



FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WIND FARM ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

VOLUME 6, PART 8, ANEX 1.2: LESSER
BLACK BACKED GULL LANDSCAPE AND
VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Application Reference	EN010115
Application Document Number	6.8.1.2
Revision	A
APFP Regulation:	5(2)(a)
Date	March 2024

Project	Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm
Sub-Project or Package	Environmental Statement
Document Title	Volume 6, Part 8, Annex 1.2: Lesser Black Backed Gull Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Application Document Number	6.8.1.2
Revision	A
APFP Regulation	5(2)(a)
Document Reference	005108475-01

COPYRIGHT © Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd

All pre-existing rights reserved.

This document is supplied on and subject to the terms and conditions of the Contractual Agreement relating to this work, under which this document has been supplied, in particular:

LIABILITY

In preparation of this document Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd has made reasonable efforts to ensure that the content is accurate, up to date and complete for the purpose for which it was contracted. Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd makes no warranty as to the accuracy or completeness of material supplied by the client or their agent.

Other than any liability on Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd detailed in the contracts between the parties for this work Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd shall have no liability for any loss, damage, injury, claim, expense, cost or other consequence arising as a result of use or reliance upon any information contained in or omitted from this document.

Any persons intending to use this document should satisfy themselves as to its applicability for their intended purpose.

The user of this document has the obligation to employ safe working practices for any activities referred to and to adopt specific practices appropriate to local conditions.

Revision	Date	Status/Reason for Issue	Originator	Checked	Approved
A	Mar-24	ES	SLR	GoBe	VE OWFL

Volume 6, Part 8, Annex 1.2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the Predator Proof Fencing at Orford Ness

Client: RWE

February 2024

1 Introduction

- 1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Optimised Environments Ltd (OPEN) on behalf of Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd (the Applicant) in relation to the proposed compensatory measures associated with the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project (VE) for Lesser Black Backed Gulls (LBBG) (*Larus fuscus*). These measures comprise the installation of a predator-proof fence at Orford Ness within the Alde-Ore Estuary Special Protection Area (AOE SPA).
- 2 The LVIA considers the effects of the predator proof fencing on landscape character and visual amenity, with special reference to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This appraisal was undertaken by Optimised Environments Ltd (OPEN) and authored by Jo Phillips who has a BA Honours in Landscape Architecture, is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and who has over twenty years' experience undertaking landscape and visual impact assessments.
- 3 Although the proposed predator proof fencing alone is not considered to constitute an 'EIA development' under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) or the Town and Country (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 the works form part of the draft Development Consent Order (Document 3.3) which is supported by an EIA (Volume 6 of the application). This LVIA supports a supplemental to EIA cover the LBBG compensation area.
- 4 Advice from Natural England has been that to properly compensate for impacts from VE to LBBG feature of the AOE SPA, a compensation measure is required. Following a site selection exercise (Document 5.5.8) and consultation undertaken with stakeholders, a suitable compensation area site has been identified at Orford Ness, where an area will be enclosed by predator proof fencing to improve breeding success of LBBG in this location.

2 The Proposal

- 5 The proposal comprises the installation of a 1.8 to 2.0 m high, wire mesh fencing, surrounding the proposed compensation area. To ensure the fence is predator proof, 60 cm is buried at a depth of 15 cm and the top 30 cm is set at a 45-degree angle. Where areas of the fence cross water, it will include mesh to the channel bed to prevent access from water-borne predators.
- 6 For construction, a small excavator will be used to remove 50 to 100 mm of topsoil to create a 1 m corridor along the line of the fence steel fence posts will be inserted into the ground at approximate 3 m intervals. No foundations are required for the fence posts and no piling or hammering will be needed. Following installation of the fence posts, the mesh fencing will be rolled out and attached to each fencepost and a 60 cm skirt of fencing will be folded into the 1 m corridor and secured into place with pegs. The topsoil will be replaced on top of the skirt and levelled.

- 7 Fence installation and any installation works will be expected to take around three weeks, with up to six personnel onsite. Site access during the installation will be by boat from Orford Quay, across the River Ore to an existing boat landing and then along existing tracks to the Site. Fencing materials, machinery and plant will be transported to the Site using standard low loaders and a small excavator or dump truck will be used to move soil. A temporary materials laydown and welfare area will be required during the construction period, for the duration of the construction work, and will be removed upon completion of the works.
- 8 The fenced areas will be located to the immediate east of the Cobra Mist site and immediate west of the shingle ridge at Orford Ness (Figure 1). It lies within close proximity to the North Sea shoreline and in an area characterised by reclaimed marshland and open grassland. Existing predator-proof fencing associated with the Norfolk Projects has been installed in this area, adjacent to the proposed site.

3 Consultation

- 9 Stakeholder consultation has been undertaken on site selection. Table 1 highlights those responses made which have particular relevance to the LVIA.

Date and consultation phase / type	Consultation and key issues raised	Section where key provisions addressed
Stage 3 Targeted Habitats Consultation – January 2024 East Suffolk Council 7th February 2024	<i>‘In terms of landscape and visual impact assessment, the consultation materials state that there is no potential for likely significant effects to arise in respect of any of the landscape or visual receptors, either at the local or wider level of the proposed sites. The materials conclude that this is due chiefly to the relatively small-scale of the proposed fence, the localised nature of the potential effects and the extent of limited existing human influences in both the wider and local landscapes. ESC’s Principal Landscape Officer raised initial concerns over the prospect of additional fencing being introduced at Orford Ness noting the recent predator-proof fencing installed in that area for other offshore wind farm compensation measures (ESC application reference DC/22/3447/FUL). However, having reviewed the consultation materials, it was acknowledged that the described fencing is expected to have a relatively low visual impact if seen over a long distance.’</i>	The LVIA considers the potential effects of the predator proof fencing on visual amenity at Section 7.
Suffolk County Council 31st January 2024	<i>‘The County Council does not agree with the statement with regards to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment in Table 2.1 Potential impacts of a LBBG compensatory area: ‘There is no potential for likely significant effects to arise in respect of any of the landscape or visual receptors, either at the local or wider level of the proposed sites. This is due chiefly to the relatively small-scale of the proposed fence, the localised</i>	The LVIA considers the potential effects of the predator proof fencing on landscape character at Section 5, on landscape

	<p><i>nature of the potential effects and the extent of limited existing human influences in both the wider and local landscapes.'</i></p> <p><i>The compensation sites and access routes are located within the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape (formerly AONB), and close to several public rights of way. The access route to VE1-VE3 runs partially along PRow Aldeburgh 14.</i></p> <p><i>The coastal landscape is characterised by little vegetation and wide-open views, big skies and a sense of wildness and remoteness. Aldeburgh, Orford and Orfordness are also tourist destinations and the landscapes around them are of high importance for recreation.</i></p> <p><i>The introduction of a utilitarian anti-predator fence could present a new and alien element in the landscape and would be expected to have adverse visual effects, especially where it would be located adjacent to public right of way (VE4). Where the fences are further removed from public right of way (VE1-VE3) it is possible that the fencing will be less visually intrusive and/or associated with other built structures on Orford Ness.</i></p> <p><i>However, either way, the visual effects should be appropriately assessed and not dismissed as non-significant at this stage. The effects on public rights of way should also be appropriately assessed, especially if the access route for construction is proposing to use the route of a public right of way.</i></p>	<p>designations at Section 6 and on visual amenity at Section 7.</p> <p>Site VE4 is no longer being considered and the effects on walkers in the area surrounding the chosen site VE2, is considered in this LVIA.</p>
<p>Natural England 31st January 2024</p>	<p><i>'The potential compensatory sites fall within the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Suffolk Heritage Coast. Where predator exclusion fences are proposed, it will be necessary to design the fenced areas in a way that does not affect the special qualities of the AONB and Heritage Coast. Any feedback from the AONB partnership or East Suffolk Council on this matter should be incorporated into the proposals.'</i></p>	<p>The LVIA considers the potential effects of the predator proof fencing on landscape designations at Section 6. The design of the proposed fence follows the design of the existing fence to ensure continuity.</p>
<p>Dedham Vale and Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscapes Team 31st January 2024</p>	<p><i>'The National Landscapes team note that the example predator fencing shown in figure 2.2 of the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm HRA Compensatory Sites for Lesser Black-Backed Gulls Consultation Document (December 2023) is a type of fencing that is unlikely to contribute to AONB purpose in a nationally designated landscape. Impacts in the proposed locations VE1, VE2 and VE3 are less likely to have a significant impact on the nationally designated</i></p>	<p>VE2 is the chosen site and VE4 is no longer being considered. The design of the proposed fencing follows the design of the existing fencing to ensure continuity.</p>

	<p><i>landscape given the association with the military in these locations. However, impacts of this type of fencing at VE4 is unlikely to contribute to the purpose of the National Landscape and should be compensated for.</i></p> <p><i>The National Landscapes team consider that the applicant should consult and consider the Selection and Use of Colour in Development document when designing the predator fencing.'</i></p>	
--	--	--

