BT-NG-020621-545-0078

Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement

Volume 6: Environmental Information

Document 6.3.6.5: ES Appendix 6.5 – Assessment of Visual Effects on Communities

Final Issue A
April 2023

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN020002

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

nationalgrid

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (here on referred to as National Grid) is making an application for development consent to reinforce the transmission network between Bramford Substation in Suffolk, and Twinstead Tee in Essex. The Bramford to Twinstead Reinforcement ('the project') would be achieved by the construction and operation of a new electricity transmission line over a distance of approximately 29km comprising of overhead lines, underground cables and grid supply point substation. It also includes the removal of 25km of the existing distribution network and various ancillary works.

1.1.2 The reinforcement would include approximately 18km of overhead line (consisting of approximately 50 new pylons, and conductors). It is assumed that this reinforcement would operate at least 400kV in a similar way to the majority of the rest of the transmission network. For the purposes of this report, the new overhead line is referenced as 'proposed 400kV overhead line' to differentiate it from the existing 400kV overhead line and the UK Power Networks owned 132kV overhead line.

1.1.3 For a full description of the project reference should be made to Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 4: Project Description (**application document 6.2.4**).

1.1.4 This assessment of the visual effects on communities has been produced to support the application for development consent and the accompanying ES under the Planning Act 2008. It should be read in conjunction with the following ES documents:

- Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual (**application document 6.2.6**);
- Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**);
- Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** to **6.3.6.4.7**); and
- Figure 6.6: Visual Receptors and Viewpoints (**application document 6.4**).

1.1.5 The assessment presented in this appendix is based on the Proposed Alignment shown on ES Figure 4.1: The Project (**application document 6.4**). As this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, National Grid is seeking consent for horizontal and vertical Limits of Deviation (LoD) within which the final alignment would lie. Consideration has been given to the potential for effects to be of greater significance should any of the permanent or temporary infrastructure elements be moved within the LoD or Order Limits.

1.1.6 The assumptions made regarding the use of flexibility for the assessment, and any alternative assumptions, are set out in Section 6.11 in Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual (**application document 6.2.6**).

1.2 Structure of this Report

1.2.1 The report follows the structure shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 – Structure of this Report

Chapter	Content
1: Introduction	Introduction, methodology and scope of the assessment (this chapter)
2. Community Area Assessments	Assessments of each community area alphabetically
3. Conclusion	A summary of the effects

1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 The community area assessment follows the approach set out in ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**). In summary it considers the following, in relation to each community area:

- Landscape sensitivity (taking into consideration landscape value and susceptibility);
- Assessment of magnitude of change; and
- Significance of landscape effects.

Study Area

1.3.2 The Study Area for the assessment is shown on ES Figure 6.1: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Study Area and Landscape Designations (**application document 6.4**) and extends to 5km from the Order Limits. This distance was determined by the nature of the surrounding environment, the physical scale of the proposals and the likely distance over which they would be sufficiently visible to give rise to significant effects. It was also informed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) plans presented on Figures 6.7 to 6.13 (**application document 6.4**).

Baseline

1.3.3 Background information provided for each community area includes the baseline description of the landscape, including a judgement on the value of the overall visual amenity.

1.3.4 The baseline description is drawn from an extensive review of published information including the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (Suffolk County Council, 2011a), Essex Landscape Character Assessment (Essex County Council, 2003), local landscape assessments (for example, neighbourhood plans and village design statements), Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, Google Earth Pro, Google Streetview, and extensive field survey. This information was supported by baseline information from the other EIA disciplines, notably ES Chapter 7: Biodiversity (**application document 6.2.7**) and ES Chapter 8: Historic Environment (**application document 6.2.8**). All the desk-based information was verified during the site surveys.

1.3.5 Representative viewpoints are referenced where appropriate to support the assessment, and these can be found in ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** to **6.3.6.4.7**). It should be emphasised that the assessment considers the general visual amenity experienced by people living and moving around their community. Conclusions for the individual viewpoints may be different (and in some

cases may be higher) as they have assessed the effects of the project on very specific views rather than a more generalised geographic area.

Assessment of Sensitivity

1.3.6 The assessment of the sensitivity of the community area to the project is based on the judgements for visual value and the susceptibility of receptors in accordance with the methodology in Section 2 of ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**).

Assessment of Magnitude of Change

1.3.7 The assessed magnitude of likely change to views experienced by people living and moving about the community area takes into consideration judgements on the anticipated size/scale of effect and the geographical area as per the methodology in Section 2 of ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**). These judgements are reported for construction, operation – Year 1, and operation – Year 15. Where relevant, reference is made to viewpoint locations. For further information on viewpoints including baseline photography and wirelines, refer to ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** to **6.3.6.4.7**).

Overall Assessment of Effects

1.3.8 Judgements on the significance of the effects on each community area as a result of the project take account of the overall judgements on sensitivity and magnitude of change as explained in the methodology in Section 2 of ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**). These judgements are reported for construction, operation – Year 1, and operation – Year 15 and effects are ultimately highlighted as 'significant' or 'not significant'. The judgements also consider the following measures which are included in the design of the project:

- Hedgerow, tree and shrub reinstatement as shown on the Vegetation Reinstatement Plans in Appendix B of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) (**application document 7.8.2**); and
- Embedded measures including planting around the cable sealing end (CSE) compounds and planted mounds around the grid supply point (GSP) substation as described in the Register of Environmental Actions and Commitments (REAC) (**application document 7.5.2**).

1.3.9 The assessment presented in this document assumes that these measures are in place.

1.3.10 In addition, there are some locations where additional mitigation is proposed for specific purposes, such as to avoid or reduce a significant effect for biodiversity. The additional mitigation is shown on ES Figure 16.1: Embedded Measures and Mitigation Proposals (**application document 6.4**).

1.3.11 The following areas of mitigation are included in the assessment even though they are not a response to significant visual effects. This is because these areas are large enough to have a noticeable effect on views by Year 15:

- New woodland planting between Wolves Wood and Ramsey Wood (MM09); and
- New woodland planting south-east of Ramsay Wood (MM10).

1.3.12 There are a number of additional areas of planting identified for landscape softening. These are not additional mitigation (identified to offset a significant landscape or visual effect) but have been identified during the assessment of visual effects on communities as areas to help soften the effects of the project for specific visual receptors. The landscape softening would be discussed with the relevant landowners, who may choose to decline the landscape softening proposals. Most of these measures consist of short sections of linear woodland or hedgerow planting. These softening measures are considered in the Year 15 assessment for Alphamstone, Assington, Bramford, Bures St Mary, Burstall, Hadleigh, Hintlesham, Layham, Leavenheath, Polstead, and Shelley.

1.4 Scope of Assessment

1.4.1 For the purposes of this assessment, the 5km study area defined in ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**) was divided into 84 community areas, 57 within Suffolk and 29 within Essex. These were based on the boundaries of the 86 parishes shown in ES Figure 6.6: Visual Receptors and Viewpoints (**application document 6.4**). For the purposes of the assessment, the parishes of Great Henny and Little Henny, and Wenham Magma and Wenham Parva were combined into single community areas. These cover a wider area than just the main settlements in order to identify potentially significant effects of the project on the general visual amenity experienced by people living and moving about community.

1.4.2 The results of an initial screening exercise are set out in Table 1.2. The table identifies the community areas which would potentially experience significant visual effects and which are then taken forward for assessment. It also identifies those community areas which are very unlikely to experience significant effects and the reason why they have therefore not been taken forward for assessment. The screening was informed by a desk based assessment of Google Earth Pro, the ZTV (ES Figures 6.7 to 6.13 in **application document 6.4**), the viewpoint assessment at ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** to **6.3.6.4.7**) and field survey.

1.4.3 All the community areas which are screened out of the assessment are wholly or partially within the 5km study area. They may also be identified in the ZTV (ES Figures 6.7 to 6.13 (**application document 6.4**)) as being potentially intervisible with the project. However, the screening exercise considered it highly unlikely that they would experience significant effects. This is partly because of the intervening vegetation (only the large woodlands are picked up in the ZTV) and partly because of the distance. The latter is explained by ES Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology (**application document 6.3.6.1**).

1.4.4 To ensure that significant effects are not overlooked, the visual assessment is based on a 5km study area, but the emphasis of the assessment is on receptors within 3km, which is where significant effects are more likely to occur. This is because at 3km distance, a 50m tall pylon will appear to be approximately 10.2mm high in the landscape (Gillespies, 2014). This reduces to 7.6mm at 4km and 6.1mm at 5km distance. The presence of pylons in the view beyond 3km is therefore highly unlikely to give rise to a significant effect.

Table 1.2 – Community Areas

Community Name	Reason
Akenham	ZTV shows no potential for intervisibility with the project. Not included in the assessment.
Aldham	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment.**
Alphamstone	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment.**
Assington	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment.**
Barham	ZTV shows no potential for intervisibility with the project. Not included in the assessment.
Baylham	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not therefore included in the assessment.
Belchamp Otten	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment.
Belchamp Water	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Belstead	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Bentley	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Borley	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 5km. Not included in the assessment.
Boxford	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment.**
Boxted	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Bramford	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Bulmer	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Bures Hamlet	Potential for limited intervisibility but high intervening tree coverage and distance (over 2.5km) means that significant effects are unlikely. Not included in the assessment.
Bures St Mary	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Burstall	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Capel St Mary	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Castle Hedingham	ZTV shows very limited potential intervisibility. Not included in the assessment.
Chattisham	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.

Community Name	Reason
Chilton	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in assessment.
Claydon	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Colne Engine	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Copdock and Washbrook	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
East Bergholt	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not therefore included in the assessment.
Edwardstone	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment.
Elmsett	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Flowton	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Gestingthorpe	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Great Blakenham	ZTV shows very limited potential for intervisibility. Not included in the assessment.
Great Cornard	At 2km distant, the taller components of the project may be perceptible but the effect on visual amenity would not be significant. Construction vehicles would use Shawlands Avenue, Head Lane and the B1508, which introduce some additional visual and noise disturbance but this would be in the urban context and would not result in significant effects. Not included in the assessment.
Great Henny and Little Henny	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Great Horkesley	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not therefore included in the assessment.
Great Maplestead	ZTV shows very limited potential for intervisibility. Not included in the assessment.
Great Waldingfield	ZTV shows very limited potential for intervisibility. Not included in the assessment.
Great Yeldham	ZTV shows very limited potential for intervisibility. Not included in the assessment.
Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural	ZTV shows very limited potential for intervisibility. Not included in the assessment.
Groton	Potential for limited intervisibility but high intervening tree coverage and distance (over 2.5km) means that significant effects are unlikely. Not included in the assessment
Hadleigh	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Halstead	ZTV shows very limited potential for intervisibility. Not included in the assessment

Community Name	Reason
Higham	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Hintlesham	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Holton St Mary	Potential for limited intervisibility but high intervening tree coverage and distance (over 2.5km) means that significant effects are unlikely. Not included in the assessment.
Ipswich	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Kersey	Potential for limited intervisibility but high intervening tree coverage and distance (over 2km) means that significant effects are unlikely. Not included in the assessment
Lamarsh	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Layham	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Leavenheath	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Lindsey	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Little Blakenham	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Little Cornard	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Little Horkesley	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Little Maplestead	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Little Yeldham	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Middleton	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Mount Bures	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Nayland-with-Wissington	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Nedging-with-Naughton	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment
Newton	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Nettlestead	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Offton	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment

Community Name	Reason
Pebmarsh	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Pinewood	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Polstead	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Raydon	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Semer	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment
Shelley	On edge of Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Sible Hedingham	ZTV shows no potential intervisibility with the project. Not included in the assessment
Somersham	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Sproughton	On edge of Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Stoke-by-Nayland	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Stratford St Mary	ZTV shows no potential for intervisibility with the project. Not included in the assessment
Sudbury	Limited potential for intervisibility at over 3km. Construction vehicles would use the A131 and A134, which would introduce some additional visual and noise disturbance but this would be in the urban context and would not result in significant effects. Not included in the assessment
Twinstead	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Wakes Colne	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Wenham	ZTV shows potential for intervisibility with the project. **Included in the assessment**.
Whatfield	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment
Wherstead	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment
White Colne	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment
Whitton	Limited potential for intervisibility and would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment
Wickham St Paul	Within the Order Limits. **Included in the assessment**.
Willisham	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 4km. Not included in the assessment

Community Name	Reason
Wormingford	Potential for intervisibility but would not experience significant effects from the project at over 3km. Not included in the assessment

1.4.5 The preliminary screening set out in Table 1.2 identified 35 community areas where their visual amenity has the potential to be significantly affected by the project. These are shown on ES Figure 6.6: Visual Receptors and Viewpoints (**application document 6.4**).

2. Community Area Assessments

2.1 Aldham

Description of Community Area

2.1.1 Aldham community area lies to the east of the study area and north of the A1071 near Hadleigh. It contains the small village of Aldham and a cluster of dwellings at Red Hill and around the junction with Cosford Road. Further west along the Street is a cluster of historic buildings including the Grade II listed Aldham Hall and St Mary's Church, which is Grade I listed. The surrounding farmland contains several small groups of dwellings often clustered around historic farmsteads. These are connected by rural lanes and a small Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network. The eastern and western parts of the community area fall within the Gipping Valley SLA and Brett Valley SLA respectively.

2.1.2 As described in the Aldham Neighbourhood Plan (Aldham Parish Council, 2020), Aldham is a small linear village which has developed along The Street, a minor road without street lighting or footways. It displays a mix of historic and modern buildings and is rural in character with a relatively remote quality.

2.1.3 The gently rolling arable farmland across the central and eastern part of the community area is located on the higher land of the plateau and is characterised by large arable fields bordered by low intermittent hedgerows, creating a large-scale, open quality with long views across the surrounding countryside. To the south-east of the area is Wolves Wood. This large block of semi-natural ancient woodland forms part of Hintlesham Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is also a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) nature reserve. Aldham Park Wood and Corn Hatches Grove are small blocks of semi-natural ancient woodland, but otherwise woodland is scarce and this contributes to the openness and sense of remoteness experienced in this part of the community area.

2.1.4 Across the western part of the community area, tributaries of the River Brett have created an area of more strongly rolling farmland with steeper slopes along the valley sides. The mainly arable fields are smaller than those on the plateau to the east and there is a higher coverage of hedgerows with trees, and small woodlands.

2.1.5 The elevated plateau affords some long views to the south-east where the existing 400kV overhead line can be seen on the skyline. The top of occasional pylons on the more distant 132kV overhead line can also be discerned from some locations but are often obscured by the intervening landform and vegetation.

2.1.6 Proximity to the north-eastern edge of Hadleigh has influenced the composition and character of the rural farmland resulting in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.1.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.30 – View from PRoW at Aldham Priory; and
- AB2.34 – View from The Street to the north of Aldham.

2.1.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.1.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the new 400kV overhead line which would cross the farmland some 600m to the south.

Table 2.1 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Aldham

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.30	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB2.34	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.1.10 Views towards construction activities outside this community area would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. There may be glimpsed views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for constructing the new 400kV overhead line, but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. No ground level construction would be visible. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along temporary access routes south of Wolves Wood and along the A1071 in the neighbouring community area would introduce some visual disturbance into the farmland but this would be in the context of current traffic movements along the A1071.

2.1.11 The works would result in a small size/scale of change in views and affect a small geographical area.

2.1.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.1.13 The new 400kV overhead line to the south-east of this community area, including the section of line which passes around Ramsey Wood, would be visible in southerly mid to long-range views from the more elevated and open parts of the community area, although there would be localised screening by landform and vegetation, including the large Wolves Wood. Due to the distance, the size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.1.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.1.15 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.1.16 Pylons on the new 400kV overhead line would continue to be present in mid to long-range views, where they would be seen alongside the existing 400kV pylons, which would increase the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure in views out from the community area.

2.1.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant).**

2.2 Alphamstone

Description of Community Area

2.2.1 Alphamstone community area lies to the south-west of the study area. It contains the village of Alphamstone and several dispersed isolated dwellings and farmsteads which are connected by a network of lanes which are occasionally sunken and bordered by hedgerows and trees. The area is served by a small PRoW, network, which is denser to the north. Much of it falls within the Stour Valley Project Area (SVPA).

2.2.2 Alphamstone is a small linear village which is mainly one plot deep except for an area of more recent housing between Pebmarsh and Goulds Road. A cluster of listed buildings around the junction of Goulds Road with Lamarsh Lane and Moat Lane, includes the Grade I listed St Barnabas Church. The village has a coherent rural character due to the wide grass verges, and the many trees and hedgerows within and around the village. A high concentration of woodlands in the surrounding farmland both enhances the rural character of the village and contains views out across the Stour Valley.

2.2.3 The landscape to the north of the community area is characterised by a strongly rolling landform created by steep-sided tributary valleys of the River Stour. The small-scale farmland has a high coverage of small woodlands and hedgerows with hedgerow trees. The woodland is mainly associated with the stream valleys and includes Parkhill Wood which is ancient in origin. To the south of the community area, the gently rolling farmland has a larger-scale, more open quality and is characterised by rectilinear fields bordered by hedgerows that are thick and species-rich in places but elsewhere are tightly managed or absent due to field amalgamation. The farmland is punctuated by occasional blocks of woodland including Mosse's Wood and Cleeshall Great Wood which are ancient in origin.

2.2.4 From the north of the community area, the existing 132kV and more distant 400kV overhead line are present in glimpsed views but are substantially screened by the rolling landform and high tree and woodland cover. To the south of the community area, the more open farmland affords clear views towards the existing 400kV overhead line south of the diamond crossing, which crosses this community area.

2.2.5 The small-scale rural landscape with valleys and woodlands results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 400kV overhead line.

2.2.6 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.6**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- G2.12 – View from PRoW at Clees Hall to the south of Alphamstone;
- G-05 – View from junction of Moat Lane and Henny Back Road;
- G-07 – View from PRoW near Mabb's Corner;
- G-15 – View from Pebmarsh Road to the south of Alphamstone;
- G-22 – View from PRoW near Whitelands Fruit Farm;
- G-23 – View from PRoW to the southeast of Alphamstone; and
- G-29 – View from PRoW off Henny Back Road north of Alphamstone.

2.2.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.2.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 400kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, new 400kV underground cables/trenchless crossing, and the Stour Valley West CSE compound.

Table 2.2 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Alphamstone

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
G2.12	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
G-05	Large	Small (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)
G-07	Large	Medium-small	Medium-small
G-15	Large	Medium-small	Medium-small
G-22	Medium-large	Medium	Medium-small
G-23	Negligible	Small	Small
G-29	Small	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.2.1 The northern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes and excavation of opencut trenches and

trenchless crossing compounds. Movement of construction vehicles would introduce further disturbance into the area. On completion of the works, vegetation would be reinstated with the exception of trees which could not be replanted over the underground cables.

2.2.2 At night, south-westerly views out from this community area may also be affected by sky glow associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence.

2.2.3 As evidenced by viewpoints G-07 and G-22, close proximity views would be substantially altered and the size/scale of change would be large. Due however to the rolling landform and high tree and woodland cover, the effect on views from the ground level construction activities would rapidly diminish with increasing distance (see viewpoints G-23 and G-29) and the geographical area affected would be medium.

2.2.4 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 400kV pylons would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time resulting in a small size/scale of change.

2.2.5 There may also be some glimpsed views of the construction activities associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line which lies just outside the northern edge of the community area.

2.2.6 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-large. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.2.7 The removal of the existing 400kV overhead line would reduce the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure present in views.

2.2.8 The degree of beneficial effect from removing the existing 400kV overhead line must be balanced against the presence of the Stour Valley West CSE compound and the immediate post-construction effects of the undergrounding, which would continue to adversely affect visual amenity.

2.2.9 The removal and reinstatement of temporary construction compounds, working areas and access routes would reduce the overall perceptible disturbance. Vegetation would be reinstated along the former construction corridor as described in the LEMP (**application document 7.8**) but at Year 1 this planting would be immature and the areas within the LoD previously used for construction would be noticeable within the rural farmland. This would result in a medium size/scale of change. Due however to the rolling landform and high tree and woodland cover, only a small geographical area would be affected.

2.2.10 At Year 1, the embedded planting around the Stour Valley West CSE compound would be too immature to provide any screening or visual integration of the infrastructure. Its presence would therefore also have an adverse effect on visual amenity.

2.2.11 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the

effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.2.12 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.2.13 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Stour Valley West CSE compound would both screen and visually integrate it into the wider landscape.

2.2.14 The adverse effects on the visual amenity of the community area predicted at Year 1 would diminish and the beneficial effects of removing the existing 400kV overhead line would be increasingly experienced.

2.2.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.2.16 New hedgerow planting to the south and east of the Stour Valley West CSE compound would screen views from the Grade II listed Abbot's Farmhouse (MM23) and would help to partially obscure views from the adjoining lane and Pebmarsh Road.

2.3 Assington

Description of Community Area

2.3.1 The relatively large Assington community area is located broadly in the middle of the study area and contains the village of Assington in addition to dispersed dwellings and farmsteads and a linear cluster of dwellings on Further Street, many of which are listed. These are connected by a network of winding lanes and the A134, which crosses the area and passes close to the northern edge of the village. The southern edge of the area is within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the area contains Tiger Hill Nature Reserve and part of Arger Fen Nature Reserve, both of which are SSSI. Other parts of the community area are fall within the SVPA and Stour Valley SLA. The area is served by a good PRoW network, which includes The Painters Trail.

