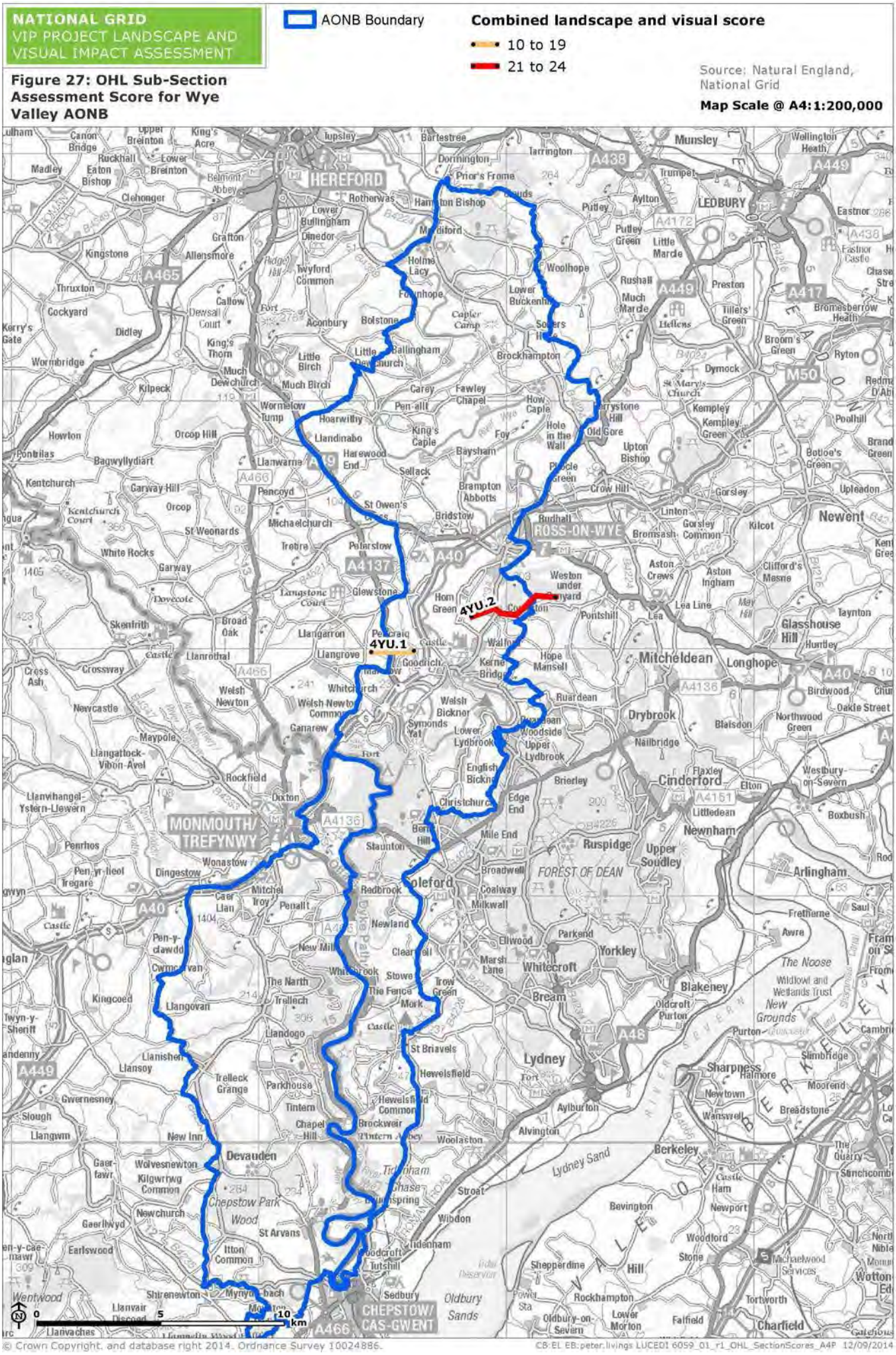


Figure 27: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Wye Valley AONB

Chapter 6: Lines Adjacent to Designated Landscapes

Northumberland National Park

6.1 Although there are no transmission lines inside the National Park boundary two sections of transmission line pass close to the Northumberland National Park. **Section 4ZY** runs along the eastern boundary between Wooler and the River Breamish, running through the Cheviot foothills. **Section XB** follows the southern boundary, parallel to the South Tyne Valley and alongside the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site (WHS). It runs from the Haltwhistle area in the west to Grindon Hill near Haydon Bridge in the east.

6.2 **Section 4ZY** is 7.8km in length and has not been subdivided further; it is shown on **Figure 28**. The sole subsection, **4ZY.1**, runs southward from Wooler, passing through the foothills of the Cheviots. The outlying hills and unenclosed moorland of the National Park are to the west, with the cultivated Till Valley to the east. The line passes close to the village of Ilderton and continues to the River Breamish east of Ingram, where it turns away from the National Park boundary. The combined landscape and visual impact of **4ZY.1** is judged to be moderate, though this subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** affecting the Cheviot foothill landscape, and **visual impacts of high importance** specifically on users of the National Cycle Route 68 which closely parallels the entire subsection.

6.3 For **Section XB** only the two discontinuous subsections running closest to the National Park boundary have been assessed as shown on **Figure 28**. Subsection **XB.1** is 5.8km in length, and runs from the A69 south of Greenhead, through to Hollin Crags northeast of Haltwhistle. This subsection runs on the north side of the settled South Tyne Valley, and has limited impact on the landscape of the National Park (and the WHS) to the north. **XB.1** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance. Subsection **XB.2** is 3.4km in length, and crosses over Grindon Common from south-west to north-east. The line cuts across the east-west grain of the parallel ridges in this area. It is visible from the footpath network in the area, but is more removed from the National Park and the key receptors along Hadrian's Wall. The combined landscape and visual impact of **XB.2** is judged to be of moderate importance but this subsection is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** where it crosses over the open ridge of Grindon Common.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

6.4 The high importance impacts of **4ZY.1** on the landscape and on views from the cycle route could be mitigated by undergrounding of the line. Screen planting along the cycle route, allied to landscape enhancement such as replacement of field boundary trees, may reduce the impact of the line, though could also restrict wider views from the route. Mitigation of the impact of **XB.2** could also be achieved through undergrounding, but there are fewer alternatives in this more open landscape where targeted screen planting would not be appropriate. Where the line has landscape and visual impacts within the area of the National Park there may be wider scope to achieve landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by the transmission line if they are in line with National Park objectives.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park[5]

6.5 The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park is not crossed by any sections of transmission line. However, **Sections 4YV** and **4YW**, which run parallel to each other, pass close to the Park in several places. At their closest point the lines lie within approximately 480 metres of the Park boundary near Milton and Carew and within 400 metres of the boundary near Craig-y-borion. **Sections 4YV** and **4YW** have been assessed jointly because of their parallel course approximately 50 metres apart (for much of the section length) and the fact that the pylons

[5] For practical reasons it has not been possible to make a full field survey visit to this area. The summary and the survey record sheet are based on comprehensive desk review and observations by a team member when in the area on other business.

appear to be the same in size and design. The lines originate at Pembroke Power Station to the west of the town of Pembroke. From here they run outside the Park boundary past Jefferston, Windberry Top and Longstone towards Brandy Hill in the north west.

6.6 **Sections 4YV** and **4YW** have not been divided into further sub-sections and remain as individual sections, **4YV.1**, and **4YW.1** as shown on **Figure 29**. **4YV.1**, and **4YW.1** are judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall, albeit with some **individual visual impacts that are judged to be of high importance**, notably from Carew Castle. Overall impacts on the landscape are judged to be of low importance due to the fact that the lines lie outside the Park boundary and do not give rise to any major conflicts with key characteristics or values of the national Park landscape.

Summary of Mitigation Options

6.6 Opportunities may exist for additional hedgerow tree planting to screen specific views where pylons are viewed at closer range and there may be opportunities for planting in the foreground to provide localised screening from Carew Castle and high points along the National Cycle Route on the Ridgeway, provided that this does not restrict views that are part of the visitor or user experience. Where the line has landscape and visual impacts withing the area of the National Park there may be wider scope to achieve landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by the transmission line if they are in line with National Park objectives.

Howardian Hills AONB

6.7 The Howardian Hills AONB itself is not crossed by any sections of transmission line. However, **section 4VC**, lies very close to the AONB, approximately 200 metres away from the boundary near Thornton-on-the-Hill and approximately 1 kilometre from the boundary near Crayke. The section runs from Husthwaite in the north past the historic village of Crayke to the south.

6.8 **Section 4VC** has not been divided into further sub-sections and remains as one section, **4VC.1**, as shown on **Figure 28**. **4VC.1** is judged to have landscape and visual impacts of overall low importance, largely due to the fact that the line sits outside the boundary of the AONB, is relatively well accommodated in the landscape and does not give rise to any major conflicts with key characteristics or values of the AONB.

Summary of Mitigation Options

6.9 Opportunities may exist for additional hedgerow and/or tree planting to screen specific views where pylons are viewed at closer range from viewpoints in the AONB.

Quantock Hills AONB

6.10 The Quantock Hills does not have any sections of transmission line inside the boundary. Line section **ZZ** lies entirely outside the AONB, but comes within 200m of the boundary at the south-eastern end of the AONB. The line has been divided, as shown on **Figure 29**, into three subsections and the combined landscape and visual impacts are judged to be of low importance for all three.

6.11 Subsection **ZZ.1** starts at the point where the line falls within 5km of the AONB, to the north-west of Cannington in the Stockland Hills. The route heads south-east across these low hills (part of the Stockland Hills landscape character area as recorded in the Sedgemoor landscape character assessment and continues across the Quantock Foothills character area. This subsection of the line is just visible from the east facing hillsides on the eastern edge of the AONB in clear conditions.

6.12 Subsection **ZZ.2** starts at the point where the line rises to cross the hills west of North Petherton crossing the Quantock Hills and Combes landscape character area in the Sedgemoor assessment and the Southeast Quantock landscape character area in the Taunton Deane assessment. The route heads south and west across these hills, skirting around the edge of the AONB, before leaving the hills at Kingston St Mary. Although the line is not within the AONB, the character of the hills and combes through which the line passes is similar to the character of the hills and

combes within the AONB. This section of the line is visible from the very south-eastern edges of the AONB.