4 Methodology

Scope of the appraisal

- 10 The focus of the LVIA is the effects of the predator proof fencing located at Orford Ness. A 2 km study area around the Site has been defined based on the likely extent of potential effects. Professional judgement and an understanding of the area have been used to ascertain the likely extent of potential effects taking account of the anticipated visibility of the predator proof fencing and the topography, land cover and built form within the area. The study area is shown on Figure 1
- 11 The focus of the LVIA is to assess the effects of the predator proof fencing located at Orford Ness. A 2 km study area around the Site has been defined based on the likely extent of potential effects. Professional judgement and an understanding of the area have been used to ascertain the likely extent of potential effects taking account of the anticipated visibility of the predator proof fencing and the topography, land cover and built form within the area. The study area is shown on Figure 1.
- 12 This LVIA has been carried out in accordance with Guidance relevant to the LVIA, which is set out in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition' (GLVIA3) produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013).
- 13 GLVIA3 sets out an approach to the assessment of magnitude of change in which three separate considerations are combined within the magnitude of change rating. These are the size or scale of the effect, its geographical extent and its duration and reversibility. Notably GLVIA3 provides guidance and not a prescriptive methodology. The guidance suggests that this approach is to be applied in respect of both landscape and visual receptors. It is considered that the process of combining all three considerations in one rating can distort the aim of identifying likely significant effects of development. For example, a high magnitude of change, based on size or scale, may be reduced to a lower rating if it occurred in a localised geographical area and for a short duration. This might mean that a potentially significant effect will be overlooked if effects are diluted down due to their limited geographical extents and/ or duration or reversibility.
- 14 As advocated by GLVIA3 the assessment has used professional judgement in defining the methodology for the LVIA. The consideration of the size or scale of the effect, its geographical extent and its duration and reversibility has therefore been undertaken separately, by basing the magnitude of change on size or scale

to determine where significant and not significant effects occur, and then describing the geographical extents of these effects and their duration and reversibility separately. Duration and reversibility are stated separately in relation to the assessed effects, for example as short, medium or long-term and temporary or permanent.

- 15 The assessment methodology utilises six scales of magnitude of change - high, medium-high, medium, medium-low, low and negligible; which are preferred to the 'maximum of five categories' suggested in GLVIA3 as a means of clearly defining and summarising magnitude of change judgements. Where there is no effect, the assessment will state there is no magnitude of change.

Assessment of Effects

- 16 The objective of the assessment of the proposed development is to predict the likely significant effects on the landscape and visual resource. The significance of effects is assessed through a combination of two considerations; the sensitivity of the landscape receptor or view and the magnitude of change that will result as a consequence of the addition of the predator proof fencing.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 17 The sensitivity of a landscape character receptor is a combination of the judgements made about the value associated with that receptor and the susceptibility of the receptor to the development proposed.

Value of the landscape receptor

- 18 The value of a landscape character receptor is a reflection of the value that society attaches to that landscape. The assessment of the landscape value is classified as high, medium-high, medium, medium-low or low and the basis for this assessment is made clear using evidence and professional judgement, based on the following range of factors.
- 19 **Landscape designations** - A receptor that lies within the boundary of a recognised landscape related planning designation is of increased value, depending on the proportion of the receptor that is affected and the level of importance of the designation which may be international, national, regional or local. The absence of designations does not however preclude value, as an undesignated landscape character receptor may be valued as a resource in the local or immediate environment.
- 20 **Landscape quality** - The quality of a landscape character receptor is a reflection of its attributes, such as scenic quality, sense of place, rarity and representativeness and the extent to which its valued attributes have remained intact. A landscape with consistent, intact, well-defined and distinctive attributes is considered to be of higher quality and, in turn, higher value, than a landscape where the introduction of elements has detracted from its character.
- 21 **Landscape experience** - The experiential qualities that can be evoked by a landscape receptor can add to its value and relates to a number of factors including the cultural associations that may exist in literature or

history, or the iconic status of the landscape in its own right; the recreational value of the landscape; and the contribution of other values relating to the nature conservation or archaeology of the area.

Landscape susceptibility to change

- 22 The susceptibility of a landscape character receptor to change is a reflection of its ability to accommodate the changes that will occur as a result of the addition of the proposed development. Some landscape receptors are better able to accommodate change as a result of the development than others due to certain characteristics that are indicative of capacity to accommodate change. These characteristics may or not also be special landscape qualities that underpin designated landscapes.
- 23 The assessment of the susceptibility of the landscape receptor to change is classified as high, medium-high, medium, medium-low or low and the basis for this assessment has been made clear using evidence and professional judgement. The following indicators of landscape susceptibility are considered in the context of the development proposed:
- 24 **Overall strength and robustness:** Collectively the overall characteristics and qualities of a particular landscape result in a strong and robust landscape that is capable of reasonably accommodating the influence of the proposed development without undue adverse effects on the special landscape qualities (in the case of a designated landscape) or the key characteristics;
- 25 **Landscape scale and topography:** The scale and topography are large enough to physically accommodate the influence of the proposed development. Topographical features such as more complex, distinctive or small-scale coastal landforms are likely to be more susceptible than simple, broad and homogenous coastal landforms;
- 26 **Openness and enclosure:** Openness in the landscape may increase susceptibility to change because it can result in wider visibility, however an open landscape may also be larger scale and simple, which will decrease susceptibility. Conversely, enclosed landscapes can offer more screening potential, limiting visibility to a smaller area, however they may also be smaller scale and more complex which will increase susceptibility;
- 27 **Skyline:** Prominent and distinctive skylines and horizons with important landmark features that are identified in the landscape character assessment, are generally considered to be more susceptible to development in comparison to broad, simple skylines which lack landmark features or contain other infrastructure features;
- 28 **Relationship with other development and landmarks:** Contemporary landscapes where there are existing similar developments or other forms of development (industry, mineral extraction, masts, urban fringe/ large settlement, major transport routes) that already have a characterising influence result in a lower susceptibility to development in comparison to areas characterised by limited development or smaller scale, historic development and landmarks;
- 29 **Perceptual qualities:** Notable landscapes that are acknowledged to be particularly scenic, wild or tranquil

are generally considered to be more susceptible to development in comparison to ordinary, cultivated or farmed/ developed landscapes where perceptions of 'wildness' and tranquillity are less tangible. Landscapes which are either remote or appear natural may vary in their susceptibility to development; and

- 30 **Landscape context and association:** The extent to which the predator proof fencing will influence the character of landscape receptors across the study area relates to the associations that exist between the landscape receptor within which the predator proof fencing is located and the landscape receptor from which the proposed development will be experienced. In some situations, this association is strong, where the landscapes are directly related, and in other situations weak, where the landscape association is weak. The context and visual connection to areas of adjacent landscape character or designations has a bearing on the susceptibility to development.

Landscape Sensitivity Rating

- 31 An overall sensitivity assessment of the landscape receptor is made by combining the assessment of the value of the landscape character receptor and its susceptibility to change. The evaluation of landscape sensitivity has been applied for each landscape receptor - high, medium-high, medium, medium-low and low - by combining individual assessments of the value of the receptor and its susceptibility to change.

Landscape Magnitude of Change

- 32 The magnitude of change affecting landscape receptors is an expression of the scale of the change that will result from the predator proof fencing and is dependent on a number of variables regarding the size or scale of the change and the geographical extent over which the change will be experienced.

Size or scale of change

- 33 This criterion relates to the size or scale of change to the landscape that will arise as a result of the predator proof fencing, based on the following factors.
- 34 **Landscape elements:** The degree to which the pattern of elements that makes up the landscape character is altered by the predator proof fencing, by removal or addition of elements in the landscape. The magnitude of change will generally be higher if the features that make up the landscape character are extensively removed or altered, and/or if many new elements are added to the landscape.
- 35 **Landscape characteristics:** The extent to which the effect of the proposed development changes, physically or perceptually, the key characteristics of the landscape that may be important to its distinctive character. This may include, for example, the scale of the landform, its relative simplicity or irregularity, the nature of the landscape context, the grain or orientation of the landscape, the degree to which the receptor is influenced by external features and the juxtaposition of the proposed development in relation to these key characteristics. If the proposed development is located in a landscape receptor that is already affected by other similar development, this may reduce the magnitude of change, particularly if there is a high level of integration and

the developments form a unified and cohesive feature in the landscape.

- 36 **Landscape designation:** In the case of designated landscapes, the degree of change is considered in light of the effects on the special landscape qualities which underpin the designation and the effect on the integrity of the designation. All landscapes change over time and much of that change is managed or planned. Often landscapes will have management objectives for 'protection' or 'accommodation' of development. The scale of change may be localised, or occurring over parts of an area, or more widespread affecting whole landscape receptors and their overall integrity.
- 37 **Distance:** The size and scale of change is also strongly influenced by the proximity of the proposed development to the receptor. Distance may be an influential factor to the extent that over a long range the scale of the influence on landscape receptors may be small or very limited. Conversely, landscapes closest to the development are likely to be most affected. Where the development is located within a 'host' landscape character area this will be directly affected whilst adjacent areas of landscape character will be indirectly affected.
- 38 **Amount and nature of change:** The amount of the proposed development that is seen. Generally, the greater the amount of the proposed development that can be seen, the higher the scale of change. Generally, the magnitude of change is likely to be lower where the proposed development is largely perceived to be at a distance, rather than 'within' the landscape being considered.