2.3.2 As described in the Assington Neighbourhood Plan (Assington Parish Council, 2022), Assington is a former estate village associated with Assington Hall, which lies to the north of the village and is set in a traditional parkland landscape that also includes the Grade I listed St Edmund's Church. The village Assington occupies an area of flatter, land to the west of The Brook, which is a tributary of the River Stour. It is a linear settlement which extends along The Street and Barracks Road and is notable for the pattern of small and typically rectilinear hedged fields in the surrounding farmland. The older buildings are found to the northern end of the village where several are listed. The village has a

coherent rural character due to the wide grass verges backed by hedges along The Street and the many trees and hedgerows within and around the village.

2.3.3 To the south of Assington, the gently rolling landform is incised by two tributary valleys of the River Stour. These valleys become deeper and steeper-sided closer to their confluence at the base of Tiger Hill. The farmland displays an organic irregular field pattern with small to medium-sized fields bordered by species-rich hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The lanes are often sunken with tall hedgerows which contain views. Woodlands are typically ancient in origin and include the large Assington Thicks and woodland associated with Tiger Hill. The combination of semi-natural ancient woodland, valley side woodlands, tall hedgerows and a high tree cover contribute to the well-wooded character of the landscape.

2.3.4 Across the northern and eastern parts of the community area and to the south-west of Assington, field amalgamation and removal of hedgerows means that the farmland is more open, with larger fields, more intermittent hedgerows, and fewer woodlands. There are some long views and a sense of remoteness and rural isolation.

2.3.5 The existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines cross the community area south of Assington and pylons are prominent on the skyline particularly from the areas of more open farmland on the plateau as indicated by Illustration 2.8. Despite this, the rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.3.6 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.5** and **6.3.6.4.6**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- F2.14 – View from PRoW south of Assington Hall;
- F2.18 – View from Dyers Lane near the A134 north of Assington;
- F-05 – View from the junction of the A134 and Marshalls Green;
- F-06 – View from PRoW on the eastern edge of Assington;
- F-08 – View from High Road between Hill View and Woodthorpe's Farm;
- F-09 – View from PRoW and Assington Village Hall car park;
- F-10 – View from PRoW near Moor's Farm to the south of Assington;
- F-11 – View from PRoW to the west of Assington Thicks near Trig Point and Severals Farm;
- F-22 – View from PRoW off B1508 south of Assington;
- G-01 – View from PRoW near Dorking Tye House; and
- G-12 – View south-east from Upper Road to the west of Assington.

2.3.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.3.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include

the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, the new 400kV overhead line, 400kV underground cables and the Dedham Vale West CSE compound.

Table 2.3 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Assington

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
F2.14	Small	Small	Small
F2.18	Negligible	Small	Small
F-05	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
F-06	Negligible	Small	Small
F-08	Medium-large	Medium	Medium
F-09	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
F-10	Medium	Medium	Medium
F-11	Negligible	Small	Small
F-22	Medium	Medium	Medium
G-01	Medium	Medium	Medium
G-12	Medium-small	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.3.9 The central and southern parts of this community area would be affected by construction activities. The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV pylons and constructing the new 400kV pylons would be noticeable over a relatively large geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be locally screened by the intervening landform, buildings, and vegetation. The size/scale of change would be small except when a pylon is seen at close range as evidenced by Viewpoint F-08.

2.3.10 Visual amenity within the south-eastern corner of the community area would be affected by construction of the Dedham Vale West CSE compound north of Harrow Street. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound and working area. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along temporary access routes and along the A134 and The Street would introduce further visual disturbance into the area. The size/scale of change would be large but would only be experienced over a small geographical area.

2.3.11 The Painters Trail follows the road network through this community area and passes under the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead line in three locations. There would be sequential views of construction activities associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line, including some close proximity views from the section of the trail between Stanton's Farm and Moor's Farm. The rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover would lessen

the effects on these views although the additional vehicles and plant using The Street and connecting temporary access routes would be noticeable to users of the trail.

2.3.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.3.13 The new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line and would therefore influence a similar geographical area. The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and be more likely to break the skyline than the smaller existing 132kV pylons to be removed. Their presence would not however fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced, which means that the size/scale of change would be small. South of Assington, substantial localised screening would be afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover.

2.3.14 Planting associated with the Dedham Vale West CSE compound would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage. As a result, the size/scale of change in views due to the new infrastructure would be medium but would be limited to close proximity views, which are already affected by the presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines.

2.3.15 Users of The Painters Trail would have sequential views of the larger 400kV pylons, which would include some close proximity views from the section of the trail between Stanton's Farm and Moor's Farm. The rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover would lessen the effects on these views although the additional vehicles and plant using The Street and connecting temporary access routes would be noticeable to users of the trail.

2.3.16 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.3.17 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.3.18 By Year 15, the embedded planting around the Dedham Vale West CSE compound would be maturing and would help to screen and visually integrate the new infrastructure into its surroundings.

2.3.19 The new hedgerows would be mature and provide some localised screening of the project from The Street and Kiln Cottage.

2.3.20 The presence of the new 400kV overhead line alongside the existing 400kV overhead line would continue to give rise to adverse effects but these would be limited to close proximity views, which are already affected by the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines

2.3.21 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.3.22 New hedgerow planting along the south side of The Street would provide some screening of views from the road (MM20) and hedgerow reinforcement close to Chestnut Grove would help to screen views from the Grade II listed Kiln Cottage (MM21).

2.4 Boxford

Description of Community Area

2.4.1 Boxford community area lies centrally within the study area and contains the village of Boxford and the hamlets of Stone Street, Calais Street and Hagmore Green which are connected by the A1071 and a network of winding lanes. The area is well served by PRoW, many of which radiate out from Boxford. Parts of the community area fall within the AONB and Box Valley SLA.

2.4.2 The village of Boxford is situated in the valley of the River Box. As described in the Boxford Neighbourhood Plan (Boxford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, 2022), the village developed around a natural ford across the river at a point where four trackways converged having crossed the surrounding rolling plateau. Centred on an historic core which includes the Grade I listed St Mary's Church; the village has expanded up the surrounding valley sides particularly to the north and east where there are some larger areas of modern development.

2.4.3 The community area is centred around the valley of the River Box and its tributaries but includes the rolling farmland on the upper valley sides and plateau. The valley floor is mainly pastoral and has a high tree cover which imparts an enclosed intimate quality and obscures much of the historic village settlement. The gentle rolling valley sides are incised by several tributary streams of the River Box and display an organic pattern of small and medium-sized fields on the lower slopes bordered by species-rich hedgerows and winding lanes. The overall impression is of sinuous and organic boundaries around the anciently enclosed fields. The arable fields on the higher valley sides and plateau are increasingly regular and in places fields are amalgamated with hedgerow removal forming larger and more open farmland. Woodland is mainly associated with the lower valley slopes but the high hedgerow and tree cover across the farmland imparts a well-wooded character to the community area.

2.4.4 Views within the valleys are contained by the landform and high tree cover along the valley of the River Box which in summer obscures much of the historic centres of Boxford and Stone Street in views from the surrounding area. By contrast, the higher ground of the upper valley slopes and plateau affords long views both across and out of the community area. To the south these include the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines which are present across much of the distant skyline.

2.4.5 The rolling farmland and valley of the River Box results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.4.6 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.4** and **6.3.6.4.5**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- E2.11 – View from Calais St on the edge of Dedham Vale AONB;
- E2.14 – View from PRoW to the east of Stone Street near Wash Lane;
- E2.17 – View from Brick Kiln Hill near Assington Lane;
- E-06 – View from PRoW to east of Peyton Hall in the Box Valley
- F2.1 – View from PRoW south of the A1071 at Boxford;
- F2.2 – View from Sherbourne Street to the north-west of Boxford;
- F2.7 – View from PRoW to north of Assington Lane near Hagmore Green;
- F2.8 – View from PRoW to south of Boxford Lane near Coddenham Hall; and
- F-20 – View from Assington Lane to the east of Hagmore Green.

2.4.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.4.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the new 400kV overhead line which would cross the farmland some 900m to the south.

Table 2.4 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Boxford

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
E2.11	Small	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)
E2.14	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
E2.17	Negligible	Small	Small
E-06	Small	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)
F2.1	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
F2.2	Negligible	Small	Small
F2.7	Negligible	Medium-small	Medium-small
F2.8	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
F-20	Medium-small	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.4.9 Views towards the construction activities outside this community area would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. There may be some glimpsed views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV pylons and constructing the new 400kV pylons in some longer views to the south but this would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time. Movement of construction vehicles along the A1071 and Hadleigh Road would introduce some visual disturbance into the farmland but this would be in the context of current traffic movements along these roads.

2.4.10 The size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.4.11 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.4.12 Visual amenity across the southern part of the community area, including the area within the AONB around Peyton Hall, would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line as fewer pylons would be present in southerly views. The size/scale of change would however be small as the existing 132kV overhead line is not prominent in most views due to the screening afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover.

2.4.13 Distant views out from the eastern and south-westerly edges of the community area, would be adversely affected by the new 400kV overhead line as the larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable despite being further from the community area than the existing 132kV pylons to be removed. The size/scale of change would be small due to the intervening distance. The geographical area affected would be small and would be restricted to the higher parts of the community area.

2.4.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.4.15 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.4.16 The community area would continue to experience an adverse effect on longer views to the south-west and east as the presence of the new 400kV overhead line would outweigh the benefits of removing the existing 132kV overhead line.

2.4.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.5 Bramford

Description of Community Area

2.5.1 Bramford community area lies to the east of the study area where it merges into the built-up area of Ipswich. It contains the village of Bramford, a collection of dwellings in the Paper Mill Lane area and the dispersed dwellings and farmsteads which comprise the hamlet of Bramford Tye to the west. The community area is well served by PRoW including the Gipping Valley River Long Distance Path, which follows the course of the river. The eastern part of the area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.5.2 The River Gipping was a navigable waterway in the 19th century and relics of its former industrial past can be found amongst the wetlands, meadows, and small woodlands, which now characterise the valley. The valley is now an important informal recreational resource and is enhanced by Suffolk Water Park which occupies an area of former sand and gravel extraction alongside the river to the north of the area.

2.5.3 As described in the Bramford Parish Plan and Village Design Statement Vision (Bramford Parish Council, 2012), the village of Bramford has an historic core centred on Ship Lane and The Street. This is surrounded by large 20th century housing estates with edge of settlement land uses such as school playing fields, a cemetery and sewage works. The B1113 has controlled expansion of the village to the west and consequently there is an abrupt change in land cover from the edge of the settlement to large-scale arable farmland. To the east, the village is constrained by the River Gipping but the parish extends beyond the river and includes the higher land in the Papermill Lane area between the railway line and the A14. The elevation of this area affords westerly views out across the water meadows and reclaimed gravel pits within the valley floor, towards the village and plateau farmland beyond. Bramford's industrial area including a restored former landfill site is to the north-east near the Broom Hill and the A14.

2.5.4 To the west of the village is Bramford Hall which was built on the high ground overlooking the village. Much of the hall was demolished and most of the parkland, which extended between Tye Lane and Bullen Lane, is in arable cultivation arable farmland. The parkland trees and most of the small ponds which once characterised the parkland have now gone, leaving only the perimeter woodland, including Miller's Wood and a linear tree belt along Bullen Lane, and the woodland around the former hall.

2.5.5 The remainder of the community area comprises medium-large-scale arable fields bordered by hedgerows with hedgerow trees is set within a rolling landform which rises to a plateau to the west. Few roads cross the area and settlement mainly comprises

isolated dwellings and farmsteads, which contributes to a sense of remoteness and rural/isolation. There is a high prevalence of small woodlands, including several which are ancient in origin. These locally contain views and also contribute to the rural and tranquil ambience of the farmland and the hamlet of Bramford Tye.

2.5.6 A key feature of this community area is Bramford Substation which occupies a slight hollow in the landform close to the western end of Bullen Lane. The surrounding woodlands, which include Bullen Wood, Fore Grove and Gobert's Grove, Miller's Wood and high coverage of hedgerows and hedgerow trees mean that the substation infrastructure is not prominent expect when seen at close range through gaps in the roadside hedgerows and from the PRoW which pass very close to the site.

2.5.7 The multiple transmission and distribution lines which converge on Bramford Substation mean that pylons are however a prominent skyline element across much of the community area. This results in a medium value for visual amenity despite the otherwise rural character of much of the area.

2.5.8 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.4 – View from PRoW at Fidgeon's Farm to the south of Bullen Lane; and
- AB2.11 – View from Tye Lane near Tye Farm.

2.5.9 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.5.10 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the new 400kV overhead line and modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line as it approaches Bramford Substation.

Table 2.5 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Bramford

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.4	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
AB2.11	Medium-small	Medium-small	Medium-small

Construction

Main Project

2.5.11 The western part of this community area would be affected by construction activity around each pylon and by movement of construction vehicles and plant on local roads and along temporary access routes. The ground level activities at each pylon location would be very noticeable when seen at close range but would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation as evidenced by viewpoints AB2.4

and AB2.11. The upper parts of the taller equipment would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time. The works would also be seen in the context of a baseline landscape which contains multiple existing overhead lines as well as Bramford Substation. As a result, the size/scale of change would be small.

2.5.12 Views towards construction activities from the central and eastern part of the community area including the village of Bramford would be limited by the intervening landform and vegetation including Miller's Wood. Movement of construction vehicles along the B1113 and Bullen Lane would introduce some visual disturbance into the farmland but this would be in the context of current traffic movements along these roads.

2.5.13 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.5.14 The modification and realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line close to Bramford Substation means that some of the pylons would be in a slightly different location but this would not affect the composition or character of the view.

2.5.15 The introduction of the new 400kV overhead line would increase the presence of high voltage electricity infrastructure in views across the western part of the community area but as evidenced by viewpoints AB2.4 and AB2.11, but would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of these views as pylons are already a key element. Due to the screening afforded by the high coverage of woodland and hedgerow trees, only the upper parts of the pylons would be noticeable in most longer distance views, where they would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines. The size/scale of change would be small except when a pylon is seen at close range. The geographical area affected would be small and would be focused on the western part of the community area.

2.5.16 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.5.17 In addition to the embedded measures, the following mitigation planting is proposed:

- New woodland planting to the south-west of Bramford Substation to provide some visual screening for dwellings along Church Hill (MM01). Although within this community area, this mitigation is for the benefit of properties within the Burstall community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.5.18 The increase in the number of pylons in views around Bramford Substation would continue to result in an adverse effect on visual amenity across the western part of this

community area, with the wider area remaining largely unaffected. There would be beneficial effects from the maturing planting to the south-west of Bramford Substation which would increase the overall woodland cover and help to visually integrate both the realigned and new 400kV overhead lines.

2.5.19 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.6 Bulmer

Description of Community Area

2.6.1 Bulmer is a large community area, located to the south-west of Sudbury at the western end of the study area. It contains the villages Bulmer Street and Bulmer Tye, plus the hamlets of Upper and Lower Houses, Finch Hill, Batt Hall and Hedingham Road, as well as a high concentration of dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a network of winding lanes. Its north-western boundary is formed by the wooded valley of Belchamp Brook. The busy A131 crosses the area and forms part of the eastern boundary. The community area is served by a dense network of PRoW which includes The Painters Trail.

2.6.2 As noted in Bulmer Village Design Statement (Bulmer Parish Council, 2012), Bulmer Street is a small village which has developed along the Street and Church Road and displays an eclectic mix of cottages, Victorian and modern houses. It contains several historic buildings, including the Grade I listed St Andrew's Church. Many parts of the village afford panoramic views between the buildings across the surrounding open arable farmland. Overhead lines are noted as being detractors to the otherwise rural character of the village.

2.6.3 Bulmer Tye is a more nucleated village which has extended either side of the A131 and has a high tree and hedgerow cover which gives it a wooded and more enclosed character than Bulmer Street. As noted in the Bulmer Village Design Statement (Bulmer Parish Council, 2012), the ancient common from which its name derives is preserved in the pattern of fields and allotments around the village.

2.6.4 To the north of Bulmer Tye is the parkland landscape of the Auberies Estate, with its avenues of trees, woodlands, copses, plantations, wood pasture and lakes.

2.6.5 The landform across the wider community area is gently rolling, becoming steeper and more complex to the north where Belchamp Brook has created a shallow valley with rolling valley sides.

2.6.6 Much of the farmland displays an organic pattern of small and medium-sized fields bordered by species-rich hedgerows with hedgerow trees. There are some areas notably south of Bulmer Tye where the field pattern becomes more regular and field amalgamation has weakened the earlier field patterns leading to the creation of a larger-scale, more open area of farmland, but enough remains of the historic field pattern to give a distinctive character to the landscape.

2.6.7 Small blocks of woodland are scattered throughout the farmland and frame views across the community area. Some of these are semi-natural ancient woodlands, including

Butler's Wood and Parsonage Wood. The woodlands, tall hedgerows and high coverage of hedgerow trees contribute to the wooded character of the landscape.

2.6.8 This area has a network of winding lanes and paths often associated with hedges that, together with the rolling countryside, can give a feeling of intimacy. However, the areas of larger more open arable fields also allow have long and sometimes panoramic views across the farmland.

2.6.9 The existing 400kV overhead line crosses the community area and, together with the existing 132kV overhead line in the neighbouring community areas, is noticeable in views to the south.

2.6.10 The wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of existing 400kV overhead line.

2.6.11 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.7**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- H-08 – View from PRoW to north-east of Wickham St Paul near Butler's Hall Farm;
- H-09 – View from PRoW between Butler's Hall Farm and Old Road; and
- H-12 – View from The Painters Trail between Bulmer Tye and Little Henny.

2.6.12 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.6.13 No component of the project would be in this community area and therefore this is not included in the assessment.

2.6.14 Components of the GSP substation include the single circuit CSE compound, 132kV underground cables, and modifications to the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines.

Table 2.6 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Bulmer

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
H-08	Medium-small	Medium-small	Small
H-09	Medium-large	Medium	Small
H-12	Negligible	No change	No change

Construction

GSP Substation

2.6.15 Visual amenity across the southern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes, excavation of the opencut trenches and earthworks to construct the mounds which form part of the

embedded measures to the east and west of the GSP substation. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along temporary access routes to the south of the community area and along the A131 and Hedingham Road would introduce further disturbance into the area.

2.6.16 The ground level activities would only affect a small part of this community area. As evidenced by viewpoints H-08 (and H-07 in the neighbouring Wickham St Paul community area), when seen in close proximity the size/scale of change would be large, but this level of effect would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, so that the geographical area affected would be small.

2.6.17 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for modifying the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.6.18 Due to its distance from the project, there would be no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of The Painters Trail, which follows the road network through the north-eastern part of this community area.

2.6.19 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

GSP Substation

2.6.20 At Year 1, the mounds which form part of the embedded measures would screen the lower parts of the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound, but the associated embedded planting would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration. As a result, the upper parts of the new infrastructure and former working area for construction of the underground cables would be very noticeable but would only affect views across a small geographical area. The size/scale of change would be small except when the GSP substation or single circuit CSE compound are seen at close range as evidenced by viewpoint H-09.

2.6.21 From the rest of the community area, including the villages of Bulmer Street and Bulmer Tye, the distance and the presence of intervening landform and vegetation means that there would be little or no change to the view.

2.6.22 The geographical area affected would be small and would be focused on the southern part of the community area.

2.6.23 Due to its distance from the project, there would be no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of The Painters Trail, which follows the road network through the north-eastern part of this community area.

2.6.24 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.6.25 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

GSP Substation

2.6.26 Visual amenity across this community area would continue to benefit from the removal of the 132kV pylons. Also, by Year 15, the embedded planting would screen much of the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound. Views would only be afforded through the gaps in the planting above the route of the underground cables and the existing 400kV overhead line. The top of the gantries may be visible but would be seen alongside the existing overhead line infrastructure.

2.6.27 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be adverse and the magnitude of change would reduce to negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

2.7 Bures St Mary

Description of Community Area

2.7.1 The large Bures St. Mary community area lies to the south-west of the study area and contains the eastern part of the village of Bures and several hamlets as well as dispersed dwellings and farmsteads often of medieval origin. These are connected by a network of winding lanes often associated with species-rich hedges that, together with the rolling farmland, can give a feeling of intimacy. The area has a limited PRoW network, although St Edmund Way connects Bures with the AONB and The Painters Trail crosses the area. The whole of this community area falls within the Stour Valley SLA and the south-eastern part of the area lies within the AONB where is includes much of Arger Fen SSSI.

2.7.2 The community area is centred around the valley of the River Stour and one of its larger tributaries and includes the rolling landform between the two valleys. The farmland displays a small medium sized organic pattern of fields. Blocks of woodland are a consistent landscape feature, including woodland at Great Bevills, and Nayland Wood and Thompson's Hill Wood. The chalk 'Bures Dragon' sits on a hillside within the AONB. The village of Bures sits just above the valley floor and has an historic, intimate feel with small historic buildings and narrow winding streets. Views across this community area are typically contained by the rolling landform and high coverage of trees and woodland.