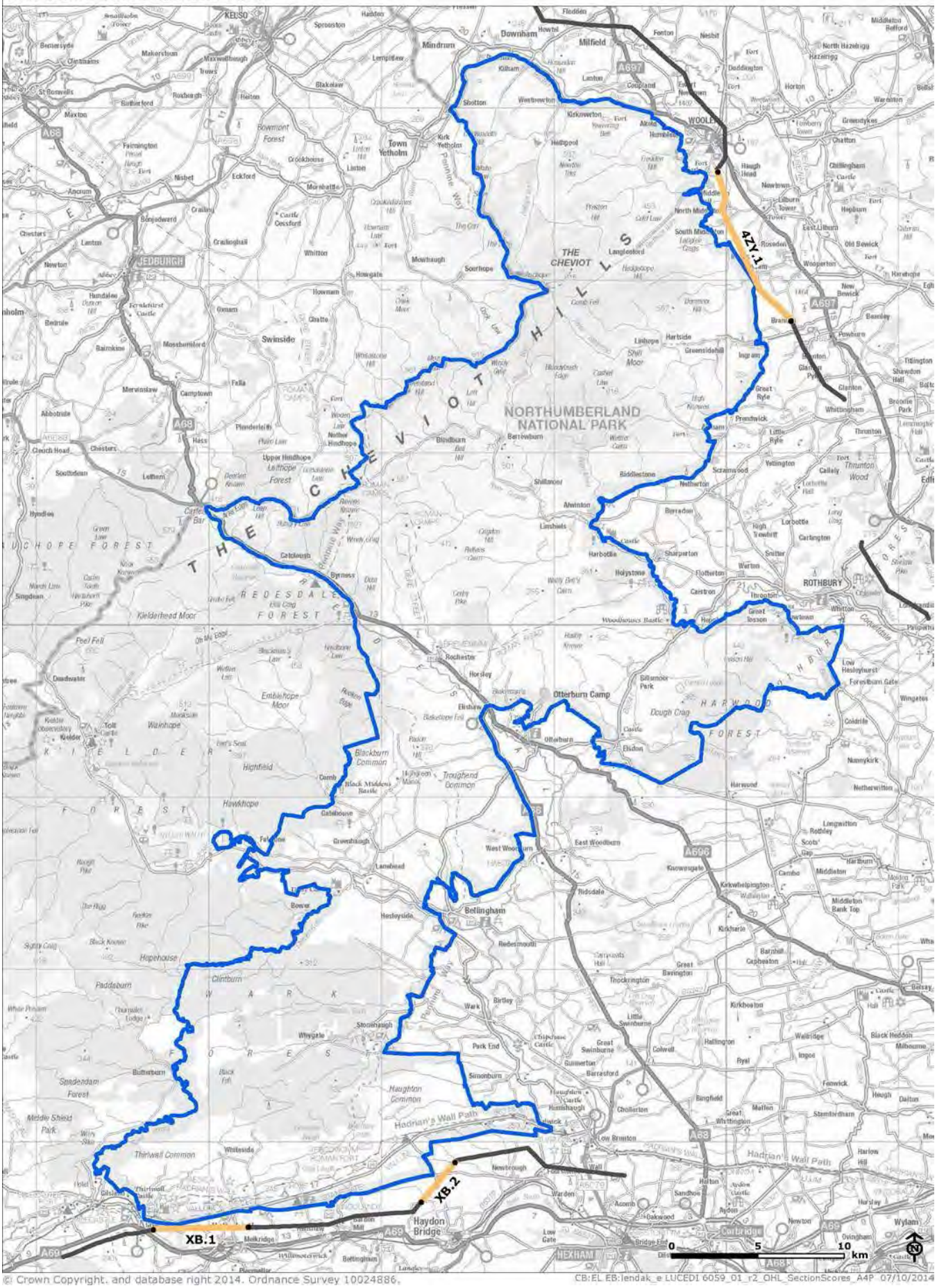
6.13 Subsection **ZZ.3** starts at the point where the line leaves the Quantock Hills and enters the lowland vale around Taunton (Landscape character area 1a Vale of Taunton Deane and 2a The Tone River Floodplain in the Taunton Deane assessment). It ends at the sub-station on the River Tone west of Taunton. This section of the line is visible from the very southern edge of the AONB, as well as from some of the elevated hills such as Cothelstone Hill in clear conditions.

6.14 For all three subsections the line is more visible from outside the boundary, particularly on approaching the AONB, where it is genrally seen against the skyline. The impact on views to the AONB is therefore generally greater than impact on views from the AONB. However, the impact of subsection **ZZ.2** on the landscape is considered to be of moderate importance because, although this subsection of the line is not within the AONB, it is in a landscape that forms a continuation of the rolling hills and fringes of the Quantocks inside the AONB and is visible on the skyline when seen from the edge of the AONB. It also affects the view of Kingston St Mary Church when viewed from the AONB).

6.15 The importance of the impact of **ZZ.2** on rights of way is also considered to be moderate as a result of some large scale impacts on short sections of footpath close to the line, and the importance of the impact of **ZZ.3** on trails is considered to be moderate as a result of the intrusion of the line into attractive views to the Blackdown Hills which are experienced by many recreational users.

Summary of mitigation opportunities

6.16 No high or very high importance impacts have been identified for this section of line. However, there may be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives in the areas of landscape influenced by the transmission line, in line with AONB management objectives, such as hedgerow reinstatement, re-planting of hedgerow trees, repair of stone banks and planting of small farm woods.


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
National Park boundary
Overhead line section not assessed
Combined landscape and visual score
10 to 19
Source: Natural England, National Grid
Map Scale @ A4: 1:300,000
Figure 28: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Northumberland National Park
NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK
THE CHEVIOT HILLS
THE CHEVIOTS
4ZY.1
XB.1
XB.2
Haydon Bridge
Otterburn Camp
Bellingham
ROTHBURY
JEDBURGH
Swinside
Hadrian's Wall Path
0 5 10 km
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CB:EL EB:lendak_e LUCEDI 6059_01_r2_OHL_SectionScores_A4P 07/10/2014

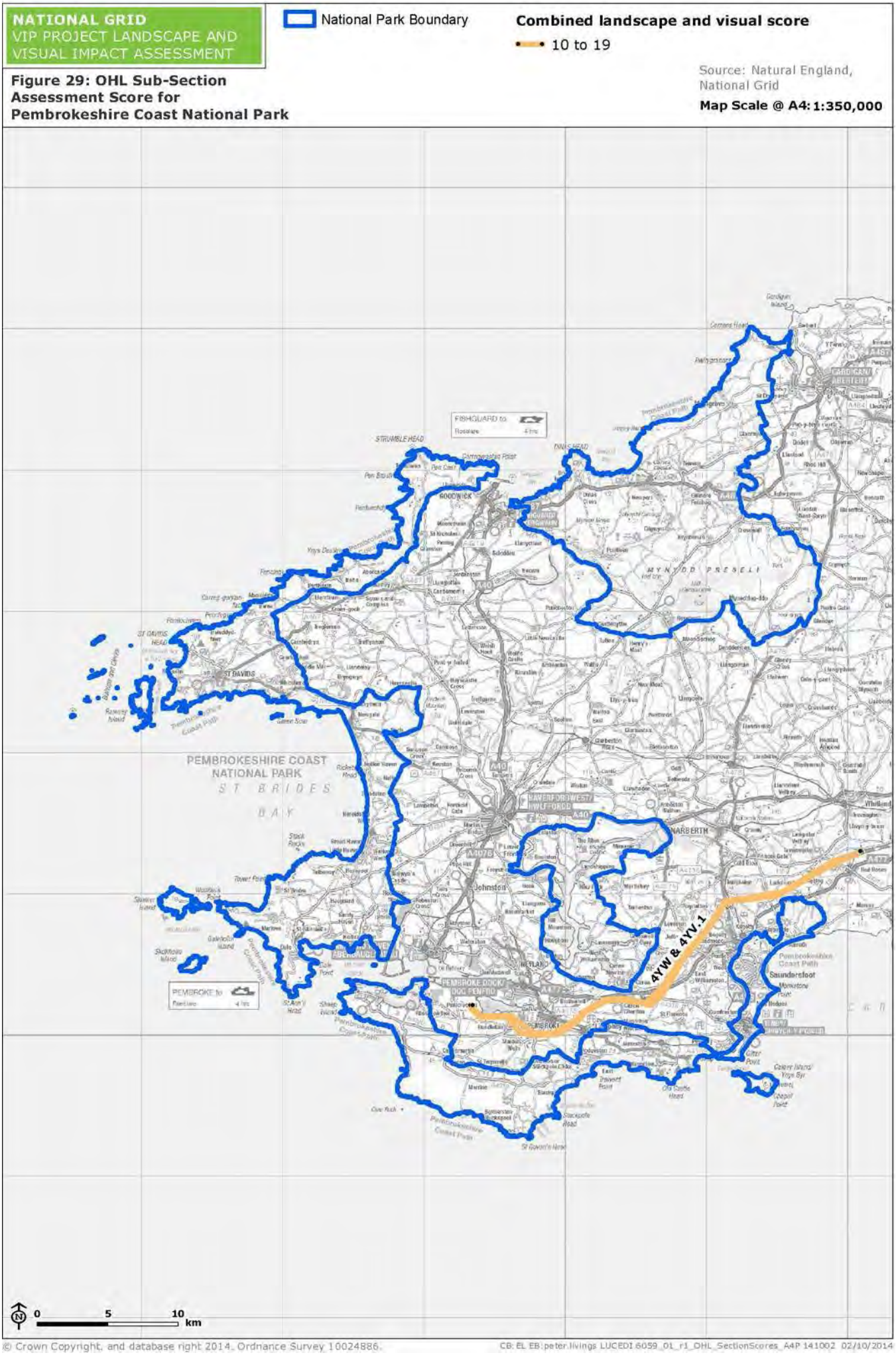
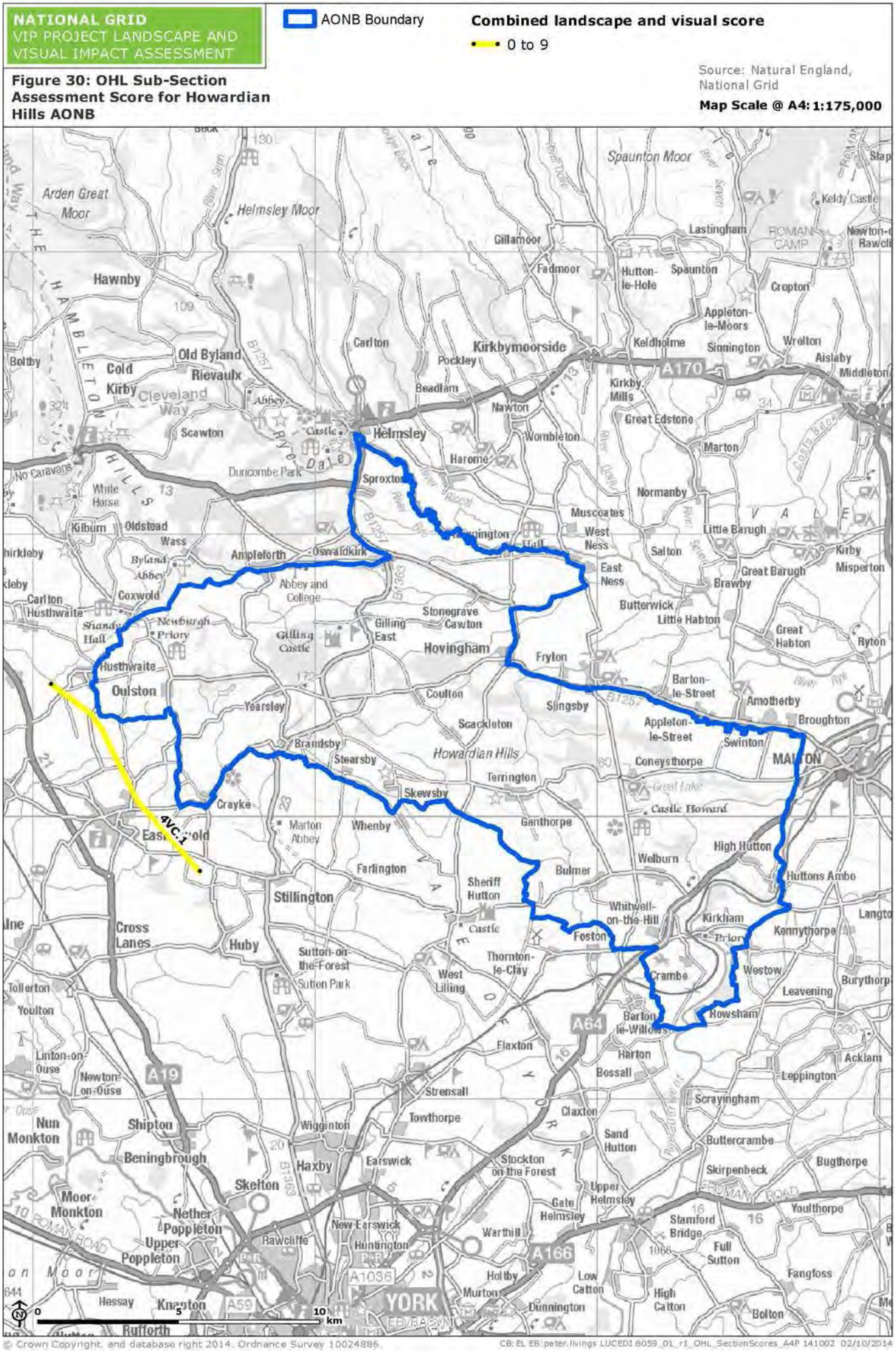