Geographical extent

- 39 The geographic extent over which the landscape effects are experienced is also assessed, which is distinct from the size or scale of effect. This evaluation is not combined in the assessment of the level of magnitude, but instead expresses the extent of the receptor that will experience a particular magnitude of change and therefore the geographical extents of the significant and non-significant effects.
- 40 The extent of the effects will vary depending on the specific nature of the proposed development and is principally assessed through analysis of the extent of perceived changes to the landscape character through visibility of the proposed development.

Duration and reversibility

- 41 The duration and reversibility of landscape effects is based on the period over which proposed development are likely to exist during construction and operation and the extent to which these elements are removed during decommissioning and its effects reversed at the end of that period. Long-term, medium-term and short-term landscape effects are defined as follows:
- Long-term - more than 10 years (may be defined as permanent or reversible);
 - Medium-term - 5 to 10 years; and

- Short-term - 1 to 5 years.

Landscape magnitude of change rating

- 42 The 'magnitude' or 'degree of change' resulting from the proposed development is described as 'high', 'medium-high', 'medium', 'medium-low' 'low' or 'negligible'. In assessing magnitude of change, the assessment focuses on the size or scale of change and its geographical extent. The duration and reversibility are stated separately in relation to the assessed effects, for example as short, medium or long-term and temporary or permanent.

Evaluating Landscape Effects and Significance

- 43 The level of landscape effect is evaluated primarily through the combination of landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change. Once the level of effect has been assessed, a judgement is then made as to whether the level of effect is 'significant' or 'not significant' as required by the EIA Regulations. This process is assisted by the matrix in Table 2 which is used to guide the assessment. Geographical extent and duration/ reversibility are considered relevant in drawing conclusions about significance, combining with other judgements on sensitivity and magnitude, to allow a final judgement to be made on whether each effect is significant or not significant.
- 44 Further information is also provided about the nature of the effects, whether these will be direct or indirect, temporary, permanent, or reversible; beneficial, neutral or adverse, and cumulative.
- 45 A significant effect occurs where the combination of the variables results in the proposed development having a defining effect on the landscape receptor, or where changes of a lower magnitude affect a landscape receptor that is of particularly high sensitivity. A major loss or irreversible effect over an extensive area or landscape character, affecting landscape elements, characteristics and/ or perceptual aspects that are key to a nationally valued landscape are likely to be significant, particularly if they are of long duration and irreversible.
- 46 A non-significant effect will occur where the effect of the proposed development is not defining, and the landscape character of the receptor continues to be characterised principally by its baseline characteristics. Equally a small-scale change experienced by a receptor of high sensitivity may not significantly affect the special landscape quality or integrity of a designation. Reversible effects, on elements, characteristics and character that are of small-scale or geographical extent or affecting lower value receptors, are unlikely to be significant.

Visual Sensitivity

- 47 Visual Effects are concerned wholly with the effect of the proposed development on views, and the general visual amenity. Visual Effects are defined by the Landscape Institute in GLVIA 3, paragraphs 6.1 as follows:

- 48 "An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on views available to people and their visual amenity. The concern ... is with assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the context and character of views."
- 49 Visual effects are identified for different receptors (people) who will experience the view at their place of residence, within their community, during recreational activities, at work, or when travelling through the area.
- 50 The level of visual effect, and whether this is significant, is determined through consideration of the sensitivity of the visual receptor and their view, and the magnitude of change that will be brought about by the proposed development.

Evaluating Visual Sensitivity to Change

- 51 In accordance with paragraphs 6.31 to 6.37 of GLVIA3, the sensitivity of visual receptors is determined by a combination of the value of the view and the susceptibility of the visual receptors to the change likely to result from the proposed development on the view and visual amenity.

Value of the view

- 52 The value of a view or series of views reflects the recognition and the importance attached either formally through identification on mapping or being subject to planning designations, or informally through the value which society attaches to the view(s). The value of a view has been classified as high, medium-high, medium, medium-low or low and the basis for this assessment has been made clear using evidence and professional judgement, based on the following criteria.
- 53 **Formal recognition:** The value of views can be formally recognised through their identification on OS or tourist maps as formal viewpoints, sign-posted and with facilities provided to add to the enjoyment of the viewpoint such as parking, seating and interpretation boards. Specific views may be afforded protection in local planning policy and recognised as valued views. Specific views can also be cited as being of importance in relation to landscape or heritage planning designations, for example the value of a view has been increased if it presents an important vista from a designed landscape or lies within or overlooks a designated area, which implies a greater value to the visible landscape.
- 54 **Informal recognition:** Views that are well-known at a local level and/or have particular scenic qualities can have an increased value, even if there is no formal recognition or designation. Views or viewpoints are sometimes informally recognised through references in art or literature, and this can also add to their value. A viewpoint that is visited or appreciated by a large number of people will generally have greater importance than one gained by very few people.

Susceptibility to change

- 55 Susceptibility relates to the nature of the viewer experiencing the view and how susceptible they are to the

potential effects of the proposed development. A judgement to determine the level of susceptibility therefore relates to the nature of the viewer and their experience from that particular viewpoint or series of viewpoints, classified as high, medium-high, medium, medium-low or low and based on the following criteria:

- 56 **Nature of the viewer:** The nature of the viewer is defined by the occupation or activity of the viewer at the viewpoint or series of viewpoints. The most common groups of viewers considered in the visual assessment include residents, motorists, and people taking part in recreational activity or working. Viewers, whose attention is focused on the landscape, or with static long-term views, are likely to have a higher susceptibility. Viewers travelling in cars or on trains will tend to have a lower susceptibility as their view is transient and moving. The least sensitive viewers are usually people at their place of work as they are generally less susceptible to changes in views.
- 57 **Experience of the viewer:** The experience of the visual receptor relates to the extent to which the viewer's attention or interest may be focused on the view and the visual amenity they experience at a particular location. The susceptibility of the viewer to change arising from the proposed development may be influenced by the viewer's attention or interest in the view, which may be focused in a particular direction, from a static or transitory position, over a long or short duration, and with high or low clarity. For example, if the principal outlook from a settlement is aligned directly towards the proposed development, the experience of the visual receptor is altered more notably than if the experience relates to a glimpsed view seen at an oblique angle from a car travelling at high speed. The visual amenity experienced by the viewer varies depending on the presence and relationship of visible elements, features or patterns experienced in the view and the degree to which the landscape in the view may accommodate the influence of the proposed development.

Visual sensitivity rating

- 58 An overall level of sensitivity is applied for each visual receptor or view - high, medium-high, medium, medium-low or low by combining individual assessments of the value of the view and the susceptibility of the visual receptor to change. Each visual receptor, meaning the particular person or group of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint, is assessed in terms of their sensitivity.

Visual Magnitude of Change

- 59 The visual magnitude of change is an expression of the scale of the change that will result from the proposed development and is dependent on a number of variables regarding the size or scale of the change and the geographical extent over which the change will be experienced. A separate assessment is also made of the duration and reversibility of visual effects.

Size or scale of change

- 60 An assessment is made regarding the size or scale of change in the view that is likely to be experienced as a result of the proposed development, based on the following criteria:

- 61 **Distance:** the distance between the visual receptor/viewpoint and the proposed development. Generally, the greater the distance, the lower the magnitude of change, as the proposed development will constitute a smaller scale component of the view.
- 62 **Size:** the amount and size of the proposed development that is seen. Visibility may range from small or partial visibility of the proposed development to all of the proposed development being visible. Generally, the larger and greater number of the proposed development that appear in the view, the higher the magnitude of change. This is also related to the degree to which the proposed development may be wholly or partly screened by landform, vegetation (seasonal) and/ or built form. Conversely open views are likely to reveal more of the proposed development, particularly where this is a key characteristic of the landscape context.
- 63 **Scale:** the scale of the change in the view, with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition. The scale of the proposed development may appear larger or smaller relative to the scale of the receiving landscape.
- 64 **Field of view:** the vertical/ horizontal field of view and the proportion of the view that is affected by the proposed development. Generally, the more of the proportion of a view that is affected, the higher the magnitude of change. If the proposed development extends across the whole of the open part of the outlook, the magnitude of change is higher as the full view has been affected. Conversely, if the proposed development cover just a narrow part of an open, expansive and wide view, the magnitude of change is likely to be reduced as it will not affect the whole open part of the outlook. This can in part be described objectively by reference to the horizontal/ vertical field of view affected, relative to the extent and proportion of the available view.
- 65 **Contrast:** the character and context within which the proposed development are seen and the degree of contrast or integration of any new features with existing landscape elements, in terms of scale, form, mass, line, height, colour, luminance and motion. Developments which contrast or appear incongruous in terms of colour, scale and form are likely to be more visible and have a higher magnitude of change.
- 66 **Consistency of image:** the consistency of image of the proposed development in relation to other developments. The magnitude of change of proposed development is likely to be lower if its layout design is broadly similar to other developments in the landscape, in terms of its scale, form and general appearance. New development is more likely to appear as logical components of the landscape with a strong rationale for their location.
- 67 **Skyline/ background:** Whether the proposed development will be viewed against the skyline, or a background landscape may affect the level of contrast and magnitude. If the proposed development adds to an already developed skyline the magnitude of change will tend to be lower.
- 68 **Nature of visibility:** the nature of visibility is a further factor for consideration. The proposed development may be subject to various phases of development change and the manner in which the proposed development may be viewed could be intermittent or continuous and/ or vary seasonally, due to periodic

management or leaf fall.

Geographical extent

69 The geographic extent over which the visual effects has been experienced is also assessed, which is distinct from the size or scale of effect and is described in terms of the physical area or location over which it is experienced (described as a linear or area measurement). The extent of the effects varies according to the specific nature of the proposed development and is principally assessed through field survey and viewpoint analysis of the extent of visibility likely to be experienced by visual receptors.

Duration and reversibility

70 The duration and reversibility of visual effects are based on the period over which the proposed development is likely to exist during construction and operation and the extent to which the proposed development is removed during decommissioning and the effects reversed at the end of that period.

71 Long-term, medium-term and short-term visual effects are defined as follows:

- Long-term - more than 10 years (may be defined as permanent or reversible);
- Medium-term - 5 to 10 years; and
- Short-term - 0 to 5 years.

Visual magnitude of change rating

72 The 'magnitude' or 'degree of change' resulting from the proposed development is described as 'high', 'medium-high', 'medium', 'medium-low', 'low' and 'negligible'. In assessing the magnitude of change the assessment focuses on the size or scale of change and its geographical extent. The duration and reversibility are stated separately in relation to the assessed effects, for example as short, medium or long-term, and temporary or permanent. The basis for the assessment of magnitude for each receptor is made clear using evidence and professional judgement.

Evaluating Visual Effects and Significance

73 The level of visual effect is evaluated through the combination of visual sensitivity and magnitude of change. Once the level of effect has been assessed, a professional judgement is then made as to whether the level of effect is 'significant' or 'not significant' as required by the relevant EIA Regulations. This process is assisted by the matrix in Table 2 which is used to guide the assessment. Geographical extent and duration and reversibility are considered as part of drawing conclusions about significance, combining with other judgements on sensitivity and magnitude, to allow a final judgement to be made on whether each effect is significant or not significant.

74 Further information is also provided about the nature of the effects, whether these will be direct or indirect;

temporary, permanent or reversible; beneficial, neutral or adverse; and cumulative).

- 75 A significant effect is more likely to occur where a combination of the variables results in the proposed development having a defining effect on the view or visual amenity or where changes affect a visual receptor that is of high sensitivity.
- 76 A non-significant effect is more likely to occur where a combination of the variables results in the proposed development having a non-defining effect on the view or visual amenity or where changes affect a visual receptor that is of low sensitivity.

Evaluation of significance

- 77 The matrix presented in Table 2 is used as a guide to help inform the threshold of significance when combining sensitivity and magnitude to assess significance. On this basis potential effects are assessed as major, major/moderate, moderate, moderate/minor, minor or negligible. In those instances where the magnitude of change has been assessed as 'no change', the level of effect is recorded as 'no effect'.
- 78 For the purposes of this assessment, any effects with a significance level of major and major/moderate have been deemed significant in EIA terms, as highlighted by the dark grey shaded boxes in Table 2. 'Moderate' levels of effect have the potential, subject to the assessor's professional judgement, to be considered as significant or not significant, depending on the sensitivity and magnitude of change factors evaluated, as shown by the light grey shaded boxes in Table 2: Matrix to guide assessment of significant effects. These assessments are explained as part of the assessment, where they occur. Significance can therefore occur at a range of levels depending on the magnitude and sensitivity, however in all cases, a significant effect is considered more likely to occur where a combination of the variables results in the proposed development having a defining effect on the landscape character or view. Definitions are not provided for the individual categories of significance shown in the matrix and the reader should refer to the detailed definitions provided for the factors that combine to inform sensitivity and magnitude
- 79 Effects assessed as being either moderate/minor, minor or negligible level are assessed as not-significant, as shown by the white shaded boxes in Table 2).

Table 2: Matrix used to guide determination of effect significance

Magnitude	High	Medium-High	Medium	Medium-Low	Low	Negligible/ None
Sensitivity:						
High	Significant (Major)	Significant (Major)	Significant (Major / moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)

Medium-High	Significant (Major)	Significant (Major / moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)
Medium	Significant (Major / moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Minor)
Medium-Low	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Significant or Not Significant (Moderate)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Negligible)
Low	Not Significant (Moderate-minor)	Not Significant (Moderate / minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Minor)	Not Significant (Negligible)	Not Significant (Negligible)

Effects on Landscape Character

- 80 Landscape Character Assessment is carried out formally at a national level by Natural England and at a county or district level by Local Planning Authorities (LPA). Natural England has subdivided the country into 48 National Character Areas (NCAs). These NCAs are defined at a broad landscape scale, and Natural England presents a descriptive and detailed character profile for each NCA. The site of the proposed fencing and the surrounding area form part of National Character Area 82 (NCA) Suffolk Coast and Heaths, which largely coincides with the boundaries of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (Figure 3).
- 81 The NCA is mainly low-lying with some areas along the coastal plain at or below sea level. There is little variation in landform apart from where the Sandlings occur as gently rolling areas of higher ground between estuaries. The soils are free-draining sands, gravels and till which have contributed to the varied vegetation patterns that are characteristic of the NCA.
- 82 The coastline comprises long sandy bays and shingle beaches, backed by low cliffs, as well as more sheltered estuaries. The rivers flow from west to east, following meandering courses and while the natural habitat is marshland, much of the surrounding area has been reclaimed for pasture or crop-growing with the geometric pattern of dykes, drainage channels and fence lines forming a characterising feature.
- 83 As well as the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Suffolk Heritage Coast, Figure 2 shows how Orfordness – Havergate National Nature Reserve (ONNNR) also covers this coastal area. ONNNR is not assessed in the LVIA as it is a nature conservation and not a landscape designation, but it does, none-the-less, highlight the importance of this coastal landscape for nature conservation and in particular breeding birds.

- 84 There are a number of small coastal towns, while settlement inland is sparse with only small villages and farmsteads. The larger towns of Lowestoft, Ipswich and Harwich lie on the north and south boundary edges of the NCA. Large modern developments include the nuclear power station at Sizewell and the 1960s Cobra Mist Radar Station on Orford Ness. Other modern features include the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe, Orwell Bridge, the A14 and A12 and East Coast railway line. Military defences from many eras are found along the coastline.
- 85 The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (SLCA) (2018) presents a more detailed scale of landscape classification compared to the broader scale of the NCA classification. While the site is shown on Figure 1 to be mostly located in the 'Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges' landscape character type (LCT), the western edge falls within the 'Coastal Levels' LCT. Figure 1 also shows that these two LCTs occupy most of the 2 km study area and as the most relevant LCTs to this LVIA, they are described and assessed in detail below. Figure 4 presents Alde Ore Site Context photographs.

Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges

Baseline

- 86 The SLCA identifies the following key characteristics of the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges as follows;
- *'Flat or gently rolling landform of sand or shingle;*
 - *Low fragile vegetation;*
 - *Vast open uncluttered landscape;*
 - *Historic military structures;*
 - *Occasional large buildings in an empty landscape;*
 - *Occasional fishing huts and boats on the beach; and*
 - *Only in short stretches is there the paraphernalia of intensive tourist activity, beach huts and piers.'*
- 87 Orford Ness is the largest example of this LCT on the east coast extending as a narrow band along the coastline and comprising an 18 km long spit which has been evolving since marshland reclamation began in the middle-ages. A succession of shingle ridges has coalesced to form a broad and very flat plain, although the long tail of the spit remains a broad ridge. Although it is difficult for vegetation to colonise the shingle owing to the arid and salty conditions, organic matter does collect in between the smaller stones which occur along the tops of the ridges making it possible for some plants to establish. This vegetation is, however, especially fragile as disturbance to the shingle ridge will cause loss of organic matter and damage to the plants and roots.