2.7.3 The rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.7.4 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.5** and **6.3.6.4.6**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- F2.16 – View from the car park at Arger Fen Local Nature Reserve;
- F-13 – View from PRoW near Corn Hall to the north of Bures Green;
- F-15 – View from the St Edmund Way between Fysh House Farm and Over Hall Farm;

- G-01 – View from PRoW near Dorking Tye House; and
- G-13 – View looking south-west from Upper Road to the west of Assington.

2.7.5 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around the community, susceptibility to the project is considered to be high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the sensitivity is considered to be high.

Assessment of Effects

2.7.6 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, the new 400kV overhead line, 400kV underground cables, trenchless crossing under the River Stour and the Stour Valley East CSE compound.

Table 2.7 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Bures St Mary

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
F2.16	Negligible	Small	Small
F-13	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
F-15	Negligible	Small	Small
G-01	Medium	Medium	Medium
G-13	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Construction

Main Project

2.7.7 Visual amenity across the northern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas and excavation of opencut trenches and trenchless crossing compounds. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along temporary access routes to the north of the community area and along the B1508 would introduce further disturbance into the area. At night, south-westerly views out from this community area may also be affected by sky glow associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence.

2.7.8 The ground level activities would only affect a small part of this community area. When seen in close proximity the size/scale of change would be large, but this level of effect would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoints F-13 and G-13. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.7.9 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and modifying the existing 400kV overhead line would be

noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.7.10 The Painters Trail follows the existing road network through the southern and eastern parts of this community area but there would be little or no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of this trail due to their distance from the works.

2.7.11 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.7.12 Visual amenity across this community area would benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and associated 400kV undergrounding but would also be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line.

2.7.13 At Year 1, the reinstatement and embedded planting associated with the 400kV underground cables and Stour Valley east CSE compound would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration. As a result, the upper parts of the new infrastructure and former working area for construction of the underground cables and trenchless crossing would be very noticeable but would only affect views across a small geographical area. The size/scale of change would be small except when the Stour Valley East CSE compound is seen in very close proximity as evidenced by viewpoint G-01 (in the neighbouring Assington community area).

2.7.14 From the rest of the community area, including the village of Bures and The Painters Trail, the distance and the presence of intervening landform and vegetation means that there would be little or no change to the view.

2.7.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.7.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.7.17 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Stour Valley East CSE compound would both screen and visually integrate it into the wider landscape. The adverse effects on the visual amenity of the community area predicted at Year 1 would diminish and the beneficial effects of removing the existing 132kV overhead line in association with undergrounding would be increasingly experienced.

2.7.18 The community area would continue to experience an overall adverse effect on visual amenity from the presence of the larger pylons on the section of new 400kV overhead line, but this would be outweighed by the benefits of removing the existing 132kV overhead line.

2.7.19 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.7.20 A linear belt of woodland planting close to Stanton's Farm (MM22) would help to screen and filter views from the property as it matures.

2.8 Burstall

Description of Community Area

2.8.1 Burstall community area lies to the east of the study area to the west of Bramford Substation. It is a relatively small community area and contains the village of Burstall, plus several dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. A network of PRoW provides access to the countryside.

2.8.2 The landform of this community area comprises a flat or gently rolling plateau which is incised by the small, wooded valley of Flowton Brook. This has created a more complex topography and steeper slopes across the western side of the area. The land is mainly in arable cultivation with an irregular pattern of medium-large fields bordered by hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

2.8.3 Away from Flowton Brook on the plateau, the field pattern becomes more regular and in places fields are amalgamated with hedgerow removal creating an area of larger and more open arable farmland. Longer views across this farmland are contained by woodland in the neighbouring community areas.

2.8.4 The existing 400kV overhead line crosses the area and views of this and other overhead lines converging on Bramford Substation are a characteristic skyline element, although Bramford Substation itself is not prominent. The presence of this high voltage electricity infrastructure results in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.8.5 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB-02 – View north from Burstall Lane towards Bramford Substation; and
- AB-03 – View from Church Hill looking south-west towards Hintlesham.

2.8.6 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.8.7 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include

the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, the new 400kV overhead line and modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line.

Table 2.8 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Burstall

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB-02	Negligible	Small	Small
AB-03	Medium-large	Medium-large	Medium-large

Construction

Main Project

2.8.8 Dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line, construction of the new overhead line and modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line would directly affect the landscape within the central and southern parts of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Church Hill and The Street, and along temporary access routes would introduce further localised disturbance.

2.8.1 When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoint AB-03. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.8.2 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and modifying the existing 400kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.8.3 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.8.4 The views across and into/out of the southern part of the community area would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line. The size/scale of change would be small as multiple 132kV overhead lines would continue to be present in the view.

2.8.5 Modification and realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line into the existing Bramford Substation means that some pylons would be in a slightly different location, but this would not fundamentally change the composition or character of the views and the size/scale of change would be small.

2.8.6 The new 400kV overhead line would be located in the open farmland to the south of the existing 400kV overhead line. The new pylons would be prominent on the skyline and would increase the presence and influence of high voltage electricity infrastructure on the northern edge of Burstall. The size/scale of change would be medium and would be experienced across a large geographical area.

2.8.7 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.8.8 In addition to the embedded measures, the following mitigation planting is proposed:

- New woodland planting to the south-west of Bramford Substation to provide some visual screening for dwellings along Church Hill (MM01). Although within the Bramford community area, this mitigation is for the benefit of properties within this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.8.9 Visual amenity across the southern part of this community area would continue to benefit from the removal of the 132kV pylons, while the proposed 400kV overhead line would continue to affect views across the central part of the community area.

2.8.10 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **moderate adverse (significant)**. The maturing of new woodland planting south of Bramford Substation in the adjoining community area would help to screen views of the infrastructure but would not alter the outcome of the assessment for the community area as a whole.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.8.11 Tree and hedgerow planting to the south of Orchard Lands (MM02) would provide screening of the lower parts of the pylons from this property as it matures.

2.9 Chattisham

Description of Community Area

2.9.1 The relatively small Chattisham community area lies to the east of the study area and contains the village of Chattisham and dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a dense network of lanes and PRoW. The eastern half of the community area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.9.2 The landform of the plateau is generally fairly flat or gently rolling but becomes more rolling with steeper slopes along the valley of Spring Brook which forms the north-eastern boundary of the community area. The land is mainly in arable cultivation with a pattern of medium to large rectilinear fields bordered by hedgerows with a high prevalence of

hedgerow trees. Around Burstall and along Spring Brook, the fields are smaller and include some pastures.

2.9.3 Elsewhere, field amalgamation has weakened the earlier field patterns and created areas of open farmland. There is a high tree cover along the valley of Spring Brook but the farmland generally has a lightly wooded character which contributes to the openness of views and the prominence of the pylons on the existing 132kV overhead line which crosses the northern part of the area. To the north there are also distant views of pylons on existing 400kV overhead line.

2.9.4 The large-scale and open arable farmland and prominence of the existing 132kV overhead line results in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.9.5 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB-06 – View north from Chattisham Lane; and
- AB-16 – View from PRoW to the rear of properties in Chattisham.

2.9.6 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.9.7 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project which would be in this community area include the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line.

Table 2.9 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Chattisham

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB-06	Small	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)
AB-16	Negligible	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.9.8 Dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would directly affect the landscape within the northern part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and these would be accessed by temporary access routes. Most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Chattisham Lane and Lower Barn Road and along temporary access routes would introduce further localised disturbance.

2.9.9 When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoint AB-16. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.9.10 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.9.11 To the north there would be views out of the community area towards the upper parts of the taller equipment used for modifying the existing 400kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line. The works would be visible on the distant skyline but would be partially obscured by the intervening vegetation and would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time.

2.9.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.9.13 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would result in a beneficial effect on the visual amenity of this community area. The size/scale of change would be medium.

2.9.14 The new 400kV overhead line would be distantly visible in northerly views out from the community area. Due to the screening afforded by the high coverage of intervening woodland and trees, only the upper parts of the pylons are likely to be noticeable and they would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines which would lessen their prominence. This would result in a small size/scale of change although the new pylons would potentially be visible across a large geographical area.

2.9.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **moderate beneficial (significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.9.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.9.17 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would continue to result in a beneficial change at Year 15, which would outweigh the adverse effects of additional pylons on the new 400kV overhead line in long range views to the north.

2.9.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity,

the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **moderate beneficial (significant)**.

2.10 Copdock and Washbrook

Description of Community Area

2.10.1 Copdock and Washbrook is a large community area located to the south-east of the study area on the edge of Ipswich, where it borders the A12, the Copdock Interchange and the A14. The area contains the villages of Copdock and Washbrook, the hamlets of Mace Green, Washbrook Street and Folly Lane and dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. The area is served by a dense network of PRoW. The northern and eastern part of the area along Belstead Brook falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.10.2 The main settlements are the linear village of Copdock which is situated on the plateau and extends along London Road (now a wide cul-de-sac), and Washbrook which is a more nucleated settlement located on the valley sides of Belstead Brook.

2.10.3 The Copdock and Washbrook Neighbourhood Plan (Copdock and Washbrook Parish Council, 2021) notes that since construction of the A12 and A14, a section of London Road has remained as a dual carriageway with lighting columns, road markings and signage. It is an urban feature which contrasts with the mainly rural character of the settlement within the parish.

2.10.4 The landform across the southern and western part of the community area is relatively flat plateau but the topography becomes more rolling to the north-east of Belstead Brook, which forms a clearly defined valley that serves as a physical and visual buffer to the A14 and urban edge of Ipswich to the east. Several small tributaries of Belstead Brook and the River Stour flow through the area and add gentle undulations to the landform.

2.10.5 Much of the farmland is in arable cultivation with a pattern of small to medium-sized fields, becoming smaller around the villages and on the steeper slopes near Belstead Brook. The fields are bordered by hedgerows which vary from species-rich and often historic hedgerows to single-species hedgerows that are more tightly managed. There has been some localised field amalgamation with loss of hedgerows but enough remains of the historic field pattern to give a distinctive character to the landscape.

2.10.6 There are few distinctive blocks of woodland, but linear woodland along Belstead Brook, around the villages, and associated with the A12/A14 corridors, gives an overall wooded character to the north-eastern part of the community area. It also imparts a smaller-scale and more intimate character to the farmland and helps to visually integrate the main roads.

2.10.7 The existing 132kV overhead line which crosses the area is present in views, although the high hedgerow cover and layering effect created by the many field boundary trees, substantially reduces its prominence when seen from a distance. There are also long views out from the community area to the north towards the transmission and distribution lines which converge on Bramford Substation.

2.10.8 The A12 and A14 trunk roads, London Road, modern development around the villages and proximity of Ipswich result in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.10.9 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.5 – View from PRoW at Washbrook;
- AB2.6 – View from Church Lane to the west of Copdock; and
- AB2.13 – View from PRoW at Longlands Barn near Chattisham.

2.10.10 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.10.11 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component would be the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed some 350m to the north.

Table 2.10 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Copdock and Washbrook

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.5	Small	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
AB2.6	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
AB2.13	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.10.12 Views towards construction activities in the adjoining Chattisham community area to the north would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and for constructing the new 400kV overhead line would be visible but would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. The works would be perceived as a series of discrete sites on the skyline area. No ground level construction would be visible and the size/scale of change would be small. The geographical area affected would be medium.

2.10.13 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.10.14 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in the adjoining community area would result in a beneficial effect on the visual amenity of this community area. The size/scale

of change would however be small as the 132kV pylons are not prominent in existing views due to the high woodland and tree cover.

2.10.15 The new 400kV overhead line would introduce additional 400kV pylons into long-range views across a relatively large geographical area, although the high coverage of woodland and trees, including Hintlesham Woods and woodland at Hintlesham Park would substantially screen the lower parts of the pylons, which would also be seen in the context of the existing 400kV overhead line, resulting in a small size/scale of change to views.

2.10.16 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.10.17 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.10.18 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would continue to result in a beneficial change at Year 15, which would outweigh the adverse effects of additional pylons on the new 400kV overhead line in distant views to the north.

2.10.19 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

2.11 Elmsett

Description of Community Area

2.11.1 Elmsett is a large community area located to the north-east of the study area. It contains the village of Elmsett and hamlet of Rookery Road, together with dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a network of local lanes and small PRoW network. Elmsett Airfield lies to the west of the village. The south-eastern part of the area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.11.2 As described in the Elmsett Neighbourhood Plan (Elmsett Parish Council, 2019), the village has a mixed character, with mid-to-late 20th century housing spreading linearly outwards from an historic core with its village green and moated site of the Old Rectory. Most of the houses have views across the surrounding farmland, whilst hedgerows and small surrounding fields with a generous tree cover impart a highly rural character to the village.

2.11.3 The landform across the community area is relatively flat or gently rolling plateau. Several small tributaries of the River Gipping flow through the south-eastern part of the area and create a more rolling landform with steeper slopes such as at Spinney Hill.

2.11.4 The land is mainly in arable cultivation and the small fields around the village give way to an irregular pattern of medium-large fields bordered by hedgerows with hedgerow trees. The hedgerows vary from species-rich and often historic hedgerows to single-species hedgerows that are more tightly managed. There are some localised areas where field amalgamation and hedgerow removal has created more open areas of farmland, for example around Elmsett Airfield.

2.11.5 Other than Elmsett Park Wood which is ancient in origin and an SSSI, there are few notable woodlands. Small shelterbelts are associated with some of the farmsteads and Elmsett Airfield but the farmland overall appears lightly wooded and affords long views across the plateau.

2.11.6 There are no high voltage overhead lines in this community area but there are distant views of the 132kV and 400kV overhead lines as they converge on Bramford Substation to the south-west.

2.11.7 The gently rolling farmland has few detractors which results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.11.8 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.25 – View from PRoW near Gate Farm near Spinney Hill; and
- AB2.29 – View from PRoW to south-east of Elmsett.

2.11.9 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.11.10 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component would be the new 400kV overhead line some 1.5km to the south-east.

Table 2.11 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Elmsett

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.25	Small	Small	Small
AB2.29	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.11.11 Views towards construction activities outside this community area would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. There would be glimpsed views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for constructing the new 400kV overhead line and

modifying the existing 400kV overhead line, but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. The size/scale of change would be small. No ground level construction would be visible and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.11.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.11.13 The new 400kV overhead line, including the section which would pass to the north-west of Ramsey Wood, would introduce new 400kV pylons into distant southerly views from the more elevated and open parts of the community area. Due to the distance and localised screening afforded by the intervening landform and vegetation, the size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be restricted to the higher parts of the community area.

2.11.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.11.15 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.11.16 Pylons on the new 400kV overhead line would continue to be seen alongside the existing 400kV pylons, which would increase the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure in views out from the community area. Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.12 Flowton

Description of Community Area

2.12.1 Flowton is a small community area to the north-east of the study area. It contains the small village of Flowton and hamlet of Flowton Brook as well as several dispersed dwellings and farmsteads, which are connected by local lanes and PRoW. Most of the area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.12.2 Located on the northern edge of the community area, the historic village of Flowton comprises a mix of older buildings including the Grade I listed St Mary's Church and some newer properties dispersed along Flowton Road and Tye Lane. Flowton was associated with the 16th century Flowton Priory, which was dismantled, transported and rebuilt in

Hertfordshire 1928. The high coverage of roadside hedgerows and trees screens and filters many views out from the village.

2.12.3 The farmland surrounding the village is on the edge of the plateau and is incised by two small tributaries of Belstead Brook which create a steeper and more complex rolling landform. The land is mainly in arable cultivation with an irregular pattern of small to medium sized fields. These are bordered by hedgerows which vary from species-rich and often historic hedgerows to single-species hedgerows that are more tightly managed. Apart from the Flowtonhall Grove, which is semi-natural ancient woodland, and small groups of trees within the stream valleys, the farmland does not have any notable woodlands. The well-wooded character of the area derives instead from the high hedgerow cover and layering effect created by the many field boundary trees.

2.12.4 From the more open elevated parts of the community area there are distant views of several overhead lines. These include the existing 400kV overhead line as it converges with other overhead lines on Bramford substation. This overhead line infrastructure forms a cluttered skyline in views to the south-east and results in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.12.5 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.17 – View from PRoW adjacent to Flowton Road at Flowton;
- AB2.18 – View from PRoW near Camperdown Cottage
- AB-18 – View south from Flowton Road near and Rhodds's Farm; and
- AB-19 – View from Flowton near St Mary's Church.

2.12.6 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.12.7 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component would be the new 400kV overhead line and modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line to the south-east.

Table 2.12 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Flowton

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.17	Medium-small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB2.18	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB-18	Negligible	Small	Small
AB-19	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.12.8 Views towards construction activities outside this community area would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. There would be glimpsed views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for constructing the new 400kV overhead line and modifying the existing 400kV overhead line, but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. The size/scale of change would be small. Ground level construction activities are unlikely to be noticeable and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.12.9 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.12.10 Modification and realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line into the existing Bramford Substation means that some pylons would be in slightly different locations, but this would not change the composition or character of views out from the community area.

2.12.11 The new 400kV overhead line, including the section of line which passes to the north-west of Ramsey Wood, would introduce new 400kV pylons into distant southerly views from the more elevated and open parts of this community area. Due to the distance and localised screening afforded by the intervening landform and vegetation, the size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be restricted to the higher parts of the community area.

2.12.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.12.13 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.12.14 Pylons on the new 400kV overhead line would continue to be present in distant views, where they would be seen alongside the existing 400kV pylons, which would increase the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure in views out from the community area.

2.12.15 There would be beneficial effects from the new woodland planting between Wolves Wood and Ramsey Wood in the neighbouring Hintlesham community area. This would increase the overall woodland cover and help to visually integrate both the existing 400kV and new 400kV overhead lines although, given the distance, this does not alter the assessment for the community area.

2.12.16 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.13 Gestingthorpe

Description of Community Area

2.13.1 Gestingthorpe community area lies to the west of the study area and contains the village of Gestingthorpe and hamlet of Audley End. The surrounding farmland contains dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by winding lanes and a relatively dense PRoW network.

2.13.2 As described in the Gestingthorpe Village Design Statement (Gestingthorpe, Parish Council, 2017), although Gestingthorpe is a linear village, it has an historic centre with several listed buildings including the Grade I listed St Mary's Church, and Gestingthorpe Hall. A Roman villa site at Hill Farm testifies to the archaeological importance of the area. The main characteristic of the village is that the buildings display no architectural uniformity, and period and thatched cottages are located adjacent to more modern dwellings. Nevertheless, the village retains a coherent rural character due to the high coverage of trees, hedgerows and grass verges.

2.13.3 Belchamp Brook and Wickham Brook form the northern and eastern boundary of the community area respectively. These stream valleys create a landform with steeper and more complex slopes compared to the gently rolling plateau to the south. The land is mainly in arable cultivation with small to medium-sized fields bordered by hedgerows with trees. Many of the hedgerows are low and tightly managed which creates some longer and more open views across the farmland.

2.13.4 Woodlands copses are dispersed throughout the farmland and include the Colliersley/Ridley's/Round Wood, Oates Plantation and Wiggery Wood, which are ancient in origin, linear woodland along the stream valleys and an arboretum at Gestingthorpe Hall. There is also substantial woodland around Hill Farm, much of which has been recently planted.

2.13.5 The rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines, which cross the southern part of the community area.

2.13.6 The following viewpoint represents the visual amenity of this community area:

- H-01 - View from PRoW in Gestingthorpe near Audley End.

2.13.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.13.8 This community area would not be affected by the main project and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the GSP substation in this community area include works to the pylons on the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines on the

eastern edge of the area. A very short section of temporary access route would cross the eastern edge of the community area.

Table 2.13 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Gestingthorpe

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
H-01	Small	Negligible	Negligible

Construction

GSP Substation

2.13.9 Visual amenity across the southern and eastern part of this community area would be affected by movement of construction vehicles and plant on Hedingham Road and the temporary access routes both in this and the neighbouring Wickham St Paul community area to the east. It would also be affected by the works to modify the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines in the Wickham St Paul community area. When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.13.10 The upper parts of the taller equipment would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.13.11 This community area would also be affected by construction activities associated with the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound to the east of Wickham St Paul. Most of the ground level works would be obscured but there may be some long-range views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing and constructing pylons resulting in a small size/scale of change to views.

2.13.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

GSP Substation

2.13.13 The GSP substation and lower parts of the single circuit CSE would be obscured by the intervening vegetation and the mound which forms part of the embedded measures, although there may be some views of the upper parts of the single circuit CSE compound as the embedded planting would be too immature to provide any screening. The modifications to the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines in the neighbouring Wickham St Paul community area would be noticeable on the distant skyline, resulting in a small size/scale of change to views affecting a small geographical area.

2.13.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of

the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.13.15 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

GSP Substation

2.13.16 The embedded planting on the western side of the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound would be maturing and would screen more of the new infrastructure.

2.13.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be adverse but the magnitude of change would reduce to negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

2.14 Great Henny & Little Henny

Description of Community Area

2.14.1 Great Henny and Little Henny community area is located to the west of the study area and contains the small historic village of Great Henny and the hamlets of Henny Street and Little Henny. These small settlements and the dwellings and farmsteads which are dispersed across the farmland are connected by a small network of roads and PRoW, which includes the Stour Valley Path, St Edmund Way and The Painters Trail.