Figure 29: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AONB Boundary
Combined landscape and visual score
0 to 9
Source: Natural England, National Grid
Map Scale @ A4: 1:175,000
Figure 30: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Howardian Hills AONB
Spaunton Moor
Arden Great Moor
Helmsley Moor
Hawnby
Old Byland
Rievaulx
Cold Kirby
Boltby
Scawton
Helmsley
Carlton
Kirkbymoorside
Pockley
Gillamoor
Fadmoor
Hutton-le-Hole
Spaunton
Lastingham
Cropton
Appleton-le-Moors
Keldholme
Sinnington
Wrelton
Aislaby
Middleton
Kirkby Mills
Great Edstone
Marton
Wombleton
Harome
Nawton
Beadlam
Duncombe Park
Sproxton
Normanby
Muscoates
West Ness
East Ness
Salton
Little Barugh
Great Barugh
Brawby
Kirby Misperton
Butterwick
Little Habton
Great Habton
Ryton
Fryton
Hovingham
Stonegrave
Gilling East
Gilling Castle
Ampleforth
Oswaldkirk
Abbey and College
Coxwold
Carlton Husthwaite
Newburgh Priory
Oulston
Husthwaite
Yearsley
Coulton
Slingsby
Barton-le-Street
Amotherby
Broughton
Swinton
Appleton-le-Street
Scackleton
Howardian Hills
Brandsby
Stearsby
Coneysthorpe
Terrington
Skewsby
Castle Howard
Crayke
Whenby
Ganthorpe
Marton Abbey
Welburn
High Hutton
Huttons Ambo
Farlington
Bulmer
Sheriff Hutton
Stillington
Whitwell-on-the-Hill
Kirkham Priory
Kennythorpe
Foston
Thornton-le-Clay
Westow
Crambe
Leavening
Burythorpe
Rowsham
Barton-le-Willows
Flaxton
Harton
Bossall
Acklam
Leppington
Scrayingham
Strensall
Towthorpe
Claxton
Sand Hutton
Buttercrambe
Bugthorpe
Skirpenbeck
Wigginton
Haxby
Earswick
Stockton on the Forest
Upper Helmsley
Gate Helmsley
Youlthorpe
Skelton
Shipton
Beningbrough
Nun Monkton
Moor Monkton
Nether Poppleton
Upper Poppleton
Rawcliffe
New Earswick
Huntington
Warthill
Stamford Bridge
Full Sutton
Fangfoss
Holtby
Murton
YORK
Dunnington
Low Catton
High Catton
Bolton
Hessay
Knapton
Rufforth
Cross Lanes
Huby
Sutton-on-the-Forest
Sutton Park
West Lilling
Tollerton
Youlton
Linton-on-Ouse
Newton-on-Ouse
A19
A64
A166
A1036
A59
Cleveland Way
Ryedale
Howardian Hills
4VC.1
0
5
10
km
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CB:EL EB:peter.livings LUCED1 6059_01_r1_OHL_SectionScores_A4P 141002 02/10/2014

NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

AONB boundary

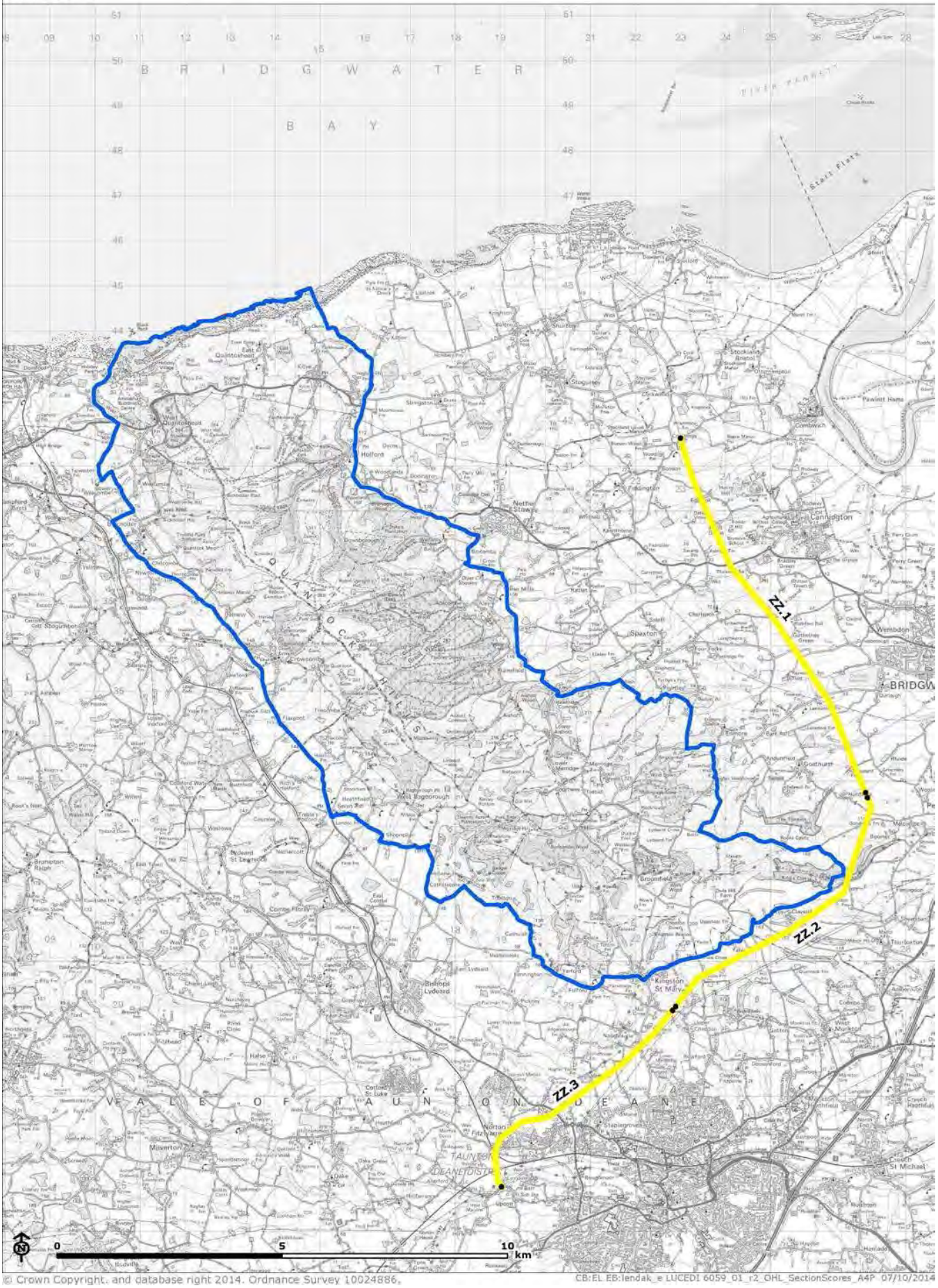
Combined landscape and visual score

0 to 9

Source: Natural England, National Grid

Map Scale @ A4: 1:115,000

Figure 31: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Quantock Hills AONB



CB:EL EB:lendak_e LUCEDI 6059_01_r2_OHL_SectionScores_A4P 07/10/2014

APPENDIX
EXAMPLE OF SURVEY RECORD SHEET WITH COMMENTARY

Overview sheet

Designated area	New Forest National Park	Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection and length (km)	2 (3.6km)

Landscape and visual context

This route section starts in an area of woodland at Stricklands Plantation at the top of the Avon Valley. It then heads east into an area of open access land, and rises onto higher ground and crosses an open heathland ridge at Hale Purlieu before crossing the B3080 and descending into sub-section 3. This is an area of high tranquillity and relatively remoteness, well used by recreational walkers and with a number of car parks provided for people's enjoyment of the landscape. The B3078 is a scenic route that runs parallel to the pylon line, to the south.

Summary description of landscape impacts

This route sub-section falls entirely within the *Northern Forests and Heaths* landscape character area, an area of heathland and forest with very little man-made influence. It is a high quality landscape and contains many features that are recognised as forming the special qualities of the New Forest National Park, such as the mosaic of lowland heath, mire, ancient pasture woodland and Forest lawns that forms the Open Forest, the historic commoning system which results in the presence of New Forest ponies, donkeys, pigs and cattle roaming free, the provision for quiet recreation, and the high levels of tranquillity and sense of 'wildness'. The scale of impact of the pylon line is very high - it is prominent on the open ridge and alters the unspoilt and tranquil nature of the landscape. The location of the pylons on a ridge mean they are visible across long distances (although scale of impact declines with distance). The importance of the impact on landscape character is considered to be very high.

Summary description of visual impacts

The fact that this is open access land means that people can access the landscape around and under the pylons and from some areas the impact of the pylons is therefore very large. Many people using this part of the forest for quiet recreation are affected by the pylon line and the naturalistic context of the forest landscape emphasises the scale of impact of the pylons in the landscape. The presence of car parks encourages people to access certain areas and some of these are very close to the pylon line. The B3078 scenic route runs parallel to the line to the south and from here the pylons are clearly seen on the skyline. High importance impacts are recorded for these receptors.

Overall importance of landscape and visual impacts

Importance of landscape impacts			Importance of visual impacts							Comb-ined
Ls. score	Ls. score	Overall ls. score	COM	TC L	ROW/ OAL	VIS	ACC	SR	Overall visual score	**L+V score**
10		10	3	-	6	6	-	6	21	**31**

Mitigation opportunities

High importance impacts have been identified for Users of Open Access Land across the Northern Heath & Forest; visitors to car parks across the heaths e.g. Deadmans Hill Car Park, Turf hill Car Park; and the B3078 scenic road. Since the pylons are located on a ridge planting is not likely to have much effect (the landscape is also sensitive to changes in landcover). A reduction in height of pylons might reduce impact marginally, but the only mitigation that is likely to have any real effect is undergrounding to remove the impact on the landscape character of this sensitive part of the New Forest (obviously the impact of ground disturbance relating to undergrounding would need to be carefully assessed). The pylons that result in greatest impact are those that cross the ridge at Hale Purlieu. If it is not possible to underground the lines painting the tops a lighter could might help them receded into the sky better. There may also be opportunities to contribute to ongoing landscape enhancement objectives such as reinstating areas of heathland through grazing and restoration work, including through the gradual conversion of further conifer plantations within the Inclosures to create more open habitats and the removal of invasive species in line with the New Forest SAC plan.

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsection number and the length of the subsection in kilometres.

Describes location of subsection and landscape and visual context in brief.

Summarises the landscape character types/area that are influenced by the subsection of line and comments upon the impact of the subsection on the landscape drawing on the brown coded landscape impact assessment sheets in the survey record

Summarises the visual receptor groups (groups of people) who experience the visual impact of the subsection of line and comments upon the visual impact drawing on the purple (SHEET 7) and blue coded (SHEETS 8J11) visual impact impact assessment sheets in the survey record

Records the scores for (1) impact on the character of the landscape (usually one, but space provided for two if needed) where Ls means landscape; and (2) the visual impacts on different receptor groups where COM = Communi3es: TC = Users of trails and cycleways; ROW/OAL = Users of rights of way and open access land; VIS = Visitors to publicly accessible sites; ACC = Tourist Accommoda3on; SR = Travellers on Scenic Routes. Scores for these groups are added to give overall visual score and the total is added to the overall landscape score to give the combined landscape and visual (L+V) score. Scores are 10 = very high importance, 6 = high importance, 3 = moderate importance and 1 = low importance. Assessments ringed in green on subsequent sheets inform these scores.