- 88 The most significant structures in this LCT are those related to military defence and include a series of Martello towers from the early 19th century and gun batteries and pillboxes from the two World Wars of the 20th century. There is also the vast and complex range of buildings in the adjacent Coastal Levels LCT, including the Radio Station and the World Service transmitter array. These larger structures form prominent features amidst such a flat, open and exposed coastal landscape.
- 89 The SLCA describes this landscape as follows '*On Orford Ness the lack of familiar points of reference at a recognised scale, such as trees and hedges, together with the presence of several very large buildings of unfamiliar and brutalist design, creates the feeling of a vast and inhuman landscape.*'

Sensitivity

- 90 The value of the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges LCT is high. This LCT is covered by the national level landscape designation of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.
- 91 The susceptibility of the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges LCT to the predator proof fencing is low. The susceptibility is moderated principally by the presence and influence of large-scale structures within close proximity to the Site, including the transmitter array. There is also old and new fencing demonstrating that this smaller scale type of structure is an established part of the baseline character and has been for some time.
- 92 The combination of the high value and the low susceptibility gives rise to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

- 93 The magnitude of change on the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges LCT will be **medium-low** within the localised part of the LCT where the Site occurs and extending approximately 400 m to the north and south, and **low** across the remaining parts of the LCT. Because the predator proof fence is relatively small in scale (1.8 to 2.0 m), occupies a very contained area and forms a semi-transparent structure, the magnitude of change will be limited. Furthermore, the baseline influence from the transmitter array, buildings and existing fencing adjacent to this LCT also moderates the magnitude of change as the predator proof fencing will not be introducing a new or unfamiliar feature. The proposed fencing will, nonetheless, add to the existing influence from built structures on this LCT and will appear at variance with the semi-natural landscape of this valued coastal area.
- 94 The limited visual influence of the predator proof fencing means that its effects will dissipate with distance and the medium-low magnitude of change will rapidly reduce to low as it becomes an even smaller scale feature in a much wider landscape. The transition between the medium-low and low magnitude of change will occur at approximately 400 m to the north and south of the Site.

Significance of effect

- 95 The combination of the medium sensitivity and medium-low magnitude of change within the localised part of the LCT where the Site occurs and extending approximately 400 m to the north and south, will give rise to a **moderate-minor** and **not significant** level of effect. The combination of the medium sensitivity and the low magnitude of change will give rise to a **minor** and **not significant** level of effect beyond approximately 400 m.

Coastal Levels

- 96 The SLCA identifies the following key characteristics of the Coastal Levels as follows;

- *'Flat marshland adjacent to the coast or estuaries;*
- *Marine alluvium soils;*
- *Sinuuous and complex mediaeval dyke networks;*
- *Uniform 19th century dyke networks;*
- *Cattle-grazed wet grassland;*
- *Widespread modification for arable production;*
- *Small plantations and carr woodlands;*
- *Inland side of rising ground often wooded;*
- *Important wildlife conservation areas;*
- *Unsettled landscape with domestic buildings on the fringes; and*
- *Derelict wind pumps.'*

Baseline

- 97 The Coastal Levels consist of low-lying, flat marshland set alongside estuaries and coastal valleys and covers most of the 2km study area. It lies to the west of the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges LCT and with the River Ore meandering through it, from the north-east to where it joins with the North Sea to the south-west. Underlying the marshes are alluvial deposits of marine origin and with the Saltmarsh and Intertidal Flats LCT occurring along the river edges. Reclamation of the marshlands began at Orford Ness in the 12th century, albeit with losses to the sea recorded in the 13th and 14th centuries. The marshland has been used historically for livestock grazing and the predominant landcover is rough grassland, although with arable farmland occurring towards the hinterland.
- 98 With very little enclosure from trees or hedgerows, the pattern of the landscape is partly defined by the

network of drains which lie between the meandering River Ore and the North Sea. The views are generally open and wide, and there is a sense of exposure, enhanced where views extend seawards. On the inland side the slight rise in landform tends to confine the views.

- 99 The defining features in the Coastal Levels LCT adjacent to the Site include the transmitter array and the radio station buildings. These appear at variance with the otherwise open and undeveloped landscape. There are no residential properties in this local area and no roads - only paths for walkers who make the ferry crossing over from the town of Orford to the south-west or take the long walk in from the town of Aldeburgh to the north. There is also an existing area of predator proof fencing in this LCT associated with the Norfolk Projects.

Sensitivity

- 100 The value of the Coastal Levels LCT is high. This LCT is covered by the national level landscape designation of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.
- 101 The susceptibility of the Coastal Levels LCT to the predator proof fencing is low. The susceptibility is moderated principally by the presence and influence of large-scale structures within this LCT, including the transmitter array. There is also old and new fencing demonstrating that this smaller scale type of structure is an established part of the baseline character and has been for some time.
- 102 The combination of the high value and the low susceptibility gives rise to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

- 103 The magnitude of change on the Coastal Levels LCT will be medium-low within the localised part of the LCT to the west of the Site and extending out to approximately 400 m and low across the remaining parts of the LCT. Because the predator proof fence is relatively small in scale (1.8 to 2.0 m), occupies a very contained area and forms a semi-transparent structure, the magnitude of change will be limited. Furthermore, the baseline influence from the transmitter array, buildings and existing fencing in this LCT also moderates the magnitude of change as the predator proof fencing will not be introducing a new or unfamiliar feature. The proposed fencing will, nonetheless, add to the existing influence from built structures on this LCT and will appear at variance with the semi-natural landscape of this valued coastal area.
- 104 The limited visual influence of the predator proof fencing means that its effects will dissipate with distance and the medium-low magnitude of change will rapidly reduce to low as it becomes an even smaller scale feature in a much wider landscape. The transition between the medium-low and low magnitude of change will occur at a range of approximately 400 m.

Significance of effect

- 105 The combination of the medium sensitivity and medium-low magnitude of change within the localised part of

the LCT to the immediate west of the Site and extending to approximately 400 m will give rise to a **moderate-minor** and **not significant** level of effect. The combination of the medium sensitivity and the low magnitude of change will give rise to a **minor** and **not significant** level of effect beyond approximately 400 m.

5 Effects on Landscape Designations

106 This section of the LVIA considers the effects of the predator proof fencing on the Landscape Designations which cover the 2km study area; namely the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Suffolk Heritage Coast (Figure 2).

Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Baseline

107 The proposed predator proof fencing lies within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The AONB comprises an area of 441km² which is set along the North Sea coast between Kessingland, in the north, and Harwich, in the south (Figure 2). It is predominantly a low-lying and flat landscape with the coastal parts characterised by estuaries, mud flats and marshes, and shingle and sandy beaches, and hinterland parts characterised by farmland with pockets of woodland and heathland.

108 An AONB is land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) to conserve and enhance its natural beauty and denotes the national importance of that land. The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB was designated in 1970 by Natural England and this designation denotes the national importance of this area. It is managed by the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Partnership who have signed a commitment to implement a Management Plan and agreed to share a common vision for the long-term care of the AONB. The vision set out in the Management Plan states, '*An area of special wildlife, landscape, seascape and heritage qualities that are conserved and enhanced with the needs of people living, working and visiting the AONB.*' This is of relevance as the sole purpose of the proposed fence is to conserve and enhance local wildlife by protecting nesting habitats for sea birds.

Sensitivity

109 The value of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB is high as this is a national level landscape designation.

110 The susceptibility of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB to the predator proof fencing is low. The susceptibility is moderated principally by the presence and influence of large-scale structures within the AONB including the transmitter array. There is also old and new fencing demonstrating that this smaller scale type of structure is an established part of the baseline character and has been for some time.

111 The combination of the high value and the low susceptibility gives rise to an overall **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

- 112 The magnitude of change on the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB will be **medium-low** within the localised part of the AONB where the Site occurs and extending out to approximately 400 m, and **low** across the remaining parts of the AONB. Because the predator proof fence is relatively small in scale (1.8 to 2.0 m), occupies a very contained area and forms a semi-transparent structure, the magnitude of change will be limited. Furthermore, the baseline influence from the transmitter array, buildings and existing fencing in the AONB also moderates the magnitude of change as the predator proof fencing will not be introducing a new or unfamiliar feature. The proposed fencing will, nonetheless, add to the existing influence from built structures on the AONB and will appear at variance with the semi-natural landscape of this valued coastal area.
- 113 The limited visual influence of the predator proof fencing means that its effects will dissipate with distance and the medium-low magnitude of change will rapidly reduce to low as it becomes an even smaller scale feature in the much wider AONB. The transition between the medium-low and low magnitude of change will occur at a range of approximately 400 m from the Site.

Significance of effect

- 114 The combination of the medium sensitivity and medium-low magnitude of change within the localised part of the LCT where the Site occurs and extending out to approximately 400 m, will give rise to a **moderate-minor** and **not significant** level of effect. The combination of the medium sensitivity and the low magnitude of change will give rise to a **minor** and **not significant** level of effect beyond approximately 400 m and across the much wider extents of the AONB.

Suffolk Heritage Coast

- 115 The Suffolk Heritage Coast coincides with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB across the extent of the 2 km study area. Heritage Coasts are defined by Natural England, rather than designated and, as such are not protected by statute. Heritage Coasts were established to conserve the best stretches of undeveloped coast in England and are defined by agreement between the relevant maritime local authorities and Natural England.
- 116 As the Suffolk Heritage Coast coincides with the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, the assessment presented above also applies to this defined area. The sensitivity will be **medium**, the magnitude of change will be **medium-low** in the local area and **low** beyond and the level of effect will be **moderate-minor** and **not significant** in the local area and **minor** and **not significant** beyond.