2.14.2 The landscape around Great Henny has been heavily influenced by the River Stour and its tributaries, particularly the unnamed tributary which forms the southern boundary of the community area, where it has created a steep-sided valley which rises to a series of low hills including Clay Hill to the south of Great Henny. Small ponds and marshland along the valley, together with the woodland and species-rich hedgerows that border the small fields, add visual interest. The high tree cover helps to visually integrate and screen the Twinstead Tee and two converging existing 400kV overhead lines which are located just outside the community area.

2.14.3 The upper valley sides display an organic pattern of small to medium-sized fields bordered by species-rich hedgerows with trees. The impression in the landscape is of sinuous and organic boundaries around the anciently enclosed fields. On the higher ground between the valleys the field pattern becomes more regular and in places fields are amalgamated with hedgerow removal creating a more open landscape. Blocks of semi-natural ancient woodland are a consistent landscape element, particularly on the upper valley slopes around Great Henny and Little Henny where they frame views both across and out of the community area.

2.14.4 To the east of Henny Road there is a pronounced change in landscape character as the rolling valley side gives way to the flat valley floor of the River Stour. Bordering the eastern side of the road are small fields with patchy hedgerows and occasional trees marking the historic field boundaries. Between these and the river, is an area of flat open grassland with few or no trees. Despite the absence of vegetation, the farmland has an enclosed and well-wooded quality due to ‘borrowed views’ of the plantation woodland on the

eastern side of the river in the neighbouring Little Cornard community area and woodland around Dawe's Hall in the neighbouring Lamarsh community area. This woodland lessens the prominence of the existing 400kV overhead line, which crosses the southern part of the community area and also the existing 132kV further south.

2.14.5 The rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 400kV overhead lines and Twinstead Tee.

2.14.6 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.6** and **6.3.6.4.7**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- G2.13 – View from footbridge over the River Stour near Henny Street;
- G-16 – View from PRoW at Great Henny;
- G-26 – View from PRoW to the south of Middleton;
- G-28 – View from St Edmund Way between Great Henny and Middleton;
- G-34 – View from the Stour Valley Way and St Edmund Way;
- H-11 – View from PRoW south of Watery Lane; and
- H-13 – View from PRoW to the south of Little Henny.

2.14.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.14.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area would include the dismantling and removal of a section of the existing 400kV overhead line to the south of the diamond crossing and modifications to the existing 400kV overhead line west of the Twinstead Tee.

Table 2.14 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Great Henny and Little Henny

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
G2.13	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
G-16	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
G-26	Small	Small	Small
G-28	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
G-34	Medium-small	Medium (beneficial)	Medium
H-11	Negligible	No change	No change
H-13	Small	Small	Negligible

Construction

Main Project

2.14.9 Dismantling and removal of the existing 400kV overhead line to the south of the diamond crossing would directly affect the landscape within the southern part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and most of the work is likely to be at ground level with limited at-height working. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Henny Street, and Watery Lane and along temporary access routes (some of which are quite long) would introduce further localised disturbance.

2.14.10 At night, south-westerly views out from this community area may also be affected by sky glow associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence.

2.14.11 When seen at close range the size/scale of change would be large but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoint G-34. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.14.12 There would also be southerly views out of the community area towards the upper parts of the taller equipment used for the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and modifications to the existing 400kV overhead line to the east and west of the Twinstead Tee respectively. This equipment would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.14.13 Construction activities would be evident in sequential views along a localised section of the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way between Clay Hill and Great Hickbush where the trails are close to the Twinstead Tee and the existing 400kV overhead line to be dismantled. The rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover along the valley sides would however substantially lessen the effects on these views.

2.14.14 The Painters Trail follows the road network through this community area and there would be sequential but distant views of the works from the trail although the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover along the valley sides would however substantially lessen the effects. The works would potentially be most noticeable from the section of Henny Road north of Boutell's Farm in the south-east of the community area and from the section of Amos Hill to the south of Little Henny. The additional vehicles and plant using Clay Hill and connecting temporary access routes would also be noticeable to users of the trail.

2.14.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

GSP Substation

2.14.16 Views out from the south-western part of the community area would be affected by construction activities associated with the eastern end of the GSP compound. Ground level activities would be mainly obscured by the intervening landform and vegetation, although movement of construction vehicles and plant along temporary access routes along the edge of Butler's Wood and Waldegrave Wood may be locally noticeable resulting in a small size/scale of change to views across a small geographical area.

2.14.17 There would be no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of the Stour Valley Path, St Edmund Way or The Painters Trail due to their distance from the works.

2.14.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.14.19 Views across and out of the southern part of this community area would benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines to the south of the diamond crossing, although the existing 400kV overhead line and Twinstead Tee would still be present in views. Also in many areas, the existing 132kV overhead line is well integrated into the landscape by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover and its removal would not be very noticeable except when seen at very close range. As a result, the size/scale of effect would be small and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.14.20 The removal of 132kV and 400kV pylons would benefit sequential views along a localised section of Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way between Clay Hill and Great Hickbush. It would also benefit views from The Painters Trail from the section of Henny Road north of Boutell's Farm in the south-east of the community area and from the section of Amos Hill to the south of Little Henny. The rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover along the valley sides would however temper the effects.

2.14.21 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

GSP Substation

2.14.22 The eastern end of the GSP substation would be visible at close range from the south-western corner of the community area. To the east of the GSP substation the mound which forms part of the embedded measures would obscure the lower parts of the infrastructure but the embedded planting would be too small to provide any screening. As a result, the upper parts of the gantry would be noticeable on the skyline. A new 400kV pylon would be broadly in the same location as the existing pylon to be replaced and, although perceptible on the skyline, would not be an uncharacteristic feature. The size/scale of change and geographical area affected would be small.

2.14.23 Due to their distance from the GSP substation, there would be no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of Stour Valley Path, St Edmund Way or The Painters Trail.

2.14.24 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.14.25 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.14.26 Visual amenity across and out of the southern part of this community area, including from the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way would continue to benefit from the removal of the 132kV and 400kV pylons. Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

GSP Substation

2.14.27 By Year 15, the embedded planting would be maturing and would screen much of the GSP substation. Views would only be afforded through the gaps in the planting under the existing 400kV overhead line. The top of the gantry may be visible but would be seen alongside the existing overhead line infrastructure. The size/scale of change and geographical area affected would reduce.

2.14.28 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant**).

2.15 Hadleigh

Description of Community Area

2.15.1 Hadleigh is a large community area located to the north-east of the study area. It contains the market town of Hadleigh and occasional dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a network of winding lanes. The PRoW network is relatively limited but includes the Hadleigh Railway Walk which follows the route of the former Hadleigh railway. Much of the former railway was in cutting and the corridor is now well wooded to either side which limits views out. The southern and western part of the area fall within the Brett Valley SLA and the Gipping Valley SLA just clips the eastern boundary.

2.15.2 Hadleigh occupies part of the valley floor and eastern valley side of the River Brett and has an historic centre surrounded by modern development of varying styles. St Mary's Church is a notable local landmark. The outskirts of the town include suburban residential housing areas, multiple recreation grounds, including Layham Road sports ground, and the Constitution Hill and Broom Hill nature reserves. Lady Lane Industrial Estate occupies the higher valley slope to the north-east. There are some long westerly and southerly views out from the town.

2.15.3 The countryside surrounding the town has a varied character. The medium to large-scale, gently rolling farmland to the east has an open and somewhat remote character. There are some small woodlands within the community area and along the former Hadleigh railway but the larger blocks of semi-natural ancient woodland around the eastern edge of the area and in the neighbouring community areas, also influence and contain views.

These include Wolves Wood, Ramsey Wood and Hintlesham Little Wood/Hintlesham Great Wood, Raydon Wood and Tom's Wood/ Broadoak Wood.

2.15.4 West of Hadleigh, the arable farmland reflects the influence of the River Brett, with a mix of gently valley sides but also some areas with steeper more complex landform for example at Constitution Hill and Broom Hill. The small to medium-sized fields are bordered by hedgerows with a high coverage of hedgerow trees. Pastures along the valley floor of the River Brett are divided by a network of drainage dykes and are interspersed with alder carr and plantations of poplar and cricket-bat willows.

2.15.5 Further west, and to the north of the community area is an area of rolling arable farmland with stream valleys. The area retains a random pattern of ancient field enclosure with species-rich hedgerows, which are often associated with the winding lanes. There is a generous cover of small woodlands and together with the hedgerow trees, imparts a well-wooded character to the landscape.

2.15.6 Although much of the community area is rural, the presence of detractors such as the Lady Lane Industrial Estate and the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines, results in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.15.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** to **6.3.6.4.3**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.35 – View from PRoW off the A1071 to the east of Hadleigh;
- AB-10 – View from PRoW to the south of A1071 near Cobbold's Farm;
- AB-11 – View from PRoW near Business Park on Pond Hall Road;
- AB-12 – View from junction of Hook Lane and Pond Hall Road;
- AB-14 – View from PRoW off Pond Hall Road near Pond Hall Farm;
- AB-15 – View from PRoW linking to Hadleigh Railway Walk;
- AB-17 – View from PRoW on the southern edge of Hadleigh;
- AB-23a – View from Pond Hall Road near Hadleigh Bee Farm;
- C2.16 – View from sports grounds on edge of Hadleigh;
- C-01 – View from PRoW near Ashbrook House in the Brett Valley;
- C-05 – View from PRoW at Broom Hill, west of Hadleigh;
- C-10 – View from Shelley Road, south of Layham;
- D2.2 – View from Constitution Hill to the west of Hadleigh; and
- D2.6 – View from PRoW near Coram Lodge Farm to the west of Hadleigh.

2.15.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.15.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed and the new 400kV overhead line.

Table 2.15 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Hadleigh

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.35	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB-10	Small	Medium	Medium
AB-11	Negligible	Small	Small
AB-12	Negligible	Small	Small
AB-14	Medium-small	Small	Small
AB-15	Medium	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB-17	Negligible	Small	Small
AB-23a	Medium-large	Large	Large
C2.16	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
C-01	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
C-05	Negligible	Small	Small
C-10	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
D2.2	Negligible	Small	Small
D2.6	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Construction

Main Project

2.15.10 Dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line would directly affect the landscape within the southern part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and these would be accessed by temporary access routes. Most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along the A1071, B1070, Rands Road, Pond Hill Road and Stackwood Road (just outside the boundary of this community area) and along temporary access routes would introduce further localised disturbance. When seen at close range the size/scale of change would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with

distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoints AB-12 and C-10. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.15.11 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines.

2.15.12 Views towards construction activities from much of Hadleigh and the countryside to the north of the settlement would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development. The Hadleigh Railway Walk follows a wooded corridor and/or is in cutting through this community area, which means there are unlikely to be many views of the construction activities. The exception is the short section west of Town House Farm where there would be high level views of the construction activities associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line. The works would introduce some very short term and temporary effects on visual amenity.

2.15.13 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.15.14 The new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line and would therefore influence a similar geographical area. The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and more likely to break the skyline than the smaller 132kV pylons which they would replace, but their presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced. Substantial localised screening would be afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and field boundary tree cover and the size/scale of effect would generally be small unless seen at close range.

2.15.15 Views towards the new 400kV overhead line from much of Hadleigh and the countryside to the north would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development. The tops of pylons may be visible on the distant skyline but would not change the composition or character of the views, which are already affected by the existing overhead lines. The geographical area affected would be medium.

2.15.16 There may be some glimpsed views of the tops of pylons from the Hadleigh Railway Walk for example from the bridge over Hook Lane but this depends on the precise location of the viewer. The conductors would overfly Hadleigh Railway Walk but this would represent very little change from the current view.

2.15.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.15.18 In addition to the embedded measures, additional mitigation planting is proposed to avoid and reduce significant effects for biodiversity which would benefit this community area:

- New woodland planting between Wolves Wood and Ramsey Wood (MM09); and
- New woodland planting south-east of Ramsay Wood (MM10).

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.15.19 The replacement in the landscape of smaller 132kV pylons by larger 400kV pylons means that high voltage electricity infrastructure would continue to affect views within and out from the community area.

2.15.20 There would be beneficial effects from the new woodland planting between Wolves Wood and Ramsey Wood in the neighbouring community area. This would increase the overall woodland cover and help to visually integrate both the existing 400kV and new 400kV overhead lines although, given the distance, this does not alter the assessment.

2.15.21 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.15.22 A linear belt of tree and shrub planting along the southern boundary of Ramsey Farm (MM12) would provide some screening of views from this dwelling. A linear belt of tree and shrub planting along the western and northern boundaries of Primrose Farm and Hadleigh Bee Farm (MM13) would provide screening of views from these properties.

2.16 Hintlesham

Description of Community Area

2.16.1 Hintlesham community area lies to the east of the study area. It contains the village of Hintlesham and dispersed properties and farmsteads and is well served by a network of lanes and PRoW. The A1071 crosses the area, passing between Hintlesham village and the Grade I listed Hintlesham Hall to the north of the village. Hintlesham Hall is accessed via a long driveway through the surrounding parkland within which it is situated. Much of the community area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.16.2 Hintlesham is a dispersed linear settlement located mainly along the A1071 and Duke Street. It displays a mix of 20th century residential properties with some historic listed buildings. West of Duke Street is Hintlesham Great Wood, which is a large block of semi-natural ancient woodland and SSSI.

2.16.3 Much of the area comprises a gently rolling plateau which supports mainly arable farmland. The irregular, medium to large-sized fields are bordered by often patchy hedgerows with trees. In places, field amalgamation and hedgerow removal has weakened the earlier field patterns leading to the creation of large-scale open landscapes, although enough remains of the historic field pattern to give a distinctive character to the

landscape. The eastern and southern edge of the plateau is incised by two clearly defined valleys – Flowton Brook to the east and Spring Brook to the south. These watercourses have created steeper and more complex landforms.

2.16.4 Woodland cover includes Hintlesham Little Wood/Hintlesham Great Wood and Ramsey Wood, as well as smaller blocks of woodland and plantation associated with the watercourses, Hintlesham Priory and Hintlesham Park and Golf Club. These include Home Wood and Alder Carr in the Brett Valley.

2.16.5 Views across the eastern and southern part of the community area are typically contained by the high woodland cover but the farmland across the central and northern part of the area has a more open character with longer views. The existing 400kV overhead line crosses the farmland, passing between Ramsey Wood and Hintlesham Little Wood and pylons are prominent in some of these views.

2.16.6 The rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 400kV overhead line.

2.16.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.26 – View from PRoW near Covey Cottages;
- AB2.27 – View from PRoW adjacent lane between Elmsett Gate and Willowbrook;
- AB-04 – View from PRoW near Mill Farm at Hintlesham;
- AB-05 – View looking south from edge of Hintlesham;
- AB-07 – View looking west from Clay Hill;
- AB-08 – View from the A1071 near Norman's Farm;
- AB-20 – View west from Hintlesham Hall;
- AB-21 – View from PRoW north of Hintlesham Hall;
- AB-22 – View from PRoW on northern edge of Hintlesham;
- AB-23b – View from Pond Hall Road south of Hintlesham Woods;
- AB-24 – View from PRoW south-west of Hintlesham;

2.16.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.16.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed and the new 400kV overhead line.

Table 2.16 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Hintlesham

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.26	Medium-small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB2.27	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB-04	Medium-large	Medium-large	Medium-large
AB-05	Small	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)
AB-07	Small	Medium	Medium
AB-08	Medium	Medium-large	Medium-large
AB-20	Negligible	Small	Small
AB-21	Medium-large	Large	Large
AB-22	Small	Small	Small
AB-23b	Small	Small	Small
AB-24	Small	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.16.10 Dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line would directly affect the landscape within the central and southern part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and these would be accessed by temporary access routes. Most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes.

2.16.11 Movement of construction vehicles and plant along the A1071, Pond Hill Road, Clay Hill, Duke Street, Chattisham Lane and Washbrook Road and along temporary access routes would introduce further localised disturbance.

2.16.12 As evidenced by viewpoint AB-08, when seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoints AB-05 and AB2.26. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.16.13 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area including from the village of Hintlesham and Hintlesham Park and Golf Club but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines.

2.16.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.16.15 Views across the southern part of this community area would benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line. The size/scale of change would be medium but would reduce east of Hintlesham as the existing 132kV overhead line in the neighbouring Sproughton community area would continue to be very noticeable.

2.16.16 In the central part of the community area, the new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line. Its presence would increase the influence of high voltage electricity infrastructure in views across the central and northern part of the community area. The section of new 400kV overhead line to the north-west of Ramsey Wood would be a new element in those views which would result in a medium size/scale of change to views, but this would diminish with distance as evidenced by viewpoints AB2.26 and AB-20. The geographical area affected would be small.

2.16.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.16.18 In addition to the embedded measures, additional mitigation planting is proposed to avoid and reduce significant effects for biodiversity which would benefit this community area:

- New hedgerow planting near Claremont Cottage on the A1071 would benefit views from a cluster of properties on A1071 near Norman's Farm (MM06);
- New woodland planting between Wolves Wood and Ramsey Wood (MM09); and
- New woodland planting south-east of Ramsay Wood (MM10).

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.16.19 The adverse effects of the new 400kV overhead line on the visual amenity of much of the central and northern part of this community area would continue to outweigh the benefits of removing the 132kV overhead line across a smaller part of the area to the south.

2.16.20 There would be beneficial effects from the new hedgerow planting and woodland planting between Wolves Wood and Ramsey Wood. This would increase the overall woodland cover and help to visually integrate both the existing 400kV and new 400kV overhead lines. The maturing hedgerow and woodland would screen the lower parts of the new 400kV pylons, which would locally reduce the effect on some views, but would not change the assessment for the community area as a whole.

2.16.21 Similarly, the linear belts of tree and shrub planting and sections of hedgerows reinstatement would also be maturing and would locally screen views towards the new infrastructure but would not alter the outcome of the assessment.

2.16.22 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **moderate adverse (significant**).

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.16.23 Linear belts of planting close to Ram's Farm (MM11), Bungalow Farm (MM07) and Mill Farm (MM03) would help to screen views from these dwellings. The reinstatement of a former field boundary hedgerow close to College Farm Cottages would help to screen views from these dwellings (MM08) and a linear belt of tree and shrub planting and hedgerow reinstatement along the A1071 would help to screen views from Hintlesham Hall and Park (MM04).

2.17 Lamarsh

Description of Community Area

2.17.1 The small community area of Lamarsh lies to the west of the study area. it contains the village of Lamarsh and some dispersed dwellings and farmsteads, including historic moated manor houses. Henny Road and the Sudbury Branch Railway Line run broadly parallel to the River Stour, which forms the eastern boundary of the community area. A tributary valley of the Stour forms its northern boundary. The PRoW network is small but includes the Stour Valley Path, St Edmund Way and The Painters Trail.

2.17.2 Lamarsh is a dispersed linear settlement which has developed along Henny Road, Lamarsh Road and Bell Hill just above the valley floor of the River Stour. It consists of a mix of 20th century residential properties with some historic listed buildings.

2.17.3 Much of the northern and western part of the area occupies an interfluve between two tributary valleys of the River Stour and has a complex rolling topography with an area of steeper slopes extending from Sparrow Farm in the west to Daw's Hall in the east. The small and medium-sized fields associated with the rolling landform have an irregular organic form, and give the impression of being ancient, enclosed fields. The high prevalence of woodland, hedgerows, trees along the valley and around Daw's Hall also contributes to the strong sense of enclosure. Few lanes cross this part of the area which consequently has a sense of remoteness and rural isolation.

2.17.4 The southern and eastern part of the community area display a contrasting character, with a more gently rolling landform on the western valley side and floor of the River Stour. The fields are more regular in shape and in places amalgamated with hedgerow removal which creates a larger-scale and more open landscape.

2.17.5 The existing 132kV overhead line crosses the northern part of the community area and the existing 400kV overhead line just clips its northern boundary near Boutell's Farm. The pylons are visible on the skyline from many locations both in this and the neighbouring community areas. They are particularly noticeable as they converge up the eastern side of the Stour Valley in the Bures St Mary community area.

2.17.6 The small-scale rolling farmland particularly to the north of this community area results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 400kV overhead line.

2.17.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.6**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- G2.5 – View from Langley Hill to the south of Lamarsh;
- G-03 – View from Henny Road near Daw's Hall;
- G-04 – View from Henny Road at Lamarsh;
- G-24 – View from PRoW near Hill Farm to the north-west of Bures;
- G-30 – View from St Edmund Way south of Twinstead Road; and
- G-31 – View from St Edmund Way north of Twinstead Road.

2.17.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.17.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed and the 400kV underground cables/trenchless crossing.

Table 2.17 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Lamarsh

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
G2.5	Medium-large	Small	Negligible
G-03	Large	Small	Medium-small (beneficial)
G-04	Medium-large	Small	Medium-small (beneficial)
G-24	Small	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
G-30	Large	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)
G-31	Medium	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.17.10 The central and northern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity associated with the 400kV underground cables and trenchless crossings of the River Stour and Sudbury Branch Railway Line. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes, and excavation of the opencut trenches and trenchless crossing compounds.

Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Henny Road, Bell Hill and Springett's Hill and temporary access routes would introduce further disturbance. On completion of the works, vegetation would be reinstated with the exception of trees which could not be replanted over the underground cables. Some of the lanes and roads would have to be used for access and this would require localised widening with temporary vegetation removal in places.

2.17.11 Construction activities associated with the new 400kV overhead line and Stour Valley East CSE compound would also be noticeable on the eastern side of the Stour Valley in views out from this community area.