Summarises possible mitigation opportunities drawing on purple (SHEET 7) and blue coded (SHEETS 8J11) visual impact impact assessment sheets in the survey record, focusing on those where a high or very high impact is identified.

SHEET 1

Baseline sheet

Designated area	New Forest National Park	Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection and length (km)	2 (3.6km)

Special qualities (and source, eg management plan)

Management Plan 2010 - 2015

- **The New Forest's outstanding natural beauty:** the sights, sounds and smells of ancient woodland with large veteran trees, heathland, bog, autumn colour and an unspoilt coastline, with views of the Solent and Isle of Wight.

  The National Park encompasses a wide variety of different landscapes, from the woodlands and rolling heathland in the centre of the Forest, to the flat and wild coastline and the farmed landscape of small fields, hedgerows and narrow lanes. Together these form an extensive area of unspoilt and ancient countryside, with hidden villages and hamlets, which has largely been lost from other parts of lowland Britain.

- **An extraordinary diversity of plants and animals** and habitats of national and international importance.

  The mosaic of lowland heath, mire, ancient pasture woodland and Forest lawns that forms the Open Forest is unique in Britain and Europe. In addition the Solent coastline comprises extensive areas of mudflats, salt marsh and shingle, backed in places by low cliffs, supporting large populations of wintering wildfowl and waders. The inter-connectedness and scale of these habitats allows many rare or restricted species of plants, birds, animals and insects to thrive, as well as the commoner species that are in many cases declining elsewhere in the country. In total 56% of the National Park is designated for its national or international nature conservation value - a far higherproportion than any other English National Park.

- **A unique historic, cultural and archaeological heritage**, from royal hunting ground, to ship-building, salt making and 500 years of military coastal defence.

  The cultural landscape of the New Forest has developed continuously from prehistoric times to the present. A wealth of features have survived to indicate this long use by human society, including more than 340 Bronze Age barrows, a number of fine Iron Age hill forts and many Roman pottery production sites. Throughout the area there are numerous remnants of medieval and later buildings, enclosures and other earthworks associated with the royal forest. The main rivers supported a boat and shipbuilding industry and the coastal salt workings were among the most important in the country during the 18th century. The National Park has 214 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, constituting almost 10% of all scheduled monuments in the south east region, together with many important unscheduled sites.

- **An historic commoning system** that maintains so much of what people know and love as 'the New Forest' forming the heart of a working landscape based on farming and forestry.

  Although common rights were once widespread in Britain and Europe, they have been lost in many areas due to the enclosure of common land and the disafforestation of former royal forests. The New Forest remains one of the few extensive lowland commons where rights are still widely practised and a strong commoning culture continues. Over the centuries commoning has largely been responsible for shaping the distinctive landscapes and habitats of the Open Forest. There were six traditional rights of common, several of which are still practised today: the right of mast allows the turning out of pigs to feed on the acorn crop, while common pasture allows the grazing of ponies, cattle and donkeys.

- **The iconic New Forest pony** together with donkeys, pigs and cattle roaming free.

  The grazing of ponies and cattle has always been central to the pastoral economy of the New Forest. The animals are free to roam over the Open Forest, across the unfenced roads and along many of the verges within the Perambulation. In recent years between 6,000 and 7,400 ponies, cattle, donkeys, pigs and sheep have been depastured on the Forest as a whole. They are one of the most obvious and distinctive features of the area, and for many visitors they are undoubtedly a very important part of their experience of the New Forest.

- **Tranquillity** in the midst of the busy, built up south of England.

  The tranquillity and sense of remoteness that can still be found in many parts of the National Park is a quality of importance to many people. The relative peace and naturalness, combined with the open and unfenced landscape of much of the area, gives a sense of space and freedom

  This contrasts with the increasingly built up and intensively managed landscape of southern England and provides a means of release from the pressures of modern life.

- **Wonderful opportunities for quiet recreation, learning and discovery** in one of the last extensive gentle landscapes in the south including unmatched open access on foot and horseback.

  The gently rolling countryside of much of the National Park represents a traditional English lowland landscape that feels familiar and safe, and is accessible to many people. There is open access on foot or horseback to more than 30,000 hectares (116 square miles) in the centre of the National Park, and an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths across the rest of the area. There are many opportunities for quiet recreation and the exploration of the landscape, while a range of visitor facilities and organised events make it easy for people to learn more about different aspects of the New Forest.

- **A healthy environment**: fresh air, clean water, local produce and a sense of 'wildness'.

  Quality of life within the National Park is underpinned by the overall environmental quality of the area. The coastal location and prevailing south westerly winds means that air pollution is generally low, and water quality in the New Forest rivers and streams, and on the coastal beaches, is also good. The variety of food and other products produced and sold locally continues to increase, giving the opportunity for people to live healthily and sustainably and at the same time support the local economy.

- **Strong and distinctive local communities** with a real pride in and sense of identity with their local area.

  The New Forest communities have a strong cultural identity, with a wealth of local traditions and a thriving commoning community. Many local people have a strong sense of New Forest history and are deeply committed to the protection of the area. Local dialect, unique place names, rural skills and traditional events still continue, while new village events created by local people may become the traditions of the future. Community life is constantly evolving and adapting to modern ways of living and working. Many communities are involved in work to help shape the future of their local area and in initiatives to make their villages or towns more socially and economically sustainable. Local businesses continue to thrive, often providing services or products for residents and visitors, or taking advantage of the recognised image and distinctiveness of the New Forest.

Landscape character types / areas (and source)

Line passes through: **LCA 21 – Northern Heathland and Forest**
(New Forest National Park DRAFT Landscape Character Assessment 2013 – Amended Version)
No other character areas are obviously affected by this route sub-section.

Key characteristics:

- Flat topped plateaux divided by four parallel steep sided U shaped valleys containing Ditchend Brook, Latchmore Brook, Dockens Water and Linford Brook creating a ridge and valley landform.
- Dominated by large expanses of open unenclosed heathland on acidic soils with enclosures, unenclosed ancient and ornamental woodlands and Forest lawns forming the other parts of the mosaic.
- Conifer plantations create dark lines in the landscape.
- New Forest ponies and cattle freely roam across heath and open Forest roads which follow straight routes, often along ridge tops.
- Undulating wooded edge on the west of the area where brooks of the north-western drainage basin have eroded sheltered valleys.
- Enclosed Forest settlements of Fritham and Linwood.
- Wild and exposed landscape with a 'remote' feel – long views to the horizon and expansive skies.

SHEETS 2 and 3 are baseline (green) sheets which are mainly pre-populated from desk study. This section summarises the Special Qualities of the designated landscape as expressed in existing documents – in this case the New Forest National Park Management Plan for 2010-2015.

Summarises the landscape character type(s) and or area(s) which is/are influenced by the presence of the pylon line and quotes the key characteris3cs of those landscapes as iden3fied in the most recent landscape character assessment, including a reference to the document used.

SHEET 2 and 3

Visual receptors		
Receptor	Viewpoints	Notes
Group 1: Communities (COM)		
Scattered individual properties across the forest	-	There are a number of scattered properties, although there are no obvious viewpoints to represent these private views.
Group 2: Trails/cycleways (TC)		
n/a		
Group 3: Rights of way/open access land (ROW/OAL)		
Users of Open Access Land across the Northern Heath & Forest	VP1, 2, 4	There are large areas of open access land in this part of the forest.
Group 4: Visitor locations (VIS)		
Deadman Hill car park	VP2	The presence of car parks is a visitor attraction in itself.
Turf Hill car park	VP3	
Group 5: Accommodation (ACC)		
n/a		No obvious visitor accommodation.
Group 6: Scenic roads (SR)		
B3078	VP2, 4	Also known as 'Deadman Hill'.

Notes on the viewpoints may (but not always) be included here including reasons for selection or, in some cases, viewpoints that were considered but not included for various reasons.

Lists the viewpoints used to assess that visual receptor group. Some groups will have one viewpoint, and some more than one. Some viewpoints may represent more than one group. Initially viewpoints are identified by desk study , with input from local officers of the designated area where possible.

Agreed list of the visual receptor groups to be covered in the visual impact assessment. Not all will be represented in every case.

SHEET 4

Landscape assessment sheet						1 of 2
Designated area	New Forest		Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection	2
Survey date	04/06/2014		Survey team and company	RK/AK	Visibility	Good
Landscape character area / type(s)	Northern Heaths & Forest				Photograph numbers	62-63, 66-71, 106-117
Summary of impact on the landscape	**L**	**M**	**H**	**VH**		
Susceptibility				VH	see over	
Value				VH	see over	
Scale of the impact on the landscape				VH	The line crosses a prominent ridge where it is clearly visible against the skyline and detracts from the tranquil and wild characteristics of the landscape - it is often the only man-made element in views across this character area.	
Geographical extent of the impact on the landscape			H		The open undulating nature of the landscape and location of the pylon line across a ridge means the pylons are often visible over long distances, affecting a large part of the forest.	
Importance of the impact on the landscape				**VH**	**Overall importance is very high due to the very high susceptibility and value of the landscape, and the very high level of impact and high geographical extent of the impact.**	

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsection number, the date of the survey, the survey team, visibility conditions, the relevant landscape character type and photographs taken that represent the landscape.

Records judgement about susceptibility of the landscape to the impact of the pylon line, drawing on the judgements in the second landscape sheet(SHEET 6, Part 1) on the scale low (L), moderate, (M) high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the susceptibility is judged to be **very high**.

Records judgement about the rela3ve value of the landscape influenced by the pylon line, drawing on the judgements in the second landscape sheet (SHEET 6, Part 2) on the scale low (L), moderate, (M) high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the relative value is judged to be **very high**.

Records judgement about the scale of the impact of the pylon line on the landscape (see method statement in Chapter 2) reflecting the degree to which the pylon line changes the character of the landscape, and how much it affects key characteristics, on the scale low (L), moderate, (M) high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the scale is judged to be **very high**.

Records judgement about geographical extent of the impact on the landscape, which is determined by the extent of the area over which it influences the landscape. In this case the judgement is **high**.

Makes a summary judgement about the overall importance of the landscape impact, based on an overview of the profile of judgements above. This is not a quantitative judgement but a matter or weighing up the balance. In this case it is a **very high importance** impact, translating to a score of 10 on Sheet 1.

SHEET 5

Landscape character area/ type(s)	Northern Heaths and Forest				Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection	2
Susceptibility	**L**	**M**	**H**	**VH**	**(impact of line on aspects of the landscape)**			
Landform				VH	An undulating elevated plateau - the line often protrudes on the skyline			
Land cover			H		Landcover is large scale but irregular and naturalistic so that the transmission line contrasts with it. Areas of woodland do help to limit extent of impact in part.			
Scale			H		Although this area has a relatively large scale plateau topography, there are smaller scale topographic and landcover features that are overwhelmed by the pylons			
Skylines				VH	This elevated part of the New Forest has some skylines that are visible over quite large areas - the pylons are on a fairly prominent ridge at Hale Purlieu			
Prominent landscape features				VH	There are no other notable prominent features to compete with, but this absence of prominent features makes these pylons stand out more.			
Human influence				VH	This is a very naturalistic landscape with little settlement and very few overt man-made structures.			
Vertical infrastructure				VH	There is no other vertical infrastructure - the transmission line is the only vertical infrastructure and stands out against the skyline.			
Perceptual aspects and tranquillity				VH	This is a tranquil and relatively wild landscape, particularly in the context of southern England.			
Value of the landscape	**L**	**M**	**H**	**VH**	**(value disregarding the line)**			
Special qualities				VH	Many of the New Forest's special qualities are found along this length of the line.			
Landscape quality				VH	Landscape quality is very high.			
Scenic quality				VH	Scenic quality is very high.			
Conservation interests				VH	A large proportion of this section of the line lies within the New Forest SPA, Ramsar and SSSI. Part of Hale Park (Registered Historic Park and Garden) is located within 1km of the line.			
Recreational value				VH	The whole sub-section is located through an area of open access land.			
Perceptual aspects and tranquillity				VH	This is a tranquil and relatively wild landscape, particularly in the context of southern England.			

