Stonestreet Green Solar

Environmental Statement
Volume 4: Appendices
Chapter 8: Landscape and Views
Appendix 8.8: Landscape Effects Table

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APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)
Planning Act 2008
The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

SENSITIVITY					
RECEPTOR	**VALUE**		**SUSCEPTIBILITY**		**SENSITIVITY**
Open Fields	**Low**	A feature that is not designated and dominated by intensive arable farmland and therefore largely monocultural. They are neither rare nor distinctive. However, they contribute to recreation through the presence of multiple Public Rights of Way ('PRoW') and they have positive perceptual aspects insofar as they are open agricultural land, and thus likely to be of value to the local community.	**Medium**	A simple but coherent structure, with some variation (arable and limited areas of pasture). There is potential for the inclusion of appropriate mitigation as part of the type of development proposed, however the overall characteristics of the receptor are also likely to be altered.	**Medium**
Hedgerows	**Medium**	A physical feature that is generally in good condition with a mixture of native species and therefore contributing to ecological value, although fragmented or eroded in places. Whilst they are common undesignated features, some of the Site's hedgerows qualify as Important Hedgerows due to ecological and heritage characteristics. Although this is eroded to a degree by historic loss of hedgerows due to field rationalisation.	**Low**	These features are typically readily retained and reinforced as part of development of the type proposed, although limited hedgerow removal is also likely to provide construction and maintenance access. Furthermore, hedgerows are readily reinstated in accordance with published landscape guidelines. On balance the feature is judged to be of low susceptibility.	**Medium**
Canopy Trees	**Medium**	Common features that are not designated albeit some have been identified as veteran trees. They are likely to be of importance to the local community and they exhibit natural and perceptual qualities and are generally in good condition	**Medium**	A physical feature that is mostly confined to field boundaries and forms an important component in the structure of the landscape. Solar development typically retains field boundary vegetation, however there is also likely to be limited clearance to facilitate access which has the potential to affect trees. In the main, the feature is readily retained as part of development of the type proposed. Furthermore, there is good potential for published guidelines to be applied (i.e. additional tree planting).	**Medium**
Woodland	**Medium-Low**	Small areas of woodland within the Site are undesignated and comprise common components within the landscape. They make a positive contribution to local character and are likely to be valued only at a local level. The Site borders Ancient Woodland at Backhouse Wood Local Wildlife Site ('LWS') (the 15m ancient woodland buffer is within the Site) therefore the value of the receptor as a whole is low-medium.	**Low**	The receptor is limited in coverage of the Site, but where present forms an important element in the structure of the landscape. Due to the limited extent of the receptor and the nature of development proposed, it is highly likely to be retained without altering its integrity as part of the Project. Furthermore, it is likely that this receptor can be enhanced through the application of published guidelines.	**Medium-Low**
The Character of the Site	**Medium**	An undesignated landscape that is primarily formed of common components and characteristics, albeit there are more valued elements (e.g. veteran trees, important hedgerows and views to the North Downs). It is in moderate condition, with erosion of character through historic removal of field boundaries associated with intensively farmed arable fields, together with the negative influence of major transport routes (HS1). However, due to the established network of PRoW, the area provides opportunities for recreation within an open rural environment, and there are local historical/cultural associations within the local landscape (e.g. listed buildings, Roman Road). The Site has some scenic qualities as a result of the undulating and ridgetop landform and distant intervisibility with the Kent Downs NL	**Medium**	The Site has a varied structure and landform, but a simple agricultural pattern and typically monocultural land cover. Development of the type proposed will include mitigation in line with published guidance, however it will also alter the characteristics of the area. On this basis, the receptor is considered to have medium susceptibility.	**Medium**