2.17.12 At night, the lighting associated with the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley may also be visible and would intensify the existing light spill from vehicles and dwellings along the Henny Road and Langley Hill and dispersed throughout the eastern side of the Stour Valley. This is however likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence

2.17.13 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.17.14 Overall, although the construction activities would be temporary, short term, and reversible, due to their extent and prominence within the valley, the size/scale of change would be large. As evidenced by viewpoints G2.5 and G-04, due to the openness of the valley floor, the geographical area affected would be medium.

2.17.15 Construction activities would be evident in sequential views along a localised section of the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way between Valley Farm and Henny Road.

2.17.16 The Painters Trail follows the road network through this community area and there would be sequential views of the works to dismantle and remove the existing 132kV overhead line, including some close-range views where the trail passes under this lane.

2.17.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-large. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.17.18 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would reduce the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure present, and benefit views along and across the Stour Valley, including from Henny Road and the edge of Lamarsh. The existing 400kV overhead line would continue to be present in views to the north but would be partially obscured by the woodland around Daw's Farm, which would result in a medium size/scale of change.

2.17.19 Reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage. This means that the former working area for construction of the underground cables would be very noticeable when seen at close range but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation. As a result, the geographical area affected would be medium.

2.17.20 To the east of the community area, the presence of Stour Valley East CSE compound with its associated gantries, and new 400kV overhead line would be visible in views out from the community area. New planting around the Stour Valley East CSE compound would provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage but the new infrastructure would be seen against a backdrop of landform which would result in a small size/scale of change to views and the geographical area affected would be medium.

2.17.21 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would improve sequential views from the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way between Valley Farm and Henny Road, although in Year 1 the former working area for construction of the underground cables would remain noticeable as the reinstatement planting would still be immature.

2.17.22 Sequential views from The Painters Trail along Henny Road would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in association with the trenchless crossings.

2.17.23 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.17.24 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.17.25 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Stour Valley East CSE compound would both screen and visually integrate it into the wider landscape. The adverse effects on the visual amenity of the community area predicted at Year 1 would diminish and the beneficial effects of removing the existing 132kV overhead line would be increasingly experienced.

2.17.26 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **moderate beneficial (significant)**.

2.18 Layham

Description of Community Area

2.18.1 Layham community area is located fairly centrally in the study area immediately to the north of the AONB which forms its southern boundary. It contains the villages of Upper Layham and Lower Layham, which are closely connected although physically separated by the River Brett which flows through the eastern part of the community area. With the exception of its western edge, most of the community area falls within the Brett Valley SLA. Winding lanes connect the dwellings and farmsteads which are dispersed throughout the farmland and a network of PRoW provides access to the countryside.

2.18.2 Upper Layham and Lower Layham are situated in the shallow valley of the River Brett. As described in the Layham Parish Plan (Layham Parish Council, 2004), Lower Layham is the more rural in character and contains several listed buildings including two Grade II listed Georgian manor houses – Netherbury Hall and Overbury Hall, as well as the Grade II listed St Andrew's Church. Upper Layham is located on the busy B1070 which connects Hadleigh to the A12 and is the larger and more densely populated of the two villages.

2.18.3 The gently rolling landform of the plateau is dissected by the River Brett and its tributaries, which have created a more complex and sometimes steeply sloping landform across the eastern and southern part of the community area. A sand and gravel extraction site near Pope's Farm adds further complexity to the local landform.

2.18.4 The farmland retains much of its historic organic pattern with small to medium-sized fields enclosed by species-rich hedgerows and associated ditches. The hedges are frequently high and wide and have a strong visual impact. There are however some areas of field amalgamation and boundary loss, particularly in the valley floor of the River Brett to both the north and south of the villages. The area has a high coverage of woodland. This includes semi-natural ancient woodlands such as Layham Grove and Coram Street Wood, valley side woodlands, and woodland associated with the sand and gravel extraction site, villages and historic halls.

2.18.5 The existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines cross the area and occupy an area of slightly higher ground, which means that pylons are present in many skyline views.

2.18.6 The rolling farmland of the Brett Valley results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines.

2.18.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.2** and **6.3.6.4.3**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- C-01 – View from PRoW near Ashbrook House in the Brett Valley;
- C-02 – View from recreation ground off Brett Green Road;
- C-03 – View from Overbury Hall Road;
- C-04 – View north from St Andrews Church in Layham;
- C-07 – View from PRoW to the east of Cobbler's Corner;
- C-11 – View from PRoW off Benton Street south of Hadleigh;
- C2.12 – View from bridleway to the north-west of Shelley;
- D2.10 – View from PRoW on Rands Road to the east of Hadleigh Heath;
- D2.11 – View from the southern edge of Hadleigh Heath
- D-01 – View south from PRoW adjacent Hill Farm;
- D-02 – View south-east from PRoW on Rands Road; and
- D-07 – View from Pope's Green Lane east of Polstead Heath.

2.18.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.18.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed and new 400kV overhead line.

Table 2.18 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Layham

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
C-01	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
C-02	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
C-03	Medium	Medium	Medium
C-04	Medium-small	Medium-small	Small
C-07	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
C-11	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
C2.12	Negligible	Small	Small
D2.10	Negligible	Small	Small
D2.11	Negligible	Small	Small
D-01	Negligible	Medium-small	Medium-small
D-02	Negligible	Small	Small
D-07	Medium-large	Medium-large	Medium-small

Construction

Main Project

2.18.10 Dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would directly affect the landscape within the central part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Rands Road and Overbury Hall Road and along temporary access routes would introduce further localised disturbance. When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoints C-11 and D-01. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.18.11 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line would be noticeable

over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines.

2.18.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.18.13 The new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line. The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and more likely to break the skyline than the smaller 132kV pylons which they would replace, but their presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced, which are already affected by the existing overhead lines and the size/scale of effect would generally be small.

2.18.14 From many parts of community area views of the new 400kV overhead line would be limited by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, leaving only glimpsed views of the upper parts of the pylons. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.18.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.18.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.18.17 The replacement in the landscape of smaller 132kV pylons by larger 400kV pylons means that high voltage electricity infrastructure would continue to affect views within and out from the community area.

2.18.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.18.19 Hedgerow planting along the eastern side of Rands Road south of Layham Park (MM15) would help to screen views of the existing and proposed 400kV overhead lines from a section of Rands Road south of Layham Park. Hedgerow planting close to Pipkin Lodge (MM14) would help to screen views from the property.

2.19 Leavenheath

Description of Community Area

2.19.1 Leavenheath community area lies to the south-east of the study area. It contains the three hamlets of Harrow Street, High Road and Honey Tye which are physically and visually separated from each other. Parts of the area fall within the AONB and Stour Valley SLA. The area is well served by PRoW.

2.19.2 As described in the Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan (Leavenheath Parish Council, 2022), the village was named after the Leaven Heath, an area of open land between Boxford, Bures, Nayland and Polstead, which was enclosed in the early 19th century resulting in the typically straight tracks and rectilinear fields.

2.19.3 The three hamlets comprise mainly 19th and 20th century housing set back from the A134, which is the main road crossing the community area. Of the three hamlets, Honey Tye contains the highest concentration of listed buildings, including the Grade II* listed Honey Hall.

2.19.4 To the east of the community area are the two golf course landscapes, which form part of the wider Stoke by Nayland Resort. The golf courses are set within a wooded landscape next to The Carrs – a series of four fishing lakes in the catchment of the River Stour. South of Plough Lane, an area of commercial orchards is associated with the Boxford Fruit Farm.

2.19.5 The rolling farmland is mainly in arable cultivation with a pattern of geometric fields resulting from 19th century enclosure of former heathland. The farmland is mainly in arable cultivation. Fields are typically medium sized and bordered by hedgerows, which in places are species-rich and associated with ditches.

2.19.6 The largest woodland is Spouse's Grove which is semi-natural ancient woodland and forms part of the larger Arger Fen SSSI within the AONB. It also contains Fords Heath which is an area of arable farmland that is being left to revert back to a grassy common ('furzey heath') landscape.

2.19.7 The existing 132kV overhead line and 400kV overhead lines cross the northern edge of the community area close to Harrow Street. The upper parts of the pylons are present in some skyline views, but the lower parts are typically obscured by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover.

2.19.8 The Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan (Leavenheath Parish Council, 2022) identifies several views of community importance. View 4 which is on the A134 just south of its junction with the Harrow Street, looks northwards along the road. Outward views from this location are mainly contained by the roadside vegetation. Pylons on the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines are not very noticeable until road users are north of the B1068 and almost under the lines.

2.19.9 The rolling farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines.

2.19.10 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.5**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- F-01 – View from the B1068 at Stewards Farm;

- F-02 – View from PRoW to the north of Harrow Street;
- F-04 – View from PRoW on northern edge of Leavenheath; and
- F-07 – View from High Road to the north-west of Leavenheath.

2.19.11 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.19.12 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 400kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, the new 400kV overhead line, and 400kV underground cable.

Table 2.19 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Leavenheath

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
F-01	Large	Small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)
F-02	Large	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)
F-04	Negligible	Small	Small
F-07	Negligible	Medium-small	Medium-small

Construction

Main Project

2.19.13 Visual amenity across the northern edge of this community area would be affected by construction activities related to the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line and underground cables. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes and excavation of opencut trenches. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along the A134 and High Road, and along the temporary access routes would introduce further disturbance into the area. On completion of the works, vegetation would be reinstated with the exception of trees which could not be replanted over the underground cables. Some of the lanes and roads would have to be used for access and this would require localised widening with temporary vegetation removal in places. Although the extent of the works within the community area would be small, visual amenity would also be affected by views of the construction activities in the neighbouring community areas, which would include construction of the Dedham Vale West CSE compound.

2.19.14 As evidenced by viewpoints F-01 and F-02, when seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening

afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoints F-04 and F-07. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.19.15 Although the construction activities would substantially alter the composition and character of the visual amenity, the effects would be temporary, short term, and reversible and would be focussed on the northern edge of the community area, with the rest of community area being unaffected.

2.19.16 From View 4 in the Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan (Leavenheath Parish Council, 2022) there may be some filtered views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line, but these views would be mainly screened and filtered by the vegetation along the A134.

2.19.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-large. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.19.18 Views across the northern part of this community area would benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and associated 400kV undergrounding but would also be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line.

2.19.19 The new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line. The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and more likely to break the skyline than the smaller 132kV pylons which they would replace, but their presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced including those from View 4 in the Leavenheath Neighbourhood Plan (Leavenheath Parish Council, 2022). Substantial localised screening would be afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and field boundary tree cover and the size/scale of effect would generally be small unless seen at close range. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.19.20 Reinstatement and embedded planting associated with the former construction areas for the underground cables and around the Dedham Vale West CSE compound in the neighbouring Assington community area would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage. As a result, the Dedham Vale West CSE compound and construction corridor for the underground cables would be noticeable and result in a large size/scale of change when seen at close range. Due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, this effect would rapidly diminish with distance and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.19.21 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.19.22 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.19.23 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Dedham Vale West CSE compound would both screen and visually integrate it into the wider landscape.

2.19.24 The new 400kV overhead line would continue to be present in views alongside the existing 400kV overhead line.

2.19.25 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be adverse but the magnitude of change would reduce to medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.19.26 A linear belt of woodland and scrub planting (MM19) would provide some screening of views from Hunter's Lodge and also to road users and dwellings on the northern edge of Harrow Street.

2.20 Little Blakenham

Description of Community Area

2.20.1 Little Blakenham community area is located to the north-east of the study area and is long and narrow, extending for about three miles from the south-western end near Flowton Church, to its north-eastern extent beside the River Gipping near Claydon. It contains the small village of Little Blakenham, the hamlets of Inghams and The Common and several dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. These are connected by a network of PRoW and a few roads. The south-western edge of the community area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA and its north-western and eastern edges within the Needham Market SLA.

2.20.2 Little Blakenham is situated at the base of gentle hillside. At its western end, the Grade I listed Church of St Mary is situated on a grassy chalky bank beside a narrow lane, a little above the houses of its village and next to the Grade II listed Rectory. Most other buildings within the village are relatively modern and include the large housing estate centred on The Beeches.

2.20.3 The farmland surrounding the village is on the eastern edge of the plateau which rises to around 60m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) near Flowton. Small tributary valleys of the River Gipping have incised the plateau and created an area of gently rolling farmland with steeper slopes along some of the valley sides.

2.20.4 The land is mainly in arable cultivation and the size and pattern of fields is distinctly different north and south of Valley Road/Somersham Road. To the south on the higher land of the plateau, the fields are large and bordered by hedgerows with few trees or woodlands. Views are long and open and pylons are a prominent skyline element. To the

north and around Little Blakenham, a high coverage of hedgerows with trees and small woodlands and groves defines an historic pattern of small and often rectilinear fields centred on Cottage Farm and the south side of Blackacre Hill. None of the woodlands are semi-natural in origin.

2.20.5 To the north of the village and surrounded by woodlands, Little Blakenham Pit SSSI is an area of former chalk workings which support one of the few examples of chalk grassland flora in East Suffolk. A tunnel radiates outwards from one pit which also contains two disused limekilns. This tunnel contains one of the largest underground roosts for hibernating bats known in Great Britain.

2.20.6 The community area becomes more urban in character towards its eastern end. This is due to the influence of main roads including the A14/B1113 roads and junction, large-scale industrial development, and waste-related and commercial land uses associated with the valley floor near Great Blakenham. To the north the community area is bordered by a large former quarry site which is now working landfill in the adjoining Great Blakenham community area.

2.20.7 Overhead lines are a common skyline element. These include an existing 400kV overhead line and two 132kV overhead lines which cross the community area and converge with other overhead lines on Bramford substation to the south. This overhead line infrastructure forms a cluttered skyline particularly in views to the south and south-east and results in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.20.8 No viewpoints were selected to represent the visual amenity of this community area as significant effects were not identified during the viewpoint selection process which was informed by site visits.

2.20.9 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.20.10 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore it is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component would be the new 400kV overhead line and modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line to the south.

Construction

Main Project

2.20.11 From the more elevated and open parts of the community area, there would be glimpsed views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for constructing the new 400kV overhead line and modifying/realigning the existing 400kV overhead line close to Bramford Substation, but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing high voltage electricity infrastructure. The size/scale of change would be small. Ground level construction activities are unlikely to be noticeable and the geographical area affected would be small. There are no roads in this part of the community area and public views are only afforded from the PRoW network. Views towards construction activities from much of the central and eastern part of the community area would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development.

2.20.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.20.13 Modification and realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line into the existing Bramford Substation means that some pylons would be in slightly different locations, but this would not change the composition or character of views out from the community area.

2.20.14 The new 400kV overhead line would introduce new 400kV pylons into distant southerly views from the more elevated and open parts of the community area. but there would be localised screening by landform and vegetation. The size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be restricted to the higher parts of the community area south of Valley Road/Somersham Road.

2.20.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.20.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.20.17 Pylons on the new 400kV overhead line would continue to be present in distant views, where they would be seen alongside the existing 400kV pylons, which would increase the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure in southerly views out from the community area.

2.20.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.21 Little Cornard

Description of Community Area

2.21.1 Little Cornard community area lies to the west of the study area and contains the villages of Little Cornard to the north and Workhouse Green to the south. The whole of the community area falls within the SVPA and the Stour Valley SLA. The River Stour forms its western boundary. The villages and dwellings and farmsteads dispersed throughout the surrounding farmland are connected by a network of lanes and by the B1508 which, together with the Sudbury Branch Railway Line, is aligned broadly parallel to the river. A network of PRoW including The Painters Trail provides access to the countryside.

2.21.2 Little Cornard comprises a small cluster of historic dwellings and farmsteads situated on the valley side of a small tributary of the River Stour. The village is very rural in character with tall hedgerows and high tree cover. The Grade I listed All Saints Church and the buildings are set back from the lanes which gives the village an enclosed and intimate character.

2.21.3 Workhouse Green is a larger village which has developed around the crossing of Upper Road and Spout Lane. It displays a mix of historic and more modern buildings but like Little Cornard, is rural in character with high hedgerows lining rural lanes and properties set back from the road.

2.21.4 The community area covers the flat valley floor and eastern valley side of the River Stour and includes part of the higher plateau to the east. Small tributaries of the River Stour have created a more complex topography with some steeper slopes, for example at Keddington Hill.

2.21.5 The farmland displays an organic pattern of small and medium-sized fields on the lower slopes, although on the higher valley sides nearer the plateau, the field pattern becomes more regular and fields are sometimes amalgamated with hedgerow removal forming localised areas of larger and more open arable fields. Fields are typically bordered by intact species-rich hedgerows with trees. Woodlands are a consistent landscape feature, and include Assington Thicks, Fitch's Wood and Mumford's Wood, both of which are ancient in origin as well as some young plantation woodland between the course of the river and the Sudbury Branch Railway Line. The woodlands and hedgerow trees give the farmland a well-wooded appearance.

2.21.6 Located to the north-west of the community area, Cornard Mere is an SSSI and local nature reserve. To the north-east and east of the Mere lies Great Cornard Country Park, which extends into the north-eastern part of the community area and contains a mosaic of woodland and small meadows bordered by species-rich hedgerows and trees. The Little Cornard Neighbourhood Plan (Little Cornard Parish Council, 2022), notes that the Mere and Country Park are an important recreational resource allowing countryside access both to the local population and visitors.

2.21.7 The elevated landform affords long views out across and along the Stour Valley. Many of these views include pylons both in this and neighbouring community areas.

2.21.8 The rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines and the two telecommunications towers near Yorley Farm.

2.21.9 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.6**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- G2.2 – View from PRoW off Chapel Lane near Costens Hall;
- G2.3 – View from PRoW at Little Cornard;
- G2.13 – View from footbridge over the River Stour near Henny Street;
- G-02 – View from PRoW on the eastern edge of Workhouse Green;
- G-12 – View south-east from Upper Road to the west of Assington;
- G-13 – View south-west from Upper Road to the west of Assington;

- G-25 – View from PRoW on the western edge of Workhouse Green; and
- G-27 – View from PRoW in Shalford Meadow on the River Stour.

2.21.10 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.21.11 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include a short section of the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, a trenchless crossing compound and a short section of the 400kV underground cables.

Table 2.20 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Little Cornard

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
G2.2	Small	Small	Small (beneficial)
G2.3	Small	Small	Small
G2.13	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
G-02	Medium-small	Small	Small
G-12	Medium-small	Small	Small
G-13	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
G-25	Small	Small	Small (beneficial)
G-27	Small	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.21.12 Visual amenity across the southern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes and excavation of opencut trenches and a trenchless crossing compound. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along the B1508 and temporary access routes would introduce further disturbance into the area. Although the physical extent of the works within the community area would be small, visual amenity would also be affected by views of the construction activities in the neighbouring community areas, which would also include construction of the Stour Valley East CSE compound in the Bures St Mary community area.

2.21.13 At night, south-westerly views out from this community area may be affected by sky glow associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence.

2.21.14 When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large but this would diminish with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, as evidenced by viewpoints G-02 and G-25. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.21.15 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV pylons would be noticeable over a wider area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.21.16 The Painters Trail follows the road network through this community area and there would be sequential views of the works from the section of Upper Road between Pond's Farm and Stanton's Farm. The works would be most noticeable from the section of this road north of Stanton's Farm as they would be seen in relatively close proximity.

2.21.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.21.18 The replacement of the existing 132kV overhead line by 400kV underground cables would benefit views to the south and south-west. In views to the south-east, the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and presence of the new 400kV overhead line means that pylons would be larger and more noticeable than at present despite being further away. This would result in a small size/scale of change but would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views.

2.21.19 Reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage. This means that the former working areas for construction of the underground cables would still be very noticeable when seen at close range but visibility would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small.

2.21.20 There may be glimpsed views of the upper parts of the Stour Valley East CSE compound to the south in the neighbouring community area but most of the new infrastructure would either not be visible or seen against a backdrop of woodland which would reduce its prominence. The planting around the Stour Valley East CSE compound would provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage.

2.21.21 There would be sequential views of the larger 400kV pylons from the section of Upper Road between Pond's Farm and Stanton's Farm. The pylons would be most noticeable from the section of this road north of Stanton's Farm where they would be close to users of the trail but would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines.

2.21.22 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.21.23 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Stour Valley East CSE compound would both screen and visually integrate it into the wider landscape.

2.21.24 The adverse effects on the visual amenity of the community area predicted at Year 1 would diminish and the beneficial effects of removing the existing 132kV overhead line would be increasingly experienced.

2.21.25 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (significant)**.

2.22 Little Maplestead

Description of Community Area

2.22.1 Little Maplestead community area lies to the west of the study area. It contains the village of Little Maplestead and several dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. These are connected by a network of lanes which are occasionally sunken and bordered by hedgerows and trees. The area is served by a dense network of PRoW which provides access to the wider countryside and to nearby Great Maplestead in the neighbouring community area.

2.22.2 Little Maplestead is a small linear village which has developed along the four roads and is mainly one plot deep. It has a mix of older and more modern houses and contains several historic buildings, including Maplestead Hall and the Grade II* listed St John the Baptist Church which is one of only four surviving medieval round churches in England. The village is outward looking and most of the properties afford panoramic views across the surrounding farmland. As a result, the village has a strongly rural character.