Header boxes show the the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsection number, and the relevant landscape character type(s) or area(s).

Judgements against the factors to be considered in assessing the susceptibility of the landscape or its ability to accommodate the pylon line, including those relevant to the Holford Rules, which have for a number of years been the principal guidance on routeing pylon lines (See method statement in Chapter 2 for details). Judgements are made in the field, using the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH) to assess each factor on the extent to which it contributes to the scale from lower to higher susceptibility. This feeds into SHEET 5.

Judgements about relative value of the area of landscape affected, which draw on statements about the special qualities contributing to the natural beauty of individual designated areas, and on interpretation of a range of established criteria/factors (originally developed for the "Lakes to Dales" National Park extension project and subsequently adopted by Natural England). Judgements are made in the field, using the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH) to assess each factor on the extent to which it contributes to lower or higher rela3ve value. This feeds into SHEET 5.

SHEET 6

This sheet is an overview of visual impacts and draws on informa3on from all blue viewpoint sheets (SHEETS 8, 9,10 and 11)

Visual receptors overview sheet

Designated area	New Forest		Route and subsection			4YB.2	
Receptor group	**Representative viewpoint nos.**	**Value**	**Scale of the impact**	**Number of receptors**	**Geographical extent of the impact**	**Importance of the impact**	**Notes**
Insert names	**Insert L/M/H/VH**						
1: Communities (COM) Scattered individual properties across the forest		M	L-H	L	H	M	Views from these locations are not designated but are valued by the people who live there. Scale of impact varies and can be high and extend over some distance (up to about 4km) but relatively few people are affected.
2: Trails/cycleways (TC)							No national or regional trails noted, cyclists use the roads (see scenic routes and open access land)
3: Rights of way (ROW/ OAL) Users of Open Access Land across the Northern Heath & Forest	1, 2, 4	H	H	H	H	H	Views vary from areas of open access land but can be very high close to the pylons. Impact extends over some distance (up to about 4km) and a large number of recreational receptors are affected.
4: Visitor locations (VIS) Car parks across the heaths e.g. Deadmans Hill Car Park, Turf hill Car Park	2, 3	H	H	H	H	H	Impact on views varies from car parks, but is high for those car parks close to the pylons. Impact extends over some distance (up to about 4km, but magnitude declining with distance) and a large number of visitors are affected.
5: Accommodation (ACC)							None noted
6: Scenic roads (TR) B3078	2, 4	H	L-H	H	H	H	Views vary from the route but the pylons have high impact on some of the most scenic parts of the route (e.g. Deadmans Hill). Impact extends over some distance (up to about 4km, but magnitude declining with distance) and a large number of visitors are affected.

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code and the assessment subsection number.

Column headers, show how judgement of overall visual impact is built up for each relevant visual receptor group (Column 1). Column 2 is for relevant viewpoints, Column 3 is for an overview judgement of the value of views experienced by that group, Column 4 is for an overview judgement of scale of impact, Column 5 is a very indicative assessment of number of receptors in that group, based on relevant viewpoints, Column 6 is an indicative assessment of the geographical distribution/extent of the group (See method statement in Chapter 2). The last column takes an overview of these individual factors to make an overall judgement about the importance of the impact on that group.

Shows judgements about the visual impacts on communities, in this case in scattered dwellings. For reasons explained in the notes on SHEET 4, there are no individual viewpoint assessments but a general assessment is recorded here of **moderate** impact translating to score of 3 on SHEET 1.

This receptor group not represented here

Shows judgements about the visual impacts on users of rights of way and open access land, based on viewpoints 1, 2 and 4 as on blue viewpoint sheets (SHEETS 8, 9 and 11). All high so overall judgement is **high**, translating to a score of 6 on SHEET 1.

Shows judgements about the visual impacts on visitors to publicly accessible locations, based on viewpoints 2 and 3 as on blue viewpoint sheets (SHEETS 9 and 10). All high so overall judgement is **high**, translating to score of 6 on SHEET 1.

This receptor group not represented here.

Shows judgements about the visual impacts on users of a known scenic route, based on viewpoints 2 and 4 as on blue viewpoint sheets (SHEETS 9 and 11). Majority high so overall judgement is **high**, translating to score of 6 on SHEET 1.

SHEET 7

Each blue sheet is an individual viewpoint assessment, used to feed into the overview of impacts on different groups in SHEET 7

Viewpoint assessment sheet

Designated area	New Forest	Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection	2
Survey date	04/06/2014	Survey team	RK/AK	Visibility	Good
Viewpoint reference	1	Grid reference	418954, 117772	Receptors	Users of OAL
Direction of view to line	40° - 80°	Distance to line (nearest pylon)	c. 250m	Photo numbers	106-108

Brief description of the view and the receptor groups represented (including no. of receptors)

This viewpoint is located in the heathland close to Hale Purlieu car park. It provides a naturalistic view of open heath and forest and is experienced by people walking in this area of open access land.

	L	M	H	VH	
Value of the view			H		Although this location is not designated in any way it is located close to a car park where people regularly walk and is a high quality view of a typical New Forest landscape.
Scale of the impact on the view			H		3 pylons are visible which occupy the skyline in the main direction of view, where they stand out against the open sky.
Importance of the impact on the view			H		The only mitigation option here would be undergrounding them. However, if this is not an option, painting the tops of the pylons a lighter colour could help them recede into the sky.

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsec3on number, date of survey, survey team, visibility condi3ons, viewpoint reference number and grid reference, receptor group(s) represented, direc3on of view, distance to nearest pylon and the photos taken/included.

Briefly summarises the loca3on of the viewpoint and the groups represented and nature of the view.

Records judgement about the relative value of the view using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the relative value is judged to be **high** and together with other relevant viewpoints informs judgements in Column 3 on SHEET 7. Notes describe reasoning.

Records judgement about the scale of the impact of the pylon line on the view, using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the scale is judged to be **high** and this is carried forward to inform judgements in Column 4 on SHEET 7. Notes describe nature of impact and reasoning.

Judges the overall importance of the impact on the view at this viewpoint by combining value and scale of impact. In this casethe importance is judged to be **high**. This judgement may inform future thinking about the need for mitigation at individual viewpoints and notes on mitigation may be added in some cases.

SHEET 8

Each blue sheet is an individual viewpoint assessment, used to feed into the overview of impacts on different groups in SHEET 7

Viewpoint assessment sheet					
Designated area	New Forest	Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection	2
Survey date	04/06/2014	Survey team	RK/AK	Visibility	Good
Viewpoint reference	2	Grid reference	419288, 116567	Receptors	Users of OAL, users of the scenic route
Direction of view to line	320° - 70°	Distance to line (nearest pylon)	c. 1.5km	Photo numbers	66-71

Brief description of the view and the receptor groups represented (including no. of receptors)

This viewpoint is located in the car park on Deadmans' Hill, on the B3078 (a scenic route). It provides a naturalistic and unspoilt view of open rolling heath and forest - there is a notable absence of man-made features (except for the pylons). It is experienced by people walking in this area of open access land, visiting the car park and driving past on the scenic route.

	L	M	H	VH	
Value of the view			H		This location is marked as a viewpoint on some tourist maps and is a high quality view representative of the New Forest landscape.
Scale of the impact on the view			H		6 pylons, plus the tips of 2 more are visible in a line occupying about 40 degrees of the view. They are clearly visible on the skyline in a view with no other man-made features across 360 degrees.
Importance of the impact on the view			H		The only mitigation option here would be undergrounding them. However, if this is not an option, painting the tops of the pylons a lighter colour could help them recede into the sky.

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsection number, date of survey, survey team, visibility conditions, viewpoint reference number and grid reference, receptor group/s represented, direction of view, distance to nearest pylon and the photos taken/included.

Briefly summarises the location of the viewpoint and the groups represented and nature of the view.

Records judgement about the relative value of the view using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the relative value is judged to be **high** and together with other relevant viewpoints informs judgements in Column 3 on SHEET 7. Notes describe reasoning.

Records judgement about the scale of the impact of the pylon line on the view, using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the scale is judged to be **high** and this is carried forward to inform judgements in Column 4 on SHEET 7. Notes describe nature of impact and reasoning.

Judges the overall importance of the impact on the view at this viewpoint by combining value and scale of impact. In this case the importance is judged to be **high**. This judgement may inform future thinking about the need for mitigation at individual viewpoints and notes on mitigation may be added in

SHEET 9

Each blue sheet is an individual viewpoint assessment, used to feed into the overview of impacts on different groups in SHEET 7

Viewpoint assessment sheet

Designated area	New Forest	Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection	2
Survey date	04/06/2014	Survey team	RK/AK	Visibility	Good
Viewpoint reference	3	Grid reference	421211, 117705	Receptors	Users of OAL
Direction of view to line	280° - 40°	Distance to line (nearest pylon)	c. 100m	Photo numbers	109-117

Brief description of the view and the receptor groups represented (including no. of receptors)

This viewpoint is located in Turf Hill car park from where there are views of heath and forest in all directions. The views are focussed south to distant hills and ridges (the pylons are located north). It is experienced by people walking in this area of open access land and visiting the car park.

	L	M	H	VH	
Value of the view			H		Although this location is not a formally designated viewpoint, it is located at a car park provided for visitors to the NP and the quality of the views is high (particularly southwards).
Scale of the impact on the view			H		Up to 8 pylons are clearly visible in close proximity, although views are focussed south away from the pylons. Nevertheless they adversely affect visual amenity for visitors to this area.
Importance of the impact on the view			H		This is an open landscape and the pylons are close. The only mitigation option here would be undergrounding them. However, if this is not an option, painting the tops of the pylons a lighter colour could help them recede into the sky.

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsection number, date of survey, survey team, visibility conditions, viewpoint reference number and grid reference, receptor group(s represented,)direction of view, distance to nearest pylon and the photos taken/included

Briefly summarises the location of the viewpoint and the groups represented and nature of the view

Records judgement about the relative value of the view using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the relative value is judged to be **high** and together with other relevant viewpoints informs judgements in Column 3 on SHEET 7. Notes describe reasoning.

Records judgement about the scale of the impact of the pylon line on the view, using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the scale is judged to be **high** and this is carried forward to inform judgements in Column 4 on SHEET 7. Notes describe nature of impact and reasoning.

Judges the overall importance of the impact on the view at this viewpoint by combining value and scale of impact. In this case the importance is judged to be **high**. This judgement may inform future thinking about the need for mitigation at individual viewpoints and notes on mitigation may be added in

SHEET 10

Each blue sheet is an individual viewpoint assessment, used to feed into the overview of impacts on different groups in SHEET 7

Viewpoint assessment sheet

Designated area	New Forest	Route (NG code)	4YB	Assessment subsection	2
Survey date	04/06/2014	Survey team	RK/AK	Visibility	Good
Viewpoint reference	4	Grid reference	424765, 115372	Receptors	Users of OAL and scenic route
Direction of view to line	270° - 320°	Distance to line (nearest pylon)	c. 4km	Photo numbers	62-63

Brief description of the view and the receptor groups represented (including no. of receptors)

This viewpoint is located in a layby on the B3078 where the pylons first come into view (at Longcross Plain). There are long views across heath and forest. It is experienced by people walking in this area of open access land and travelling along the B3078 (a scenic route between Cadnam and Godshill).