6 Effects on Visual Amenity

- 117 This section of the LVIA considers the effects of the predator proof fencing on the visual amenity of visual

receptors in the 2km study area. The type and frequency of visual receptors experiencing views in this area is limited. There are no settlements or roads close to the site owing to the divisions created by the River Ore and River Alde, as well as the presence of water across the marshlands and reclaimed farmland. The nearest settlement is Orford, at approximately 3.2 km to the south-west and from which the proposed fence will not be readily visible to residents. The minor roads that serve this rural area are also separated by the rivers and occur at a similar distance such that the proposed fence will also not be readily visible to road-users on public roads. It will mostly be walkers within the local area of the Cobra Mist site and shingle ridge whose views will potentially be affected by the proposed predator proof fencing. It is, therefore, the effect on this group of visual receptors that is assessed in detail below.

- 118 Figure 3 shows that the England Coast Path and Public Right of Way (PRoW) coincide on the western bank of the River Ore. On the eastern side of the River Ore, there is a series of trails associated with the ONNNR and to the north former paths associated with the Cobra Mist site, with one passing close to the western side of the Site. Access onto Orford Ness is restricted by the ferry times from Orford which typically do not cross between November and March, and the alternative, long walk in from Aldeburgh to the north.

Walkers

Baseline

- 119 The low-lying and level landform of the proposed Site and surrounding area, combined with the low-lying nature of the vegetation means that views in this area are typically open and exposed. The lack of elevated landform does also, however, mean that these views are not especially long ranging, with the exception of views from the coastal edge across the North Sea. The strong horizontal emphasis formed by the relatively flat and low-lying landscape, means that where built structures occur, they stand out as prominent features.
- 120 In the area around the proposed fencing site, there are a number of large-scale, built features that form visual foci in this otherwise open and exposed coastal landscape, including the Cobra Mist site and its associated transmitter array (Plate 1). There are also various fenced boundaries forming low-level enclosure across this relatively open landscape (Plate 2). Variation in the landform created by dykes also form some localised enclosure to the extent of views (Plate 3).
- 121 Access onto Orford Ness involves taking a ferry from the small town of Orford onto the Orford Ness National Nature Reserve or alternatively taking the long walk in from the town of Aldeburgh to the north. Most of this area is managed by the National Trust and movement of visitors is controlled by providing walking routes, some of which are closed between November and March in order to protect the birds and other wildlife. Public access onto the Cobra Mist site is not permitted, and there is a National Trust sign on the route from the north advising walkers not to access this area without permission. From the south, access is restricted owing to the presence of Unexploded Ordnances. This means it is difficult for walkers to experience a close-range view of the predator proof fence.

Sensitivity

- 122 The value of the views of walkers in this area will be medium-high. Although there are no formal viewpoints marked on Ordnance Survey maps, this area is covered by the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Suffolk Heritage Coast which denotes a scenic landscape of value.
- 123 The susceptibility of walkers to the effects of the predator proof fencing will be medium-low for the following three reasons. Firstly, Orford Ness is a large and expansive area with open views extending over the coastal landscapes, rivers and adjacent seascape. The Site forms only a small proportion of the wider landscape and a relatively small feature in the wider views. Secondly, there is already an influence from both new and old fencing within this landscape, as well as other larger built structures associated with the nearby Cobra Mist site.
- 124 The combination of the medium-high value and the medium-low susceptibility gives rise to a **medium** sensitivity.

Magnitude of change

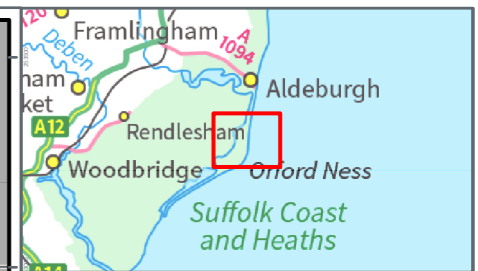
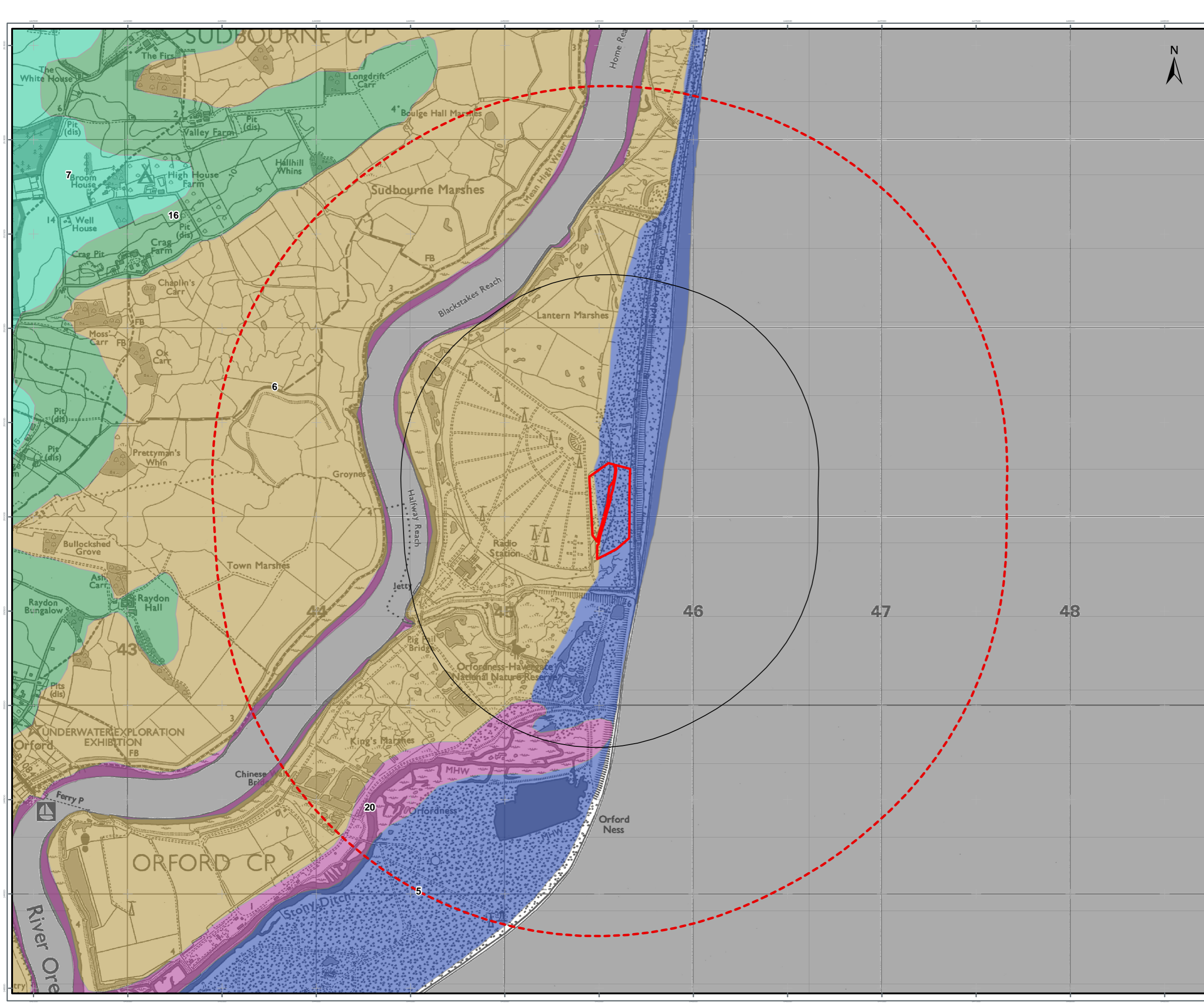
- 125 The magnitude of change on the views of walkers will be **low** or with **no change** in all remaining parts where visibility will be limited owing to distance or screened by intervening landform, vegetation or structures.
- 126 Generally, the effect of the predator proof fencing on the views of walkers will be moderated by the restrictions on public access which means they will not experience a close-range view, and as well the presence of existing development in the local landscape. This is not a natural landscape as it has been reclaimed from marshland and is characterised by open grassland and geometric drainage channels. It is also not an undeveloped landscape, and the presence of the Cobra Mist site and associated transmitter array presents examples of relatively large structures. Smaller structures also occur in the form of remnant farm fencing and the more recent predator proof fencing associated with the Norfolk Projects. This all means that the introduction of the predator proof fencing associated with VE will not appear as a new or unfamiliar feature and will be seen in the context of a modified and partly developed landscape.
- 127 From where access for walkers occurs, typically beyond approximately 400 m, the predator proof fence will appear as a relatively distant and small scale feature in the views of walkers and will be seen within a wider landscape and seascape context in which other larger structures, such as the transmitter array, will have more of an influence. Here the magnitude of change will be low and where the fence is screened by landform, vegetation or other structures or not discernible owing to distance, there will be no change.

Significance of effect

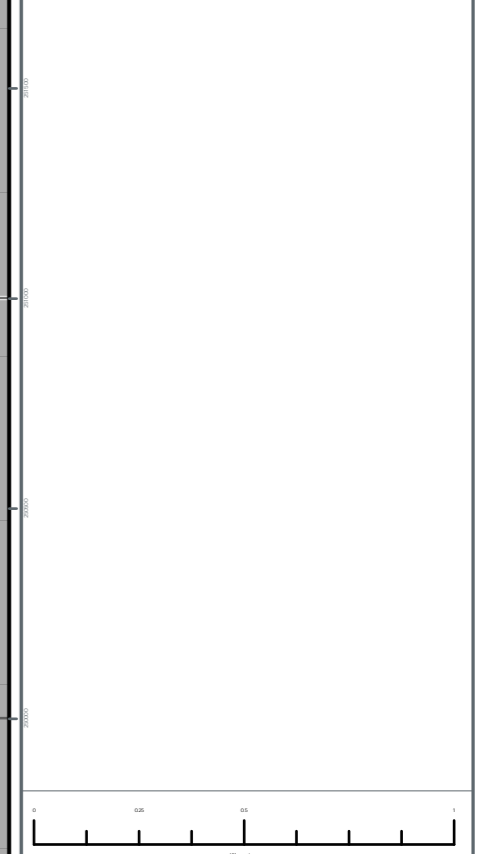
- 128 The combination of the medium sensitivity and the low magnitude of change will give rise to a **minor** and **not significant** level of effect on the views of walkers and with no effect occurring where there will be negligible or no visibility.

7 Summary

- 129 This LVIA has considered the potential for effects to arise in respect of the landscape character of the two LCTs which cover the local area of the Site, the landscape designation of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and defined area of the Suffolk Heritage Coast, and the visual amenity of walkers in this area.
- 130 The conclusion is that the effect on landscape character across the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges LCT, Coastal Levels LCT, Suffolk Coast and Heath AONB, and the Suffolk Heritage Coast will be moderate-minor and not significant in a very localised area around the Site and then either minor and not significant or with no effect across the much wider extent of these landscape receptors. There will be no effect on the visual amenity of walkers in the local area around the Site owing to restrictions on public access. The effect on walkers beyond approximately 400 m will be a minor and not significant effect or no effect where no visibility arises.
- 131 While it is recognised that the predator proof fencing will have a localised effect owing to the increase in the extent of fencing in an area of open grassland, these effects will be moderated by the relatively small scale and contained extent of the predator proof fencing and the human influences which have already notably altered this landscape. The effects on landscape character and visual amenity will be not significant.



- LEG END**
- Proposed Fence Line
 - 1km Radius
 - 2km Study Area
- Suffolk Landscape Character
Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment 2018
- 5. Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges
 - 6. Coastal Levels
 - 7. Estate Sandlands
 - 16. Rolling Estate Sandlands
 - 20. Saltmarsh and Intertidal Flats



Data Source:
Contains UKHO Law of the Sea data © Crown copyright and database right Ordnance Survey data. All rights reserved. Licence number 0100031673C contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2023). Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

PROJECT TITLE:
FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WINDFARM

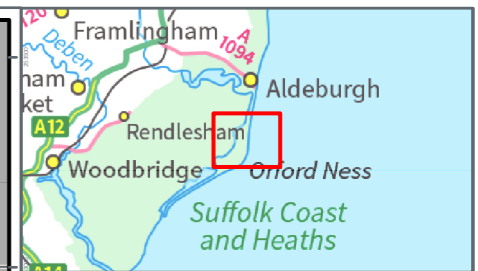
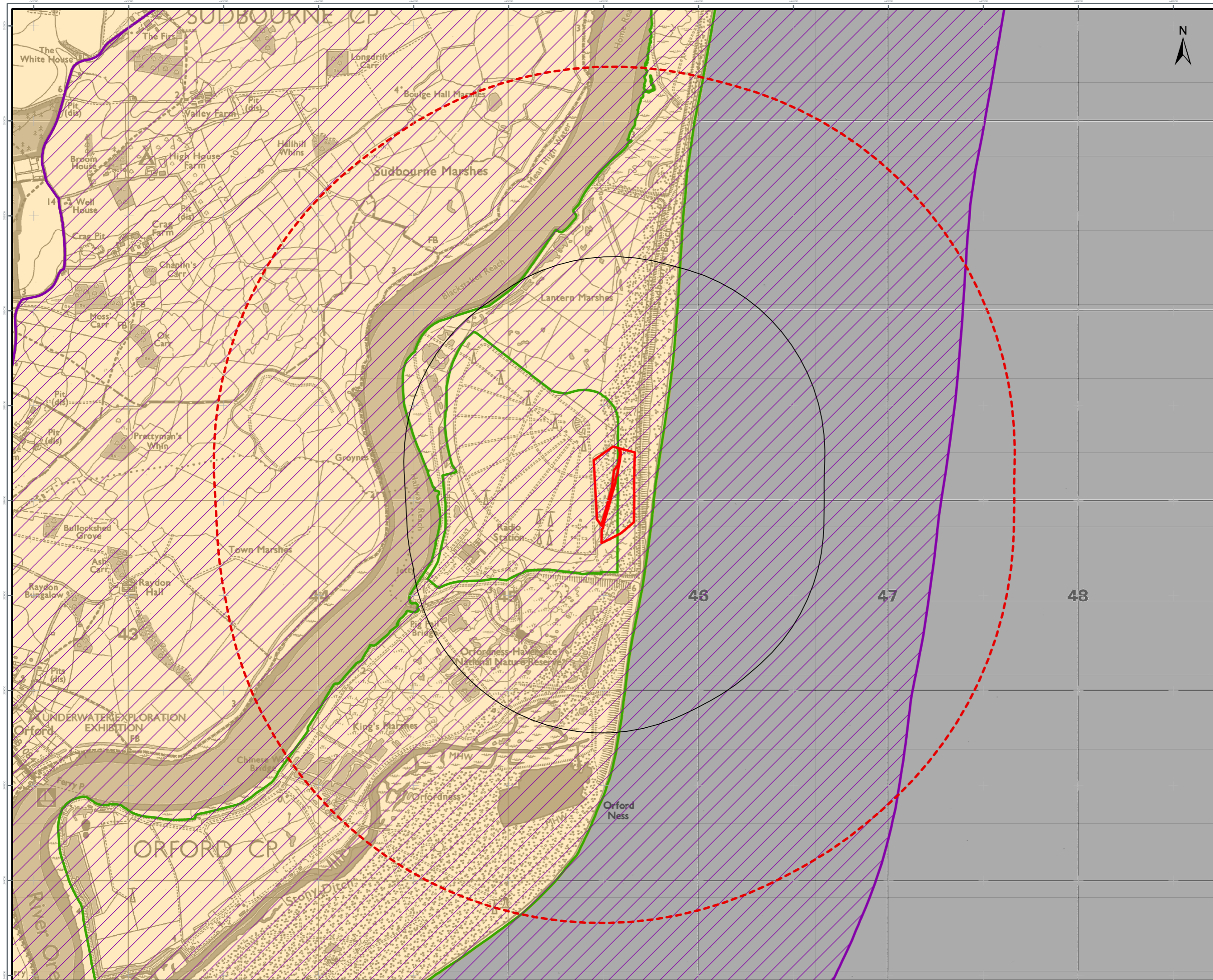
DRAWING TITLE:
**Figure 1
Landscape Character Areas**

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1	21/02/2024	For Information	SH	JP

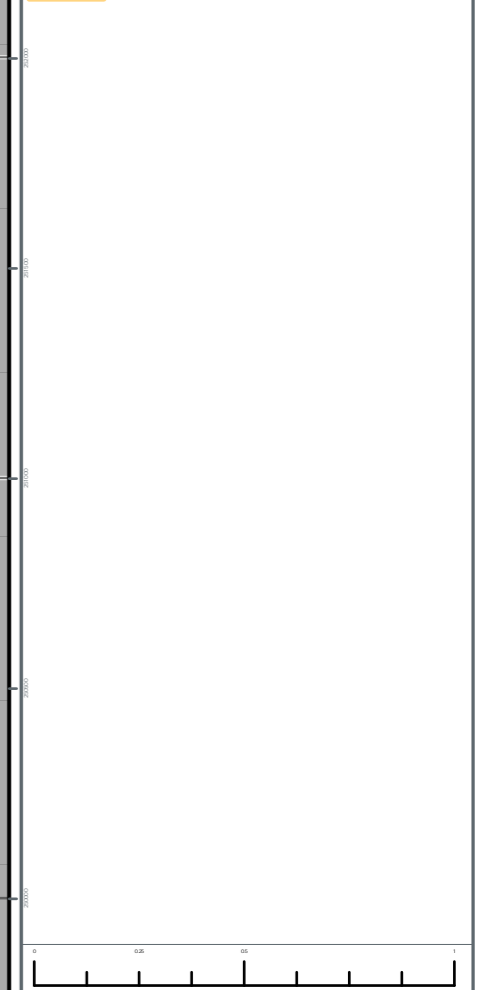
DRAWING NUMBER: 05356.00010.0422.0

Sheet No: 1 of 1
SCALE: 1:10000 PLOT SIZE: A3 DATE: 05/08/2024 PROJECTION: British National Grid





- LEG END**
- Proposed Fence Line
 - 1km Radius
 - 2km Study Area
 - Suffolk Heritage Coast
 - Orfordness-Havergate National Nature Reserve
 - Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Natural Beauty



Data Source:
 Contains UKHO Law of the Sea data © Crown copyright and database right Ordnance Survey data. All rights reserved. License number 0100031673. © Natural England copyright. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right (2024). © Historic England (2024). Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right (2024). The Historic England GIS Data contained in this material was obtained on 08/03/2022. The most publicly available up to date Historic England GIS Data can be obtained from <http://www.HistoricEngland.org.uk>.