2.22.3 The landscape across the wider community area is characterised by flat or gently undulating plateau landform, which is incised by tributary valleys of the River Colne. These create a more undulating landform with some steep-sided slopes, particularly across the western side of the area. The farmland displays a small to medium-sized pattern of mainly arable fields which are bordered by a patchy network of hedgerows, affording long views across the farmland. Between Oak Road and the A131, field amalgamation has weakened the earlier field pattern leading to the creation of some larger fields. To the east of the A131, there is a higher coverage of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and the layering effect of these field boundary trees contains longer views and creates a smaller scale, more intimate landscape.

2.22.4 Woodlands are concentrated around Stanley Hall to the east of the community area and around Pearman's Hill to the south-west.

2.22.5 Other than the loss of hedgerows, there are few notes of discordance in this relatively remote area of farmland. High voltage electricity infrastructure is not present in views except for occasional glimpses of the top of a 132kV pylon in views out from the far north-eastern corner of the area. As a result, the landscape has a medium-high value for visual amenity.

2.22.6 No viewpoints were selected to represent the visual amenity of this community area as significant effects were not identified during the viewpoint selection process which was informed by site visits.

2.22.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.22.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation which lies some 2km to the north-east and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the Stour Valley West CSE compound some 3km to the east in the neighbouring Alphamstone community area. A bellmouth and temporary access route would extend east from the A131 Sudbury Road to provide access for construction traffic and would pass through a very small part of the community area. By crossing fields and using existing field accesses wherever practicable, this would avoid the need to widen and remove vegetation along local lanes.

Construction

Main Project

2.22.9 The only noticeable construction activities would be the removal of a short section of roadside vegetation to provide the bellmouth at the junction with the A131 Sudbury Road and the intermittent movement of vehicles and plant along the temporary access route both in this and the adjoining Pebmarsh community area. This would be visible from the A131 but would be experienced transiently and would be in the context of the existing road traffic which would result in a small size/scale of change. Visual amenity across most of the community area would be unaffected due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover and therefore the geographical area affected would be small.

2.22.10 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.22.11 On completion of the works, the roadside hedgerow would be replanted and the temporary access route would be reinstated to arable cultivation. The farmland which would return to its current character, other than the new hedgerow appearing immature.

2.22.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.22.13 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.22.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

2.23 Middleton

Description of Community Area

2.23.1 Middleton community area lies to the west of the study area. To the west it is bordered by the A131 and to the east by the River Stour, which is also the county boundary between Essex and Suffolk. It contains the village of Middleton and several dispersed dwellings and farmsteads, some of which occupy large plots which are set back from the road. A cluster of properties also sits along the boundary of this community area and Great Henny community area. These are connected by a network of lanes which are occasionally sunken and bordered by hedgerows and trees. The area is served by a small network of PRoW which includes St Edmund Way and the Stour Valley Path.

2.23.2 The village occupies a slightly elevated situation on the western wide of the Stour Valley just below the crest of the ridgeline which is notable for its mature trees, mainly oaks and hedgerow elms. As noted in the Village Design Statement for the Parish of Middleton (Middleton Parish Council, 2009), this location affords expansive views in most directions across countryside scenes that are characteristic of paintings by Constable and Gainsborough.

2.23.3 The historic core of the village is broadly laid out as a square with the Grade I listed All Saints Church on its northern edge. The church sits in an area of remnant 19th century parkland with tree avenues and terraces. The rest of the village comprises Victorian housing and more modern buildings in an eclectic variety of styles.

2.23.4 The landform across the community area varies from the relatively flat valley floor of the River Stour in the east, through the more rolling landform of the western valley side in the central part of the community area, to the gentle rolling landform to the west. The farmland comprises mainly medium sized arable fields, which become larger and more open within the valley floor of the River Stour, with occasional stands of poplar and willow. Fields are bordered by hedgerows, which are intermittent or absent in places, whilst former hedgerows are often marked by strong lines of trees.

2.23.5 Woodland is a small component of the landcover but the coverage of field boundary woodland in the neighbouring community areas imparts a well-wooded character of the

area. Despite the absence of vegetation, the farmland has an enclosed and well-wooded quality due to 'borrowed views' of the plantation woodland on the eastern side of the river in the neighbouring Little Cornard community area and woodland around Dawe's Hall in the neighbouring Lamarsh

2.23.6 There is a small commercial development in the north of the area around Middleton Hall Farm, which includes several different businesses occupying either purpose-built buildings or redundant farm buildings. This is one of the few notes of discord in an otherwise rural landscape. There are occasional views of distant pylons from the southern part of the community area but high voltage overhead line infrastructure is not a prominent element. As a result, the landscape has a medium-high value for visual amenity.

2.23.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.6**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- G2.16 – View from Middleton near Brakemoor Hill; and
- G-26 – View from PRoW to the south of Middleton.

2.23.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.23.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed which is nearly 2km to the south in the neighbouring community areas.

Table 2.21 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Middleton

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
G2.16	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
G-26	Small	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.23.10 As evidenced by viewpoints G-26 and viewpoints closer to the project in the neighbouring community area including G-16 and G-28, ground level activities and movement of vehicles and plant along temporary access routes are unlikely to be visible. The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and 400kV overhead line south of the diamond crossing may be noticeable in skyline views but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing 400kV overhead line. Together with the intervening distance, this means that the size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.23.11 Visual amenity across most of the community area, including from St Edmund Way and the Stour Valley Path would be unaffected due to the high tree cover particularly along the tributary valley of the River Stour south of Great Henny.

2.23.12 At night, distant south-easterly views out from this community area may also be affected by sky glow associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossings in the Stour Valley but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence.

2.23.13 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.23.14 Visual amenity across the southernmost part of this community area would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and 400kV overhead line south of the diamond crossing. The existing 400kV overhead line would remain but would continue to be relatively inconspicuous. Due to the distance and presence of intervening vegetation, it is anticipated that the magnitude of beneficial visual change would be small.

2.23.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.23.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.23.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

2.24 Nayland with Wissington

Description of Community Area

2.24.1 Nayland-with-Wissington community area is located to the south of the study area. It contains the larger village of Nayland to the east and the hamlet of Wissington (locally known as Wiston) to the south, together with dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a network of winding, narrow and often hedged lanes. With the exception of a small area to the north, which is in the Stour Valley SLA, most of this community area falls within the AONB. The area is well served by PRoW, including Stour Valley Path, St Edmund Way and The Painters Trail which cross the community in several locations.

2.24.2 Nayland and the rural hamlet of Wissington are located on the northern bank of the River Stour where they are separated by the A134. Nayland is a former industrial settlement whilst Wissington has always been a rural community comprising several farms and loosely clustered groups of dwellings connected by winding lanes.

2.24.3 Nayland displays a mix of historic buildings and 20th century ribbon development along the main routes with some large residential estates to the north and north-west. It has over 100 listed buildings some of which date from the 14th century, including the Grade I listed St James' Church. The medieval plan form and density of development fronting onto the street gives the historic core of the village an intimate character, whilst the two millstreams contribute further to the distinctive character of the village. The open spaces leading down to the river and Court Knoll scheduled monument are of aesthetic and historic importance to the village. Much of the surrounding farmland to the north of the village comprises large pastures and arable fields bordered by low hedgerows with trees. This imparts a strong rural character to the village.

2.24.4 The River Stour forms the southern boundary of this community area and has created a valley floor landscape of mainly grazed meadows bordered by hedgerows with trees and ditches and occasional small arable fields. A large area of woodland is associated with a cluster of historic buildings on the valley floor. These include the moated Grade II listed Wiston Hall and Grade I listed Church of St Mary Wiston.

2.24.5 To the north the valley floor gives way to a sharply rolling landform created by several narrow and deeply incised tributary valleys of the River Stour. This rolling landform in turn merges northwards into the gently rolling elevated plateau. The farmland comprises a small to medium-sized irregular pattern of pastures and arable fields bordered by species-rich hedgerows. It is crossed by a network of narrow, sinuous and incised rural lanes. Woodland is a consistent landscape element and includes both woodland blocks such as Grange Wood, Arger Fen and Rowley Grove which are ancient in origin with more irregular areas of woodlands along the stream valleys.

2.24.6 From the northern part of the community area, there are glimpses of pylons on the existing 132kV and more distant 400kV overhead lines but views across much of the community area are contained and inward looking due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover.

2.24.7 The natural beauty and diversity of the landscape and its strong sense of history results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.24.8 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.5**)) represent visual amenity across this community area:

- F-18 – View north-west from PRoW in Spouse's Vale Local Nature Reserve;
- F-19 – View north-east from PRoW in Spouse's Vale Nature Reserve; and
- F-21 – View from Dead Lane on St Edmund Way.

2.24.9 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.24.10 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the new 400kV overhead line which would cross the farmland approximately 1km to the north.

Table 2.22 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Nayland with Wissington

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
F-18	Negligible	Small	Small
F-19	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
F-21	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.24.11 Views towards construction activities outside this community area to the north would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. There may be glimpsed views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and for constructing the new 400kV overhead line to the south of Assington Thicks, but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. The works would be perceived as a series of discrete sites on the skyline across a medium area. No ground level construction would be visible and the size/scale of change would be small.

2.24.12 The route of the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way follows the lower lying valleys, which would limit the effect on the views experienced. The short section of St Edmund Way along Dead Lane and the boundary of the AONB is more elevated and would afford distant sequential views towards the works on the higher land to the north of Leavenheath.

2.24.13 The Painters Trail follows the existing road network through the south-central part of this community area but there would be little or no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of this trail due to their distance from the works.

2.24.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.24.15 The new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line. The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and more likely to break the skyline than the smaller existing 132kV pylons to be removed, but their

presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced. Substantial localised screening would be afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and field boundary tree cover and the size/scale of effect would generally be small. The geographical area affected would be small and focused on the northern part of the community area. Much of the central and southern parts of the community area would be unaffected.

2.24.16 The route of the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way follows the lower lying valleys, which would limit the effect on the views experienced. The short section of St Edmund Way along Dead Lane and the boundary of the AONB is more elevated and would afford distant sequential views towards the new 400kV pylons as they cross the higher land to the north of Leavenheath.

2.24.17 There would be little or no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of The Painters Trail due to their distance from the project.

2.24.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.24.19 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.24.20 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and presence of the new 400kV overhead line means that high voltage electricity infrastructure would continue to affect views within and out from the community area.

2.24.21 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant).**

2.25 Newton

Description of Community Area

2.25.1 Newton is a relatively large community area which lies to the west of the study area close to Sudbury. It contains the village of Newton, the hamlet of Sackers Green and some loose clusters of properties mainly to the south of the A134. The farmland to the north of the A134 is sparsely populated with only the occasional isolated dwelling or farmsteads and few connecting lanes or tracks. The area is served by a small network of PRoW which, like the roads, is mainly concentrated to the south of the A134.

2.25.2 Newton extends along the A134 and Church Road. Although mainly a linear village which is one plot deep either side of the road, it includes a cul-de-sac of more modern housing off the A134 behind the older properties. The Grade II* listed All Saints Church and Newton Hall are situated slightly outside of the village along Church Road. To the south

of the A134, the former village green is now the manicured landscape of Newton Green Golf Club. As noted in the Newton Neighbourhood Plan (Newton Parish Council, 2021), The Green is of particular historic importance as its surrounds contains several listed buildings and a scheduled monument. Important trees, hedgerows, and other natural features such as ponds are also found within The Green.

2.25.3 A section of the eastern boundary of the community area is bordered by the River Box. The river and one of its tributaries have created an area of more rolling landform with steeper slopes compared to the gently rolling topography which is typical of most of the area.

2.25.4 The field pattern particularly to the south of the A134 and along the valley of the River Box, retains much of the organic pattern of ancient and species-rich hedgerows and associated ditches. A high coverage of trees is associated with the field boundaries and lanes, the golf course, the river valley and the dwellings and farmsteads. These contain views and impart a sense of tranquillity and rural isolation to the landscape.

2.25.5 North of the A134, fields have been amalgamated and boundary hedgerows removed. This larger-scale farmland provides the setting for the church and northern edge of Newton village and affords longer views across the gently rolling countryside, which is lightly wooded but includes Lord's Wood, Alstrop Wood and High Wood all of which are ancient in origin.

2.25.6 The landscape to the south of the A134 and along the River Box is largely intact. Despite the field amalgamation, the farmland to the north of the A134 has a rural quality. Views are contained in the middle distance by wooded horizons which impart a sense of remoteness. There are few notes of discord and high voltage electricity infrastructure is only present in views out from the southernmost part of the community area near Lord's Wood. As a result, the landscape has a medium-high value for visual amenity.

2.25.7 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.5**)) represents visual amenity across this community area:

- F-23 - View from PRoW south-east of Newton.

2.25.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.25.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the new 400kV overhead line which would cross the farmland some 1.2km to the north.

Table 2.23 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Newton

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
F-23	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Construction

Main Project

2.25.10 Ground level activities and movement of vehicles and plant along the temporary access route are unlikely to be visible. The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line may be noticeable in skyline views but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines. Together with the intervening distance, this means that the size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be small

2.25.11 Visual amenity across most of the community area would be unaffected due to the high tree cover.

2.25.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.25.13 Visual amenity across the southernmost part of this community area would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in the neighbouring Assington and Little Cornard community areas but would also be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line.

2.25.14 The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable than the smaller existing 132kV pylons to be removed, but their presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced as they would be seen in the context of the existing 400kV overhead line. This means that the size/scale of effect on views would be small. Mumford's Wood and Assington Thicks in the adjoining Assington and Little Cornard community areas would limit the geographical area where visual amenity may be affected.

2.25.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.25.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.25.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.26 Pebmarsh

Description of Community Area

2.26.1 Pebmarsh community area lies to the south-west of the study area and contains the village of Pebmarsh, hamlets such as Cripple Corner and Cross End, and many dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a network of winding lanes, private tracks and PRoW.

2.26.2 Pebmarsh has developed along Peb Brook, a small tributary valley of the River Colne and comprises the historic core, which includes a small village green and the Grade I listed St John the Baptist Church, with modern development to the east and west. The village has an enclosed, intimate feel created by the wooded valley, winding lanes and high tree and hedgerow cover. The church tower is an important local landmark which is visible from much of the village and its approach roads.

2.26.3 Across the central and southern part of this community area, erosion of the plateau by the tributaries of the River Colne has created a series of small, wooded valleys with ponds and fishing lakes, including Pebmarsh Lake and Preston's Lake. Away from the small pastures around the village, the gently rolling farmland of the upper valley sides is mainly in arable cultivation and comprises an organic pattern of small to medium-sized fields bordered by species-rich hedgerows with a high coverage of hedgerow trees. These give way to larger more open fields on the plateau. Scattered throughout the farmland are many small and often linear unnamed woodlands and shelterbelts which together with the tall hedgerows and hedgerows trees, contain views and impart a sense of remoteness and rural isolation. Some fields towards the north of the area have less boundary vegetation and are more open in character.

2.26.4 The existing 400kV overhead line south of the diamond tee crosses the eastern edge of this community area near Lamarsh Park and North Wood but is not prominent in longer views due to the high woodland and tree cover which characterises this community area.

2.26.5 The well-wooded character of the farmland and its association with a series of small stream valleys and lakes farmland results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.26.6 No viewpoints were selected to represent the visual amenity of this community area as significant effects were not identified during the viewpoint selection process which was informed by site visits.

2.26.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around the community, susceptibility is considered to be high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the sensitivity is considered to be high.

Assessment of Effects

2.26.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation which lies some 2km to the north-east and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the Stour Valley West CSE compound some 3km to the east in the neighbouring Alphamstone community area. A temporary access route would cross the northern part of the community area to provide access for construction traffic from the A131 Sudbury Road. By crossing fields and using existing field accesses wherever practicable, this would avoid the need to widen and remove vegetation along local lanes.

Construction

Main Project

2.26.9 Intermittent vehicle and plant movements along the temporary access route which crosses the northern part of the community area would be the most noticeable part of the works.

2.26.10 Views towards other construction activities outside this community area would be limited due to the intervening landform and vegetation. From the higher parts of the community area there would be distant views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 400kV overhead line and constructing the Stour Valley West CSE compound but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines. This which means the size/scale of change would be small. No ground level construction would be visible and due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover only a small geographical area would be affected.

2.26.11 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.26.12 On completion of the works, the temporary access route would be reinstated to farmland and the route would return to its current character, other than the hedgerows appearing immature.

2.26.13 The removal of the existing 400kV overhead line would have a beneficial effect on distant views out of the community area to the east but the size/scale of effect would be small. This is due to the distance and the ongoing presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines. The effects would be focussed on the higher parts of the community area and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.26.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant).**

Proposed Mitigation

2.26.15 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.26.16 The removal of the existing 400kV overhead line would continue to have a beneficial effect on distant views out of the community area to the east.

2.26.17 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

2.27 Polstead

Description of Community Area

2.27.1 Polstead is a large community area containing the village of Polstead to the south and the hamlets of Mill Street, Polstead Heath, Hadleigh Heath, Bower House Tye and Whitestreet Green. These and the many dispersed dwellings and farmsteads are connected by winding lanes, which to the south are often sunken and bordered by tall species-rich hedgerows. A dense PRoW provides access to the countryside and includes a short section of St Edmund Way and The Painters Trail. The southern half of the area is within the AONB whilst a small area to the north is within the Brett Valley SLA.

2.27.2 Polstead is a picturesque village situated in the valley of the River Box at the point where the plateau is incised by several small stream valleys. The village derives its name from the ponds which lie at the bottom of a steep hill leading up to the village green on one side with the architecturally distinctive Grade I listed St Mary's Church, and Polstead Hall on the other side.

2.27.3 The southern part of the community area within the AONB displays a more complex topography and occasionally steep slopes for example along the eastern valley side close to Polstead. The farmland has an organic pattern associated with the River Box and its tributaries. Fields are typically small and bordered by often species-rich hedgerows and there is a high coverage of woodland and trees which contains views and imparts an intimate enclosed quality to the landscape. As the land rises away from the stream valleys, the pattern of arable fields on the higher valley sides and plateau becomes more regular. In places, particularly outside the AONB, field amalgamation and hedgerow removal has created some localised areas of more open farmland with longer views.

2.27.4 Woodland is a consistent landscape feature and includes the many blocks of woodland dispersed throughout the area, such as Millfield Wood and Bushy Park Wood as well as the linear woodlands along the stream valleys which include Dollops Wood and woodland associated with some of the older halls and farmsteads such as Rockalls Hall, Newhouse Farm, the Nussteads and Peyton Hall. These woodlands and the high coverage of hedgerow trees give the community area a well-wooded character and contain many longer views both across and out of the area.

2.27.5 The central part of the community area is crossed by the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines, although the pylons are often screened or filtered by the local landform and vegetation which reduces their prominence, particularly in longer views.

2.27.6 Views across and out from the western edge of the community area are also affected by the intensive orchard farming and large-scale agricultural structures associated with Boxted Fruit Farm on the western edge of community area near Hill Farm and Peyton Hall but the effects on visual amenity are contained by the rolling landform and high coverage of woodland and trees.

2.27.7 The well-wooded and scenic farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the A131 and existing overhead lines.

2.27.8 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.3** to **6.3.6.4.5**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- D2.14 – View from Potash Lane to the west of Hadleigh Heath;
- D2.16 – View from PRoW near the A1071 near Bower House Tye;
- D-03 – View from end of Popes Green Lane at Polstead Heath;
- D-06 – View from PRoW off Heath Road near Millfield Wood;
- D-07 – View from Pope's Green Lane east of Polstead Heath;
- E2.5 – View from Rectory Hill to the north of Stoke-by-Nayland;
- E2.11 – View from Calais St on the edge of Dedham Vale AONB;
- E-02 – View from Calais St in Whitestreet Green;
- E-06 – View from PRoW to east of Peyton Hall in the Box Valley;
- E-07 – View from PRoW near Whitestreet Green in Dedham Vale AONB;
- E-08 – View from Holt Road on north-west edge of Polstead;
- E-10 – View from PRoW at edge of Dedham Vale AONB near Dollops Wood; and
- F-01 – View from the B1068 at Stewards Farm.

2.27.9 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.27.10 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed, new 400kV underground cables, trenchless crossing under the Box Valley and the Dedham Vale CSE compound.

Table 2.24 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Polstead

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
D2.14	Negligible	No change	No change
D2.16	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
D-03	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
D-06	Medium-large	Medium-large	Medium
D-07	Medium-large	Medium-large	Medium-small
E2.5	Negligible	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
E2.11	Small	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)
E-02	Medium-large	Small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)
E-06	Small	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)
E-07	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
E-08	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
E-10	Medium	Medium-small (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)
F-01	Large	Small (beneficial)	Medium-small (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.27.11 Dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would directly affect the landscape within the central part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would require the use of mobile cranes.

2.27.12 As evidenced by viewpoints H-07 (and H-08 in the neighbouring Gestingthorpe community area), although the size/scale of change would be large when seen at close range, the effect on views would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.27.13 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and for constructing the Dedham Vale East CSE compound would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines.

2.27.14 The central part of this community area would be affected by construction activity associated with the 400kV underground cables, trenchless crossing under the Box Valley and the Dedham Vale East CSE compound. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes and excavation of opencut trenches and trenchless crossing compounds. Movement of construction vehicles and plant would introduce further disturbance into the area. At night, views may also be affected by night time lighting associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossing of the Box Valley but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence. Given the high tree cover, this would only affect a small part of the community area.

2.27.15 On completion of the works, vegetation would be reinstated with the exception of trees which could not be replanted over the underground cables.

2.27.16 When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large but this would diminish with distance due to the screening afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover as evidenced by viewpoints D2.16 and E-08. As a result, the geographical area affected would be small, although movement of construction vehicles and plant along the A1071, Holt Road, Stackwood Road and Heath Road would introduce some visual disturbance outside the main working area.

2.27.17 The Painters Trail follows the road network through the southern part of this community area. There would be sequential views of construction activities associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line which would be most noticeable from the section of the trail which follows Water Lane and Homey Bridge Road around the perimeter of Polstead Park, although the valley landform and high woodland and tree cover would lessen the effects on these views.

2.27.18 Visual amenity would also be affected by views of the construction activities in the neighbouring community areas and would include construction of the Dedham Vale West CSE compound in the Assington community area. These works would however be seen in the context of the commercial farming and large polytunnels but this would be seen in the context of the large-scale structures associated with Boxted Fruit Farm.

2.27.19 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **moderate adverse (significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.27.20 The absence of the existing 132kV overhead line would reduce the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure present in views but the ongoing presence of the existing 400kV overhead line would reduce the size/scale of change to medium.

2.27.21 Reinstatement and embedded planting associated with the underground cables and Dedham Vale East CSE compound and Dedham Vale West CSE compound (outside but close to this community area) would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage. As a result, when seen at close range, the size/scale of change resulting from the construction activities within the LoD would be medium but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover as evidenced by viewpoint D2.16. The effects would be focussed on the higher parts of the community area and the geographical area affected would be medium. The trenchless crossing under the Box Valley would reduce the immediate post construction effects along the valley west of Bushy Park Wood.

2.27.22 Users of the section of The Painters Trail which follows Water Lane and Homey Bridge Road around the perimeter of Polstead Park would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in association with the underground cables/trenchless crossing, although the valley landform and high woodland and tree cover would temper the level of beneficial effect.

2.27.23 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **moderate beneficial (significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.27.24 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Main Project

2.27.25 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Dedham Vale East and Dedham Vale West CSE compounds would both screen and visually integrate them into the wider landscape.

2.27.26 The adverse effects on the local landscape predicted at Year 1 would diminish and the beneficial effects of removing the existing 132kV overhead line would be increasingly experienced.

2.27.27 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **moderate beneficial (significant)**.

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.27.28 Scrub and hedgerow planting to the south of Millfield Wood (MM16) would help to further integrate and screen views of Dedham Vale East CSE compound.

2.28 Raydon

Description of Community Area

2.28.1 Raydon is a large community area located to the east of the study area. It contains the village of Raydon, hamlets such as Lower Raydon (west) and The Woodlands (east) and dispersed dwellings and farmsteads connected by a network of lanes. Much of the southern and western part of the area is within the AONB or Brett Valley SLA. A dense PRoW network includes The Painters Trail, and Hadleigh Railway Walk which passes through the north of the area.

2.28.2 The landform comprises a gently rolling plateau, which is incised by a series of river valleys and their tributaries, including the Brett Valley which forms the western boundary of the community area. These valleys divide the edge of the plateau into a series of interfluves and create areas of complex and often steep slopes for example along the tributary valleys of the River Brett near Lower Raydon. Much of the land is in arable cultivation with a pattern of small to medium-sized fields on the valley slopes giving way to larger fields on the plateau. The fields are bordered by hedgerows, which vary from species-rich and often historic hedgerows to single-species hedgerows that are more tightly managed. Blocks of semi-natural ancient woodland including the large Raydon Great Wood, Long Wood, Square's Grove and Tom's Wood are scattered throughout the area, whilst woodland along the disused Hadleigh Railway creates a distinctive linear feature within the farmland. Woodland associated with the historic manorial halls such as Woodlands Hall, Spider Hall, Wood and Layham Hall as well as the Brett Vale Golf Club also contribute to the well-wooded character of this community area.

2.28.3 In the 20th century the flat farmland east of Woodland's Road was used for World War II airfields, which has left a legacy of runway remains and buildings, and some modern

industrial use at Notley Enterprise Park. The openness of the landscape in this area results in some long and open views across the arable farmland. Elsewhere, and particularly in the parts of the community area that fall within the AONB and Brett Valley SLA, the rolling landform, network of winding lanes and tall hedgerows means that views are more contained and the existing 132kV and more distant 400kV overhead lines to the north in the neighbouring community areas are not prominent in most views.

2.28.4 The well-wooded farmland within this community area results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.28.5 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** and **6.3.6.4.2**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB-09 – View from Woodlands Road to the west of Chattisham;
- AB-13 – View from eastern end of Hadleigh Railway Walk;
- C2.1 – View from PRoW to the north-west of Coopers Corner;
- C2.4 – View from Woodlands Road to the north of Raydon;
- C2.7 – View from PRoW adjacent Brett Vale Golf Club;
- C-06 – View from PRoW between New Barn Farm and Layham Hall;
- C-08 – View from PRoW off Wade's Lane north of Brett Vale Golf Club; and
- C-09 – View from PRoW adjacent to Brett Vale Golf Club.

2.28.6 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.28.7 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed which would cross the farmland some 150m to the north in the neighbouring community areas. A short section of temporary access route would cross the northernmost part of this community area to provide access from Woodlands Road.

Table 2.25 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Raydon

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB-09	Small	Small	Small
AB-13	Negligible	Small	Small
C2.1	Negligible	Small	Small
C2.4	Negligible	Small	Small

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
C2.7	Negligible	Small	Small
C-06	Negligible	Small	Small
C-08	Small	Medium	Medium
C-09	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.28.8 Visual amenity across the northern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line.

2.28.9 Ground level activities are unlikely to be visible but the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line would be noticeable in skyline views but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time. The works would be perceived as a series of discrete sites across the horizon in views out from the northern edge of the community area but would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines, including the existing section of 400kV overhead line to the west of Bushy Cooper's Farm. Together with the intervening distance, this means that the size/scale of change would be small.

2.28.10 Visual amenity across most of the community area to the south would be unaffected due to the screening afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover. Therefore, as evidenced by viewpoint AB-09, the geographical area affected would be small, although movement of construction vehicles and plant along the B1070 and Clay Hill and along temporary access routes in the north-east of the area would introduce some localised disturbance outside the main working areas.

2.28.11 A short section of The Painters Trail follows the existing road network through the south-central part of this community area but there would be little or no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of this trail due to their distance from the works.

2.28.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.28.13 Visual amenity across this community area would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in the neighbouring community areas but would also be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line.

2.28.14 The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and more likely to break the skyline than the smaller 132kV pylons which they would replace, but their presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced as they would be seen in the context of the existing 400kV overhead line. This means that the size/scale of effect on views and geographical area affected would be small. Substantial localised screening would also be afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and field boundary tree cover.

2.28.15 West of Bushey Cooper's Farm, the new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line, whilst to the east of the farm it would divert away from the existing 400kV overhead line to pass to the north-west of Ramsey Wood and the new pylons would be increasingly obscured in views from much of the community area by the intervening vegetation including Hintlesham Woods.

2.28.16 The geographical area affected would be small. Most of the southern part of the community area including views from The Painters Trail would be unaffected due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover.

2.28.17 There would be no effect on the visual amenity experienced by users of the Hadleigh Railway Walk due to the distance from the project and the heavily wooded nature of the former railway corridor.

2.28.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.28.19 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.28.20 The replacement of smaller 132kV pylons by larger 400kV pylons in the landscape means that high voltage electricity infrastructure would continue to affect northerly views out from this community area.

2.28.21 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

2.29 Shelley

Description of Community Area

2.29.1 Shelley community area contains the small village of Shelley and some dispersed farmsteads which are connected by winding lanes. The southern and eastern part of the community area is within the AONB. Several PRoW cross the area and include The Painters Trail, but there is limited public access to the valley floor.

2.29.2 Shelley is situated on the west bank of the River Brett which forms the eastern boundary to the area. The village is intimate and historic in character, comprising several listed properties and a church along a tree-lined lane. The Grade II listed Shelley Hall is a medieval moated farmstead which occupies a secluded site to the south-west of the village.

2.29.3 The plateau landform which comprises much of this community area has been eroded by River Brett and its tributaries to create gently sloping valley sides with some complex topography and occasionally steep slopes near the village, although the valley floor of the main river is flat and crossed by a series of drainage ditches. The farmland displays an organic pattern of small and medium-sized fields on the lower slopes and valley floor, although outside the AONB, the pattern of arable fields becomes more regular and in places fields are amalgamated with hedgerow removal forming areas of larger-scale and more open arable farmland. The overall impression across the part of the community area within the AONB is of anciently enclosed fields. Although there are some small woodlands within the community area, including Snakes Wood at Gifford Hall, the well-wooded character of the farmland derives instead from the high coverage of hedgerows and hedgerow trees as well as 'borrowed' views of woodlands in the neighbouring community areas.

2.29.4 The existing 132kV crosses the northern edge of the community area but the pylons on this line and the 400kV overhead line to the north are not prominent due to the high tree and hedgerow cover.

2.29.5 This community area lies partly within the AONB which results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.29.6 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.2** and **6.3.6.4.3**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- C2.12 – View from bridleway to the north-west of Shelley;
- D-04 – View from PRoW between Polstead Road and Stoke Road; and
- D2.5 – View from Becketts Lane to the north of Gifford's Hall.

2.29.7 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around the community, susceptibility is considered to be high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the sensitivity is considered to be high.

Assessment of Effects

2.29.8 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community include a short section of the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed and a short section of the new 400kV overhead line. In both cases the sections are very short and only clip the most northerly part of the community area.

Table 2.26 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Shelley

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
C2.12	Negligible	Small	Small
D-04	Medium	Medium-small	Small
D2.5	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.29.9 Visual amenity across the northern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and construction of the new 400kV overhead line both in this and the neighbouring Polstead community area. Westerly views out of the community area would also be affected by construction of the 400kV underground cables and Dedham Vale East CSE compound south of Millfield Wood in the Polstead community area. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes, and excavation of the opencut trenches. On completion of the works, vegetation would be reinstated with the exception of trees which could not be replanted over the underground cables. Although the size/scale of change would be large, only a very small geographical area would be affected.

2.29.10 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line would be visible on the skyline but would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time.

2.29.11 Views towards the construction activities from much of the community area including Shelley and The Painters Trail would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development.

2.29.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.29.13 The new 400kV overhead line would be aligned parallel and close to the existing 400kV overhead line. The larger 400kV pylons would be more noticeable and more likely to break the skyline than the smaller existing 132kV pylons to be removed, but their presence would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of the views currently experienced. Substantial localised screening would be afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and field boundary tree cover and the size/scale of effect would generally be small unless in very close proximity. The geographical area affected would be small.

2.29.14 Views towards the new 400kV overhead line from much of the community area including Shelley and The Painters Trail would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development.

2.29.15 Reinstatement and embedded planting associated with the 400kV underground cables and Dedham Vale East CSE compound would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration at this stage. As a result, the Dedham Vale East CSE compound and former working area for construction of the underground cables would be very noticeable. This would result in a large size/scale of change but only a small geographical area would be affected.

2.29.16 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.29.17 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.29.18 The new 400kV overhead line would continue to be present alongside the existing 400kV overhead line and adversely affect views within and in/out of the community area.

2.29.19 By Year 15, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be maturing and the landscape would be returning to its existing character. Similarly, the embedded planting around Dedham Vale East CSE compound would both screen and visually integrate it into the wider landscape. The new hedgerows would be mature and would screen the lower parts of the Dedham Vale CSE compound in views from Pope's Green Farm.

2.29.20 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant).**

Proposed Landscape Softening

2.29.21 New hedgerow planting along the east side of Millward Road would help further screen views of the Dedham Vale East CSE compound from properties to the east of Millward Road.

2.30 Somersham

Description of Community Area

2.30.1 Somersham community area lies to the east of the study area and contains the village of Somersham and several dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. These are connected by lanes and private tracks, and by a dense network of PRoW which provides access to the wider countryside and to the nearby Gipping Valley in the neighbouring community area.

2.30.2 The village of Somersham is located within a winding tributary valley of the River Gipping and the small stream flows through the village in a small channel alongside the road. The village displays an eclectic mix of older and more modern properties. A few listed buildings, including the Grade I listed St Mary's Church are dispersed throughout the village.

2.30.3 The wider area comprises a gently rolling plateau which is bisected by tributary valleys of the River Gipping. These valleys have created areas of more steeply sloping landform. The farmland displays a random pattern of ancient field enclosure with small to medium sized fields bordered by often tightly managed hedgerows, with gaps in places. On the higher ground between the valleys there are areas where fields have been amalgamated and hedgerows removed creating a more open landscape with long views, including towards the Gipping Valley to the east.

2.30.4 Woodland is consistent landscape element and includes the large Somersham Park Ancient Woodland, which is a prominent skyline feature in the south of the community area, as well as several smaller woodlands and belts of trees.

2.30.5 In contrast to the elevated panoramic views, the river valleys afford a smaller scale, more intimate sense of enclosure. Similarly, views from the local lanes are typically enclosed by roadside vegetation, with occasional openings created by gaps in the hedgerows or field accesses affording longer views.

2.30.6 To the north-east outside of the community area is the broad valley of the River Gipping. Although most of the transport corridors and urban sprawl along the Gipping Valley are obscured by the intervening vegetation, the skyline above the valley is broken by overhead lines. An existing 132kV and 400kV overhead line also cross the community area to converge on Bramford Substation, which lies to the south-east. The presence of this high voltage electricity infrastructure results in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.30.7 No viewpoints were selected to represent the visual amenity of this community area as significant effects were not identified during the viewpoint selection process which was informed by site visits.

2.30.8 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.30.9 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line and new 400kV overhead line close to Bramford Substation.

Construction

Main Project

2.30.10 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for modifying/realigning the existing 400kV overhead line and constructing the new 400kV overhead line close to Bramford Substation may be noticeable in skyline views from the higher parts of the community area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen

in the context of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines. Together with the intervening distance, this means that the size/scale of change would be small.

2.30.11 Visual amenity across most of the community area, including from Somersham would be unaffected due to the intervening landform and woodland cover. The geographical area affected would therefore be small.

2.30.12 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.30.13 The modification/realignment of the existing 400kV overhead line close to Bramford Substation means that some of the pylons would be in a slightly different location but given the intervening distance, this would not be particularly noticeable.

2.30.14 The presence of the new 400kV overhead line would increase the presence of high voltage electricity infrastructure in distant views but would not fundamentally alter the composition or character of these views as pylons are already a key element. The size/scale of change would be small as there would be little change to the visual amenity currently experienced. The geographical area affected would be small and would be focused on the southernmost part of the community area.

2.30.15 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.30.16 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.30.17 The increase in the number of pylons in distant views would continue to result in an adverse effect on visual amenity across the higher parts of this community area, with the wider area including Somersham remaining unaffected. There would be beneficial effects from the maturing planting to the south-west of Bramford Substation which would increase the overall woodland cover and help to visually integrate both the realigned and new 400kV overhead lines.

2.30.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would continue to be negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

2.31 Sproughton

Description of Community Area

2.31.1 Sproughton is a relatively large community area to the east of the study area. In addition to Sproughton, it includes residential and urban fringe land uses on the western edge of Ipswich. The area is crossed by several main roads including the A14 which connects Felixstowe to the Midlands, the A1214, A1071, and the B1113. The PRoW network includes the Gipping Valley River Path which follows the old towpath along a narrow corridor between the railway and the A14. Once industrialised, the river corridor is now an important recreational resource with woodland, lakes and wildflower meadows interspersed with relics from the river's industrial past. Most of the community area falls within the Gipping Valley SLA.

2.31.2 The village of Sproughton is situated on the valley floor and western valley side of the River Gipping and is contained by the river to the east. The settlement is primarily 20th century but there are some older houses and occasional listed buildings including the Grade II* listed All Saint's Church, which is located alongside the River Gipping.

2.31.3 The urban character of the landscape east of the B1113 contrasts with the more rural farmland to the west. Here, a landscape of medium-large arable fields bordered by hedgerows with trees is set within a rolling landform which inclines gently towards the valley of Burstall Brook on the south-western boundary of the community area. Few roads cross the area and settlement mainly comprises isolated dwellings and farmsteads. These are often set back from the roads by private tracks which contributes to a sense of remoteness and rural/isolation. Woodland cover is relatively sparse but increases to the north where it includes Burstall Long Wood, which is ancient in origin, and to the south along Burstall Brook. Woodland around Abbey Oaks, to the south of Sproughton and along the A14 corridor provides localised containment of views across the community area.

2.31.4 Several transmission and distribution lines cross the area and converge on Bramford Substation to the north-west in the neighbouring Bramford community area. Pylons are a prominent skyline element, which together with the main roads and urban fringe detractors around the edge of Ipswich result in a medium value for visual amenity.

2.31.5 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.2 – View from PRoW near Valley Farm Lodge by the A1071; and
- AB-01 – View south from PRoW on Burstall Lane near Hill Farm.

2.31.1 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the medium value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is medium-high.

Assessment of Effects

2.31.2 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and

removed. The last pylon to be removed lies immediately to the west of the community area and a section of temporary access route follows provides access from the A1071.

Table 2.27 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Sproughton

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.2	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
AB-01	Small	Medium (beneficial)	Medium (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.31.3 Visual amenity across the western part of the community area would be affected by construction activity around the individual pylons to be dismantled or constructed and by movement of construction vehicles and plant on the As1071 and the temporary access route along its western boundary. The size/scale of effect would be large when seen at close range, but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, so that from most of the community area, the size/scale of change would be small as evidenced by viewpoints AB2.2 and AB-01. The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.31.4 There would also be some views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for constructing the new 400kV overline and modifying/realigning the existing 400kV overhead line close to Bramford Substation in the neighbouring Bramford community area. The construction activities would be seen in the context of existing high voltage electricity infrastructure which would reduce the size/scale of change and woodlands including Burstall Long Wood, Round Wood and Bullen Wood, would screen most of the ground level works.

2.31.5 Views towards construction activities from much of the central and eastern part of the community area would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development.

2.31.6 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **neutral (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.31.7 Views out from the western part of this community area would benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line but would also be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line as it approaches Bramford Substation. The size/scale of beneficial change would be greater than the adverse change. In both cases

the size/scale of change would be small as multiple existing transmission and distribution lines would continue to affect visual amenity. Also, the effects on visual amenity across much of the central and eastern part of the community area would be limited by the intervening landform, vegetation and built development. The geographical area affected would therefore be small.

2.31.8 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would **be neutral (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.31.9 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

2.31.10 Views out from the western part of this community area would continue to benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line and be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line

2.31.11 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the medium-high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

2.32 Stoke-by-Nayland

Description of Community Area

2.32.1 The large Stoke-by-Nayland community area is located in the central part of the study area and contains the villages of Stoke-by-Nayland, Withermarsh Green, Stoke Tye Thorington Street and many other hamlets, and dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. It is crossed by the B1086 and B1087, and a network of sinuous and historic lanes which have a strongly rural character, with steep banks in places, grass verges and veteran trees. Two golf courses which are part of the wider Stoke by Nayland Resort are located to the north-west of the community area on the edge of the AONB. The area is well served by PRoW network which tend to connect in an east-west direction and along the river valleys. The network includes Stour Valley Path, St Edmund Way and The Painters Trail. The whole of this community area lies within the AONB.

2.32.2 Stoke-by-Nayland village is situated on a ridge between the Box Valley to the east and a tributary valley of the River Stour to the west. It comprises an historic core with some modern estates mainly located to the north of the village. The Grade II listed Church of St Mary is located on the high ground at the edge of the village and is a prominent and distinctive landmark within the AONB, particularly as the open and sloping landform in front of the church accentuates the height of the tower and prominence of the church.

2.32.3 To the south of the village is Tendring Park, a Grade II Registered Park and Garden, which has a river valley setting sloping down from the village towards the River Stour. The wood pasture, woodlands, copses and boundary tree belts are relatively intact and impart a distinct parkland character and sense of place.

2.32.4 The community area is within the catchment of the River Box with its many streams, ponds and open ditches, whilst its southern and eastern boundaries are formed by the Rivers Stour and Brett respectively. These rivers have created a complex landform with the steeper slopes within the valleys giving way to more gently rolling landform on the interfluvial areas. The field pattern is one of small to medium-sized fields bordered by often species-rich hedgerows with hedgerow trees, which to the south of Stoke-by-Nayland merges into a larger scale pattern of irregular arable fields.

2.32.5 Woodland is a consistent landscape element across much of the community area, with a notable cluster of semi-natural ancient woodlands on the upper valley slopes to the north including Long Wood, Hazel Grove and Mark Wood. Woodland is also associated with historic parklands including Tendring Park, Stoke Priory at Stoke Tye and Gifford's Hall at Withermarsh Green. These include blocks of semi-natural ancient woodland, veteran trees and wood pasture.

2.32.6 The elevated location of Stoke-by-Nayland affords long views out from the edges of the settlements across the surrounding lower-lying farmland. These views reinforce the relationship between the historic edge of the village on a ridge of higher land overlooking the Stour and Box valleys. Elsewhere views are more contained by the rolling landform and high coverage of woodland and trees. There are glimpses of pylons on the existing 132kV and more distant 400kV overhead lines, but pylons are not prominent in views.

2.32.7 The natural beauty of the landscape and its strong sense of history with its medieval settlement, parkland and enclosure patterns results in a high value for visual amenity.

2.32.8 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.4**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- E2.3 – View from Stour Valley Footpath on the edge of Stoke-by-Nayland;
- E2.5 – View from Rectory Hill to the north of Stoke-by-Nayland;
- E2.10 – View from PRoW on Sudbury Road north of Stoke-by-Nayland;
- E2.15 – View from the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way south-west of Stoke-by-Nayland;
- E-03 – View from the Stour Valley Path and St Edmund Way west of Stoke-by-Nayland; and
- E-04 – View from PRoW near Homey Bridge in the Box Valley.

2.32.1 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.32.2 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. Components of the project in this community area include a very short section of 400kV underground cables.

Table 2.28 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Stoke-by-Nayland

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
E2.3	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
E2.5	Negligible	Medium-small	Medium-small
E2.10	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)
E2.15	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
E-03	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
E-04	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.32.3 Although the extent of the works within the community area would be very small, visual amenity across the northern part of this community area would also be affected by views of the works to construct the 400kV underground cables and trenchless crossing under the Box Valley in the neighbouring Polstead community area.

2.32.4 Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes, and excavation of the opencut trenches and trenchless crossing compounds. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along temporary access routes would introduce further disturbance. At night, views may also be affected by night time lighting associated with the overnight working on the trenchless crossing of the Box Valley, but this is likely to be an exceptional and infrequent occurrence. Given the high tree cover, this would only affect a small part of the northern edge of the community area.

2.32.5 On completion of the works, vegetation would be reinstated with the exception of trees which could not be replanted over the underground cables.

2.32.6 There would also be northerly views out from the community area towards the upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV overhead line, but this would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. Ground level construction is unlikely to be visible other than in very close proximity.

2.32.7 The size/scale of change would be large but as evidenced by viewpoint E-04, the geographic area affected would be small and restricted to the open fields north of the B1068. From the rest of the community area, including the villages, the distance and the presence of intervening landform and vegetation means that there would be little or no change to the view.

2.32.8 The Painters Trail follows the road network through this community area and there would be sequential views of construction activities associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line which would be most noticeable from the section of

the trail north of the B1068. The rolling landform along the Box Valley and high tree cover would however lessen the effects on these views.

2.32.9 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.32.10 View across and out from the northern part of this community area would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line. The size/scale of change would be small due to the continued presence of the larger pylons the existing 400kV overhead line. The geographical area affected would be small as evidenced by viewpoints E-04 and E2.10. This is because, due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, only the most northerly part of the community area would be affected.

2.32.11 At Year 1, the reinstatement planting associated with the 400kV underground cables would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration. As a result, the former working area for construction of the underground cables would be very noticeable. The size/scale of change would be medium but the geographical area affected would be small and restricted to the open fields north of the B1068. From the rest of the community area, including the villages, the distance and the presence of intervening landform and vegetation means that there would be little or no change to the view. The geographical area affected would be small and focussed on the higher parts of the community area above the valleys, including Stoke-by-Nayland village.

2.32.12 Users of the section of The Painters Trail north of the B1068 would benefit from the removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in association with the underground cables, although the rolling landform along the Box Valley and high tree cover would temper the level of beneficial effect.

2.32.13 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.32.14 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.32.15 The removal of the existing 132kV overhead line would continue to result in a beneficial change at Year 15. Once the farmland was reinstated and hedgerows replanted, the landscape along the former working area for the underground cables would return to its current character. Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high

sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (significant)**.

2.33 Twinstead

Description of Community Area

2.33.1 Twinstead community area lies to the west of the study area and contains Twinstead village and Twinstead Green as well as smaller clusters and individual dwellings and farmsteads concentrated along the network of winding lanes which crosses the area. The road network includes the A131 which connects Sudbury to the north with Halstead to the south. The eastern part of the community area falls within the SVPA.

2.33.2 The flat or gently undulating landform of the plateau gives way to a more complex landform along the steep-sided tributary valleys of the River Stour to the north and east of the community area. To the east of the A131, the farmland displays a small-scale organic pattern of pastures bordered by ancient and species-rich hedgerows and a high coverage of woodlands including Twinsteadhall Wood, which is ancient in origin. To the west of the A131 the land is mainly in arable cultivation with a more regular pattern of medium-large sized fields bordered by hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

2.33.3 The small-scale, rolling and well-wooded farmland results in a high value for visual amenity despite the presence of the A131 and existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines which cross the northern part of the community area.

2.33.4 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.6** and **6.3.6.4.7**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- G-35 – View from PRoW to the north of Twinstead;
- H-05 – View from Green Lane to north of Twinstead Green;
- H-10 – View from PRoW on Old Road; and
- H-14 – View from lane to the south of Twinstead Green near Beech Cottage.

2.33.5 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.33.6 Components of the main project in the northern part of this community area include the existing 132kV overhead line and section of existing 400kV overhead line south of the diamond crossing to be dismantled and removed, and modifications to the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines including the Twinstead Tee. Components of the project in the north-western part of this community area include the GSP substation, 132kV underground cables and modifications to the existing 132kV overhead line. The single circuit CSE compound lies just to the west in the neighbouring Bulmer community area.

2.33.7 In the southern part of the community area, a temporary access route would extend from the A131 eastwards across the farmland to provide access to the works to construct the Stour Valley West CSE compound in the neighbouring Alphamstone community area. By

crossing fields and using existing field accesses wherever practicable, this would avoid the need to widen and remove vegetation along local lanes.

Table 2.29 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Twinstead

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
G-35	Medium-small	Medium-high (beneficial)	Medium-high (beneficial)
H-05	Medium-small	Small	Negligible
H-10	Medium	Medium-small	Small
H-14	Negligible	Small (beneficial)	Small (beneficial)

Construction

Main Project

2.33.8 Dismantling/removal and modifications to the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines would directly affect the landscape this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes.

2.33.9 Visual amenity across the central part of this community area would be affected by construction activity around the individual pylons to be dismantled and removed or modified and by movement of construction vehicles and plant on local roads and along temporary access routes. When seen at close range, the size/scale of change would be large but this would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, as evidenced by viewpoints H-14 (and H-11 in the neighbouring community area). As a result, the geographical area where visual amenity would potentially be affected would is small.

2.33.10 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 400kV overhead line and modifying the existing 400kV overhead line would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time and would be seen in the context of the existing overhead lines.

2.33.11 Due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, much of the community area would be unaffected by the works, although movement of construction vehicles and plant along the A132, Church Road and Old Road would introduce some additional visual disturbance.

2.33.12 To the south of the community area, intermittent movement of construction vehicles and plant along a temporary access route would introduce localised visual disturbance into an area of farmland which would otherwise be unaffected by construction activity.

2.33.13 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

GSP Substation

2.33.14 Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes, excavation of opencut trenches and earthworks to construct the mounds which form part of the embedded measures to the east and west of the GSP substation.

2.33.15 The ground level activities would only affect a small part of this community area. When seen in close proximity the size/scale of change would be large, but this level of effect would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation, so that the geographical area affected would be small. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along the A132, Church Road and Old Road would introduce some additional visual disturbance.

2.33.16 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for modifying the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time.

2.33.17 Due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, much of the community area would be unaffected by the works.

2.33.18 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.33.19 The removal of the existing 400kV overhead line south of the diamond crossing would reduce the amount of high voltage electricity infrastructure present in views. When seen at close range, the size/scale of beneficial change resulting from the removal of a pylon would be large, but this would diminish rapidly with distance as the pylons are not prominent in wider views and the change would be seen in the context of pylons on the existing 400kV overhead line. Due to the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover, the geographical area potentially affected is small.

2.33.20 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

GSP Substation

2.33.21 At Year 1, the mounds which form part of the embedded measures would screen the lower parts of the GSP substation (and single circuit CSE compound in the neighbouring community area) but the associated embedded planting would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration. As a result, the upper parts of the new infrastructure and former working area for construction of the underground cables would be very noticeable but would only affect views across a small geographical area. The size/scale of change would be small except when the GSP substation or single circuit CSE compound is seen at close range as evidenced by viewpoints H-05 and H-10.

2.33.22 The geographical area affected would be small. From the rest of the community area, including Twinstead village, the rolling landform and high woodland and tree cover means that there would be little or no change to the view.

2.33.23 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

Main Project

2.33.24 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

GSP Substation

2.33.25 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.33.26 The removal of the existing 400kV overhead line (4YLA) would continue to result in a beneficial change at Year 15.

2.33.27 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

GSP Substation

2.33.28 By Year 15, the embedded planting would be maturing and would screen much of the GSP substation (and single circuit CSE compound in the neighbouring community area). Views would only be afforded through the gaps in the planting above the underground cables and under the existing 400kV overhead line. The top of the gantries may be visible but would be seen alongside the existing overhead line infrastructure.

2.33.29 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be adverse but the magnitude of change would reduce to negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

2.34 Wenham

Description of Community Area

2.34.1 Wenham community area lies to the east of the study area and contains the villages of Great Wenham (also known as Wenham Magna) and Little Wenham (also known as Wenham Parva) together with some dispersed farmsteads. Lanes and a relatively dense PRoW network provides access to the countryside. The villages both have a rural character, with Great Wenham being larger and displaying an open, residential character

with a variety of building styles, some of which are medieval in origin. Little Wenham comprises a cluster of historic buildings on the site of Little Wenham Hall (a Grade I listed building and Scheduled Monument).

2.34.2 The villages are set within two small tributary valleys of Sutton Brook, which are incised into the surrounding gently rolling plateau farmland. Much of the land is in arable cultivation with a pattern of medium to large fields. The fields are bordered by hedgerows which vary from species-rich and often historic hedgerows to single-species hedgerows that are more tightly managed. Woodlands are concentrated along the stream valleys, but the high hedgerow and hedgerow tree cover gives much of this community area a well-wooded character. The Sudbury Branch Railway Line creates a distinctive linear woodland belt across the LCA. Despite the relatively high woodland cover, the plateau landform means that in places there are often long and open views. However, from the stream valleys and around the villages, views are more contained and the landscape has an intimate quality.

2.34.3 The landscape which has a high value of visual amenity particularly along the well-wooded stream valleys and around the historic villages.

2.34.4 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.1** to **6.3.6.4.2**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- AB2.21 – View from PRoW near Wenham Grange on Brook Lane; and
- C2.1 – View from PRoW to the north-west of Coopers Corner.

2.34.1 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.34.2 This community area would not be affected by the GSP substation and therefore this is not included in the assessment. No component of the project would be in this community area. The closest component is the existing 132kV overhead line to be dismantled and removed 330m to the north.

Table 2.30 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Wenham

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
AB2.21	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small
C2.1	Negligible	Small	Small

Construction

Main Project

2.34.3 Visual amenity across the northern part of this community area would be affected by construction activity associated with the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line in the open farmland immediately to the north of this community area.

Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Clay Hill and temporary access routes in the neighbouring community areas would add further disturbance into the northern part of the area. The effect on views from the ground level construction activities would rapidly diminish with increasing distance.

2.34.4 The upper parts of the taller equipment used for dismantling and removing the existing 132kV pylons would be noticeable over a larger geographical area but would only be present at each pylon for a short period of time. There would also be some distant skyline views of the upper parts of the taller equipment used for constructing the new 400kV overhead line. The works would be perceived as a series of discrete sites across the horizon beyond the existing 400kV overhead line and to the north-west of Ramsey Wood. No ground level construction would be visible.

2.34.5 As evidenced by viewpoint AB-09 in the neighbouring Raydon community area, the size/scale of change would be small as pylons are already a noticeable skyline element. Only a small geographical area would be affected. From much of the community area including Great Wenham and Little Wenham, the works would be obscured by the layering effect created by the many field boundary trees.

2.34.6 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole during construction would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

Main Project

2.34.7 Visual amenity across this community area would benefit from the dismantling and removal of the existing 132kV overhead line but would also be adversely affected by the presence of the new 400kV overhead line on the distant skyline in views out to the north.

2.34.8 Due to the greater prominence of the existing 132kV overhead line in the open farmland immediately to the north the benefits of its removal would outweigh the disbenefits of introducing the new 400kV overhead line. The size/scale of change would be medium but this would reduce with increasing distance as from much of the community area, including Great Wenham and Little Wenham, the existing 132kV is obscured by the layering effect created by the many field boundary trees. The geographical area affected would be medium and focussed on the areas of more open plateau.

2.34.9 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.34.10 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

Main Project

2.34.11 The benefits of removing the existing 132kV overhead line would continue to outweigh the adverse effects of additional pylons on the new 400kV overhead line in distant views to the north. Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be beneficial and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor beneficial (not significant)**.

2.35 Wickham St Paul

Description of Community Area

2.35.1 Wickham St Paul community area lies towards the western edge of the study area and includes the village of Wickham St. Paul and some dispersed dwellings and farmsteads. The village of Wickham St Paul has a rural and historic character, with several listed buildings and a spacious open character created by the large village green and buildings set back from the road. The A31 crosses the southern part of the area and provides connections to Sudbury and Halstead. The area is served by a good PRoW network.

2.35.2 The wider community area is gently rolling plateau farmland, which to the north includes the small incised tributary valley of Belchamp Brook. The land is mainly in arable production with varying field sizes bordered by intermittent hedgerows with occasional trees. To the north and west of the Wickham St Paul, field amalgamation has weakened the earlier field patterns leading to the creation of a larger scale and more open landscape broken only by the occasional small block of woodland. Close to the south-eastern edge of the village there is a distinctive pattern of smaller rectilinear hedged fields.

2.35.3 Despite the presence of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines, the gently rolling farmland has high value for visual amenity

2.35.4 The following viewpoints (see ES Appendix 6.4: Viewpoint Assessment (**application document 6.3.6.4.7**)) represent the visual amenity of this community area:

- H-02 – View from Broad Road to north of Wickham St Paul;
- H-03 – View from All Saints Church at Wickham St Paul on Church Road;
- H-04 – View from Rectory Lane on the edge of Wickham St Paul;
- H-06 – View from PRoW to the south-east of Wickham St Paul; and
- H-07 – View from PRoW near Rectory Lane on the edge of Wickham St Paul.

2.35.1 As views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by people living in and moving around this rural community, their susceptibility to the project is high. When combined with the high value for visual amenity, the overall sensitivity is high.

Assessment of Effects

2.35.2 This community area would not be affected by the main project and therefore this is not included in the assessment.

2.35.3 Components of the GSP substation in this community area include modification of the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines.

Table 2.31 – Viewpoint Assessment Summary for Wickham St Paul

Viewpoint Number	Magnitude		
	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
H-02	Small	Small	Negligible
H-03	Small	Small	Negligible
H-04	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
H-06	Small	Negligible	Negligible
H-07	Medium-small	Medium-small	Small

Construction

GSP Substation

2.35.4 Modifications to the existing 132kV and 400kV overhead lines would directly affect the landscape within the central part of this community area but the effects would be short term and require little vegetation removal. A small working area around each pylon would be required and most of the work is likely to be at ground level with some limited at-height working, which would include the use of mobile cranes. The upper parts of the taller equipment would be noticeable on the skyline. The works would be noticeable in the open farmland but would only be present at each pylon location for a short period of time. Movement of construction vehicles and plant along Church Road, Rectory Lane, School Road and Old Road and along temporary access routes would introduce some additional visual disturbance.

2.35.5 The size/scale of change would be small and the geographical area affected would be medium.

2.35.6 The eastern part of the community area would also be affected by views out towards construction activities associated with the 132kV undergrounding, GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound in the neighbouring Twinstead and Bulmer community areas. Initial vegetation removal would be followed by the presence of a construction compound, working areas, temporary access routes, excavation of opencut trenches and earthworks to construct the mound which forms part of the embedded measures to the west of the GSP substation. Movement of construction vehicles and plant would introduce further disturbance into the area.

2.35.7 The ground level activities would only affect a very small part of this community area. As evidenced by viewpoints H-07 (and H-08 in the neighbouring Gestingthorpe community area), although the size/scale of change would be large when seen at close range, the effect on views would diminish rapidly with distance due to the screening afforded by the landform and vegetation and the geographical area affected would be small.

2.35.8 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be medium-small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the

effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)

GSP Substation

2.35.9 At Year 1, the embedded planting would be immature and provide limited screening or visual integration, although the mound to the west of the GSP substation which forms part of the embedded measures would provide some screening of the lower parts of the substation. As a result, the upper parts of the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound and former working area for construction of the 132kV underground cables would be noticeable in views out from the eastern edge of the community area as evidenced by viewpoint H-07. The size/scale of change would be medium-small.

2.35.10 From much of the community area including the village of Wickham St Paul, the gently rolling landform, hedgerows and layering effect created by the field boundary trees, would substantially reduce the prominence of the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound. The geographical area affected would be small.

2.35.11 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would be adverse and the magnitude of change would be small. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 1 of operation would be **minor adverse (not significant)**.

Proposed Mitigation

2.35.12 No mitigation over and above the embedded measures is proposed in this community area.

Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)

2.35.13 Visual amenity across this community area would continue to benefit from the removal of the 132kV pylons. Also, by Year 15, the embedded planting would be maturing and would screen much of the GSP substation and single circuit CSE compound in easterly views out from the community area.

2.35.14 Overall, it is anticipated that the effect on visual amenity would continue to be adverse but the magnitude of change would reduce to negligible. Taking account of the high sensitivity, the effect of the project on the visual amenity of the community area as a whole at Year 15 of operation would be **neutral (not significant)**.

3. Conclusion

3.1.1 The following table provides a summary of the assessment of community areas.

Table 3.1 – Summary of the Assessment of Community Areas

Community Name	Sensitivity	Main Project / GSP Substation	Directly Affected		Magnitude			Significance		
			Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
Aldham	Medium-high	Main project	-	-	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Alphamstone	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-large	Medium-small	Medium-small	**Moderate adverse**	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Assington	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Boxford	High	Main project	-	-	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bramford	Medium-high	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Community Name	Sensitivity	Main Project / GSP Substation	Directly Affected		Magnitude			Significance		
			Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
Bulmer	High	Main project	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		GSP Substation	✓	✓	Medium-small	Small	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Neutral
Bures St Mary	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-small	Small	Medium-small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Burstall	Medium-high	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-small	Medium	Medium	Minor adverse	**Moderate adverse**	**Moderate adverse**
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chattisham	Medium-high	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-small	Medium	Medium	Minor adverse	**Moderate beneficial**	**Moderate beneficial**
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Copdock and Washbrook	Medium-high	Main project	-	-	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Elmsett	High	Main project	-	-	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Community Name	Sensitivity	Main Project / GSP Substation	Directly Affected		Magnitude			Significance		
			Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
Flowton	Medium-high	Main project	-	-	Negligible	Small	Small	Neutral	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Gestingthorpe	High	Main project	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		GSP Substation	✓	✓	Negligible	Small	Negligible	Neutral	Minor adverse	Neutral
Hadleigh	Medium-high	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Great Henny & Little Henny	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	Small	Negligible	Negligible	Minor adverse	Neutral	Neutral
Hintlesham	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Medium	Medium	Minor adverse	**Moderate adverse**	**Moderate adverse**
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lamarsh	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-large	Medium-small	Medium	**Moderate adverse**	Minor beneficial	**Moderate beneficial**
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Community Name	Sensitivity	Main Project / GSP Substation	Directly Affected		Magnitude			Significance		
			Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
Layham	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Medium-small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Leavenheath	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-large	Medium	Medium-small	**Moderate adverse**	**Moderate adverse**	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Little Blakenham	Medium-high	Main project	✓	✓	Negligible	Small	Small	Neutral	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Little Cornard	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Little Maplestead	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Negligible	Negligible	Minor adverse	Neutral	Neutral
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Middleton	High	Main project	✓	✓	Negligible	Small	Small	Neutral	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Community Name	Sensitivity	Main Project / GSP Substation	Directly Affected		Magnitude			Significance		
			Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
Nayland with Wissington	High	Main project	-	-	Negligible	Small	Small	Neutral	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Newton	Medium-high	Main project	-	-	Negligible	Small	Small	Neutral	Minor adverse	Minor Adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Pebmarsh	High	Main project	✓	-	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Polstead	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium	Medium	Medium	**Moderate adverse**	**Minor beneficial**	**Moderate beneficial**
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Raydon	High	Main project	✓	-	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Shelley	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Community Name	Sensitivity	Main Project / GSP Substation	Directly Affected		Magnitude			Significance		
			Construction	Operation	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)	Construction	Operation Year 1 (Without Mitigation)	Operation Year 15 (With Mitigation)
Sproughton	Medium-high	Main project	-	-	Small	Small	Small	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Stoke-by-Nayland	High	Main project	✓	✓	Small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Twinstead	High	Main project	✓	✓	Medium-small	Small	Small	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	✓	✓	Small	Small	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Neutral
Wenham	High	Main project	-	-	Small	Medium-small	Medium-small	Minor adverse	Minor beneficial	Minor beneficial
		GSP Substation	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wickham St Paul	High	Main project	-	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
		GSP Substation	✓	✓	Medium-small	Small	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse	Neutral

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