	L	M	H	VH	
Value of the view			H		Although this location is not a formally designated viewpoint, it is located in a layby on a well used scenic route across the New Forest.
Scale of the impact on the view	L				The upper parts of 4-5 pylons are visible on the distance skyline seen against open sky. They are noticeable in the view, but not detractingly prominent.
Importance of the impact on the view		M			Although this is a high value view, the scale of impact is low. Overall importance of the impact is moderate.

Header boxes show the designated area, the National Grid Line section code, the assessment subsection number, date of survey, survey team, visibility conditions, viewpoint reference number and grid reference, receptor group(s represented,)direction of view, distance to nearest pylon and the photos taken/included.

Briefly summarises the location of the viewpoint and the groups represented and nature of the view.

Records judgement about the relative value of the view using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the relative value is judged to be **high** and together with other relevant viewpoints informs judgements in Column 3 on SHEET 7. Notes describe reasoning.

Records judgement about the scale of the impact of the pylon line on the view, using the guidance set out in the method (See Chapter 2 for details) on the scale low (L), moderate (M), high (H) and very high (VH). In this case the scale is judged to be **low** and this is carried forward to inform judgements in Column 4 on SHEET 7. Notes describe nature of impact and reasoning.

Judges the overall importance of the impact on the view at this viewpoint by combining value and scale of impact. In this case the importance is judged to be **moderate**. This judgement may inform future thinking about the need for mitigation at individual viewpoints and notes on mitigation may be added in some cases.

SHEET 11

Route section 4YB.2

Viewpoint 1: View from footpath close to Hale Purlieu car park looking north-east across Hale Purlieu

Selected photographs for each viewpoint

SHEET 12

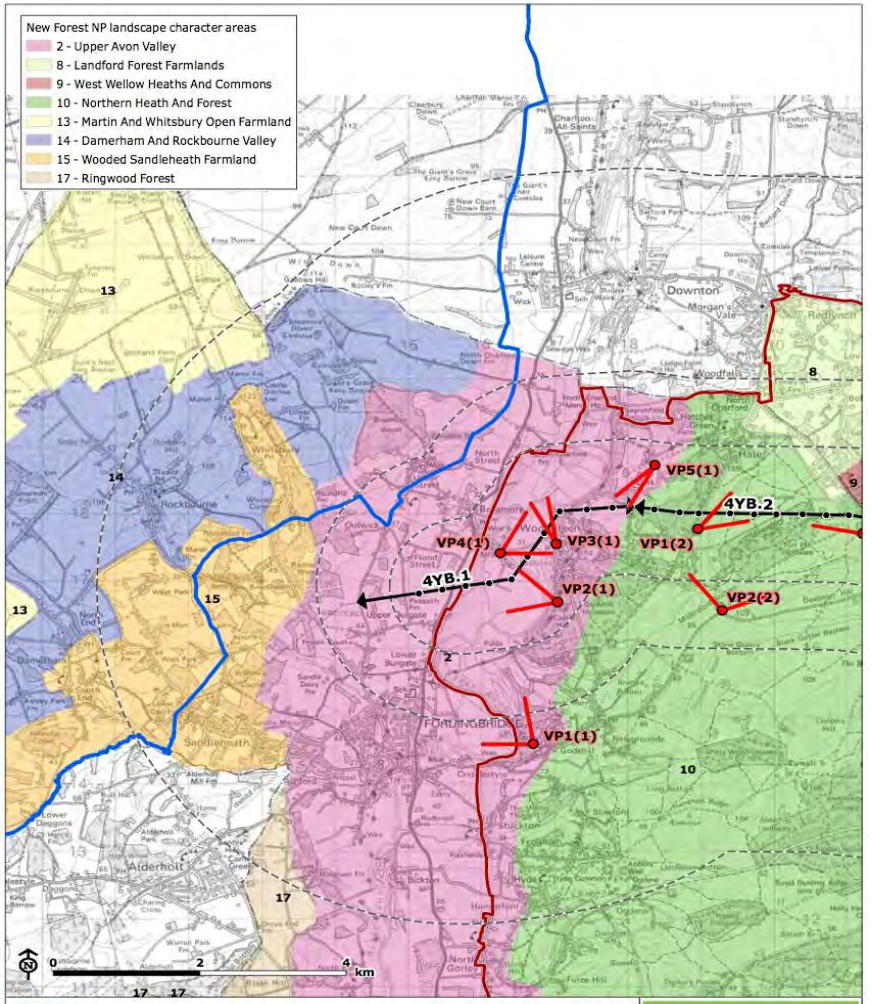


Figure 1 shows the line subsection and towers/pylons overlaid on landscape character types/areas and with viewpoints and direction of view. VP2 (1) means viewpoint 2 for subsec3on 1

SHEET 13

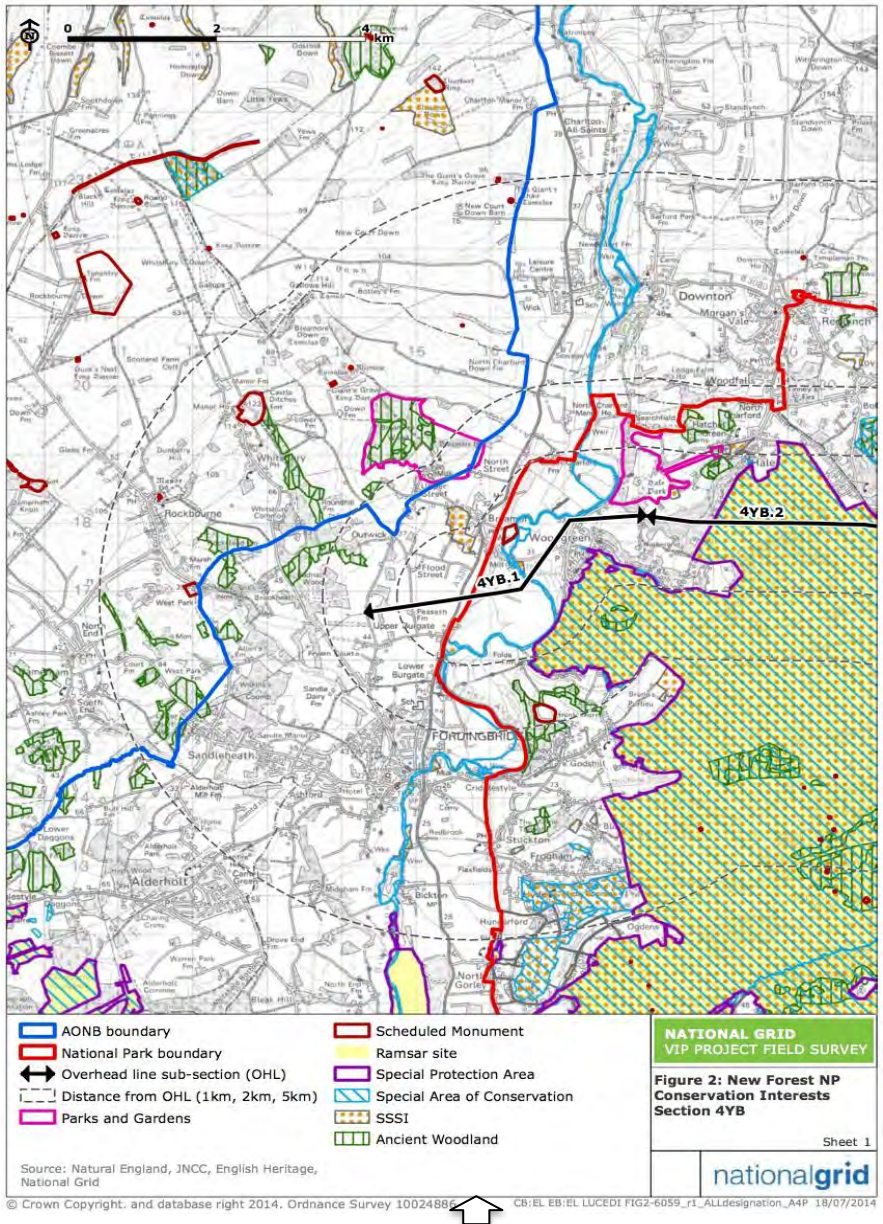


Figure 2 shows the line subsection overlaid on various areas of conservation interest, which help to inform judgements about value in Part 2 of landscape sheet (conservation interests)

SHEET 14

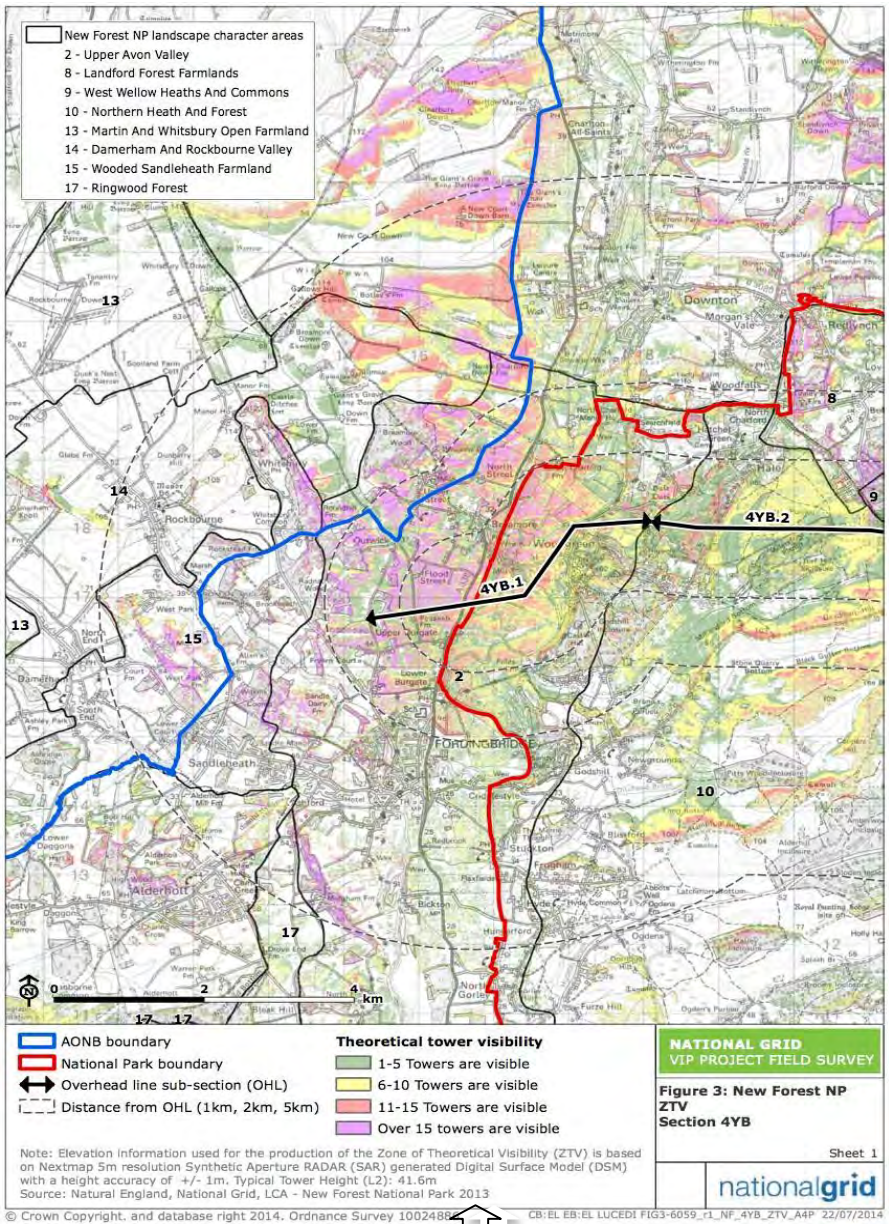


Figure 3 shows the line subsection overlaid on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, which also shows how many towers are theoretically visible. Landscape character also overlaid in outline only.