SENSITIVITY					
RECEPTOR	**VALUE**		**SUSCEPTIBILITY**		**SENSITIVITY**
Landscape Character Area ('LCA') – Aldington Ridge	**Medium**	A landscape area primarily composed of relatively common characteristics although it includes areas of ancient woodland, conservation areas and listed buildings – most notably St Martins Church. The LCA is noted as having strong historical associations and is strongly unified with few visual detractors, however with weak ecological and functional integrity due to sparse tree cover and intensive arable farming. The LCA is not within the Kent Downs NL, and therefore is deemed to have medium value.	**High**	An open, gently elevated agricultural landscape with a strong visual relationship with the North Downs ridgeline, albeit the landform and intervisibility is more notable to the east. Whilst there is potential to include characteristic mitigation in accordance with the published landscape guidance, as the host LCA to the Project, it is of high susceptibility to direct changes that are likely to alter the integrity of the receptor.	**High**
LCA – Old Romney Shoreline Wooded Farmlands	**Medium**	The LCA is in good condition with a strong sense of place, tranquillity and noted ecological integrity, and with cultural and historical associations, although noted as being more fragmented to the east by intensive agriculture. A heavily wooded area with substantial ancient woodland cover, and opportunities for recreation.	**Low**	An extensive area with a variable pattern and gently undulating landform and strong woodland/hedgerow character with inherent strong visual enclosure, resulting in low vulnerability to accommodating development of the type and location proposed.	**Medium**
LCA – Upper Stour Valley	**Low**	An area generally in poor condition with historic fragmentation of vegetation and hedgerows. The LCA is dominated by intensive agricultural and strongly influenced by the HS1 / Network Rail railway line. It includes ancient woodland and listed buildings but otherwise is not designated. There are opportunities for recreation on the PRoW network and an association with the East Stour River, and therefore likely to be valued at a local level.	**Medium**	A very open, flat landscape with a weak pattern and simple composition. There is a strong potential for inclusion of characteristic mitigation as part of the type of development proposed. However, as a host LCA the lack of cover and strong local intervisibility increases vulnerability to development. The severance and intrusion of the railway line, also provides enclosure. On balance the susceptibility is judged to be medium.	**Medium**
NL LCA 2C Postling Scarp and Vale	**Very High**	A nationally designated landscape with high levels of scenic beauty and distinctiveness. An area used for recreation, with the North Downs Way a notable feature.	**Medium**	Considering the location of the Site, approximately 3km from the LCA, and the existing nature of the LCA's setting, including noted influences of existing settlement and infrastructure, the LCA is considered to have some capacity to accommodate solar development within its setting, particularly as the Project is restricted in height and not proposed on the more sensitive vale below the scarp, as noted within the landscape character assessment.	**High**
NL LCA 4C Stour Valley	**Very High**	A nationally designated landscape with high levels of scenic beauty and distinctiveness. An area used for recreation, with the North Downs Way a notable feature.	**Low**	Considering the distance to the Site (over 5km), and the varied nature of the setting of the LCA, with existing settlement in Ashford a notable feature, together with the restricted height of the development type proposed, the setting of the LCA is likely to have capacity to accommodate the Project without altering the overall integrity of the receptor. The main components of the receptor's setting are the cross valley sides of the Stour River to the west and the landscape to the north of the M20, seen to the south. The Site is not within these areas.	**High**
NL LCA 5B Lympne	**Very High**	A nationally designated landscape with high levels of scenic beauty and distinctiveness. An area with cultural and	**Vey Low**	The LCA is primarily characterised by the south facing escarpment and views across the Romney Marshes. The location of the Site and underlying topography, together with the	**Medium**

SENSITIVITY			
RECEPTOR	**VALUE**	**SUSCEPTIBILITY**	**SENSITIVITY**
Greensand Escarpment	historical time depth, particularly as a result of views over the Romney Marshes.	restricted height of the Project is such that the Project is highly unlikely to appreciably alter the setting of the LCA.	

VALUED LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT		
FACTOR	**VALUE**	**NOTES**
Natural heritage	**Low-Medium**	The majority of the Site comprises arable farmland which is mono-cultural with little natural structure or value. Field boundaries are often delineated by hedgerows which are diverse and, in some instances, are identified as Important Hedgerows. Tree cover is limited. Watercourses flow through the Site, however they are not strongly associated with semi-natural habitats and there is little sense of surviving semi-natural habitats within the Site itself. Part of the Site lies on the western extent of the Aldington Ridge, which is a feature of some geomorphological interest.
Cultural heritage	**Low**	There are no designated heritage features within the Site, with a limited number of listed buildings within the site's immediate context. Bank Road/Roman Road runs through the Site, but the Roman road is not designated, primarily an archaeological feature, and with little perceptible positive contribution to the character of the Site experienced by people.
Landscape condition	**Low-Medium**	The Site predominantly comprises large scale arable fields which have been consolidated over time, resulting in some loss and fragmentation of vegetation, albeit remaining hedgerows and field boundary trees are typically in good condition. As an agricultural landscape, the Site is well managed, however intensive agricultural practices have also degraded the landscape over time.
Associations	**Low**	The Site has no notable cultural associations.
Distinctiveness	**Low-Medium**	The Site is primarily composed of common components (e.g. arable farmland, hedgerows, watercourses). Whilst these aspects contribute to the agricultural character of the area, the sense of place or individual identity is not notably strong. The Aldington Ridge is to an extent a distinctive topographical feature, however the Site occupies only the westernmost extent of the ridge which is less pronounced.
Recreational	**Medium**	The Site is well served by a network of PRoW providing opportunities for it to be used by the public for walking. However, there are no recreational opportunities that indicate higher value (e.g. National Trails, Common Land etc).
Perceptual (Scenic)	**Medium**	The Site is open farmland with an extensive network of PRoW which allows open views, including towards the Kent Downs National Landscape. However, there are also detracting features in the HS1 Railway Line and associated infrastructure, as well as overhead power lines. The Site contributes to the sense of an open, simple undulating agricultural landscape, and there are views towards St Martin's Church from a restricted part of the Site.
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquility)	**Low-Medium**	The Site is intensively farmed arable land in the context of the HS1 Railway, the M20 Motorway, Ashford and a number of smaller settlements and there are frequent passing cars on local roads. On this basis, the Site is not perceived as wild or remote. However parts of the Site are relatively tranquil (i.e. peaceful and quiet), and the Site forms part of the Ashford Proposed Dark Skies Area, however as demonstrated by ES Volume 3, Figure 8.10: Night-Time Appraisal Plan (Doc Ref. 5.3), the Site is also considerably influenced by existing artificial light sources.
Functional	**Low-Medium**	The Site includes area of floodplain (Fields 26-29) upstream of the Aldington Flood Alleviation Scheme, and the East Stour River flows along/through the Site from east to west therefore contributing to hydrological function. The Site also has views towards the Kent Downs National Landscape and therefore contributes to a limited degree to the setting and special qualities of the nationally designated landscape. However, the majority of the Site is arable farmland which serves little towards the healthy functioning of the landscape.
Overall Value	**Medium**	Based on the factors set out above and considering the overall weight of evidence, the value of the Site is considered to be medium in that is primarily composed of common components and characteristics. It is not designated (other than the Ashford Proposed Dark Skies Area) but it has some recognisable and positive characteristics and components that contribute to overall character, alongside detractive elements. On this basis, the Site is not considered to be a 'Valued Landscape'.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – OPEN FIELDS					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Extensive	Very Short	Small	A wholesale change across the entirety of the receptor within the Order limits as a result of construction activities progressing across the Site, with the exception of the majority of Fields 26-29 but experienced for a very short duration of 12 months. Construction activities relating to solar PV panel installation will not fundamentally physically change the receptor and changes are reversible. However, construction of the Project Substation, Inverter Stations, Intermediate Substations, water tanks and internal access tracks is likely to be more intense in terms of earthworks and vehicle movements.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Extensive	Very Short	Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Extensive	Medium	Large	A wholesale change to the receptor across the Site, with the exception of the majority of Fields 26-29 with the loss of openness and introduction of built forms across the majority of the Site, on a medium term duration. Changes are largely readily reversible on removal of PV panels, albeit some elements e.g. substation are less readily reversible. Physical changes to the receptor associated with PV panels are limited due to lack of substantial earthworks, however the Project Substation, Inverter Stations, water tanks and internal access tracks will have a greater physical impact on the fields. Fields 26-29 will be largely retained as open fields as well as other smaller areas within the Site (e.g. adjacent to residential properties). Using professional judgement, the effects are considered to be major-moderate adverse due to the extensive footprint of the site and the extent of the receptor across the Site that will be affected.	**Major-Moderate (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Extensive	Medium	Large	At Year 15, establishment of extensive new landscape features including approximately 100 ha of grazing grassland and 56ha of wildflower grassland and the re-establishment of historic hedgerows to break up the field pattern in accordance with published guidance. This will result in an extensive and pronounced improvement in the physical attributes of the receptor from an intensive arable landscape. As such, whilst the impact of the built elements of the Project remain, there are also considered to be a significant benefits to the receptor in terms of the value and condition of the physical feature.	**Moderate (Adverse and Beneficial)**
Decommissioning	Extensive	Very Short	Small	Decommissioning activities will be similar in nature and duration to the construction phase, albeit in the context of an improved landscape receptor as a result of established grassland. Nonetheless, the removal of built features including the Project Substation, Inverter Stations, Intermediate Substations, water tanks and internal access tracks is likely to introduce pronounced physical change to the receptor for the 12-month decommissioning period. As such there will be adverse and beneficial effects.	**Minor (Adverse and Beneficial)**
Decommissioning Residual	Extensive	Very Short	Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Adverse and Beneficial)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – HEDGEROWS					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	The majority of hedgerows will not be affected by construction and decommissioning activities, with limited removal of small sections required to provide access, or to create new PRoW routes. Up to 150m of hedgerow will need to be removed, predominantly to facilitate construction of the internal haulage road across the Site. The removal of hedgerows will be offset by the provision of approximately 5.5km of new native hedgerows within the Site. These temporary changes are unlikely to affect the integrity of the receptor as a whole.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Modest	Medium	Small	The Project includes over 11km of retained hedgerows for reinforcement and approximately 5.5km of new hedgerows, with over 33,000 plants comprising 10 native species. Proposed hedgerows often broadly follow the route of historic hedgerows that have been removed through intensive agricultural practices, and will therefore re-establish landscape patterns. Nonetheless, the contribution of new planting to the quality of the receptor is modest at Year 1.	**Minor (Beneficial)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Extensive	Medium	Large	At Year 15, the establishment of proposed hedgerow planting and creation of new hedgerows, together with enhanced management and reinforcement of existing hedgerows will result in a wholesale improvement in the quality and extent of the receptor.	**Moderate (Beneficial)**
Decommissioning	Extensive	Very Short	Small	During decommissioning, very limited sections of hedgerow will be temporarily removed to provide access during the decommissioning period. However, in the context of extensive improvements to the network of hedgerows, these removals will not be appreciable against the beneficial impact of the established planting strategy.	**Minor (Beneficial)**
Decommissioning Residual	Extensive	Very Short	Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Beneficial)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – CANOPY TREES					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	As set out on the tree protection plans included in the **ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.3: Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Doc Ref. 5.4)**, a limited number of trees will be removed as part of the construction of the Project. In the context of the existing extent of vegetation within the Site, the extent of removal will be barely perceptible and no trees classed as veteran trees will be removed.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Modest	Medium	Small	The Project includes the planting of 264 orchard trees, as well as over 374 individual wetland trees along the East Stour River and 128 new native hedgerow trees. Tree planting along the river includes rare native black poplar and willow, and amounts to a substantial increase in tree numbers within the Site. While trees are to be planted as feathered stock to an initial height of 2m, the contribution of new planting to beneficial change is limited until established. On balance, this change will result in a modest improvement in the receptor as a whole at Year 1.	**Minor (Beneficial)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Extensive	Medium	Large	Following establishment of proposed planting as part of a Site-wide landscape strategy, the quality and quantity of this receptor across the Site will be considerably improved, with native wetland canopy trees improving the legibility and habitat value of the East Stour River. Enhanced management of the existing landscape features will also lead to beneficial long term effects.	**Moderate (Beneficial)**
Decommissioning	Extensive	Very Short	Small	No trees are expected to be removed during the decommissioning stage, with all existing and proposed planting protected. As such the effect will remain beneficial as a result of the established landscape strategy.	**Minor (Beneficial)**
Decommissioning Residual	Extensive	Very Short	Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Beneficial)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – WOODLAND					
Medium-Low Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	None	None	None	Existing woodland will not be removed during construction and will be protected in as set out in the accordance with measures set out in the **Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.8)**.	**Nil**
Construction Residual	None	None	None	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Nil**
Operation (Year 1)	Modest	Medium	Small	The Project includes approximately 11,000 woodland plants including proposed woodland belts along Calleywell Lane, the East Stour River and around the proposed substation in Field 26. Landscape proposals also include new woodland and shrub planting to the margins of existing woodland (including ancient woodland at Backhouse Wood LWS). However, at Year 1, the planting is unlikely to strongly contribute to an improvement in the receptor with a resultant modest scale of impact until established.	**Negligible–Minor (Beneficial)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Ample	Medium	Medium	At Year 15, proposed woodland and native woodland margin planting will have established and will form part of an extensive Site-wide landscape enhancement, with a resultant noticeable improvement in the quantity and quality of the receptor at a Site level.	**Minor–Moderate (Beneficial)**
Decommissioning	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	Existing and proposed woodland will be protected during the decommissioning stage in accordance with measures secured through the **Outline DEMP (Doc Ref. 7.12)**. As such, the effect at this stage will be beneficial as a result of the established mitigation strategy.	**Negligible (Beneficial)**
Decommissioning Residual	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Beneficial)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – THE CHARACTER OF THE SITE					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Extensive	Very Short	Small	Construction activities, including plant/vehicle movements on local roads will have a strong influence on the character of the Site for a very short duration of 12 months, due to the presence of construction activities and emergence of built form. Construction of PV panels will have a limited physical impact on the fabric landscape due to their relatively non-invasive construction method. However the construction of the Project Substation, Inverter Stations, Intermediate Substations, water tanks and internal access roads is likely to be more intense due to earthworks and construction of structures of a more permanent character. The character of the Site will be strongly affected by construction activities for the 12 month period and the receptor is likely to experience wholesale change across the Site.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Extensive	Very Short	Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Extensive	Medium	Large	At Year 1, the character of the Site will experience wholesale change from a simple agricultural character to a solar farm, with reduction in openness as well as the physical changes introduced by the Project. These effects are limited to an extent by substantial buffers and areas for landscape improvements (Fields 26-29), as well as the nature of solar development in general (i.e. restricted height, visual permeability and reversibility). Furthermore, the pattern and underlying character of the landscape will remain legible due to retention/reinforcement of landscape features. Using professional judgement, the effects are considered to be major-moderate adverse due to the extensive footprint of the Site and the extent of the Site over which changes would be introduced.	**Major–Moderate (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Ample	Medium	Medium	Following establishment of the comprehensive landscape proposals, including grassland across the Site in place of intensive arable use, reinstatement and reinforcements of hedgerows, extensive woodland and scrub and individual canopy trees, the Site will be subject to considerable improvements that will integrate proposed built elements to an extent. Key characteristics will be restored and published landscape character guidance will be implemented alongside the continued negative impact of built elements. Notwithstanding the above, the character of the Site will be altered as a result of the introduction of built development. As such there will be a combination of adverse and beneficial effects at Year 15.	**Moderate (Adverse and Beneficial)**
Decommissioning	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	The proposed landscape strategy will have had the benefit of 40 years of establishment at the time decommissioning takes place. As such, the Site will be more enclosed by vegetation, reducing the potential for the activities to be perceived. Furthermore, the substantial enhancements to the character of the Site will remain in place (i.e. proposed hedgerows, canopy trees and woodland), and are considered to balance the adverse short term effects of decommissioning activities, resulting in a negligible (neutral) effect overall.	**Negligible (Neutral)**
Decommissioning Residual	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Neutral)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – LCA ALDINGTON RIDGE					
High Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	Construction activities will result in direct effects on the LCA, reducing tranquillity and altering the agricultural character for a very short duration. However, considering the scale of the LCA in comparison to the Site, and the range of activities already occurring within the LCA (such as those relating to agriculture), the effects of construction are likely to be barely perceptible.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Ample	Medium	Medium	The Project will occupy a relatively small proportion of the LCA, resulting in direct effects. However, the location of the Site on the elevated ridgeline is such that changes will be perceived across a wider area. The physical changes to the LCA are predominantly limited in scale and reversible. There will be some interruption of the relationship with the Kent Downs NL from within the LCA and open views generally, but it will retain its underlying structure as an agricultural landscape, including through continued grazing of the Site. Furthermore, the majority of the LCA (i.e. the more elevated ridgeline to the east of the Site) will remain unchanged with little intervisibility with the Project. The provision of the open field to the west of Field 12, with diverted PRoW AE370 and a seating area creates opportunities for public enjoyment of views to the North Downs.	**Moderate (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Modest / Ample	Medium	Small / Medium	At Year 15, following establishment of proposed vegetation, whilst the magnitude of effects is likely to remain the same, there will be a greater influence of positive and characteristic features including tree and shrub planting, recreation of historic field boundaries, ponds and other ecological features. This will both temper the perception of adverse change and introduce beneficial physical changes in line with landscape character guidance. On this basis the scale of change will reduce and there will be a combination of adverse and beneficial effects.	**Moderate (Adverse and Beneficial)**
Decommissioning	Modest	Very Short	Very Small	Decommissioning activities will occur on a very short term basis, with enhanced containment as a result of the established landscape framework. Nonetheless, the change will physically alter a discrete part of the receptor.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Decommissioning Residual	Modest	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Minor (Adverse)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – LCA OLD ROMNEY SHORELINE WOODED FARMLANDS					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	Construction activities will result in direct effects on the LCA, reducing tranquillity and altering the agricultural character for a limited duration. However, considering the scale of the LCA in comparison to the Site, and the range of activities already occurring within the LCA (such as those relating to agriculture), the effects of construction are likely to be barely perceptible.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Compact	Medium	Very Small	A very small extent of the north-eastern fringe of the LCA will be affected by the Project, where the key characteristics of the LCA are not strongly legible (e.g. distinctive ridges and large broadleaf woodlands), and unlikely to be compromised by the Project. Physical changes to the LCA are very limited and reversible, and the extent to which the Project will be perceived in the landscape is also limited by reduced intervisibility.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Compact	Medium	Very Small	Year 15 effects will remain as identified at Year 1 due to the limited extent of the Site and therefore limited extent of mitigation measures contained within this small area.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Decommissioning	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	The effects will be similar to those identified for the construction phase.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Decommissioning Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Adverse)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – LCA UPPER STOUR VALLEY					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	Construction activities will result in direct effects on a limited proportion of the LCA, with adverse physical and perceptual change for a very short term duration. This will include the construction of the Project Substation, as well as the Grid Connection Route. Due to the open nature of the LCA to the west of Station Road, these impacts, including those in the Aldington Ridge LCA will have a wider indirect influence.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Ample	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Ample - Modest	Medium	Medium - Small	The Project will occupy a relatively small proportion of the LCA. However, the open, valley floor landform is such that changes will be perceived across a wider area, particularly to the north-west towards The Forstal. The direct physical changes to the LCA are mostly of a limited nature and reversible, notwithstanding the presence of the Project Substation adjacent to the HS1 / Network Rail railway line. Limited physical impacts on the fabric of the landscape and the LCA will retain its underlying structure as an agricultural landscape, including through the potential for continued grazing of the Site. Furthermore, the retention of Fields 26-29 for landscape/habitat improvements and the lack of landscape impact from the underground grid connection route during the operational phase reduces the extent of the LCA affected.	**Moderate-Minor (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Modest	Medium	Small	At Year 15, following establishment of proposed vegetation, whilst the magnitude of effects is likely to remain the same, there will be a greater influence of positive and characteristic features including wetland habitat features and native tree planting along the East Stour River. Furthermore, the provision of a diverted PRoW along the East Stour River will aid the legibility of the watercourse and the established landscape of Field 26-29 with proposed PRoW providing new recreational value. As such, the Year 15 significance is considered to be Minor Neutral, on balance.	**Minor (Neutral)**
Decommissioning	Modest	Very Short	Very Small	Decommissioning activities will occur on a very short term basis, with enhanced containment as a result of the established landscape framework. The change will physically alter a discrete part of the receptor and will be in the context of the landscape strategy established over a 40 year period and is therefore judged to be neutral.	**Negligible (Neutral)**
Decommissioning Residual	Modest	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Neutral)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – NL LCA 2C POSTLING SCARP AND VALE					
High Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	The Site is located approximately 3km at its closest point, as such there are no direct effects arising with only indirect effects as a result of changes to the distant setting of the LCA. Distant partial views of the Site are possible, however only the uppermost parts of the Project (on the Aldington Ridge) are visible from the elevated North Downs ridge (e.g. VP 35). These views are at a range of over 6.8km, making the Project difficult to perceive in the context of wide panoramic views of an expansive landscape that includes large areas of settlement and distant views of wind turbines in the Romney Marshes. The Project is likely to affect some views back towards the LCA from within the Site from the PRoW network on the Aldington Ridge, however these are in limited locations (small sections of PRoW AE370, AE445 and AE474) and are local to the Site. Therefore, the effect on views to the North Downs ridgeline from the overall setting of the LCA is minimal and the Project will not affect the undulating vale landscape that sits between the M20 and the LCA, or the more elevated parts of the Aldington Ridge to the east of Goldwell Lane, which have a stronger sense of intervisibility with the LCA. Furthermore, the rerouting of PRoW AE370 through an open field to the west of Field 12 and the provision of a seating area will provide new enhanced opportunities for the public to enjoy views towards the North Downs from the Aldington Ridge. With respect to views from PRoW AE474, there will be relatively open views of solar PV in Field 20, until proposed hedgerows establish, which will have an adverse effect on views towards Tolsford Hill from approximately 40m of the PRoW. On this basis, the indirect changes to the character of the LCA are judged to be limited during construction, decommissioning and year 15 of operation. The changes in the setting of the LCA are judged to be perceptible at Year 1 of operation due to the presence of solar PV in views towards the North Downs from within the Site, however using professional judgement, due to the limited scale of change likely to be perceived from this location the effect is judged to be minor-moderate and not significant.	**Minor (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Minor (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Compact - Modest	Medium	Small		**Minor-Moderate (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Compact	Medium	Very Small		**Minor (Adverse)**
Decommissioning	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Minor (Adverse)**
Decommissioning Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Minor (Adverse)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – NL LCA 4C STOUR VALLEY					
High Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	Whilst the Site is theoretically perceptible from the LCA at a minimum distance of 5.5km, it is likely to be virtually imperceptible in real terms. The Project will not affect the immediate setting of the LCA, including the valley sides of the Stour – noted in the summary characteristics of the landscape character assessment. Only a very limited portion of the Site (the uppermost parts of the Aldington Ridge) are theoretically visible, and forms a very small component within dramatic long distance views over a settled landscape. With respect to views towards the Kent Downs NL, the Project will not truncate any existing views of the Wye Crown, which is too distant to identify from the Site. Whilst there are parts of the Site where existing distant views of the LCA are likely to be partly truncated by new built form (e.g. VP 2 and small sections of PRoW AE370, AE445), these are in limited locations and are not highly valued views (e.g. not from a designated landscape). The impact on views to the North Downs ridge from the overall setting of the LCA is minimal. Furthermore, the mitigation strategy, including the rerouting of PRoW AE370 through an open field to the west of Field 12 and the provision of a seating area will provide new enhanced opportunities for the public to enjoy views towards the North Downs from the Aldington Ridge. The changes are not located within the landscape to the north of Ashford, which has a stronger sense of intervisibility with the LCA (as noted in the Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020). Therefore, the impact on the wider perception of the North Downs ridgeline within the LCA ridgeline from its setting is limited, and is unlikely to be virtually imperceptible. On this basis, applying professional judgement, whilst the Project is likely to be theoretically visible within the setting of the LCA, the intervening distance and location of the Site is such that effects at all stages are judged to be negligible and neutral.	**Negligible (Neutral)**
Construction Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Negligible (Neutral)**
Operation (Year 1)	Compact	Medium	Very Small		**Negligible (Neutral)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Negligible (Neutral)**
Decommissioning	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Negligible (Neutral)**
Decommissioning Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small		**Negligible (Neutral)**

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS – NL LCA 5B LYMPNE GREENSAND ESCARPMENT					
Medium Sensitivity					
ASSESSMENT PHASE	**SCALE**	**DURATION**	**MAGNITUDE**	**NOTES**	**SIGNIFICANCE**
Construction	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	The Project will not directly affect the LCA and there is very limited intervisibility – only in the LCA's north-easternmost extent (VP 28). The Project will not affect the Romney Marshes, or interrupt the relationship between the LCA and the North Downs ridgeline to the north. Whilst construction activities will be perceptible in Field 20, resulting in indirect effects on the setting of the LCA, these effects will be experienced at a distance of over 300m in the context of existing overhead power lines.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Construction Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation (Year 1)	Compact	Medium	Very Small	At Year 1, a very limited part of the Project in Field 20 is likely to be perceptible beyond intervening existing vegetation, from a very small part of the LCA. The majority of the LCA and its key characteristics will not be affected by the Project.	**Negligible (Adverse)**
Operation Residual (Year 15)	Compact	Medium	Very Small	At Year 15 following establishment of proposed mitigation including tall native hedgerows and trees on the southern boundary of Field 20, the Project is unlikely to be readily perceptible and the effect on the setting of the LCA will be neutral.	**Negligible (Neutral)**
Decommissioning	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	Considering the enhanced enclosure of the Site likely to be in place during the decommissioning phase, the effect on the setting of the LCA will be minimal and, considering the very short duration, is judged to be neutral.	**Negligible (Neutral)**
Decommissioning Residual	Compact	Very Short	Very Small	No further mitigation is proposed, therefore the effects will remain as set out above.	**Negligible (Neutral)**

SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS							
RECEPTOR	**SENSITIVITY**	**LANDSCAPE EFFECTS**					
		CONSTRUCTION	**CONSTRUCTION RESIDUAL**	**OPERATION (YEAR 1)**	**OPERATION RESIDUAL (YEAR 15)**	**DECOMMISSIONING**	**DECOMMISSIONING RESIDUAL**
Open Fields	Medium	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)	Major-Moderate (Adverse)	Moderate (Adverse and Beneficial)	Minor (Adverse and Beneficial)	Minor (Adverse and Beneficial)
Hedgerows	Medium	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Minor (Beneficial)	Moderate (Beneficial)	Minor (Beneficial)	Minor (Beneficial)
Canopy Trees	Medium	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Minor (Beneficial)	Moderate (Beneficial)	Minor (Beneficial)	Minor (Beneficial)
Woodland	Medium-Low	Nil	Nil	Negligible–Minor (Beneficial)	Minor–Moderate (Beneficial)	Negligible (Beneficial)	Negligible (Beneficial)
The Character of the Site	Medium	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)	Major–Moderate (Adverse)	Moderate (Adverse and Beneficial)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)
Landscape Character Area ('LCA') – Aldington Ridge	High	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)	Moderate (Adverse)	Moderate (Adverse and Beneficial)	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)
LCA – Old Romney Shoreline Wooded Farmlands	Medium	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)
LCA – Upper Stour Valley	Medium	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Moderate-Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)
NL LCA 2C Postling Scarp and Vale	High	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)	Minor-Moderate (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)	Minor (Adverse)
NL LCA 4C Stour Valley	High	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)
NL LCA 5B Lympne Greensand Escarpment	Medium	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Adverse)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)	Negligible (Neutral)
Boxes shaded grey denote effects considered significant for EIA purposes.							

Assessment Glossary of Terms (refer to ES Volume 4, Appendix 8.2: LVIA Methodology (Doc Ref 5.4) for a description of the criteria applied in the tables in this appendix)

Value of the receptor: Very Low, Low, Medium, High or Very High

Susceptibility of the receptor: Very Low, Low, Medium, High or Very High

Sensitivity of the receptor: Very Low, Low, Medium, High or Very High

Scale of the effect: None, Compact, Modest, Ample or Extensive

Duration of the effect: None, Very Short, Short, Medium or Long

Magnitude of the effect: None, Very Small, Small, Medium or Large

Significance of the effect: Nil, Negligible, Minor, Moderate or Major

Balance of the effect: Adverse, Neutral or Beneficial