PROJECT TITLE:
FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WINDFARM

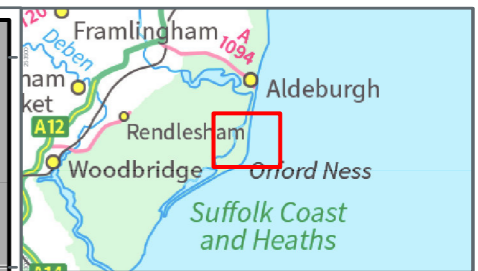
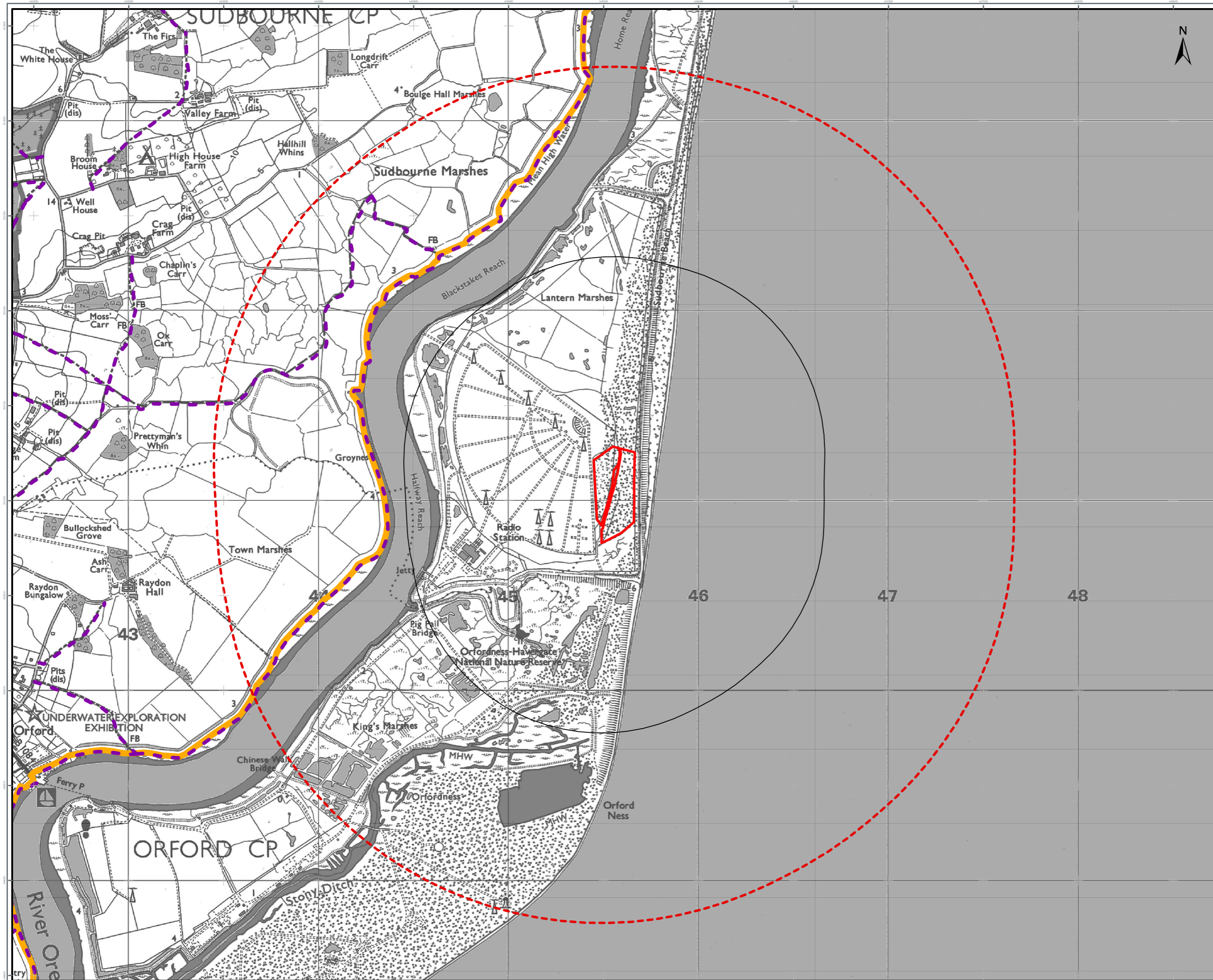
DRAWING TITLE:
**Figure 2
 Landscape Designations**

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1	21/02/2024	For Information	SH	JP

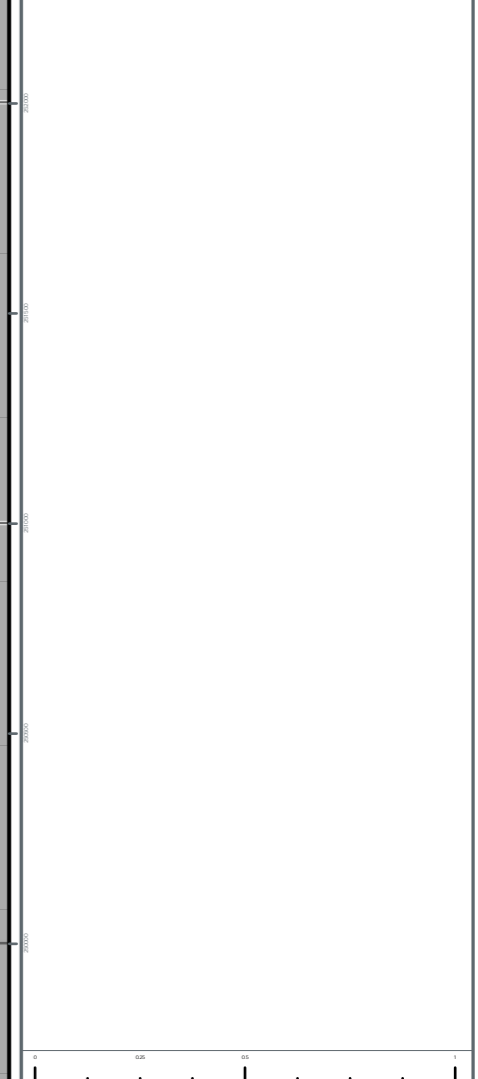
DRAWING NUMBER: 05356.00010.0423.0

Sheet No: 1 of 1
 SCALE: 1:10000 PLOT SIZE: A3 DATE: 05/08/2024 PROJECTION: British National Grid





- LEG END**
- Proposed Fence Line
 - 1km Radius
 - 2km Study Area
 - Public Right of Way
 - England Coastal Path



Data Source: Contains UKHO Law of the Sea data © Crown copyright and database right Ordnance Survey data. All rights reserved. License number 0100031673. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

PROJECT TITLE:
FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WINDFARM

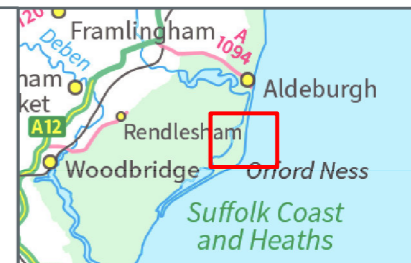
DRAWING TITLE:
Figure 3
Principal Visual Receptors and Viewpoints

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1	27/02/2024	For Information	SH	JP

DRAWING NUMBER: 05356.00010.0424.0

Sheet No: 1 of 1

SCALE: 1:10000 PLOT SIZE: A3 DATA: OSGB 1936 PROJECTION: British National Grid



LEG END

Data Source:
Contains UKHO Law of the Sea data © Crown copyright and database right Ordnance Survey data. All rights reserved. License number 0100031673.

PROJECT TITLE:
FIVE ESTUARIES OFFSHORE WINDFARM

DRAWING TITLE:
**Figure 4
Site Context Photographs**

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1	06/03/2024	For Information	SH	JP

DRAWING NUMBER: 05356.00010.0425.0

Sheet No: 1 of 1
SCALE: PLOT SIZE: A3 DATA: OSG B 1936 PROJECTION: British National Grid





F I V E 
ESTUARIES
OFFSHORE WIND FARM

PHONE 0333 880 5306

EMAIL fiveestuaries@rwe.com

WEBSITE www.fiveestuaries.co.uk

ADDRESS Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Ltd
Windmill Hill Business Park
Whitehill Way, Swindon, SN5 6PB

COMPANY NO Registered in England and Wales
company number 12292474