SHEET 15

For further information

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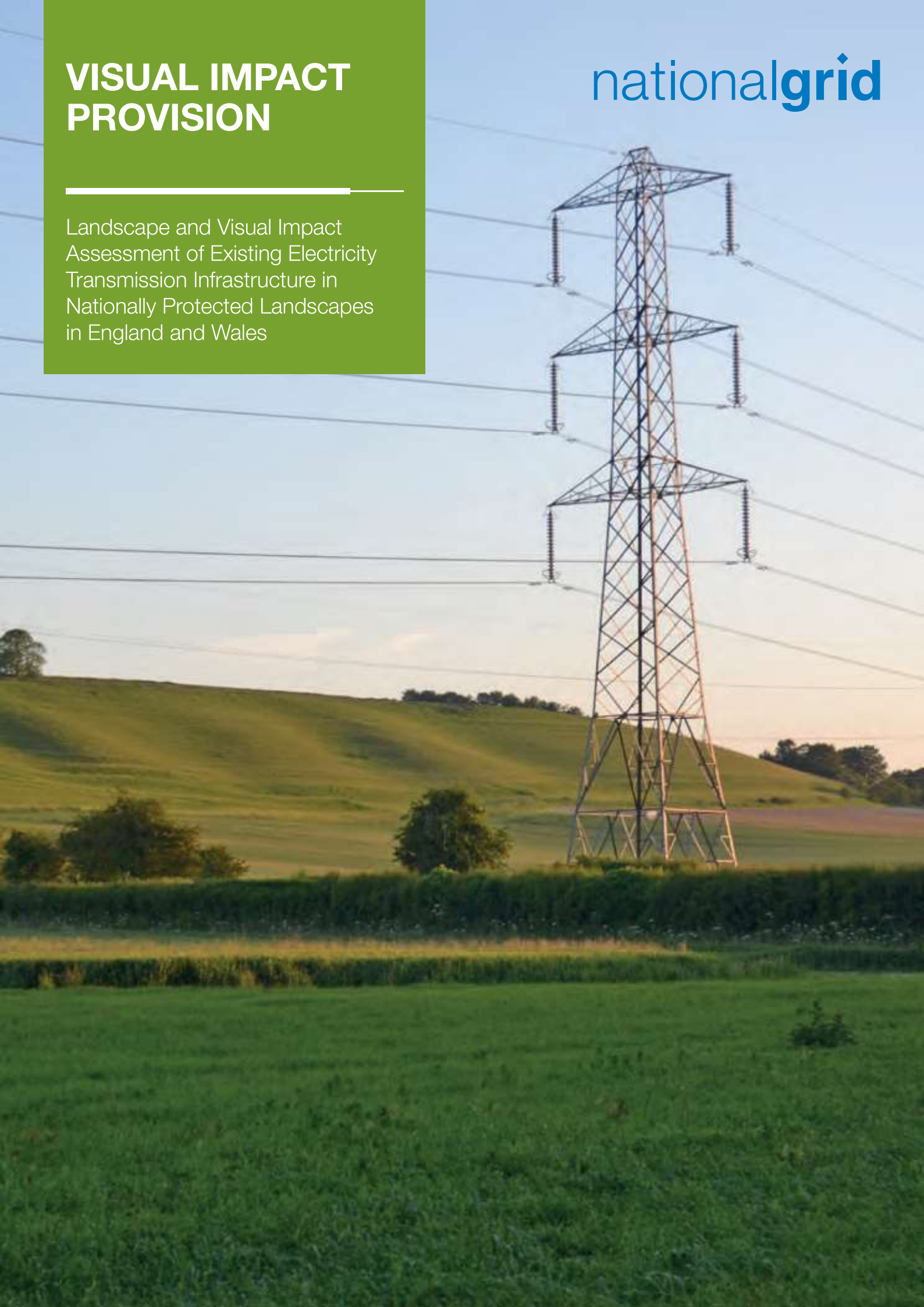
APPENDIX 2

2014 Gillespies-LUC VIP Report - extracts relevant to Suffolk ANOB

VISUAL IMPACT PROVISION

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Existing Electricity Transmission Infrastructure in Nationally Protected Landscapes in England and Wales

nationalgrid



nationalgrid

VISUAL IMPACT PROVISION

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of Existing Electricity Transmission Infrastructure in Nationally Protected Landscapes in England and Wales

Technical Report

Professor [redacted]
Gillespies
Land Use Consultants

October 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been written by Professor [redacted] acting as Independent Adviser to National Grid on the Visual Impact Provision Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment project, with contributions from the teams from Gillespies and Land Use Consultants who carried out the detailed field survey work for the project. We would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by [redacted] at National Grid, the helpful comments from members of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, and the input from landscape staff of the authorities responsible for the National Parks and AONBs that were visited.

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Figure 18 Overview map and assessment scores for Dorset AONB
Figure 19 Overview map and assessment scores for Forest of Bowland AONB
Figure 20 Overview map and assessment scores for High Weald AONB
Figure 21 Overview map and assessment scores for Kent Downs AONB
Figure 22 Overview map and assessment scores for North Wessex Downs AONB
Figure 23 Overview map and assessment scores for Shropshire Hills AONB
Figure 24 Overview map and assessment scores for Solway Coast AONB
Figure 25 Overview map and assessment scores for Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB
Figure 26 Overview map and assessment scores for Tamar Valley AONB
Figure 27 Overview map and assessment scores for Wye Valley AONB

Overview maps for lines adjacent to designated landscapes (all at the end of Chapter 6 – Pages 108 to 118)

Figure 28 Overview map and assessment scores for Northumberland National Park
Figure 29 Overview map and assessment scores for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
Figure 30 Overview map and assessment scores for Howardian Hills AONB
Figure 31 Overview map and assessment scores for Quantock Hills AONB

PART ONE

OVERVIEW OF ASSESSMENT

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Visual Impact Provision

1.1 Ofgem and National Grid have agreed a new set of price controls and incentives for the period from April 2013 to March 2021. This includes a provision of £500 million for electricity transmission owners to mitigate the visual impact of existing electricity infrastructure in nationally protected landscapes in Great Britain. For National Grid, which is the transmission owner in England and Wales, this means considering the effects of existing infrastructure on the visual amenity and landscapes of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). National Grid have referred to this as the **Visual Impact Provision (VIP)**.

1.2 In 2012-13 National Grid prepared a Visual Impact Provision policy setting out how the fund would be used and how stakeholders would be engaged in identifying opportunities for maximising benefits from it. After a public consultation on the draft between July and September 2013 the policy statement was presented to Ofgem for review. The policy statement made it clear that National Grid's objective:

"is to achieve the maximum enhancement to the landscape from the available funds whilst ensuring that no significant adverse impacts arise as a result".

1.3 The policy document included a set of guiding principles and a commitment to the creation of a Stakeholder Advisory Group consisting of stakeholders with national remits for England and Wales, and ways of engaging other stakeholders. National Grid is committed to using the VIP in a collaborative and transparent way.

1.4 In taking the VIP forward there have been two major strands of work so far:

- The establishment and operation of the Stakeholder Advisory Group, whose remit is to assist National Grid in deciding how best to use the VIP;
- The initiation and conduct of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment project to provide evidence to National Grid and the Stakeholder Advisory Group about the relative impacts of the different transmission lines to inform the decision making process.

The Stakeholder Advisory Group

1.5 The Stakeholder Advisory Group is chaired by independent environmental adviser and broadcaster, Chris Baines and comprises senior representatives of fifteen groups with a national remit in the ongoing protection and enhancement of the landscape, as well as Ofgem and National Grid itself. The fifteen member organisations, in alphabetical order, are:

Cadw
Campaign for National Parks
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
English Heritage
Landscape Institute
National Association of AONBs
National Parks England
National Parks Wales
National Trust
Natural England
Natural Resources Wales
The Ramblers
Visit England
Visit Wales

1.6 In fulfilling its role in the first stage of the project the group is involved in:

- helping to identify priorities for use of the VIP;
- considering the technical outputs from the work;
- considering the views of wider stakeholders who are not represented on the group;
- identifying specific infrastructure and locations which would benefit most from the VIP.

1.7 In addition National Grid appointed [redacted] as their independent adviser on the technical aspects of the landscape and visual impact work required to inform deliberations about use of the VIP. She has been responsible for providing a link between National Grid and the technical aspects of the project, overseeing and liaising with the consultants appointed to carry out the detailed assessment work, and providing a link with the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

1.8 In order to assist the Stakeholder Advisory Group in helping to identify priorities for use of the VIP the Stakeholder Advisory Group has been involved in discussions about the approach to the landscape and visual impact assessment project and has received presentations and progress reports on the work.

The landscape and visual impact assessment project

1.9 The distribution of National Grid electricity transmission infrastructure in relation to designated National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), is shown in **Figure 1**. The purpose of the landscape and visual impact assessment project is to identify those sections of electricity transmission lines within in England and Wales that have the most important impacts on the landscape and visual amenity of these designated landscapes. The emphasis is on making a comparative assessment of the landscape and visual impacts of the sections of transmission lines that lie within the designated areas and identifying a possible shortlist of candidate schemes for consideration by the Stakeholder Advisory Group in order to decide which ones should be taken forward for more detailed technical assessment. The focus is on the transmission lines themselves but where appropriate it has also been necessary to consider the impacts of other transmission infrastructure (such as, for example, substations and sealing end compounds). In practice relatively few such situations occurred.

1.10 During the project consideration has also been given to the issue of transmission lines that lie outside, but in reasonable proximity to, designated landscapes. To address this the authorities responsible for each designated landscape were approached by National Grid and invited, if they so wished, to make a case for such lines to be assessed. Four cases were made and accepted and so lines adjacent to the Howardian Hills and the Quantock Hills AONBs and the Pembrokeshire and Northumberland National Parks have been assessed using the same method that was adopted for lines lying within the designated landscapes

1.11 Experienced landscape planning consultants have been appointed to carry out the detailed landscape and visual impact assessment work, in association with [redacted] as National Grid's independent adviser. Gillespies carried out work on designated areas in Wales, Northern England, Eastern England and the Midlands, interpreted here as including the Cotswolds and the Chilterns. Land Use Consultants carried out work in the South East and the South West. Allocation of the work sought to provide some parity in terms of the total lengths of transmission lines to be covered although those covered by Gillespie's work were geographically much more scattered than those covered by Land Use Consultants who worked on longer lengths of line in a smaller number of areas.

1.12 The scale of the work required in a short timescale has meant that each landscape practice has deployed two teams, each of two people, to carry out the desk study and field survey work. This has benefits in terms of timely completion of the work but poses additional problems in achieving consistency of approach. The alternative approach, of having one person assessing all of the relevant transmission lines, would largely overcome the problem of consistency but would have taken an unacceptably long time to complete the work.

1.13 Professional judgement is key to assessing landscape and visual impacts and there is a need for the judgements that are made to be as consistent as possible and based on clear and transparent methods. A key part of the process has therefore been to develop a shared understanding

between the different teams of consultants appointed, of the landscape and visual impact assessment method and its specific application to the VIP.

1.14 In order to achieve as much consistency as possible a number of steps have been taken:

- The method of assessment has been based on industry standard guidance adapted to suit the particular circumstances of the VIP (see Chapter 2 for details);
- The detailed method has been developed jointly between the teams of consultants and National Grid's independent adviser and described in a method statement;
- Application of the method was tested at the start of the project by a joint site visit in the North Wessex Downs AONB and a linked workshop which allowed benchmarking of judgements and further refinement of the method;
- The method statement was fine tuned during the early stages of the fieldwork and any proposed changes shared, discussed and agreed between all those concerned;
- Calibration meetings were held within the two practices to ensure as much consistency as possible and issues arising as the work progressed were resolved in discussion with the independent adviser;
- The project Principals for each team took responsibility for quality control, especially in the later writing up stages of the project;
- On completion of the fieldwork and initial draft write-ups of the survey records, a preliminary ranking of the transmission line sections and subsections was conducted and informed a two-day calibration workshop in which the evidence relating to each subsection was presented and all parties reviewed and amended the assessments where there were thought to be inconsistencies. National Grid sat in on the second day of the workshop.
- Independent peer review of the outputs from the work has been carried out by [redacted] who has also pulled together the conclusions, recommendations and supporting information in this report.

1.15 Landscape and visual issues are the clear focus of this project. We have not dealt separately with impacts of the transmission lines on historic environment/heritage assets and their settings in their own right. In anticipation of the VIP Project English Heritage commissioned a separate report on Power Transmission and the Historic Environment (ECUS Ltd, 2013) which mapped and commented on the proximity of power lines in the designated landscapes to important heritage assets. This report, and the related datasets, has been available to the landscape consultants carrying out the preliminary VIP work. In the LVIA we have touched on historic environment issues in two ways:

- by using map information on World Heritage Sites and Registered Parks and Gardens in our survey record maps of conservation interests, which in turn informed our judgments about relative landscape value at a local level where "conservation interests" is among the criteria (see **APPENDIX** for details)
- by considering visual impacts on visitors to historic environment/heritage sites as one of our groups of visual receptors. Battle Abbey and the Registered Battlefield which was the site of the Battle of Hastings in the High Weald AONB, and Plas Newydd, a National Trust property and Registered Park and Garden in the Anglesey AONB provide good examples of this.

This report

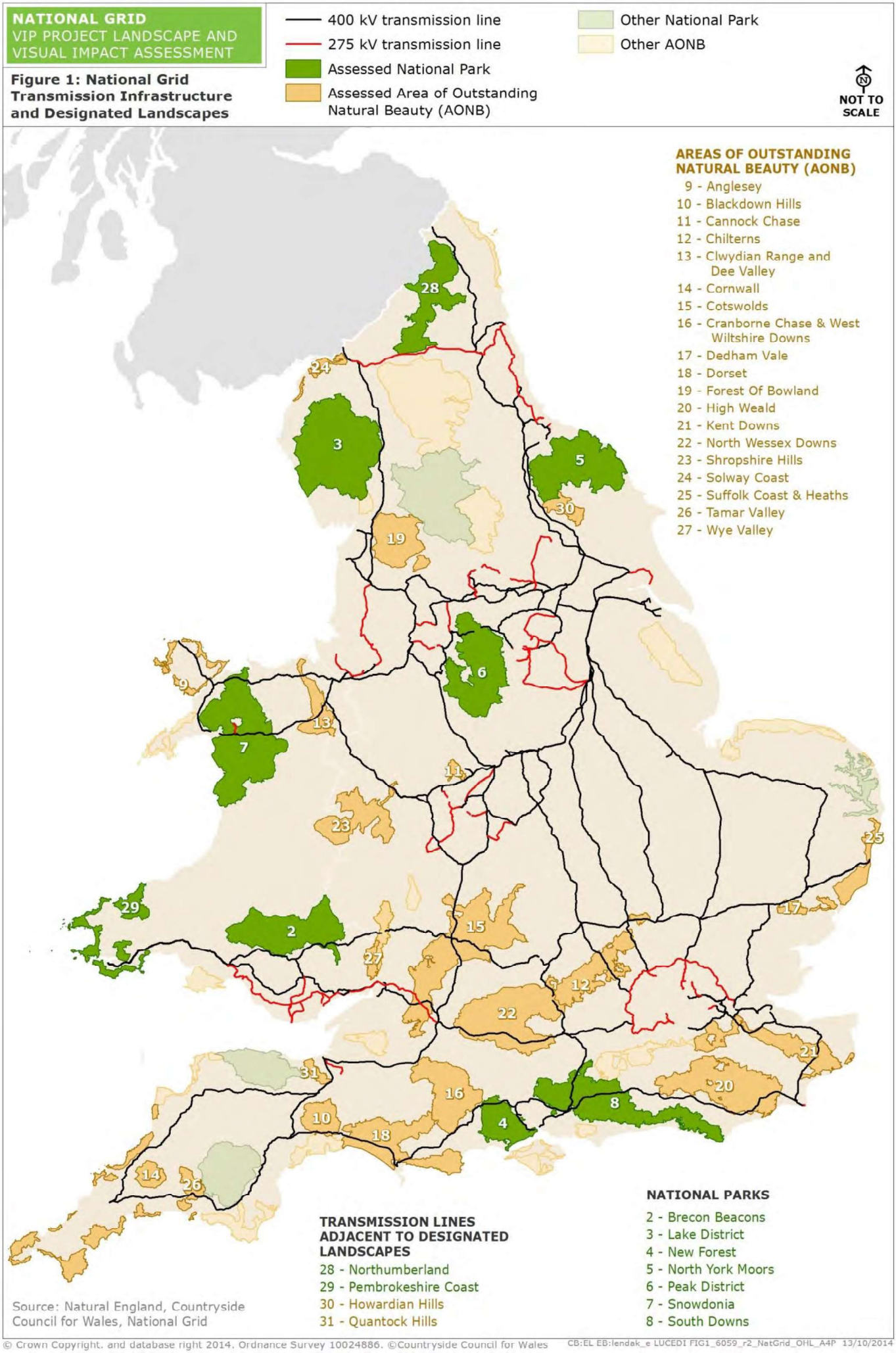
1.16 This report is part of the output from the landscape and visual impact assessment project. It sets out the approach and methods of assessment and the outputs from the work, explaining the steps taken to progress from the individual surveys of transmission line subsections to a possible shortlist of candidates for further technical investigation of mitigation options. Its purpose is **to provide evidence** to inform the discussions of the Stakeholder Advisory Group. It does not therefore make firm recommendations but simply sets out the findings of the work so far.

1.17 The report is set out in two parts each containing three chapters:

- **Part 1** provides an overview of the assessment and contains:
  - Introduction (**this Chapter**)
  - A detailed description of the assessment method (**Chapter 2**)
  - An explanation of the outputs of the assessment (**Chapter 3**)

- **Part 2** provides summary overviews of the assessments for each designated area, with whole area maps, divided into:
  - National Parks (**Chapter 4**)
  - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (**Chapter 5**)
  - Lines adjacent to designated landscapes (**Chapter 6**)

Appendix A demonstrates the way that the survey findings are recorded and the report is supplemented by a DVD containing the full set of survey record sheets and maps


NATIONAL GRID
VIP PROJECT LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Figure 1: National Grid Transmission Infrastructure and Designated Landscapes
400 kV transmission line
275 kV transmission line
Assessed National Park
Assessed Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
Other National Park
Other AONB
NOT TO SCALE
AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)
9 - Anglesey
10 - Blackdown Hills
11 - Cannock Chase
12 - Chilterns
13 - Clwydian Range and Dee Valley
14 - Cornwall
15 - Cotswolds
16 - Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs
17 - Dedham Vale
18 - Dorset
19 - Forest Of Bowland
20 - High Weald
21 - Kent Downs
22 - North Wessex Downs
23 - Shropshire Hills
24 - Solway Coast
25 - Suffolk Coast & Heaths
26 - Tamar Valley
27 - Wye Valley
TRANSMISSION LINES ADJACENT TO DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES
28 - Northumberland
29 - Pembrokeshire Coast
30 - Howardian Hills
31 - Quantock Hills
NATIONAL PARKS
2 - Brecon Beacons
3 - Lake District
4 - New Forest
5 - North York Moors
6 - Peak District
7 - Snowdonia
8 - South Downs
Source: Natural England, Countryside Council for Wales, National Grid
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CB:EL EB:lendak_e LUCEDI FIG1_6059_r2_NatGrid_OHL_A4P 13/10/2014

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.99 Due to the open nature of the estuary and salt marsh landscapes it is considered that additional planting to the west of the two pylon lines may not be appropriate or in keeping with landscape character. Blocks of woodland planting to the east (between the pylon lines, railway and M6 corridor) may however help to backcloth the lines further and so reduce the cumulative impact of the lines and the infrastructure corridor. This might be achieved as part of wider landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by the transmission lines that are in line with AONB management objectives.

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

5.100 The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is crossed by two sections of pylon line. **Sections 4ZW** and **4ZX** have been assessed jointly as they run directly parallel to each other approximately 50 m apart and the pylons are perceived as being the same in size and design. The pylon lines originate within the AONB at Sizewell Power Station on the coast and from here they run south for approximately 1 kilometre before exiting the AONB boundary near the dismantled railway to the south east of Leiston. The lines then run in a broadly south westerly direction inland past the settlements of Knodishall, Friston and Gromford, all of which lie outside the AONB.

5.101 **Section 4ZW** and **4ZX** have not been divided into subsections and remain as individual sections, **4ZW.1** and **4ZX.1**, as shown on **Figure 25**. **4ZW.1** and **4ZX.1** are jointly judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance, albeit with individual impacts which are of high importance. **High importance visual impacts** have been identified affecting users of regional trails and cycleways in the AONB.

Summary of Mitigation Options

5.102 The reinforcement of existing woodlands and hedgerows could help to further screen views of the pylons, in particular providing appropriate mitigation for some viewpoints in close proximity to the lines. Due to the flat nature of the landscape however, it is likely that the tops of pylons would still be visible when the lines are viewed over a longer distance. Such planting and reinforcement might be achieved as part of wider landscape enhancements for those areas adversely affected by transmission lines that are in line with objectives in the AONB Management Plan.

Tamar Valley AONB

5.103 One section of transmission line passes through the Tamar Valley AONB. **Section YF** runs eastward from the substation near Ellbridge, crossing the Tamar and Tavy rivers, and leaving the AONB north-west of Tamerton Foliot. It is 7.8km in length and has been divided, as shown on **Figure 26**, into two subsections. Subsection **YF.1** enters the AONB as it crosses the minor road east of Ellbridge. It is carried across the River Tamar on a pair of very tall pylons to Weir Quay, where it turns southward along the Bere Peninsula. Subsection **YF.2** begins west of Bere Ferrers and crosses the River Tavy on a second pair of very tall pylons, before continuing east to the AONB boundary. Subsection **YF.1** is judged to have **combined landscape and visual impacts of very high importance**, while **YF.2** is judged to have combined landscape and visual impacts of moderate importance overall, albeit with some individual impacts of high importance.

5.104 Subsection **YF.1** is judged to have **landscape impacts of high importance** on the open estuarine valley, classified as falling within the *Middle Tamar Valley* and *Lower Tamar and Tavy* landscape character areas. The river-crossing pylons in particular are out of proportion to and intrusive in the medium-scale valley landscape especially as the transmission line cuts across steep sections of the valley sides. **YF.1** is also judged to have **visual impacts of high importance** on the communities of Cargreen and Weir Quay, users of the Tamar Valley Discovery Trail, users of local footpaths, and visitors to the Tamar Valley and Tavistock section of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. Again these impacts arise from the dominant presence of the river-crossing pylons, which are highly visible from waterside locations which look out across

Figure 25: OHL Sub-Section Assessment Score for Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB