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PEGASUS GROUP

Old Wood Energy Park

Land west of Wysall, Nottinghamshire

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Document Management.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Pegasus Group have been commissioned by Exagen Development Ltd to prepare this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in support of a planning application for the proposed Old Wood Energy Park development (Development). The Development is for the construction and operation of a renewable energy park made up of ground mounted solar photovoltaic arrays (solar farm), Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), substation and ancillary infrastructure (the Development, also known as Old Wood Energy Park). The Development is located on two parcels of land to the west of Wysall, Nottinghamshire and connected by a buried cable which would be beneath the bound surface of the public highway between the two land parcels (the site).- refer to Figure 1 Site Location and Context Plan. The site falls within the administrative boundary of Rushcliffe Borough Council (the Council).

1.2. The layout of the Development and landscaping proposals are illustrated on Figure 2 Landscape Proposal.

1.3. This LVIA reviews and evaluates the baseline condition of the site and its surrounding landscape, and considers opportunities for mitigation measures and whether such measures would be appropriate to the local landscape character.

1.4. The main objectives of the LVIA are:

- To describe the landscape character of the site and its surroundings, evaluate its sensitivity to change and, taking into account the magnitude of change, assess the effect that the proposal would have on the local landscape character.
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e., people who would be able to see the development), evaluate their sensitivity to change and, taking into account the magnitude of change, assess the effect that the proposal would have on visual amenity. Detailed residential visual amenity issue is excluded from this LVIA.
- To identify landscape elements associated with the site, evaluate their sensitivity to change and, taking into account the magnitude of change, assess the effect the proposals would have on landscape elements.
- To identify mitigation measures and opportunities for landscape character and visual amenity enhancement, in order to mitigate, offset or reduce the predicted adverse effects.

Consultation

1.5. In June 2022, Pegasus submitted a request for pre-application advice to the Council and the submission was supported by Pegasus' *Pre-Application Landscape And Visual Statement* (March 2022) in relation to the co-called 'Willoughby 2' site, which formed part of a larger potential development extent being considered at the time.

1.6. The Council issued its pre-application response at the end of September 2022, under reference: 22/00709/ADVICE, stating that detailed input into LVIA matters will be considered during the determination stage: ***"In respect of landscape, the authority replies upon external input to provide comment on the methodology and importantly the***

specific landscape and visual effects of the proposals. It would be during the consideration of a planning application when a full LVIA has been submitted where full consideration of the landscape and visual affects would be considered in detail."

1.7. Nevertheless, the Council's response was informative and referred to a number of planning policies of relevance to the LVIA issues, namely Policy 22 'Development within the Countryside' and Policy 16 'Renewable Energy', and the published *Landscape Sensitivity Study*, which was jointly commissioned by Rushcliffe and Melton Councils.

1.8. A brief analysis of the site, at the time referred to as 'Willoughby 2' is provided on pages 3 - 5 of the Council's pre-application response (unpaginated document), and this is helpful:

"In respect of Willoughby 2 [the site]***, there are two separate parcels of land measuring some 107.4 ha in total located to the west of Wysall.***

The northern parcel is approximately 73.7 ha in area and comprises 11 agricultural land parcels and buildings associated Lodge Farm. It is crossed by three public rights of way, bounded by woodland to the north and a mixture of agricultural land and woodland to the east, south and west. It is also directly to the west of a proposed ground mounted solar installation at Highfield Farm, Wysall (Ref: 22/00303/FUL) which is yet to be determined. No consideration of the cumulative affects of the proposals seems to have been undertaken to date, but if this application is either undetermined or approved upon submission it is recommended this be included within the LVIA.

The land itself it relatively well contained in the wider landscape. There is a public footpath running though the site and it is directly adjacent to a local nature reserve (north) which also contains ancient woodland. It is considered that views from the local nature reserve (which contains a variety of pathways) also have value. Development directly alongside the nature reserve is not considered appropriate not only visually would it provide a negative juxtaposition, but it may also harm the root protection of existing trees and have an impact on wildlife within it. There should be consideration of a buffer along the entirely of the northern boundary and some form planting behind the proposed panels. The eastern part of the site also appears to include a detached dwelling and would be directly alongside another dwelling accessed from Bradmore Road. There should be sufficient distance to these properties not to adversely affect their amenity, outlook and setting. Without a detailed layout it is difficult to comment meaningfully.

The southern parcel measures some 33.7ha in area and comprises of six agricultural fields, bounded by a mixture of agricultural land and woodland. It is also directly to the west of a proposed ground mounted solar installation at Highfield Farm, Wysall (Ref: 22/00303/FUL) which is yet to be determined. The site would be exposed in views from the south, but it acknowledged that the majority of these would be distant views.

Similarly, there needs to be some consideration of the cumulative effects of the adjacent proposed ground mounted solar development.

(…) At Willoughby 2, it is considered that the sites are relatively contained in the wider landscape by existing vegetation but are constrained by the existing nature reserve to the north, and existing dwelling on and alongside the east part of the site. The cumulative affects also need further consideration.

(...)

Conclusion

It is considered that the fields forming Willoughby 2 are also relatively well contained in the wider landscape but are not without constraint. The nature reserve to the north and the residential properties to the east will limit development of certain parts of the site - without a detailed layout plan it is difficult to comment further. Similarly, there also needs to be consideration of the cumulative effects of the proposals (particularly Willoughby 2) where it would be located directly adjacent to an application for a 49.9MW solar farm (if approved)."

1.9. In summary, the scope of work, assessment approach and viewpoint selection outlined in this LVIA had not been subject to any detailed pre-application consultation, but the Council's analysis - quoted above, provided sufficient information with regard to the anticipated study area/ focus of the assessment and potential constraints.

1.10. This LVIA has been written with regard to the best practise - refer to Appendix 1 Pegasus' Methodology, knowledge of the site and its context, and the scope of work, assessment, and viewpoint selection are considered appropriate and representative, and proportionate to the scale of the Development, given its location and characteristics. The approach in this LVIA is based on Pegasus' experience in dealing with LVIA issues for such typology elsewhere in the country.

1.11. Limited advice with regards to potential landscape and visual effects was provided by the Council in June 2023 as part of the EIA Screening Opinion, application reference no. 23/01010/SCREIA, which confirmed that the Development was not EIA Development.

Cumulative Schemes

1.12. With regards the cumulative effects, the Council's pre-application response and Council's EIA Screening Opinion for the Development refer to a single consented (but not yet implemented) solar farm located immediately to the west of the site - application reference no. 22/00303/FUL Land To North East Of Highfields Farm, Bunny Hill, Costock, Nottinghamshire. The LVIA submitted as part of that application has been reviewed to inform this report, along with the comments issued by the Council's landscape consultant. This information guided the scope of cumulative assessment.

1.13. In addition to the above cumulative scheme, Pegasus' desktop research identified two other cumulative schemes in the area:

- 21/00703/FUL - OS Field 8561, Rear Of Rushcliffe Grove, East Leake, Nottinghamshire | Installation and operation of a solar farm together with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure. | Approved 02 December 2021.

- 23/00254/FUL - Land At Fields Farm Asher Lane Ruddington Nottingham | Installation of a Renewable energy Park comprising: ground mounted solar panels; access tracks; inverters, transformers; substation and battery energy storage system; customer cabin; underground cables and conduits; perimeter fence; CCTV equipment; temporary construction compound; and associated infrastructure and planting scheme. | Approved 02 October 2023.

1.14. Given that all three cumulative schemes are approved, they are considered to form part of the baseline, in terms of landscape character and visual amenity.

1.15. In addition, an EIA Screening Report was submitted to the Council in June 2023 for a proposed 49.9 MW cumulative solar scheme at Land To The East And South-East Of Costock, Rushcliffe (alternative address: Field Farm, Wysall Road, Costock, Nottinghamshire, LE12 6XQ). This scheme, given its current status, is unlikely to come forward before the determination of the Development. For that reason, and the fact no final design and landscape plan are available, it is not considered any further in this LVIA. It is assumed potential cumulative effects with the Development would be assessed in any LVIA submitted for the cumulative scheme.

1.16. The locations of the cumulative schemes are shown on Figure 1 Site Location and Context Plan.

Approach and Methodology

1.17. The LVIA assesses the operational stage of the Development only, as the construction and decommissioning stages would be of short and temporary duration. Any potential effects brought about by the construction and decommissioning stages are likely to be lower or similar to those assessed post construction. The effects are therefore assessed as Year 1 post-completion, and at Year 15 to take into account proposed mitigation and enhancement measures.

1.18. The development has been screened by the Council as a non-EIA development - application reference no. 23/01010/SCREIA (see para 1.11).

1.19. This LVIA has been undertaken with regards to the best practice guidelines within the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* Edition 3 (hereafter referred to as *GLVIA3*). The *GLVIA3* states in paragraph 1.17 that when identifying landscape and visual effects there:

"...is a need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional."

1.20. GLVIA3 also recognises in paragraph 2.23 that:

"...professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements"

1.21. All effects are taken as adverse unless otherwise stated. This LVIA should be read in conjunction with the supporting Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement (DAS). The detailed methodology for this LVIA is provided in Appendix 1. The photographic evidence has been prepared with regard to the Technical Guidance Note 06/19 *Visual Representation of Development Proposals*, published by the Landscape Institute on 17 September 2019.

1.22. This LVIA (December 2023) has been prepared by Radek Chanas, Associate Landscape Architect at Pegasus with over 15 years of experience in landscape planning and appeal work in relation to renewable and low carbon energy developments, including acting as

expert witness. He is a Chartered Landscape Architect with Master of Engineering in Landscape Architecture and Master of Arts in Garden and Landscape History. He is considered to have 'substantive experience'.

Study Area

1.23. A preliminary 3km radii study area has been initially identified based on the Ordnance Survey (OS) 1:25,000 map and desktop research, which included a review of the planning policies contained in the Council's Development Plan: *Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy* (adopted December 2014) and *Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies* (adopted October 2019).

1.24. These policies are not specifically listed or referred to in this LVIA, but the provided guidance and Council's objectives have been taken into account during the iterative design process, baseline research, and assessment work presented in this LVIA.

1.25. A preliminary baseline research and a single site visit were carried out in late January 2022, to inform Pegasus' *Pre-Application Landscape And Visual Statement* (March 2022).

1.26. Following this preliminary research and site visit, a more focused smaller study area, of approximately 1 - 1.5km radii, was considered to be more appropriate and informative, given the lack of or very limited inter-visibility with the majority of the surrounding wider countryside –this is largely reflective of the Council's position outlined in their pre-application advice.

1.27. This conclusion was based on views gained from within the site and reciprocal views from publicly accessible views in the surrounding area – as evidenced in Pegasus' *Pre-Application Landscape And Visual Statement* (March 2022) and Section 6 of this LVIA.

1.28. The LVIAs for the approved cumulative schemes have also been reviewed and their findings support this conclusion.

Nature of Effect

1.29. The degree of landscape or visual effect is identified by means of a descriptive scale as per the *GLVIA3*. However, it is also necessary to consider the nature of the landscape and visual effects. The *GLVIA3* assists on this point noting:

"One of the more challenging issues is deciding whether the landscape effects should be categorised as positive or negative. It is also possible for effects to be neutral in their consequences for the landscape. An informed professional judgement should be made about this and the criteria used in reaching the judgement should be clearly stated. They might include, but should not be restricted to:

- ***The degree to which the proposal fits with existing character***
- ***The contribution to the landscape that the development may make its own right, usually by virtue of good design, even if it is in contrast to existing character.***
- ***The importance of perceptions of landscape is emphasised by the European Landscape Convention, and others may of course hold different opinions on***

whether the effects are positive or negative, but this is not a reason to avoid making this judgement, which will ultimately be weighed against the opinions of others in the decision making process."

Limitations to the Assessment

1.30. The site visit, photography, and assessment were carried out in late January 2022 when the level of vegetative screening was reduced. In addition, the identified viewpoints have been purposely selected to avoid any features in the foreground that would screen or interrupt views towards the site.

1.31. The weather condition and visibility were good, with views recorded from publicly accessible vantage points. The assessment excludes private land and views from private dwellings.

2. Description of the Site and Proposals

Site and its Context

2.1. The site comprises 2 separate parcels of land located in very close proximity to each other. Wysall is the closest settlement and lies, broadly speaking, to the east of the site. The northern parcel includes 9 medium to large scale field enclosures with Bradmore Road forming, in parts, its eastern boundary. A linear woodland, known as Old Wood, forms the northern edge to this parcel and cloaks a pronounced change in levels, marked by Bunny Hill, Rough Hill, and Windmill Hill. The contours steeply slope to the north and indicate change from the elevated and undulating Nottinghamshire Wolds to the vale landscape associated with the River Trent, which lies further north.

2.2. The southern parcel includes 5 small to medium field enclosures with the access track crossing an additional field enclosure and leading to Wysall Road / Costock Road, which abuts it to the south. Wysall Road leads north east towards the settlement of Wysall and west to the village of Costock. Wysall is separated from the site by various pastoral and arable fields with the settlement edge largely enclosed by mature hedgerow and tree vegetation.

2.3. The two parcels are connected by a buried cable to be laid beneath the bound surface of the public highway.

2.4. Arable fields separate the two parcels. Large scale arable fields characterise the landscape to the west of the site, with a number of woodland blocks compartmentalising the area. Rough Plantation, Wysall Rough Plantation, Long Rough Plantation, and Intake Wood abut the site. The Holy Cross Convent is located west of Intake Wood and along with the neighbouring Highfields, mark the countryside between the site and the A60 (Bunny Hill road / Nottingham Road).

2.5. The site's perimeter, in addition to the aforementioned highways, follows existing field boundaries delineated by hedgerows, blocks of woodland and tree belts. Boundary hedgerows associated with the site are generally well maintained and approximately 1.5m to 2m in height, albeit there are sections, which are higher - for example the boundary

hedgerows H1, H2, H4, and H19 (4m high) associated with the northern parcel, and H40 and H49 (5m high) associated with the southern parcel.

2.6. The A60 (Nottingham Road / Bunny Hill road) dissects this working agricultural landscape and lies approximately 1km away to the west. The village of Costock marks the junction of Wysall Road / Costock Road with the A60 (Nottingham Road / Bunny Hill road) with the settlement of East Leake located beyond the 2km radii from the site. The landscape west of the A60 is not visible from within the site land or its immediate area, albeit the large scale infrastructure of British Gypsum facilities ,north of East Leake, is visible from certain elevated locations. The approved small scale solar farm at OS Field 8561, Rear Of Rushcliffe Grove, East Leake, Nottinghamshire (application reference no. 21/00703/FUL) at Sharpley Hill, north eastern edge of East Leake is located within this distant study area.

2.7. Immediately to the west of the site lies the approved cumulative solar farm on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm, Bunny Hill, Costock, Nottinghamshire (application reference no. 22/00303/FUL). It covers the arable fields around The Holy Cross Convent, west of the site and above mentioned woodlands with its northern edge abutting Old Wood with the substation located in the southern most part of the site with access off Wysall Road / Costock Road to the south.

2.8. Topographically the site forms part of the elevated Nottinghamshire Wolds and its convoluted outline terminates abruptly as a steep slope to the north before descending into the broad valley of the River Trent - refer to Figure 3 Topography Plan. The north western corner of the site, which abuts Old Wood, sits at approximately 88m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The landform rises further west and culminates as Bunny Hill, and according to the Ordnance Survey (OS) Explorer map 1:25,000 reaches approximately 92m AOD. This rising landform, coupled with Old Wood, encloses the site and its immediate landscape to the north. The higher ground continues further west towards Rough Hill and Sharpley Hill, which collectively segregate the site and landscape immediately around it from the wider study area further north and west.

2.9. To the north west of the site, beyond Old Wood, lies the approved cumulative solar farm on Land At Fields Farm Asher Lane Ruddington Nottingham (application reference no. 23/00254/FUL). It is located on the edge of Ruddington and is associated with the low lying landscape (c. 30m AOD). Due to the change in levels and the presence of Old Wood, there is no inter-visibility between this cumulative site and the core study area.

2.10. The site's landform rises towards Bradmore Road and Wysall, which collectively enclose the site to the east and separate it from the landscape further east and south east. This gentle rise in levels is illustrated by the Site Context Views, Viewpoint 1 and Viewpoint 2, with Lodge Farm identifiable on the horizon. Bradmore Road sits between approximately 90m and 82m AOD with the village sat between approximately 86m and 68m AOD. Views from this road overlook the southern parcel and the eye travels towards the distant hills seen on the horizon.

2.11. Further east and south east of Bradmore Road and Keyworth Road the landform falls or broadly remains at a similar elevation as the site itself. Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, located approximately 3.5km away from the site to the south east, sits slightly higher, up to approximately 100m – 105m AOD - refer to Figure 3 Topography Plan. There is lack of any inter-visibility between the site and this village due to the intervening vegetation.

2.12. The landform of the site gently slopes to the south, reaching approximately the 60m contour line along the southern edge of the site, along Wysall Road / Costock Road (refer to Site Context Views, Viewpoint 1). This lower ground is drained by Kingston Brook, and its valley continues south east towards Willoughby-on-the-Wolds. South of the Brook and Wysall Road/ Costock Road the topography rises again to approximately 85m AOD around Wolds Farm on Wysall Road and Oak Tree Farm on Wysall Lane. It continues south to reach approximately 90m AOD before sloping again towards the River Mantle. The higher ground around Wolds Farm and Oak Tree Farm terminates views south from within the site (refer to Site Context Views, Viewpoint 2). Due to this undulating landform and presence of well managed and relatively tall hedgerows and blocks of woodland, which are characteristic of this landscape, reciprocal views towards and into the interior of the site are limited or are relatively distant and interrupted by tree canopies. This is further explained in Section 6 of this LVIA.

2.13. It is noted that a Screening Request has been submitted for a 49.9MW solar farm in the elevated southern part of the study area with the grid connection linking to the overhead power lines at the cumulative site Land To North East Of Highfields Farm, Bunny Hill, Costock, Nottinghamshire (application reference no. 22/00303/FUL). Based on the submitted documents it appears that the access is being proposed off Rempstone Lane. The site visit confirmed that whilst theoretically visible (refer to Figure 5), there is very limited inter-visibility between the site and this high ground due to the intervening field boundary vegetation. Given the status of this scheme it is envisaged that the subsequent application, associated with this cumulative development, would consider the Development as part of their cumulative assessment.

2.14. There are a number of properties that adjoin the site or lie in very close proximity to it and are visible form within the site (distance measured between the fence line and curtilage of the property):

- The Elms along Bradmore Road - c. 160m from the dwelling.
- Lodge Farm and Field View accessible from Bradmore Road - c. 120m from the dwelling.
- Five Oaks Stables and Scotland Hill Farm along Wysall Road / Costock Road, some 350m and 170m respectively..
- The Holy Cross Convent at Highfields, some 400m.

2.15. The village of Wysall and Costock both lie in close proximity, but the intervening vegetation prevents from gaining any direct or unrestricted views.

2.16. In terms of public access, there are two Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) that traverse the site, both in the northern site (there are none in the southern site):

- Public Footpath Wysall FP4 connecting to Bradmore Road.
- Public Footpath Wysall FP3 and Public Footpath Costock FP7 from Wysall leading diagonally across the site and through Old Wood, where it joins Bridleway Bunny BW15 on the northern edge of the woodland.

2.17. There are a number of other PRoWs within the close to medium range landscape and they tend to converge at Wysall and Thorpe in the Glebe, which lies further south. It is noted that Public Footpaths Costock FP4 and Rempstone FP8 cross the southern part of the study area, between Costock and Wymeswold, with Public Footpath Rempstone FP10, Thorpe In The Glebe FP8 and Thorpe In The Glebe FP7, located in close proximity to the southern parcel of the site.

2.18. A promoted long distance route, the Midshires Way, dissects the study area, leading from the north western quadrants of the study area, across Bunny Hill and the site, and linking with Wysall before continuing further south east. An alternative section of the Midshires Way also follows Bradmore Road along the site's eastern edge.

2.19. According to the OS Explorer map 1:25,000 there are no Open Access Land areas, commons, country parks or accessible woodlands in the local area. Public access is limited to highways and PRoWs.

2.20. The review of the Development Plan revealed that the northern parcel of the site falls within the 'Gotham Hills, West Leake & Bunny Ridge Line' ecological network identified as part of biodiversity opportunity areas in the *Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies* (adopted October 2019) Appendix E. This issue will be considered, if appropriate, in the Ecological Impact Assessment (December 2023) prepared by Clarkson & Woods Ecological Consultants.

Development, Mitigation Measures and Enhancements

2.21. A series of technical drawings and elevations, and cross section explain the layout of the Development and associated infrastructure, and this LVIA should be read in conjunction with these plans and the description provided in the Planning Statement and DAS (both December 2023). Figure 2 Landscape Proposals illustrates the general arrangement of the infrastructure and proposed mitigation planting.

2.22. This LVIA is based on the following height parameters:

- Solar panels with a maximum height of up to 3.1 m above the ground.
- Inverters in the solar arrays with a maximum height of up to 3 m.
- Wooden post and wire mesh 'deer fencing' round the solar arrays, with a maximum height of 2.4m.
- The proposed battery storage units would be secured in containers approximately 3m high.
- The battery storage containers would be painted green, or other colour as agreed with the Council.
- The battery storage units and inverters/ transformers that would be located in parallel rows to represent a coherent and relatively simple layout demarcated by permeable stone access tracks constructed of locally sourced materials.
- The battery storage and ancillary facilities (but excluding the substation) would be secured by green painted palisade security fencing of 2.5m in height.

- Where access gates are necessary double leaf security gates to match proposed palisade fencing.

- CCTV around the main part of the site, i.e., the perimeter of the battery storage compound.

- The proposed on-site substation, the equipment would be between approx. 4 - 7m in height.

- Access to the northern parcel would be from Bradmore Road to the east via a new access road, located just south of the existing access to Lodge Farm and access to the southern parcel would be from Wysall Road to the south, where an existing field access point will be widened to the east to facilitate the necessary junction design. The access tracks would resemble a typical agricultural loose stone track with only the bellmouth and circa first 15 m or so from the public highway being bound. The tracks will typically be 4 m wide and where necessary turning areas are proposed within the site as are passing places.

- The proposed on-site substation will be subject to Distribution Network Operator (DNO) specific design requirements and the design and height parameters used in this LVIA are only indicative at this stage.

2.23. The proposed layout incorporates a number of built-in mitigation measures:

- Offsets from field boundary vegetation to avoid any impacts on the Root Protection Areas of retained vegetation (field boundary hedgerows and trees). The relatively wide buffer also provides a generous maintenance zone and helps avoid any long-term management risks, which could result in the need for future tree works.

- Management and enhancement of all existing field boundary hedgerows to an approximate height of 3.0m - 3.5m, where existing hedgerows are lower, and an A-shaped profile to maximise ecological benefits and further reduce any potential to gain views of the Development from the surrounding area. It is important to note that less rigorously managed hedgerows are more beneficial in terms of ecology.

- New hedgerows along the retained PRoWs through the site to aid screening.

- The position of trees and blocks of woodland /copses within the southern and northern parcels to ensure maximum screening.

- Minor areas of panel removal following the geophysical survey results and preliminary LVIA findings.

- Most importantly, a considerable set back and landscaped buffer has been provided along the Midshires Way, which crosses the site's northern parcel to reduce the degree of adverse effects.

2.24. In addition, Old Wood to the north of the site is Ancient Woodland and the proposed layout incorporates a 30 m offset, double the expected minimum 15m buffer to Ancient Woodlands.

2.25. The above described refinements and mitigation measures, part of the iterative design process, respond to the on-site analysis and preliminary findings of this LVIA (December 2023).

2.26. The location of the above listed elements and other ancillary equipment and facilities have been informed by the findings of this LVIA.

Colours and Materials

2.27. The Development would use a limited palette of both colours and materials that would be typically self-finishing. The photovoltaic panels are designed to absorb the light rather than reflect it and with their dark colour would appear quite recessive in the landscape.

2.28. The ancillary infrastructure, such as central inverter cabinets, switchgear, spares container, battery storage container, and battery auxiliary storage container, would be proprietary elements with colours agreed with the Council. This LVIA is based on the assumptions that the colour and finishes are likely to be recessive and dark, to reduce their visibility.

2.29. The substation would be secured by palisade fencing of standard design and approx. 2.4m in height, and painted green. Where access gates are necessary these are envisaged to be of similar height and design.

3. Planning Policy Review

3.1. The relevant planning policies are detailed within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Policy Guidance, and the Council's Development Plan. The NPPF and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) have been reviewed to inform this LVIA but are not specifically or extensively quoted.

Rushcliffe Local Plan

3.2. Planning policies relevant to this LVIA are contained in the *Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy* (adopted December 2014), *Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies* (adopted October 2019), and associated Polices Map. Based on the review of the *Part 1: Core Strategy* and *Part 2: Land and Planning Policies* the following policies are considered to be the most relevant and informative to this LVIA:

- *Part 1: Core Strategy*: Policy 2 'Climate Change', its Point 5, Policy 10 'Design and Enhancing Local Identity', Policy 16 'Green Infrastructure, Landscape, Parks and Open Space', and Policy 17 'Biodiversity'.

- *Part 2: Land and Planning Policies*: Policy 16 'Renewable Energy', Policy 22 'Development Within the Countryside'.

3.3. With regard the landscape character issues, *Part 1: Core Strategy* Policy 16 'Green Infrastructure, Landscape, Parks and Open Space' is informative and states:

" (…)

2. The approach will require that: (…)

e) Landscape Character is protected, conserved or enhanced where appropriate in line with the recommendations of the Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment. Criteria for the assessment of proposals and any areas of locally valued landscape requiring additional protection will be included the Local Plan Part 2 (Land and Planning Policies)."

3.4. *Part 2: Land and Planning Policies* Policy 16 'Renewable Energy' is particularly informative and states:

"1. Proposals for renewable energy schemes will be granted planning permission where they are acceptable in terms of: (…)

b) landscape and visual effects; (…)

g) amenity of nearby properties;

h) grid connection;

i) form and siting;

j) mitigation;

k) the decommissioning and reinstatement of land at the end of the operational life of the development;

l) cumulative impact with existing and proposed development;…"

3.5. The text accompanying Policy 16 'Renewable Energy' refers to the *Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study: Wind Energy Development* (August 2014) (hereafter referred to as the *Landscape Sensitivity Study*.[1] The Council in their pre-application response states that: ***"Although the document relates to wind energy, the overall landscape considerations are largely applicable to your proposal."*** Whilst the thrust of the document and its assessment approach methodology may be informative this document deals with different typology, of very different characteristics hence it's of very limited use to this LVIA. Similarly, the published *Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document* (June 2015),[2] relates strictly to wind farm developments and therefore is of very limited use. The review of the Council's website did not reveal any Supplementary Planning Documents or Guidance that would be informative in terms of landscape sensitivity to solar energy or battery storage schemes. The Council's *Solar Farm Development Planning Guidance* (November 2022) and its appendix 3 provide information with regard to the structure and scope of work of an LVIA, and this has been used to inform this report.[3]

3.6. It appears that there are no made Neighbourhood Plans that would apply to the site and its immediate area.

3.7. Both Keyworth and East Leake Parishes have had their respective Neighbourhood Development Plans made. The landscape associated with these two Parishes, however,

[1] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planning-growth/planning-policy/studies-and-background-documents/
[2] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/r25haqmn/wind-energy-spd-final-version-june-2015.pdf
[3] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/i0tnvsnv/solar-farm-guide-nov-2022.pdf

does not exhibit any evident visual relationship with the site. For that reason, these two Neighbourhood Development Plan have not been reviewed.

4. Landscape Features and Elements

4.1. The effects of the Development on the character of the wider landscape are discussed in detail in Section 5. This part of the LVIA analyses the effect of the Development on those landscape elements that help characterise the site and provide the structural integrity of its environment.

4.2. Existing landscape elements within and immediately surrounding the site are shown on the Landscape Proposals Plan (Figure 2) along with the proposed planting. The site photography provided at Figure 3 and Figure 5, illustrate the landscape features present within the site.

4.3. With regard to the cumulative effects, the planning application drawings and reports for all four cumulative schemes have been reviewed. It is not clear whether the estimated construction programme for the adjacent solar farm at Land To North East Of Highfields Farm Bunny Hill Costock Nottinghamshire (application reference number 22/00303/FUL) would occur at the same time as the Development. In any case the construction area and extent of the proposed site would not overlap with the adjacent cumulative scheme or any other identified cumulative scheme. Thus, there is no potential for any direct cumulative effects upon the landscape features.

4.4. The two parcels are connected by a buried cable to be laid beneath the bound surface of the public highway. Any degree of change is expected to be inconsequential with the Development utilising direct drilling or very limited and narrow trenches. Thus, the effects are expected to be highly localised and largely avoiding landscape features. For this reason, the cable route is not considered further.

Effect upon the Ground Cover Vegetation

4.5. At the time of writing the ground cover within the two parcels included arable crop and grass margins along the field boundaries with two areas of modified grassland located in the southern parcel (Field 1 and Field 5, refer to Figure 5 of the Ecological Impact Assessment). The Development would introduce a new type of development into what is currently agricultural land. The existing ground cover vegetation is considered to be of medium value, being characteristic of the local landscape. This vegetation is considered to be of low susceptibility to development of the type proposed, being ephemeral arable crop and being easily replaced in a relatively short period of time. The overall sensitivity to development of the type proposed is considered to be medium.

4.6. The majority of the existing arable vegetation, that characterises the site, would be disturbed or removed during the construction phase. Following the completion of the construction stage, the area beneath and between the panels would be sown with an appropriate grassland suitable for grazing (within the solar farm) with the grass margins oversewn with a mix to benefit biodiversity. This would be managed as permanent grassland. The remaining area, outside of the fenced compound would be sown with a wildflower mix to benefit biodiversity. The area of the proposed battery storage and substation would be laid to hardcore or left as a building platform, with no opportunities to grass within the compound for health and safety and operational reasons. In addition, the

proposed access tracks would require crop to be removed and would be surfaced with crushed stone to reflect the local geology. The surface would be permeable to avoid water run-off.

4.7. The majority of the land would remain covered by pastoral grasslands, in contrast to the current ephemeral arable crop. Additional areas of structural planting are also being proposed.

4.8. In terms of the arable land cover the proposed grassland, once established, would bring about beneficial change with the ephemeral crop, that is being grown annually, replaced by pastures. The magnitude of change is considered to be medium with the effects moderate beneficial. With regards to the existing grass margins within the site the magnitude of change would be negligible and effects negligible neutral from a landscape elements point of view. In terms of biodiversity this would be considerably more advantageous, and this is further described in the Ecological Impact Assessment (December 2023).

Effect upon Topography

4.9. The gently sloping landform of the site is considered to be uncomplicated with the change in levels smooth and without any abrupt localised variations. It forms part of the wider rising valley slope - particularly the northern parcel, and for that reason its value is considered to be medium. With regard to its susceptibility, it is considered to be low. The overall sensitivity of the site's topography is therefore assessed as medium.

4.10. Due to its characteristics, the proposed solar modules would follow and reflect the local topography and any localised changes in contours found across the site. This allows the landform to influence the layout of the development, ensuring that the topography continues to form a recognisable feature in the landscape. Changes to the topography of the site would be very limited and mostly concerned with the localised trenching for underground cabling, and setting up the temporary construction compound, footings for the inverter kiosks, and access tracks, and building platforms for the battery storage units and substation. The solar panels would be pile driven into the ground and not requiring any footings or foundations. These effects would be temporary with the ground levels in these areas reinstated and soil reseeded. The proposed substation and battery storage units would be located within a level area, thus limiting the need for excessive engineering works, and any direct effects are expected to be inconsequential. The proposed access tracks would follow the slope of the site and would not require any excessive or engineering scale ground modelling.

4.11. Overall, the prevailing simple and gently sloping, and locally level, landform of the site would remain largely unchanged, and would not diminish its contribution as a landscape element. Consequently, it is assessed that the magnitude of change would be negligible and effects negligible.

Effect upon Tree and Hedge Resource

4.12. The site's boundaries are characterised by hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and woodland edge locally. None of the trees within the site's boundaries are protected by any Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or are part of a designed or designated landscape. Old Wood to the north is designated as Ancient Woodland and the Development maintains a 30m set back. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (dated October 2023), prepared by Barton

Hyett Associates has assessed the tree and hedgerow resource within the site as being largely of medium to low quality (Category B and C), from an arboricultural point of view. The majority of the hedgerows associated with the site have been assessed in the Ecological Impact Assessment (December 2023) as being 'native' or 'native with trees' with some of the boundary hedgerows identified as 'species rich' - refer to Figure 4 and Figure 5 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (December 2023). The hedgerow vegetation represents a traditional but typical field boundary treatment. For this reason, the value of tree and shrub vegetation is considered to be medium. In terms of susceptibility of the hedgerow vegetation this is considered to be medium as this type of vegetation requires some time to mature and establish as a landscape element. Trees, as a landscape feature are generally more difficult to replace and require a longer time to establish, thus are judged to be of high susceptibility. Overall, the sensitivity of hedgerow vegetation is medium and tree vegetation high.

4.13. The layout of the Development has been purposely developed to allow generous offset from the boundary vegetation to avoid any tree and hedgerow removal with the proposed access tracks utilising the existing gaps / field gates in the boundary and internal hedgerows. There is the potential that the existing gaps / field gates would have to be widened to accommodate the proposed access tracks if they are narrower than the standard 5m width.

4.14. The landscape strategy for the site is described in the Mitigation Measures section above and illustrated on Landscape Proposals (Figure 2), hence this information is not repeated here. The amount of introduced vegetation would equate to:

- Proposed hedgerow: 2316 lin. m
- Proposed copse planting: 0.7ha.
- Proposed woodland: 1.9ha.
- Large scale trees: 66no.
- Small scale trees: 69no.
- Willow tree planting: 5no.
- Grazing seed mix: 68ha.
- Wildflower seed mix: 24ha.
- Wet meadow grassland: 1.1ha.
- Skylark mitigation: 3.6ha.

4.15. The Development would bring about a considerable net gain in the site's hedgerow, tree, and woodland resource. The existing hedgerows would be enhanced through additional planting and their management changed in order to increase their height to approximately 3m - 3.5m; this would be beneficial for biodiversity as acknowledged in the Ecological Impact Assessment: ***"Maintenance of hedgerows at a height of at least 3m is considered particularly important for encouraging use by native British wildlife."*** The proposed

planting would result in a high magnitude of change and major beneficial effect upon the hedgerow and tree resource.

Public Rights of Way (PRoWs)

4.16. The Development would not have any direct physical or residual effects upon any of the PRoWs within the site during its operational stage. The PRoWs within the site would be retained and remain open during the construction stage of the Development with specific management measures set out in the submitted Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP).

4.17. Other routes within the surrounding area would not be directly affected by the Development. Effects on visual amenity as experienced from the local rights of way network are considered in Section 6 of this LVIA.

Effect upon Water Features

4.18. A single small scale watercourses drains the northern parcel of the site.

4.19. Kingston Brook lies to the south of the southern parcel with the proposed access from Wysall Road crossing this watercourse.

4.20. The layout of the Development has been adjusted to allow physical offset from those two watercourses. The proposed access tracks in the northern parcel utilise the existing crossing and at the southern site a new prefabricated bridge will be installed to span Kingston Brook, with no physical work being proposed in the watercourse. The existing structure over Kingston Brook is not considered suitable for construction and operational traffic.

Summary of Effects on Landscape Features and Elements

4.21. The Development would have:

- a moderate beneficial effect upon the groundcover vegetation of the site,
- a negligible effect on the topography of the site,
- a major beneficial effect on the hedgerow and tree resource within the site,
- no physical direct effects on the PRoWs within the site,
- no physical direct effects on the watercourses within the site.
- no cumulative direct effects.

5. Landscape Character Assessment

5.1. This section seeks to establish how the Development would potentially affect the character of the local landscape. The effects on landscape character consider how the introduction of

new landscape elements and built form physically alter the landform, landcover, landscape pattern, and perceptual attributes of the site or how visibility of the proposals changes the way in which landscape character is perceived. Landscape character is defined in *GLVIA3* as the:

"Distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."[4]

Landscape Designations

5.2. The proposed site does not fall within any statutory landscape designations. The review of the Council's website and Local Plan did not reveal any non-statutory local landscape designations either. Therefore, the site is not constrained by any landscape designations that relate to its value or scenic beauty.

Landscape Character - Baseline

5.3. The character of the landscape within the study area has been analysed and described on two levels:

- National level assessment provided by Natural England.
- County level in the *Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment* (June 2009) - refer to Appendix 2 for extracts.

National Level

5.4. According to Natural England, the site and study area fall within the National Character Area (NCA) 74 'Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds'.[5] This national level assessment, however, is considered too coarse and geographically too extensive to provide a detailed information that would be relevant to the site and Development. For this reason, the description of the national level NCA 74 has been reviewed to inform this LVIA, but has not been assessed as a specific landscape receptor.

County Level

5.5. *Part 1: Core Strategy* Policy 10 'Design and Enhancing Local Identity' specifically refers to the published *Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment* (June 2009), and states:

"5. Outside of settlements, new development should conserve or where appropriate, enhance or restore landscape character. Proposals will be assessed with reference to the Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment."

5.6. The use of the *Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment* is reinforced by Policy 16 'Green Infrastructure, Landscape, Parks and Open Space'.

[4] *GLVIA3,* Glossary, page 157.
[5] https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2098895

5.7. The published *Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment*[6] is available on the Council's website, however, the maps are not legible, and it is difficult to identify the relevant Regional Character Areas with certainty. It appears that the site falls within the 'Nottinghamshire Wolds' Regional Character Area, and the eastern most part of Draft Policy Zone NW01 'Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps'[7] - refer to Plate 1.

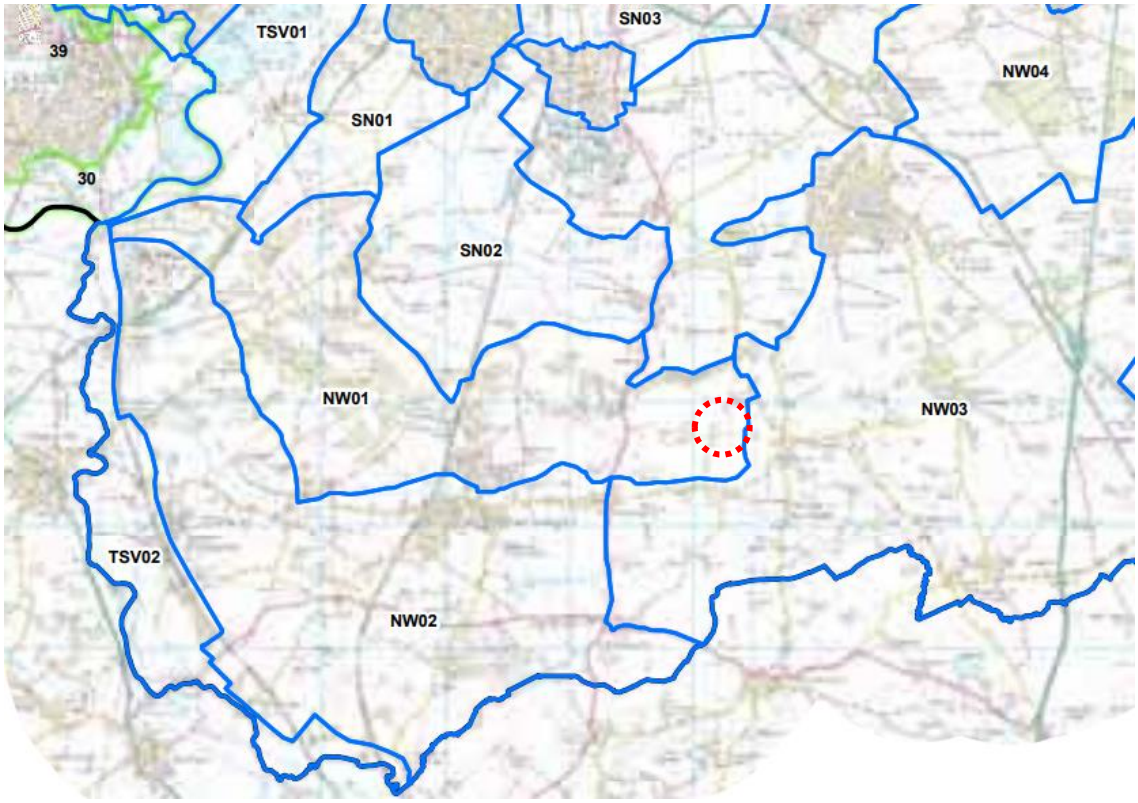


Plate 1 Extract from the Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment (Figure 018 Draft Policy Zones). The approximate location and extent of the site is marked with red dashed circle.

5.8. The landscape management strategy is to 'conserve'.

5.9. The key characteristic features of the Draft Policy Zone NW01 'Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps' are identified in the above Assessment as being[8]:

- ***"Series of prominent individual hills with steep sometimes scarp slopes and broad plateaus.***
- ***Hills are the dissected northern extent of a low boulder clay plateau extending from Leicestershire traditionally known as 'The Wolds'.***
- ***Rural character although urban elements such as villages, power station, industry and quarrying are frequent in the landscape.***

[6] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/planning-growth/planning-policy/studies-and-background-documents/
[7] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/5xjlg50w/2a-greater-nottingham-lca-drawings.pdf
[8] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/2rrnbiim/3-appendices.pdf

- ***Kingston Brook is a localised feature on low ground between hills characterised by riparian woodland and some grazing pasture at its margins.***
- ***Land use is a mixture of woodland, arable and pasture. Arable is on the lower and more gentle slopes, pasture close to rivers, settlements and scarp grassland where the land is steeply sloping precluding machinery from working the land.***
- ***Field pattern is mostly modern although pockets of older field systems such as irregular geometric and geometric and those reflecting open fields are present.***
- ***Field pattern in places sweeps down the slopes and is a distinctive feature.***
- ***Field boundaries are mostly hedgerows on the slopes with fences often present on higher ground.***
- ***Woodland is generally on high ground across the hills although there are smaller pockets of woodland on lower ground as establishing scrub and along village fringes/areas of former quarry.***
- ***Prominent extensive woodland plantation covers the slopes and high ground, often on steep scarps.***
- ***Rides and areas of open land are interspersed between plantation woodland.***
- ***Wooded tracks with spring flowering understorey planting along tracks up hills.***
- ***Large commuter settlements such as Gotham and East Leake and smaller settlements such as West Leake are nestled at the base of the hills on the fringes of the DPZ.***
- ***Infrequent individual farms within the character area often on the slopes or high ground. A row of individual modern houses is present along Ash Lane. One distinctive red brick and pantile roof farmstead on Bunny Hill is set within gardens with a small orchard.***
- ***Buildings are mostly red brick with older properties having red pantile roofs.***
- ***Church towers and spires are prominent within a uniform village skyline.***
- ***Overhead lines are prominent on low ground between hills.***
- ***Small former spring (Wheldon Spring) on Gotham Hill is a localised feature characterised by a depression in the ground and establishing scrub.***
- ***Enclosed channelled views on low ground between hills with extensive panoramic views across towards Nottingham City and beyond from high ground."***

4.10 Draft Policy Zone NW01 'Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps' is described as, :

"A series of distinctive wooded hills with arable fields on lower and gentler slopes and pasture and pockets of grassland on the steeper slopes. Views are extensive and often over long distances from the high ground although become more enclosed from lower

ground. Urban elements are frequent with views of Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station and the gypsum works. (…) Land use is a mix of plantation woodland, arable farming and pasture. Fields are mostly medium to large in size (…) Woodland comprises large geometric field sized blocks of both broadleaved and conifer woodland (…) Other vegetation includes smaller frequent copses at the base of slopes and around settlements. Frequent hedgerow trees and intact hedgerows are present across the area. (…) The landscape condition is GOOD. Hedgerows and woodland are well managed, although there is some evidence of field boundary fragmentation in places. Where hedgerows have been replaced, the timber fencing is usually in good condition. The agricultural land is well managed and features are intact with little sign of decline."

4.11 The published Assessment goes on to state:

"This DPZ is a distinctive series of hills which are prominent within the surrounding area. They often form a backdrop to views from the southern edges of Nottingham. From high ground within the DPZ there are open expansive views to the centre of Nottingham and lower-lying farmland at Ruddington and Bunny. The strength of character is STRONG. The hills are distinctive and consistent features across the landscape and exert their influence within the surrounding area. The pattern of arable, pasture and woodland is also consistent with moderate sized villages and some expanding commuter villages present on low ground."

4.12 With regard the 'landscape actions' these generally refer to the conservation of various landscape features and land use. Those that are informative to this LV Statement are quoted below:

- ***"Conserve the older field patterns within the character area such as those reflecting open systems and the irregular and regular geometric patterns.***
- ***Conserve field patterns which sweep down the hills.***
- ***Conserve the diversity of broadleaf and large-scale woodland plantations on hills.***
- ***Any new woodland planting should be small in scale along the base of slopes becoming larger and of field size on higher slopes.***
- ***Conserve hedgerows and encourage infill planting within gaps rather than erection of timber fencing.***
- ***Conserve the uniform roofline of villages with prominent church spires.***
- ***Ensure any new industrial development is nestled on low ground and has well wooded boundaries which integrate with woodland on higher ground to reduce its visibility."***

Analysis of Landscape Sensitivity

5.10. As mentioned before, the Council has not published any Supplementary Planning Documents or Guidance that would be informative in terms of landscape sensitivity to ground mounted solar developments or battery storage developments. The Council's *Solar Farm Development Planning Guidance* is informative in terms of scope of work but does not provide any information with regard the landscape sensitivity.

5.11. The Council's published *Landscape Sensitivity Study* includes the information from the above mentioned *Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment*, and identifies the site as being part of Landscape Character Unit (LCU) 16 'Nottinghamshire Wolds: Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps',[9] which coincides with the above described Draft Policy Zone NW01 'Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps'. This published report determines medium - high sensitivity rating to wind farms for such landscape factors as: Landform and Scale, Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features, Skylines, and Scenic qualities. A single medium rating has been assigned to Perceptual qualities with a single high rating for Intervisibility factor. It is important to reiterate, however, that the published assessment is concerned with wind farm developments, thus this heightened sensitivity level assigned to Unit 16 / Draft Policy Zone NW01 cannot be applied to the Development, given the different typology, nature and very low height of solar modules when compared to wind energy developments.

5.12. The 'Summary of Key Sensitive Features and Views' in the published assessment identifies the following:

- ***"The distinctive pattern of the series of wooded hills which are locally prominent and form a backdrop to surrounding and wider landscapes.***
- ***The expansive views from higher ground.***
- ***Visual relationship with surrounding areas such as the south of Nottingham and views towards the hills from other areas.***
- ***Scenic qualities associated with the contrast of wooded hills with the surrounding agricultural landscape.***
- ***The character of Conservation Areas and smaller, traditional villages such as West Leake and Thrumpton, including views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisals….***
- ***Varied land cover including smaller scale field patterns defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees and frequent human scale features.***
- ***Areas that are more tranquil and remote in character such as hill tops and higher ground."***

5.13. Being undesignated farmland, the value of the local landscape is considered to be medium, being a pleasant working undesignated countryside, and without any demonstrable physical attributes that would take it out of the ordinary.

5.14. With regard to the susceptibility of the local landscape, the following factors are considered relevant:

- Relatively high level of enclosure provided by landform and woodland blocks, as acknowledged by the Council in their pre-application response.

[9] https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/2lagdyqv/landscape-sensitivity-study_part3.pdf

- Localised changes in levels, coupled with the roadside vegetation limit inter-visibility between the site and the landscape west and east of it.

- Existing vegetation pattern provides an appropriate context for further planting to be included as part of the Development,

- Relative low height of the proposed typology, i.e., the solar array over the majority of the site and proposed battery storage units in the south of the southern parcel.

5.15. Based on the review of the above identified sensitivities, coupled with the overall character of the local landscape, and the characteristics of the proposed typology, results in the landscape being of medium susceptibility.

5.16. In summary, the local landscape is considered to be of medium sensitivity to development of the type proposed: ground mounted solar farm and battery storage modules, associated infrastructure, and substation.

Landscape Character Effects

5.17. The site's character would change from open agricultural land to one that remains in agricultural use - through active hedgerow and woodland management, and potential sheep grazing, contains energy infrastructure: solar modules, battery modules, ancillary infrastructure, substation compound etc, and the magnitude of change would be high, with effects major adverse. Such effects would be limited to the site itself, and not the surrounding landscape. The surrounding landscape would not be subject to any direct physical change. The Development fits well into the existing field pattern and would retain and enhances the boundary hedgerows through gapping up and planting hedgerow trees. This would exert positive influence over the local landscape with trees / woodlands being one of its characteristic elements.

5.18. The presence of the cumulative solar scheme on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm, Bunny Hill, Costock, Nottinghamshire (application reference no. 22/00303/FUL) and OS Field 8561, Rear Of Rushcliffe Grove, East Leake, Nottinghamshire (application reference no. 21/00703/FUL) have to be acknowledged as both schemes have been approved and now form part of the existing baseline. In other words, the host Draft Policy Zone NW01 'Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps' is best described as open countryside and still largely rural, in line with the published landscape character assessment, with localised influence of solar energy developments.

5.19. It is accepted that the Development would reinforce the presence of solar farm in the local landscape. Therefore, the landscape pattern / land cover pattern would be locally changed, and this would affect the landscape associated with the site, and the adjacent cumulative site on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm. The presence of the cumulative scheme at Rear Of Rushcliffe Grove, East Leake would be inconsequential given its small scale and context. This is confirmed by the then Design and Landscape Officer in their statutory comments: ***"In principle I don't object to the proposed solar farm. I think the LVIA assessment makes a good case that the impact on landscape character will be minimal***

and whilst it identifies that there will be some short term harm to the users of the right of way to the east, this can be mitigated through hedgerow planting and gapping up."[10]

5.20. With regard to the remaining aspects of the local landscape, referenced in the Council's published *Landscape Sensitivity Study*, the Development when judged in the context of the approved cumulative sites, would exert limited influence. The landform would continue to be evident with the low lying profile of the panels and their uniform height reflecting the local variation in levels and gently undulating topography. The landscape associated with the site and indeed the adjacent cumulative site somewhat differs from the description of the Landscape Character Unit 16, which states: ***"The LCU is dominated by a series of distinctive wooded hills ling: Gotham Hill, Cottagers Hill, Wright's Hill, Wood Hill, The Odells, the West Leake Hills and Bunny Hill. The hills are characterised by steep, sometimes scarp slopes…"*** In comparison, the topography of the site and adjacent cumulative site is more akin to ***"…. some gentler slopes – e.g. towards the east of the LCU"*** as identified in the above mentioned *Landscape Sensitivity Study*.

5.21. The Development, however, would be located within a landscape that benefits from a sense of enclosure provided by the landform and blocks of woodland. The site's western edge coincides with a localised change in levels with the wester perimeter hedgerow - associated with the northern parcel, blocking any views in and out towards the western part of the study area. This visual and physical segregation is reinforced by the woodlands that mark the site's western edge: Intake Wood, Rough Plantation, Wysall Rough Plantation, and Long Plantation. Collectively, these features would ensure that here is a degree of physical separation and reduced inter-visibility between the Development and the adjacent cumulative site, and the two schemes would not exert any evident influence over the perceptual and sensory aspect of the local landscape. Old Wood encloses the site to the north, blocking any views in and out, and preventing any cumulative landscape character effects with the approved scheme on Land At Fields Farm, Asher Lane, Ruddington (application reference no. 21/00703/FUL). To the east the contours rise again with the vegetation along Bradmore Road preventing any inter-visibility with the landscape to the north east and east. To the south, the visual envelope of the Development is curtailed by the gently rising land, which rises from Kingston Brook, and the landscape effects are geographically limited.

5.22. The proposed planting has been purposely devised to reduce the perception of change and screen the Development. This, with time, would further limit the influence to the site itself and the immediate environs. The surrounding landscape would not be physically affected. The introduced small blocks of woodland and copses would be wholly reflective of the landscape pattern, locally, where blocks of woodland are one of its key characteristics. They would help compartmentalise the Development physically and visually, whilst strengthening the habitat connectivity and reinforcing the wooded character of the local area.

5.23. The 'Guidelines and Recommendations' for the host 'Nottinghamshire Wolds' Regional Character Area refers to ***"… opportunities for new woodland planting on suitable sites (…) Conserve all areas of permanent pasture particularly where present close to villages and along streams… Conserve the semi-irregular small to medium scale field pattern around villages….Conserve the riparian character of stream corridors through retention and replanting of streamside trees and scrub…Conserve willow pollards where present***

[10] Comments issued via email 27 May 2021 15:24.

along stream corridors…. Promote measures for achieving a better integration of new and existing development in the countryside." The Development and its landscaping respond positively to these guidelines.

5.24. The proposed small blocks of woodland and copse planting also echo the character of the host NW01 Gotham And West Leake Hills And Scarps, which is described as: ***"Woodland comprises large geometric field sized blocks of both broadleaved and conifer woodland. (…) Other vegetation includes smaller frequent copses at the base of slopes and around settlements. Frequent hedgerow trees and intact hedgerows are present across the area"*** with the 'Landscape Actions' section stating: ***"Any new woodland planting should be small in scale along the base of slopes (…) Conserve hedgerows and encourage infill planting within gaps."***

5.25. Most Importantly the proposed planting and layout respond to the following Landscape Actions': ***"Ensure any new industrial development is nestled on low ground and has well wooded boundaries which integrate with woodland on higher ground to reduce its visibility."*** The enclosed character of the site and potential for the Development to be successfully integrated into the receiving landscape has been acknowledged by the Council in their pre-application response: ***"The land itself it relatively well contained in the wider landscape."***

5.26. It is accepted that the low lying valley of Kingston Brook allows for greater inter-visibility with the landscape to the south and this constrained was one of the main drivers for the proposed woodland and copse planting. The introduced hedgerow trees aim to link, visual and physically, the existing woodlands in order to create strong landscape framework around the site's perimeter and high sense of enclosure. The proposed layout has been purposely reduced to allow for substantial areas of woodland and copse planting. Furthermore, to echo the guidelines in the published landscape character assessment, Willow trees are being proposed along Kingston Brook, which would be pollarded, to provide continuity in tree vegetation and traditional tree management, and coincidently filter the views towards the proposed solar modules.

5.27. With the Development being designed to form two small scale parcels of development; the sense of scale would remain unaffected with the proposals representing a modest addition to the receiving landscape. The proposals would have some limited degree of change upon the perception of relative tranquilly due to the presence of this new built form, however, its visibility would be very limited. Therefore, any influence over the landscape character would be very localised and largely perceived from the closest highway and PRoWs that may offer views of parts of the Development. It is important to reiterate that the proposed layout has sought to provide a considerable separation buffer along PRoWs within the site, in order to reduce the adverse effects, whilst retaining the sense of openness experienced along these routes. The perception of the wider landscape would not be redefined or altered to any evident degree given the limited inter-visibility with the site, its low lying character, and low profile of the Development.

5.28. The proposals would retain the existing field pattern, being respectful of the field boundaries, and would not detract from any landscape or manmade features, that could be regards as local landmarks, due to the vegetative screening around the site and limited inter-visibility across the local area.

5.29. With its low profile, the Development would also not affect the perception of skylines, which would continue to be dominated by woodlands, hedgerows, and hedgerow trees, with occasional built form in the nearby villages. As recognised in the published *Landscape Sensitivity Study*: ***"The wooded hills are distinctive, undeveloped and consistent skyline features which often form a backdrop to views within the LCU. However, skylines are frequently broken by lines of pylons stretching across the landscape. From higher ground skylines are formed by more distant landscapes."*** It is considered that the Development would have only very limited and geographically highly localised change upon this aspect of the local landscape.

5.30. As evidence at Section 6 of this LVIA, the Development would be largely screened in the majority of the local views, including close to medium range views from the east and the settlement of Wysall, and from the west. The scenic quality would be altered to a low degree with the open undeveloped countryside containing solar energy development but continuing to be primarily defined by its field pattern, boundary hedgerows, and blocks of woodland dispersed across the immediate area and compartmentalising the landscape.

5.31. Given the extent of the host Draft Policy Zone NW01 'Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps', and considering the presence of the approved scheme on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm, Bunny Hill, Costock, Nottinghamshire (application reference no. 22/00303/FUL), it is considered that the character of this landscape would change to a medium degree resulting in moderate adverse effects, during the operational stage of the Development. It is important to reiterate that such effects would be temporary and reversible, and the proposed mitigation planting would help reduce this degree of change to low with the residual effects judged to be minor adverse at Year 15.

5.32. On balance, it is considered that the Development, would bring about a low magnitude of change, resulting in temporary and reversible minor adverse effects upon the wider character of the host landscape – i.e., its central and western parts which are physically and visually isolated from the site.

5.33. With regard to the neighbouring NW02 and NW03, the Development is not located within these landscapes. Thus, any effects would be indirect and relate to the perceptual and sensory aspects of these two Draft Policy Zones. The published *Assessment* notes that views from NW02 are rural and distant: ***"Views are often over quite long distances due to the undulating landform. On high ground views extend to Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station and the hills surrounding it and across rolling farmland towards Leicestershire."*** Given the low lying location of the Development and its relatively limited level of inter-visibility with this landscape, coupled with the proposed mitigation planting, it is considered that the nature and character of such views would, not be redefined or changed to any evident degree once the introduced planting has matured.

5.34. With regard to the neighbouring NW03, the following 'Characteristic Features' are noted in the published *Assessment*: ***"Woodland comprises a mix of small linear belts, geometric copses and coverts on high ground and around large farmsteads and halls on village fringes. Wooded impression created through frequent blocks of small woodland, hedgerow trees and mature hedgerows."*** It is evident that the Development would help reinforce this characteristics and whilst not located in this Draft Policy Zone, any inter-visibility that may occur would be influenced by the introduced woodlands and copses, and hedgerow trees. These in turn would help reserve the ruralness of the view and mitigate against any adverse landscape character effects.

5.35. In summary, with regards to the neighbouring Draft Policy Zones NW02 and NW03, the magnitude of change is assessed as being inconsequential and negligible. On that basis, the landscape character effects would be negligible.

6. Visual Amenity Assessment

6.1. The assessment of visual effects considers the changes in views arising from the Development in relation to visual receptors including the surrounding settlements, residential properties, highways, PRoWs together with the effects on identified viewpoints. Visual amenity is defined in *GLVIA3* as the:

> **"Overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area."**[11]

6.2. The assessment was carried out in late January 2022 and November 2023, as part of on-site survey. Site photographs were taken to record the character and nature of the views, and the existing visibility of the site. Where relevant the seasonal changes to the vegetative cover have been considered as part of the visual assessment. The on-site assessment has been verified against the current proposals illustrated at Figure 2 Landscape Proposals.

6.3. The construction and decommissioning stages would be of relatively short duration. It is accepted that plant movement and construction activities would be present during the construction and decommissioning phases, and such activities may be visible from the surrounding areas. The Development would be incrementally introduced to the site with the final stage of the construction work (or in reverse, the initial stage of the decommissioning phase) resembling the development at year 1 post completion. The ground levelling, soil stripping, and plant movement would be temporary and short term, and would exert a lesser degree of influence when compared to the proposed built infrastructure. Thus, any effects brought about by the construction and decommissioning phases, although relevant, are considered to be similar or lower to those identified during the long-term operational phase of the Development. Therefore, this assessment focuses on the operational stage, assessed following completion at year 1, and year 15 to indicate the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation planting.

6.4. With regard the sensitivity of visual receptors a distinction between the high sensitivity PRoW receptor and medium sensitivity road users / incidental pedestrian receptors has been made. None of the local roads are identified as part of a promoted long distance walking route, with the exception of the Midshires Way, or scenic drive thus logically their users / receptors cannot be considered to be of high sensitivity.

6.5. It is important to state at the outset that the assessed visual effects are temporary in nature and reversible.

[11] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA 3rd Edition

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

6.6. A Screened Zone of Theoretical Visibility (SZTV) has been modelled for the Development – see Figure 5. The methodology used for the production of the SZTV is set out on the plan itself, but in summary:

- The proposed solar modules and battery storage modules have been modelled at 3.1m in height across the site to represent the likely worst-case scenario for the majority of structures within the Development.
- Built form (as shown on OS Open Map Local) has been modelled at 8m in height.
- Areas of woodland (as shown on OS Open Map Local) are modelled at 15m in height.

6.7. It is important to reiterate that the modelled SZTV does not take into account other vegetation such as field boundary and roadside hedgerows, which are not included in the above datasets. This means, and the field survey has confirmed, that the actual visibility of the Development would be substantially reduced from that shown on the modelled SZTV.

6.8. Furthermore, it has to be reiterated that SZTV is a tool and needs to be used proportionally to the anticipated effects and scale of the Development. It is not relied on solely to demonstrate the visibility of the infrastructure, that is the purposes of the visual assessment. As outlined in Section 2 the Site is not evident from the majority of the analysed locations and Section 6 provides a robust assessment of the Development. It is considered that the current SZTV is informative and sufficient to make judgment in relation to the anticipated visual effects of the battery storage modules, super transformers, the substation, and other ancillary elements.

Visual Receptors and Viewpoint Assessment

6.9. Analysis of the 1:25,000 OS Explorer mapping indicates that there are no areas of Open Access Land, commons, or country parks in the vicinity of the site or the wider study area. The Midshires Way is the only promoted long-distance footpath in the area and crosses the site.

6.10. In order to ascertain the inter-visibility between the site and local landscape, and assess the potential visual effects of the Development, a set of 7 viewpoints had been selected during the pre-application stage, as illustrated in Pegasus' *Pre-Application Landscape And Visual Statement* (March 2022). Due to the lack of any theoretical visibility, the viewpoint located along Nottingham Road / Bunny Hill road to the west of the site, has been subsequently omitted and replaced by a new viewpoint located further south along the same road. This viewpoint aims to illustrate views from the same road and the edge of Costock, which is the nearest settlement in the western part of the study area.

6.11. Due to the lack of detailed feedback from the Council on Pegasus' *Pre-Application Landscape And Visual Statement* (March 2022), specifically around viewpoints, the same viewpoint selection has been used in this LVIA - with the exception of then Viewpoint 5.

6.12. As part of the preliminary works, views towards the site have been investigated from the following public highways:

- Keyworth Road and Bradmore Road to the north east and east.

- Distant Widmerpool Road to the east and West Thorpe road to the south east.
- Wymeswold Road to the south east and Costock Road /Wysall Road to the south.
- Wysall Road leading south and south west from Costock Road towards Rempstone.
- Nottingham Road / Bunny Hill road to the west of the site.

6.13. This on-site analysis helped guide the extent of the study area and the appraisal of the local PRoWs.

6.14. With regard to Keyworth Road, this highway marks the higher ground east of the site with the landform falling towards Fairham Brook - refer to Figure 4. Views north east and east are distant and easily gained. Views west towards the site, however, are completely screened by the intervening hedgerows and trees, including the roadside hedgerow along Bradmore Road. Viewpoint 1 has been purposely selected to illustrate this lack of inter-visibly. Views from further north along Keyworth Road have been investigated and the lack of views illustrated at Plate 2 and Plate 3. None of the approved cumulative sites would be visible from this viewpoint or the remaining section of the road. Due to the lack of views, the road receptors associated with Keyworth Road and Viewpoint 1 would not experience any change to their views and no visual effects as a result of the Development.

Plate 2 View from the central section of Keyworth Road, north of The Stables.

Plate 3 View from the northern section of Keyworth Road, near Longcliffe Farm.

6.15. Views from Bradmore Road, leaving Wysall, are initially screened due to the road being narrow, the slight change in levels, and the presence of the roadside hedgerow. Approaching The Old Vicarage views continue to be screened by the roadside hedgerow but then open up looking west with the hedgerow lower and gappy - Viewpoint 2. This temporary change to the views would occur along the approx. 120m long section of the road. At Viewpoint 2, the development proposed in the northern parcel would not be visible, being screened by the rising landform and intervening hedgerow, so this part of the Development would not have any influence over the road receptors. With regard to the southern parcel, the travelling receptors would theoretically gain views of the solar modules located in the two northern most fields, with the boundary hedgerows relatively low and the change in levels revealing the gently sloping landform. The solar modules would be located in the green pastoral field, some 700m away at the closest point, and if seen, would read as a very small scale, distant, and recessive element in the view. The eye would continue to travel to the undulating landscape beyond Kingston Brook with Long Rough Plantation, Rough Plantation and Wysall Rough Plantation terminating the views west and reading as one of the main features in the view. The foreground would remain undeveloped, open, and rural. Given the distance, change in levels and low lying profile of the Development, with the receptors looking at the back of the solar modules and views interrupted by the proposed woodland and hedgerow tree planting, the degree of change is assessed as negligible. This would result in negligible effects at Year 1 upon the medium sensitivity road receptors and high sensitivity recreational receptors traveling along this section of the Midshires Way. The cumulative site at Land To North East Of Highfields Farm (reference no. 22/00303/FUL) adjacent to the west of the site would not be visible.

6.16. Further north, on the approach to Lodge Farm and then towards The Elms, the roadside hedgerow restricts views west with the traveling receptors gaining restricted views into the adjacent fields - these fall outside of the site. Further north, the road starts to descend into Old Wood and the site's boundary extends to abut the road. Views, however, are curtailed

by the roadside hedgerow and its height is sufficient to break the line of sight between the receptors and the proposed solar modules which would be located one field apart - refer to Plate 4.

6.17. Glimpsed and restricted views would be theoretically gained through a field gate on the site's north eastern boundary, but such views would be very restricted, gained at speed with the road curing and limiting the potential for any clear or prolonged views. It is also worth mentioning that the proposed layout allows for a generous buffer to the road and boundary vegetation with the nearest solar module located some 50m away from the road - the existing gap in the boundary hedgerow is shown at Plate 5. This would further assist in reducing any negative effects.

6.18. As part of the landscape strategy for the Development, a number of hedgerow trees have been added along the site's north eastern edge in order to reinforce the physical and visual segregation and limit any potential for adverse visual effects.

6.19. In summary, the visual envelope of the Development extends to parts of Bradmore Road but does not breach Keyworth Road or the landscape beyond, and does not affect the north eastern and eastern study area. None of the approved cumulative sites would be visible from this part of the study area.

6.20. With regard to the distant eastern and south eastern study area, the site visit did not identify any views from within the site. It is recognised that the SZTV plan suggests areas of theoretical visibility, however, the site visit confirmed that views from Widmerpool Road and West Thorpe road are not available with the intervening hedgerows screening or heavily restrict views towards the site. Views from the elevated section of West Thorpe road, such as near Glebe Lodge Stables (c. 88m AOD) or The Grey House and Homeward (c. 801m AOD) - refer to Figure 4, continue to be restricted or screened. Where views are open the receptors gain westward looking views of the nearby valley, which separates the road from Thorpe in the Glebe settlement and woodlands on the upper valley slopes, or Wysall Wood on the higher ground when looking north.

6.21. The above conclusion is supported by the analysis and site photography (viewpoints 9 and 10; Figure 5) presented in the LVIA associated with the approved cumulative site on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm (reference no. 22/00303/FUL), which is adjacent to the west of the site.[12]

[12] Pegasus' LVIA dated October 2022; reference P20-1785 Rev.01A

Plate 4 Views from the northern end of Bradmore Road, near Old Wood.

Plate 5 Views from the northern end of Bradmore Road, near Old Wood - site field gate. Note: this existing gap will be enclosed by new hedgerow.

6.22. Similarly, views from Wymeswold Road are constrained by the roadside hedgerows and despite its relative elevation the level of inter-visibility with the site is very limited, despite the SZTV plan indicating otherwise. The more elevated section of the road, around Mill

Cottage and Oak Tree Farm (Plate 6), offer distant views but these are in parts foreshortened, and the distant landscape appears wooded. The visibility of the fields within and around the site is extremely limited. Lodge Farm can be just identified, through the intervening tree canopies, but is not apparent or easily distinguishable given the distance and intervening man made features and trees. The elevated green pastoral field in the background has been identified as that located south of the Farm and largely outside of the site's boundary. The visibility of the Development, if perceptible, would be inconsequential and negligible in winter months at most.

Plate 6 View from Wymeswold Road, at Public Footpath: Thorpe In The Glebe FP5, north of Oak Tree Farm

6.23. Around Hillcrest Farm (Plate 7) and Windyridge Farm (Plate 8), the roadside hedgerow screens the site's southern parcel with the eye catching glimpses of the undulating landscape to the north west of Wysall and around Rough Plantation. The woodlands merge with the intervening tree canopies, to create a perception of a well wooded landscape and the site's northern parcel is not evident. Glimpses of the elevated fields, identified as the northern parcel - its north western field and south eastern field near Lodge Farm, can be gained. The field hedgerows, however, heavily limit the appreciation of the site land and this coupled with the landform and glimpsed nature of such views would render any degree of change to be inconsequential and negligible for the traveling road receptors.

Plate 7 View from Wymeswold Road at Hillcrest Farm.

Plate 8 View from Wymeswold Road, through field gate, north of Windyridge Farm.

6.24. Long to medium range views from the southern part of the study area are illustrated by Viewpoint 3 and Viewpoint 4. Viewpoint 3 is located along the elevated section of Rempstone Lane near The Bungalow and Wolds Farm, at c. 88m AOD. It aims to illustrate views gained from this elevated section of the road and the nearby PRoWs: Public Footpath

Costock FP4 leading west and then north towards Costock and Public Footpath Rempstone FP8 leading south east across the higher ground and towards Wymeswold.

6.25. In these views, the trees associated with Old Wood form a relatively strong linear feature on the distant horizon, some 2.8km away. The Holy Cross Convent and Intake Wood, visible to the left, and Lodge Farm visible to the right can be easily identified in the distance, and help establish the site's extent. The approved cumulative site on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm (reference no. 22/00303/FUL) would be evident in these views looking north. The LVIA associated with 22/00303/FUL illustrates views from this PRoW looking north (at its Viewpoint 7, Figure 5 and Photomontage 7, Figure 6) - and assessed the effects as major adverse at Year 1 reducing to moderate at Year 15.

6.26. The woodlands along the site's western edge merge visually into one large block of woodland, screening the central part of the northern parcel. The receptors would gain glimpses of the two fields along the western edge and two of the fields in the south eastern part of the northern parcel. The site's southern parcel is not evident and easily appreciated, being screened or views heavily filtered by the intervening tree canopies.

6.27. For the high sensitivity PRoW users, it is accepted that views would be potentially prolonged as they traverse the higher ground and gain views to the north. Intake Wood would continue to enclose, and in parts screen, the western part of the northern parcel. Views of the central and eastern part would be interrupted by Rough Plantation, Wysall Rough Plantation, and Long Rough Plantation, which would help visually disintegrate the scheme and physically compartmentalise it into smaller areas, which would read as a natural extension to the adjacent approved cumulative solar farm.

6.28. Given the very limited level of inter-visibility and distance, as illustrated by Viewpoint 3, the degree of change and effects are assessed as low at most. Where the visibility of the site increases it is accepted that this may locally increase to medium, resulting in major effects in winter views. It is anticipated that, once the mitigation planting has matured at Year 15, the southern part of the site would be almost completely screened. Receptors would potentially gain views of some of the solar modules located in the north western fields of the site - that near Intake Wood. These would be seen in direct context of the adjacent scheme, thus would read as forming its part, reducing the degree of change to negligible. The solar modules in the north eastern part of the northern parcel would be almost completely screened. The residual degree of change is considered to be negligible, given the predicted amount of maturing vegetative screening and context.

6.29. With regard to the road users, views from the elevated section of Rempstone Lane, around Hill Farm and Wolds Farm, these are curtailed by the roadside hedgerows and the road's alignment which direct views towards north east thus largely away from the site. Therefore, contrary to the SZTV plan, views from the road would be heavily curtailed and the Development would not be evident. The degree of change is considered to be negligible with the effects also negligible. As the road diverts to the north and descends into the valley of Kingston Brook, the receptors would theoretically gain medium to increasingly close range views of the Development. In reality, however, the tree canopies that line this section of the road considerably restrict and filter views to the north. Past the entrance to Five Oaks Stables, views open up yet become low lying and the receptors would gain views of the southern parcel of the Development. In comparison, the development within the northern parcel would be largely screened, interrupted, and not apparent. The degree of change is assessed as being initially low, with the effects minor adverse, increasing to high

and major adverse effects at the junction with Costock Road /Wysall Road. With time, once the proposed mitigation planting has matured, the Development would be almost completely screened and views inconsequential or its visibility would be very limited resulting in negligible effects.

6.30. Viewpoint 4 is located along Public Footpath Rempstone FP10, just off Wysall Road, some 700m away from the nearest solar modules and substation. Views from this PRoW have been investigated but the boundary hedgerow, visible in the mid ground, screens the valley of Kingston Brook and would screen the southern parcel of the Development. Lodge Farm, located immediately east of the site's northern parcel is perceptible on the higher ground, and is seen against the wooded horizon formed by Old Wood. The field visible immediately south of the farm is the south eastern field of the northern parcel. According to the proposed Landscape Strategy plan, this particular field would be largely left undeveloped with the solar modules limited to its western most area that slopes west and the rest managed for skylark via continued arable agricultural practices. This indicates a lower degree of inter-visibility with the receptors gaining views of a very small part of the Development, judged to bring about a negligible degree of change and negligible effects. Furthermore, the south eastern and eastern edge of the Development would be enclosed by a new copse planting and hedgerow trees to ensure the vegetative screening is reinforced and retained for the duration of the Development..

6.31. Views from the central and north eastern section of this PRoW, when approaching Wysall are lower lying and screened - refer to Plate 9. The roadside hedgerow screens or heavily restricts views out. The woodland to the north can be easily identified, but none of the arable and pastoral fields associated with the site or located around it are prominent or evident. The fields visible in the background, through the hedgerow, are those located between the northern and southern parcels of the site. The areas of the Site which will be developed are not visible. None of the cumulative solar farms would be visible from Viewpoint 4 or this PRoW.

Plate 9 Views looking north from Public Footpath Rempstone FP10, between Wysall Road and Wysall.

6.32. With regard to the views from Costock Road /Wysall Road to the south of the site, views travelling eastbound are controlled by the tree belts associated with Kingston Brook, which create an almost continuous band of tree canopies. At close quarters, past Nouvelle Farm and Westview, near the site's southern access point, the travelling receptors gain views of the site's southern parcel over the roadside hedgerow, which at the time of site visit was relatively low and gappy - Viewpoint 5. Such views quickly disappear with the south eastern edge of the site enclosed by blocks of woodland that line the Brook and extend east into the village environs. At Viewpoint 5, due to the proximity (c. 140m away) and extent of the view affected by the Development, the degree of change would be high with effects major adverse. The receptors would be travelling at speed and views would be partially curtailed by the intervening hedgerows, which would screen the lower parts of the introduced solar modules. The proposed substation and battery modules would be partially visible when traveling eastbound only, and the existing woodland along Kingston Brook would help enclose this element of infrastructure, separating it physically and visually from the wider surroundings. Such scale of effects is expected to be experienced along approx. 550m of the road, between Nouvelle Farm and Westview to the west, at Viewpoint 5, and up to the nearby barn that lies to the east. In winter months, views looking west would include the adjacent approved solar farm on Land To North East Of Highfields Farm (reference no. 22/00303/FUL) but such views would be partially interrupted by the intervening hedgerows woodland blocks and tree canopies - its LVIA Viewpoint 8, Figure 5 and Photomontage 8, Figure 6. Further west along the road, the existing tree cover along the Brook would screen the adjacent approved cumulative solar farm. Once the proposed mitigation planting has matured, the tall c. 3m high boundary hedgerow and hedgerow trees, coupled with the copse and woodland along the southern edge of the site would substantially restrict views of the Development. The degree of change is considered to be negligible with negligible effects upon the traveling receptors.

6.33. In terms of the western part of the study area, the SZTV plan indicates small patches of theoretical visibility along Nottingham Road / Bunny Hill road, some 1 - 1.5km west of the site. Views from this road had been investigated during the site visit and due to the refinements to the layout the majority of this road is now free from any theoretical visibility of the Development. Subsequently, the previously selected viewpoint near Bunny Hill Farmhouse, located along the central section of the road, has been omitted. A viewpoint further south, on the edge of Costock, has been introduced to illustrate the level valley landscape and views east towards the site - Viewpoint 6. Views include the built form associated with the Holy Cross Convent and Intake Wood with the woodland and change in levels screening the northern parcel of the Development. Looking east, the receptors would gain an appreciation of Rough Plantation, Wysall Rough Plantation, and Long Rough Plantation, which collectively create a wooded horizon and screen the landscape beyond. The southern parcel of the Development is also not visible so the Development would not have any degree of change and no effects upon the users of this road or any of the nearby residential or PRoW receptors, and any effects would be negligible.

6.34. Views from the elevated northern section of the road, travelling towards Bunny Hill are not supported by site photography due to the lack of a suitable stopping place. The site survey confirmed, however, that views are controlled by the roadside hedgerow. Where gaps do exist, such as at field gates, views terminate on the rising landform and intervening field boundary hedgerows and woodlands with no views of the site.

6.35. In summary, the visual envelope of the Development does not extend towards Nottingham Road / Bunny Hill road, and this gives evidence of its highly localised effects.

6.36. With regard to the PRoWs within the site, views would inevitably be open and direct. It is, however, important to recognise that such views would be highly localised and are not reflective of the general level of visibility.

6.37. The eastern edge of Wysall is enclosed by rear gardens with field hedgerows and trees restricting views out. Views along Public Footpath Wysall FP3, leaving the settlement, are enclosed and short range, and terminate on the foreground and nearest hedgerows. The nearby woodlands that mark the site's western edge are seen protruding above the hedgerow line but the site itself is not visible - refer to Plate 10.

Plate 10 View from Public Footpath Wysall FP3, on the edge of Wysall, looking west.

6.38. As the route diverts west, views continue to be enclosed by the boundary hedgerow, which marks the locally higher ground - contour line 90m AOD - refer to Figure 4, and the site is screened. The landform then gently slopes west, views open up, and the receptors would gain first views of the site - Viewpoint 7. The relative elevation of the landscape allows for distant views across the southern part of the Development, with the settlement of East Leake visible in the background. Rough Plantation, Wysall Rough Plantation, and Long Rough Plantation provide a physical and visual barrier between the site and the western study area, albeit there is a degree of inter-visibility from this elevated location. The Convent is not visible, being screened by Intake Wood. Views towards the site's northern parcel are heavily restricted by the field hedgerow even in winter views - it is acknowledged, however, that the proposed solar modules would be identifiable. Views south west extend towards Scotland Hill Farm located along Wysall Road / Costock Road. Glebe Farm, located further west along the road is identifiable due to the nearby strongly linear geometric woodland planting. The farmsteads are backclothed by the immediately surrounding undulating fields that separate this landscape from the area around Costock. Views south extend onto the higher ground but terminate on the rising horizon around Wolds Farm (c. 85 - 88mm AOD), with the farmstead itself enclosed by trees and largely screened. The corridor of Wysall Road, which traverses this elevated landscape, is not evident. Barn Farm Cottage, located

some 2km away from the site, can be identified on the distant elevated horizon (90m AOD) with Peaslands Farm seen to the left of it. The more distant landscape to the south or south east is not visible from this location.

6.39. The Development would be seen as part of the low lying landscape, enclosed by hedgerows and woodlands, and visually and physically separate from the wider undulating landscape. The existing hedgerows and trees would help to provide some limited screening but given the proximity and elevation, it is expected that the majority of the development within the southern parcel would be visible. Whilst apparent, the solar modules would sit low in the landscape and would not compete visually with the undulating landform seen in the background. Their low profile would echo the valley landscape and the proposed mitigation planting would help to reduce their appearance even at year 1. Views north, if gained, would include the solar modules located in the south eastern most part of the northern parcel only. The degree of change is assessed as medium with the effects major adverse. At Year 15, it is predicted that the southern parcel of the Development would be almost completely screened with the nearest solar modules screened by the maturing woodland located on the northern edge of this particular parcel. The hedgerow trees introduced along the eastern edge would heavily filter views of the Development, particularly in summer months. The degree of change is expected to be negligible with the residual effects also negligible. Whilst some very small parts of the Development may still be percpetible at Year 15 in winter views, the change would be inconsequential to the nature and character of this view.

6.40. Further along the PRoW the route descends onto the lower ground between the northern and southern parcels, before diverting north towards the northern parcel. Views south are towards the low lying Scotland Hill Farm along Wysall Road, with the background of undulating fields. Wolds Farm can be identified on the horizon, amongst the tree canopies. The receptors would gain direct views of the proposed solar modules and fencing located within the northern most field of the southern parcel, and this infrastructure would screen the remaining part of the Development. Looking west Rough Plantation, Wysall Rough Plantation, and Long Rough Plantation screen the views out. Looking north, the landform gently rises, and the field hedgerows almost completely screen the site land associated with the northern parcel. This extremely limited inter-visibility with the northern parcel suggests that this part of the Development would be largely screened from this view even at Year 1. Given the visibility of the southern parcel, however, the degree of change would be high and effects major adverse along this section of the PRoW.

6.41. As Public Footpath Wysall FP3 enters the site's northern parcel, and continues towards Old Wood as Public Footpath Costock FP7, views of the Development would be direct and very close range - refer to Viewpoint 8. The site's southern parcel would disappear from the view, being screened by the landform and intervening hedgerow. Inevitably at Year 1 the degree of change would be high and effects major adverse along this route and at Viewpoint 8. Similarly, direct views would be gained from the central and western section of Public Footpath Wysall FP4 as one travels west from Bradmore Road. Initially, views would be partly curtailed by hedgerows (including the 4m tall hedgerow H4 along the eastern edge), and built form of Lodge Farm and The Elms, its garden vegetation. Past Lodge Farm, views would become open, and views would include the development in the western part of the northern parcel as well. The degree of change would be high and effects major adverse along this section of the PRoW.

6.42. It is important to reiterate that the layout of the Development has been purposely revised to ensure the visibility of the solar modules is reduced as far as practical. The layout

incorporates generous buffers between the PRoW and solar modules, and the PRoW route is set in a considerable green corridor with new hedgerows and hedgerow trees screening and filtering the views, whilst aiming to retain a degree of visual openness.

6.43. Once the proposed mitigation planting has matured, the receptors would benefit from vegetative screening along the route, with their views largely curtailed or heavily filtered and their visual amenity protected. The degree of change would vary from low to negligible, depending on the nature of views. The residual effects would vary from moderate adverse to negligible.

Road Receptors

6.44. As evidenced in the preceding paragraphs, the road users present in the locality would be largely unaware of the Development. Views may be gained from certain sections of Wymeswold Road near Hillcrest Farm, and from Rempstone Lane near The Bungalow and Wolds Farm. Such views, however, would be very infrequent, glimpsed and heavily restricted and judged to be negligible even in winter months. The road users associated with Bradmore Road are also likely to be subject to negligible effects, with heavily restricted views towards the site's southern parcel gained along approx. 120m long section of the road around Viewpoint 2.

6.45. With regard to Wysall Road, on the boundary of the southern parcel, direct and relatively close range views and major adverse effects are expected to occur along approx. 550m long section of the road. Such views would be gained as one travels between Nouvelle Farm and Westview to the west, at Viewpoint 5, and up to the nearby isolated barn that lies to the east.

6.46. No other highways have been judged to be affected.

PRoW Users

6.47. Based on the above assessment, views of the Development from the north western and north eastern quadrant of the study area, and associated PRoWs, would not be gained due to vegetation and landform. PRoWs to the east of Wysall and west of the A60 / Nottingham Road would not be affected either. It's the PRoWs in the southern study area and those within the site that are most relevant to this LVIA.

6.48. The PRoW receptors within the site would inevitably be affected to a high degree with the effects major adverse at Year 1. Such effects would be experienced by the users of Public Footpath Wysall FP3 and Public Footpath Costock FP7 - between Viewpoint 7 and the southern edge of Old Wood; and the users of Public Footpath Wysall FP4 - between Lodge Farm and the site. As explained at paragraph 6.43, the residual effects at Year 15 would vary from moderate adverse to negligible.

6.49. As evidenced earlier, views from West Thorpe Road and Wymeswold Road are either not gained or heavily curtailed with the effects judged to be negligible. Therefore, it follows that the nearby PRoW users located between these two highways and around Thorpe in the Glebe would not be subject to any visual effects or effects in winter months at Year 1 would be negligible at most.

6.50. Similarly, due to the lack of any inter-visibility with the settlement of Costock, the PRoWs in the distant south western quadrant of the study area are not expected to be affected.

6.51. With regard to Public Footpath Rempstone FP10, as illustrated by Viewpoint 4 and analysed in the preceding paragraphs, the effects upon this PRoW have been judged to be negligible. The same conclusion would apply to its lower lying north eastern extension - Public Footpath Thorpe In The Glebe FP8, which leads towards Wysall.

6.52. With regard to Public Footpath Thorpe In The Glebe FP7, this route leads west from Wymeswold Road and is located at a similar elevation to Viewpoint 4 and Public Footpath Rempstone FP10. Hence, the level of inter-visibility is expected to be similar or comparable, and effects also judged to be negligible.

6.53. The elevated southern part of the study area is crossed by two PRoWs: Public Footpath Costock FP4 leading west and then north towards Costock, and Public Footpath Rempstone FP8 leading south east across the higher ground and towards Wymeswold. Viewpoint 3 illustrates the views from the elevated section of Rempstone Lane near The Bungalow and Wolds Farm. In comparison, views from the elevated western section of Public Footpath Costock FP4, near The Bungalow, are restricted to a higher degree with a nearby hedgerow enclosing the views north. Intake Wood and Rough Plantation can be identified but the northern parcel is almost completely screened. The PRoW receptors would catch glimpses of the development in the western fields only, with the visibility of its eastern fields greatly reduced. In terms of Public Footpath Rempstone FP8, initially views are curtailed by the built form and vegetation associated with Wolds Farm and views of the site are not gained or are hevaily restricted and inconsequential. As one moves towards Peaslands Farm the PRoW is flanked by a hedgerow to the east and the to the north, with views restricted and eventually screened.

6.54. On balance it is considered that the degree of change and effects upon the receptors associated with Public Footpath Costock FP4 and Public Footpath Rempstone FP8 would be largely negligible, occasionally increasing to a low degree of change and moderate effects in winter views at Year 1. Such moderate effects would be highly localised and are not representative of the general lower degree of inter-visibility and negligible effects. The residual effects at Year 15 would be negligible given the context and the screening provided by the maturing woodland, copse and hedgerow tree planting.

Residential Receptors

6.55. Based on the views gained from within the site the following residential receptors have been considered relevant:

- The Elms and Lodge Farm / Field View accessible from Bradmore Road.
- Five Oaks Stables and Scotland Hill Farm along Wysall Road / Costock Road.

6.56. Based on the assessment of visual effects upon PRoW and road users, and static Viewpoints 2 and 5 - 7, and the site visit it is predicted that the residents at The Elms are likely to be subject to negligible effects given the screening provided by the site's boundary hedgerow H4 (on average 4m in height), introduced hedgerow trees, and the nearby built form. With regard to the residents at Lodge Farm / Field View, the dwelling is enclosed by its perimeter garden and farm buildings. As part of the design iteration, an area of solar

modules located south of the dwelling has been removed - now utilised as skylark mitigation plot, with a new hedgerow and hedgerow trees added to enclose the curtilage of the dwelling, and limit any adverse effects. The degree of change and effects are predicted to be negligible. In terms of the residential receptors at Five Oaks Stables and Scotland Hill Farm, given the views gained from the site, distance, and the filtering effect of the intervening trees, the degree of change is considered to be low at most with the effects moderate adverse in winter views at Year 1. The copse and woodland planting proposed along the site's southern edge aims to reduce and mitigate any adverse effects, and the residual effects are predicted to be negligible.

Table 2: Summary Table - Viewpoint Assessment (winter views)							
Visual Receptor	**Value of View (Low/Medium/ High)**	**Susceptibility of Visual Receptor (Low/Medium/High)**	**Sensitivity of Visual Receptor (Low/Medium/High)**	**Change to View (Year 1)**	**Degree of Effect (Year 1)**	**Change to View (Year 15)**	**Degree of Effect (Year 15)**
Viewpoint 1	Medium	Medium	Medium	No change	No effects	No change	No effects
Viewpoint 2	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 3	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible
	Medium	High	High	Low to Medium	Moderate to Major	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 4	Medium	High	High	Negligible	Negligible Neutral	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 5	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Major Adverse	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 6	Medium	Medium	Medium	No change	No effects	No change	No effects
Viewpoint 7	Medium	High	High	Medium	Major Adverse	Negligible	Negligible
Viewpoint 8	Medium	High	High	High	Major Adverse	Low to Negligible	Moderate Adverse to Negligible

7. Summary and Conclusions

7.1. This LVIA has been prepared as part of a planning application for the proposed Old Wood Energy Park which is a renewable energy park made up of ground mounted solar photovoltaic arrays (solar farm), Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), substation and ancillary infrastructure. The Development is located on two parcels of land to the west of Wysall, Nottinghamshire and connected by a buried cable which would be beneath the bound surface of the public highway between the two land parcels. The Development is located within open countryside and within the administrative boundaries of Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Effects on Landscape Elements

7.2. The Development has been assessed as having:

- a moderate beneficial effect upon the groundcover vegetation of the site,
- a negligible effect on the topography of the site,
- a major beneficial effect on the hedgerow resource within the site,
- a major beneficial effect on the tree resource within the site,
- no physical direct effects on the PRoWs within or abutting the site,
- no physical direct effects on the water courses associated with the site.

Effects on Landscape Character

7.3. The Development has been assessed as having minor adverse effects upon the character of the wider host landscape NW01 'Gotham And West Leake Hills And Scarps', identified in the published *Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment* (June 2009). It is accepted that locally, within the eastern most part of the host NW01 the degree of change would be major adverse at Year 1. The residual effects at Year 15 however, have been assessed as diminishing to minor adverse.

Effects on Visual Amenity

7.4. The majority of the identified and analysed visual receptors have been assessed as subject to either negligible neutral effects or no effects at all. There would be some highly localised areas within the local landscape, such as along the PRoWs within the site where views of the Development would inevitably be open, direct, and very close range, particularly in winter months. Such views, however, are not necessarily representative of the overall very limited visibility of the Development.

7.5. The assessment of the Development has concluded that out of the assessed 8 viewpoints, Viewpoint 3, Viewpoint 5, Viewpoint 7, and Viewpoint 8 would be subject to major adverse effects at Year 1 in winter views only. Such effects are generally expected to reduce to moderate adverse to negligible at year 15. The receptors at Viewpoint 8, within the site,

have been assessed as subject to moderate adverse effects at Year 15 at most, given the proposed maturing structural vegetation.

7.6. In terms of road users, only those traveling along Wysall Road, which pass the site's southern parcel, would experience direct and relatively close range views resulting in major adverse effects along approx. 550m long section of the road. Similarly, those travelling along the northern end of Rempstone Lane, as they approach the junction with Wysall Road, have been assessed as subject to major adverse effects at Year 1. The residual effects, however, have been assessed as negligible.

7.7. Views of the Development from PRoWs in the surrounding landscape vary to a considerable degree. The overwhelming majority of the PRoWs within the study area and around Wysall, are free from any theoretical visibly of the Development or are enclosed with views restricted and effects inconsequential and negligible. The receptors travelling along the PRoWs across the site have been judged to experience major adverse effects, due to the very close range and elevated nature of such views. The residual effects have been assessed as moderate adverse at most, locally reducing to negligible where the inter-visibility with the Development would be minimal. The PRoW users travelling across the elevated southern part of the study area along Public Footpath Costock FP4 and Public Footpath Rempstone FP8 have been assessed as subject to negligible effects, generally speaking. Localised moderate adverse effects have been established where the visibility of the Development has been judged to increase.

7.8. With regard to the issue of residential visual amenity, the assessment has concluded that residents at Five Oaks Stables and Scotland Hill Farm would be subject to moderate adverse effects at most, in winter views at Year 1, with the residual effects negligible.

Conclusions

7.9. The Development has been considered in the context of the relevant planning policies and published landscape character assessments, and has been subject to a thorough on-site assessment, and iterative design process with regard the extent of the developable areas and landscaping proposals. This LVIA has concluded that the Development can be effectively integrated and assimilated into the surrounding landscape with the adverse effects highly localised to the immediate environs only, and being temporary and reversible, with the proposed mitigation planting substantially reducing the scale of adverse effects to a negligible level and only highly localised moderate adverse residual effects upon the users of the Midshires Way as they travel across the Development.

7.10. The introduced built-in mitigation measures, such as offset from the site boundaries and considerable amount of woodland and tree planting assist in reducing the adverse effects and allowing the development to be assimilated into the receiving environment without any residual undue harm.

Appendix 1 Methodology

1. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY STANDARD TEMPLATE THAT IS USED FOR PROJECTS

1.1 The Analysis is based on this methodology which has been undertaken with regards to best practice as outlined within the following publications:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013) - Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019) - Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19;
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) - Natural England;
- An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment - To Inform Spatial Planning and Land Management (2019) - Natural England.
- Reviewing Landscape Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs and Landscape and Visual appraisals (LVAs) Technical Guidance Note 1/20 Landscape Institute.

1.2 GLVIA3 states within paragraph 1.1 that "Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity."[1]

1.3 GLVIA3 also states within paragraph 1.17 that when identifying landscape and visual effects there is a "need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of the likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional."[2]

1.4 GLVIA3 recognises within paragraph 2.23 that "professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. While there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements"[3] undertaken by a landscape consultant or a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI).

1.5 GLVIA3 notes in paragraph 1.3 that "LVIA may be carried out either formally, as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or informally, as a contribution to the 'appraisal' of development proposals and planning applications."[4] Although the proposed development is not subject to an EIA requiring an assessment of the

[1] Para 1.1, Page 4, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[2] Para 1.17, Page 9, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[3] Para 2.23, Page 21, GLVIA, 3rd Edition
[4] Para 1.3, Page 4, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

likely significance of effects, this assessment is also titled as an LVIA rather than an 'appraisal' in the interests of common understanding with other planning consultants.

1.6 The effects on cultural heritage and ecology are not considered within this LVIA.

Study Area

1.7 The study area for this LVIA covers a 3km radius from the site. However, the main focus of the assessment was taken as a radius of 1km from the site as it is considered that even with clear visibility the proposals would not be perceptible in the landscape beyond this distance.

Effects Assessed

1.8 Landscape and visual effects are assessed through professional judgements on the sensitivity of landscape elements, character and visual receptors combined with the predicted magnitude of change arising from the proposals. The landscape and visual effects have been assessed in the following sections:

- Effects on landscape elements;
- Effects on landscape character; and
- Effects on visual amenity.

1.9 Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."[5] Various factors in relation to the value and susceptibility of landscape elements, character, visual receptors or representative viewpoints are considered below and cross referenced to determine the overall sensitivity as shown in Table 1:

Table 1, Overall sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Medium
	LOW	Medium	Medium	Low

[5] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

1.10 Magnitude of change is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration."[6] Various factors contribute to the magnitude of change on landscape elements, character, visual receptors and representative viewpoints.

1.11 The sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor and the magnitude of change arising from the proposals are cross referenced in Table 11 to determine the overall degree of landscape and visual effects.

2. EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

2.1 The effects on landscape elements includes the direct physical change to the fabric of the land, such as the removal of woodland, hedgerows or grassland to allow for the proposals.

Sensitivity of Landscape Elements

2.2 Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape element and the susceptibility of the landscape element to changes that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 88-90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

2.3 The criteria for assessing the value of landscape elements and landscape character is shown in Table 2:

Table 2, Criteria for assessing the value of landscape elements and landscape character

HIGH	Designated landscape including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty considered to be an important component of the country's character or non-designated landscape of a similar character and quality. Landscape condition is good and components are generally maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and absence of major built infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive landscape elements and features are key components that contribute to the landscape character of the area.

[6] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

MEDIUM	Undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside considered to be a distinctive component of the national or local landscape character. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and some major built infrastructure, the landscape has a moderate level of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive landscape elements and features are notable components that contribute to the character of the area.
LOW	Undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside considered to be of unremarkable character. Landscape condition may be poor and components poorly maintained or damaged. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and significant major built infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not notable components that contribute to the landscape character of the area.

2.4 The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of landscape elements and landscape character is shown in Table 3:

Table 3, Criteria for assessing landscape susceptibility	
HIGH	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or little existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are not easily replaced or substituted (e.g. ancient woodland, mature trees, historic parkland, etc). Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features, major infrastructure or industry is not present or where present has a limited influence on landscape character.
MEDIUM	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed.

	Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are easily replaced or substituted. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features, major infrastructure or industry is present and has a noticeable influence on landscape character.
LOW	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development being proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form, etc. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and has a dominating influence on the landscape.

2.5 Various factors in relation to the value and susceptibility of landscape elements are assessed and cross referenced to determine the overall sensitivity as shown in Table 1.

2.6 Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."[7] The definitions for high, medium, low landscape sensitivity are shown in Table 4:

Table 4, Criteria for assessing landscape sensitivity	
HIGH	Landscape element or character area defined as being of high value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of medium value combined with a high susceptibility to change.
MEDIUM	Landscape element or character area defined as being of high value combined with a low susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of medium value combined with a medium or low susceptibility to change. Landscape element or character area defined as being of low value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change.

[7] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

LOW	Landscape element or character area defined as being of low value combined with a low susceptibility to change.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements

2.7 Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on individual landscape elements within the site as shown in Table 5:

Table 5, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change for landscape elements	
HIGH	Substantial loss/gain of a landscape element.
MEDIUM	Partial loss/gain or alteration to part of a landscape element.
LOW	Minor loss/gain or alteration to part of a landscape element.
NEGLIGIBLE	No loss/gain or very limited alteration to part of a landscape element.

3. EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

3.1 Landscape character is defined as the "distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."[8]

3.2 The assessment of effects on landscape character considers how the introduction of new landscape elements physically alters the landform, landcover, landscape pattern and perceptual attributes of the site or how visibility of the proposals changes the way in which the landscape character is perceived.

Sensitivity of Landscape Character

3.3 Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape and the susceptibility of the landscape to changes that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 88-90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

3.4 The criteria for assessing the value of landscape character is shown in Table 2.

[8] Glossary, Page 157, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

3.5 The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of landscape character is shown in Table 3.

3.6 The overall sensitivity is determined through cross referencing the value and susceptibility of landscape character as shown in Table 1.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Character

3.7 Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on landscape character as shown in Table 6:

Table 6, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change on landscape character	
HIGH	Introduction of major new elements into the landscape or some major change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
MEDIUM	Introduction of some notable new elements into the landscape or some notable change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
LOW	Introduction of minor new elements into the landscape or some minor change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.
NEGLIGIBLE	No notable or appreciable introduction of new elements into the landscape or change to the scale, landform, landcover or pattern of the landscape.

4. EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

4.1 Visual amenity is defined within GLVIA3 as the "overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area."[9]

4.2 The effects on visual amenity considers the changes in views arising from the proposals in relation to visual receptors including settlements, residential properties, transport routes, recreational facilities and attractions; and

[9] Page 158, Glossary, GLVIA3

representative viewpoints or specific locations within the study area as agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

4.3 Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the visual receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the proposals – see pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed on a scale of high, medium or low.

4.4 The criteria for assessing the value of views are shown in Table 7:

Table 7, Criteria for assessing the value of views	
HIGH	Views with high scenic value within designated landscapes including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, etc. Likely to include key viewpoints on OS maps or reference within guidebooks, provision of facilities, presence of interpretation boards, etc.
MEDIUM	Views with moderate scenic value within undesignated landscape including urban fringe and rural countryside.
LOW	Views with unremarkable scenic value within undesignated landscape with partly degraded visual quality and detractors.

4.5 The criteria for assessing the susceptibility of views are shown in Table 8:

Table 8, Criteria for assessing visual susceptibility	
HIGH	Includes occupiers of residential properties and people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside using public rights of way (PROW).
MEDIUM	Includes people engaged in outdoor sporting activities and people travelling through the landscape on minor roads and trains.
LOW	Includes people at places of work e.g. industrial and commercial premises and people travelling through the landscape on major roads and motorways.

4.6 Sensitivity is defined in GLVIA3 as "a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of susceptibility of the receptor to a specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor."[10] The definitions for high, medium, low visual sensitivity are shown in Table 9:

Table 9, Criteria for assessing visual sensitivity	
HIGH	Visual receptor defined as being of high value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of medium value combined with a high susceptibility to change.
MEDIUM	Visual receptor defined as being of high value combined with a low susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of medium value combined with a medium or low susceptibility to change. Visual receptor defined as being of low value combined with a high or medium susceptibility to change.
LOW	Visual receptor defined as being of low value combined with a low susceptibility to change.

Magnitude of Change on Visual Receptors

4.7 Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of change on visual receptors as shown in Table 10:

Table 10, Criteria for assessing magnitude of change for visual receptors	
HIGH	Major change in the view that has a substantial influence on the overall view.
MEDIUM	Some change in the view that is clearly visible and forms an important but not defining element in the view.
LOW	Some change in the view that is appreciable with few visual receptors affected.
NEGLIGIBLE	No notable change in the view.

[10] Glossary, Page 158, GLVIA, 3rd Edition

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

5.1 The likely significance of effects is dependent on all of the factors considered in the sensitivity and the magnitude of change upon the relevant landscape and visual receptors. These factors are assimilated to assess whether or not the proposed development will have a likely significant or not significant effect. The variables considered in the evaluation of the sensitivity and the magnitude of change is reviewed holistically to inform the professional judgement of significance.

5.2 A likely **significant** effect will occur where the combination of the variables results in the proposed development having a definitive effect on the view. A **not significant** effect will occur where the appearance of the proposed development is not definitive, and the effect continues to be defined principally by its baseline condition.

5.3 Within Table 11 below, the major effects highlighted in grey are considered to be significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. It should be noted that whilst an individual effect may be significant, it does not necessarily follow that the proposed development would be unacceptable in the planning balance. The cross referencing of the sensitivity and magnitude of change on the landscape and visual receptor determines the significance of effect as shown in Table 11:

Table 11, Significance of landscape and visual effects

		Sensitivity		
		HIGH	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
Magnitude of Change	**HIGH**	Major	Major	Moderate
	MEDIUM	Major	Moderate	Minor
	LOW	Moderate	Minor	Minor
	NEGLIGIBLE	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

6. TYPICAL DESCRIPTORS OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

6.1 The typical descriptors of the landscape effects are detailed within Table 12:

Table 12, Typical Descriptors of Landscape Effects

MAJOR BENEFICIAL	Substantially: - enhance the character (including value) of the landscape; - enhance the restoration of characteristic features and elements lost as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; - enable a sense of place to be enhanced.
MODERATE BENEFICIAL	Moderately: - enhance the character (including value) of the landscape; - enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from inappropriate management or development; - enable a sense of place to be restored.
MINOR BENEFICIAL	Slightly: - complement the character (including value) of the landscape; - maintain or enhance characteristic features or elements; - enable some sense of place to be restored.
NEGLIGIBLE	The proposed changes would (on balance) maintain the character (including value) of the landscape and would: - be in keeping with landscape character and blend in with characteristic features and elements; - Enable a sense of place to be maintained.
NO CHANGE	The proposed changes would not be visible and there would be no change to landscape character.
MINOR ADVERSE	Slightly: - not quite fit the character (including value) of the landscape; - be a variance with characteristic features and elements; - detract from sense of place.
MODERATE ADVERSE	Moderately: - conflict with the character (including value) of the landscape; - have an adverse effect on characteristic features or elements; - diminish a sense of place.
MAJOR ADVERSE	Substantially: - be at variance with the character (including value) of the landscape; - degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements or cause them to be lost; - change a sense of place.

7. TYPICAL DESCRIPTORS OF VISUAL EFFECTS

7.1 The typical descriptors of the visual effects are detailed within Table 13:

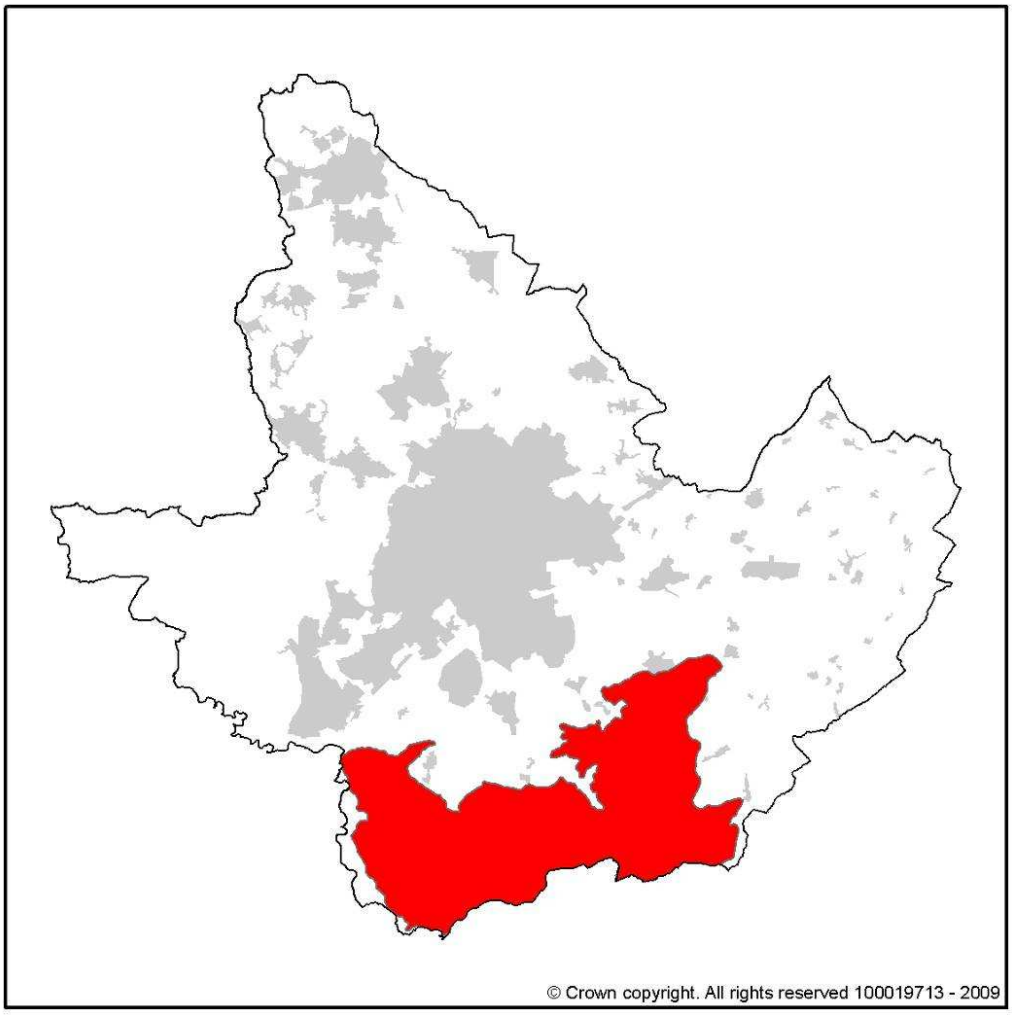
Table 13, Typical Descriptors of Visual Effects	
MAJOR BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a major improvement in the view.
MODERATE BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a clear improvement in the view.
MINOR BENEFICIAL	Proposals would result in a slight improvement in the view.
NEGLIGIBLE	The proposed changes would be in keeping with, and would maintain, the existing view or where (on balance) the proposed changes would maintain the general appearance of the view (which may include adverse effects which are offset by beneficial effects for the same receptor) or due to distance from the receptor, the proposed change would be barely perceptible to the naked eye.
NO CHANGE	The proposed changes would not be visible and there would be no change to the view.
MINOR ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a slight deterioration in the view.
MODERATE ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a clear deterioration in the view.
MAJOR ADVERSE	Proposals would result in a major deterioration in the view.

8. NATURE OF EFFECTS

8.1 GLVIA3 includes an entry that states *"effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity."*[11] GLVIA3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed, and this therefore becomes a matter of professional judgement supported by site specific justification within the LVIA.

[11] Para 6.29, Page 113, GLVIA 3rd Edition

Appendix 2 Extract from Greater Nottingham Landscape Character Assessment (June 2009)



DPZ within this Regional Character Area:

NW01	**Gotham and West Leake Wooded Hills and Scarps**
NW02	**East Leake Rolling Farmland**
NW03	**Widmerpool Clay Wolds**
NW04	**Cotgrave Wooded Clay Wolds**

Key Characteristics

- Defined by a low boulder clay plateau traditionally known as 'wolds' (elevated tracts of open land);
- Closely associated with a dissected glacial plateau comprising variable thicknesses of boulder clay overlying Lower Lias and Rhaetic Beds;
- Broad area of low hills which extend to the Soar Valley thinning out to a series of hills in the north. Gotham and West Leake are the most prominent;
- Rhaetic beds provide a low steeply inclined escarpment which forms a continuous boundary above Cropwell Bishop broken only by the valleys of Fairham Brook and other minor streams;
- Soils are predominantly strong clayey matrix containing chalk stones and lenses of fine loamy material which are difficult to cultivate although loamy coarse soils are present to the west of the region;
- Erosion by streams has stripped away covering glacial drift to create a series of deep valleys separated by ridges of higher ground. The most prominent is Kingston Brook, a narrow corridor flanked by steeply rising hills;
- Most streams flow west towards the River Soar except Fairham Brook which flows north to the River Trent;
- Distinctive rural character and feeling of seclusion from urban centres;
- Small red brick and pantile roofed villages interconnected by narrow winding country lanes;
- Larger commuter settlements with residential estates on their fringes and small older centres within the northern and western parts of the region;
- Red brick and pantile roof farmsteads are common within the area although many farms contain larger modern buildings constructed in metal or timber;
- Industrial influences have a localised effect on the area such as Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station, and gypsum works at East Leake and Gotham;
- Narrow lanes bordered by hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees (mostly ash with some oak);
- Extensive areas of continuous pasture and arable farming;
- Well defined and recognisable pattern of hedged fields and woodland;
- Medium to large scale regular and semi-irregular field pattern, this is less distinctive in arable fields; older smaller field patterns are present in pastoral fields close to village fringes;
- Ridge and furrow present within pastoral fields;
- Hedgerows are mostly hawthorn, most are well maintained and intact although around arable fields their condition is more variable;
- Broad-leaved woodland is variable across the area and ranges in size creating areas of high and low enclosure; the most prominent and mature is on high ground covering the hills to the north at Gotham and West Leake and around Cotgrave;
- Smaller woodland copses and coverts are common and exert a localised influence particularly where present on high ground;
- Hills characterised by large regular blocks of mature broad-leaved woodland, scarp grasslands and pasture and long arable fields which extend down the slopes;

- Pockets of wooded parkland provide an element of formality and enclosure within the landscape such as Stanford Hall and Kingston Hall;
- Small streams notable through the presence of willows and riparian shrubs; and
- Willow pollards are common within this area.

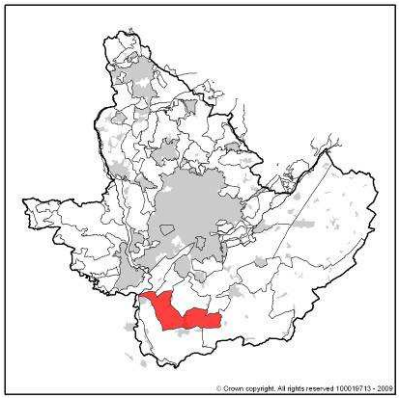
Guidelines and Recommendations

- Enhance the broad-leaved character of existing woodlands;
- Identify opportunities for new woodland planting on suitable sites;
- Conserve the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape;
- Conserve the traditional built form character and pattern of rural settlements;
- Conserve all areas of permanent pasture particularly where present close to villages and along streams;
- Promote measures for conserving and enhancing the historic features such as ridge and furrow;
- Conserve the historic pattern of hedgerows along rural lanes;
- Conserve the semi-irregular small to medium scale field pattern around villages and medium to large scale field pattern throughout remainder of the area;
- Restore the traditional pastoral character and diversity of scarp grasslands;
- Promote measures to enhance the semi-natural appearance of scarp woodland;
- Conserve the balance of woodland and farmland on scarp hills;
- Conserve the riparian character of stream corridors through retention and replanting of streamside trees and scrub;
- Conserve willow pollards where present along stream corridors;
- Conserve the character of village side pastoral landscapes; and
- Promote measures for achieving a better integration of new and existing development in the countryside.

NW01 Gotham And West Leake Hills And Scarps

CONTEXT

Regional Character Area:
Nottinghamshire Wolds
LDU Reference: 113, 128, 66, 425, 251, 252 ,187, 258
DPZ Reference: NW01



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Series of prominent individual hills with steep sometimes scarp slopes and broad plateaus
- Hills are the dissected northern extent of a low boulder clay plateau extending from Leicestershire traditionally known as 'The Wolds'
- Rural character although urban elements such as villages, power station, industry and quarrying are frequent in the landscape
- Kingston Brook is a localised feature on low ground between hills characterised by riparian woodland and some grazing pasture at its margins
- Land use is a mixture of woodland, arable and pasture. Arable is on the lower and more gentle slopes, pasture close to rivers, settlements and scarp grassland where the land is steeply sloping precluding machinery from working the land
- Field pattern is mostly modern although pockets of older field systems such as irregular geometric and geometric and those reflecting open fields are present
- Field pattern in places sweeps down the slopes and is a distinctive feature
- Field boundaries are mostly hedgerows on the slopes with fences often present on higher ground
- Woodland is generally on high ground across the hills although there are smaller pockets of woodland on lower ground as establishing scrub and along village fringes/areas of former quarry
- Prominent extensive woodland plantation covers the slopes and high ground, often on steep scarps
- Rides and areas of open land are interspersed between plantation woodland
- Wooded tracks with spring flowering understorey planting along tracks up hills
- Large commuter settlements such as Gotham and East Leake and smaller settlements such as West Leake are nestled at the base of the hills on the fringes of the DPZ
- Infrequent individual farms within the character area often on the slopes or high ground. A row of individual modern houses is present along Ash Lane. One distinctive red brick and pantile roof farmstead on Bunny Hill is set within gardens with a small orchard
- Buildings are mostly red brick with older properties having red pantile roofs
- Church towers and spires are prominent within a uniform village skyline
- Overhead lines are prominent on low ground between hills
- Small former spring (Wheldon Spring) on Gotham Hill is a localised feature characterised by a depression in the ground and establishing scrub
- Enclosed channelled views on low ground between hills with extensive panoramic views across towards Nottingham City and beyond from high ground

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

A series of distinctive wooded hills with arable fields on lower and gentler slopes and pasture and pockets of grassland on the steeper slopes. Views are extensive and often over long distances from the high ground although become more enclosed from lower ground. Urban elements are frequent with views of Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station and the gypsum works. Some villages such as Gotham village are characterised by modern edges and a small older core with a distinctive church spire. Others such as West Leake are small and distinctive focused along a single street with small working farms and lack of modern development.

Land use is a mix of plantation woodland, arable farming and pasture. Fields are mostly medium to large in size with the majority of arable farming being a modern field pattern; although at Gotham there is evidence of older irregular geometric patterns. Pockets of fields reflecting open field system and regular geometric patterns are present on lower slopes or pockets of high ground. Older field patterns are generally used for pasture.

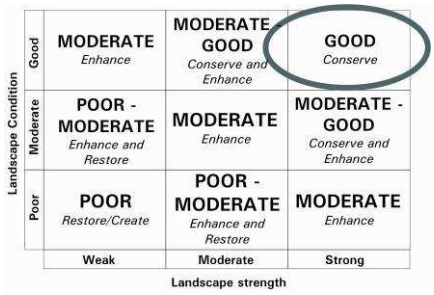
Woodland comprises large geometric field sized blocks of both broadleaved and conifer woodland. On West Leake Hill a large woodland is used for commercial forestry with rides and various belts of different species within woodlands. Other vegetation includes smaller frequent copses at the base of slopes and around settlements. Frequent hedgerow trees and intact hedgerows are present across the area. Pockets of regenerating scrub are often around village fringes or on the base of slopes.

The landscape condition is **GOOD**. Hedgerows and woodland are well managed, although there is some evidence of field boundary fragmentation in places. Where hedgerows have been replaced, the timber fencing is usually in good condition. The agricultural land is well managed and features are intact with little sign of decline.

Landscape Strength

This DPZ is a distinctive series of hills which are prominent within the surrounding area. They often form a backdrop to views from the southern edges of Nottingham. From high ground within the DPZ there are open expansive views to the centre of Nottingham and lower-lying farmland at Ruddington and Bunny.

The strength of character is **STRONG**. The hills are distinctive and consistent features across the landscape and exert their influence within the surrounding area. The pattern of arable, pasture and woodland is also consistent with moderate sized villages and some expanding commuter villages present on low ground.



The overall landscape strategy is **CONSERVE**.

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Landscape features

- Conserve the distinctive pattern of hills with large blocks of woodland on high ground
- Conserve the older field patterns within the character area such as those reflecting open systems and the irregular and regular geometric patterns
- Conserve the balance of arable farming on lower slopes and pasture on steeper and higher slopes
- Conserve field patterns which sweep down the hills
- Conserve the landform of the former Wheldon Spring
- Conserve the diversity of broadleaf and large-scale woodland plantations on hills
- Ensure new conifer planting includes belts of broadleaf woodland and woodland edge along its fringes
- Any new woodland planting should be small in scale along the base of slopes becoming larger and of field size on higher slopes
- Conserve the small rides and various ages of woodland within the character area
- Conserve the wooded tracks along the ridgelines
- Conserve hedgerows and encourage infill planting within gaps rather than erection of timber fencing
- Conserve areas of rough grassland where present on steeper scarp slopes

Built form

- Conserve the frequency of small farmsteads and outbuildings throughout the landscape; any new barn developments should be small scale and fit within the existing pattern and vernacular styles
- Conserve the small linear and vernacular character of West Leake
- Conserve the uniform roofline of villages with prominent church spires

- Encourage the use of red brick and red pantile roofs for new buildings and extensions
- Conserve the nucleated character of larger villages
- Minimise the influence of larger settlements such as East Leake through small-scale woodland planting to reduce the scale and frequency of urban edges within views

Other development/ structures in the landscape

- Conserve the winding character of rural lanes with expansive channelled views between hills
- Ensure any new industrial development is nestled on low ground and has well wooded boundaries which integrate with woodland on higher ground to reduce its visibility

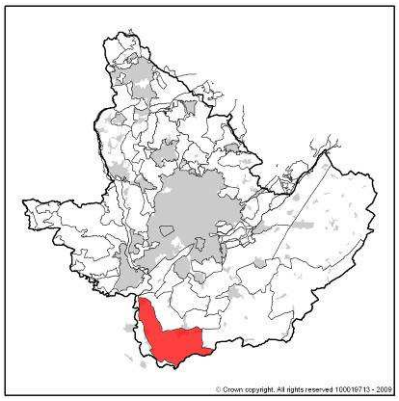
NW02 East Leake Rolling Farmland

CONTEXT

Regional Character Area: Nottinghamshire Wolds

LDU Reference: 268, 247, 186, 365, 364

DPZ Reference: NW02



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Rolling landscape which forms part of the wider glacial plateau of chalky boulder clay overlying lower lias and Rhaetic beds
- Undulations in the landscape are formed by small streams and tributaries which have cut through softer mudstones and clays; Kingston Brook is the most distinctive
- Localised man-made earthworks present around Ratcliffe Power Station which have a localised influence on character
- Frequent watercourses which are often demarcated by clusters of riparian willows along their course; where trees are not present watercourses are generally not visible in the landscape
- Rural character present across the area although there are views towards urban elements such as Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station visible above hills, a gypsum works and village fringes
- Land use is arable and some pasture. Pasture becomes more prominent around East Leake where it is mostly horse grazing and around Rempstone where sheep grazing is more common
- Field pattern includes small, medium and large-scale fields recognised within the Historic Landscape Characterisation as being a mix of ages including regular, semi-regular geometric and irregular field patterns. Arable field pattern tends to be of modern origin
- Oldest field enclosures are often concentrated around watercourses and smaller settlements
- Field boundaries are almost all hedgerows which are generally intact and comprise mostly hawthorn; around horse grazing areas electric and timber and wire fencing is present which has a localised influence in character particularly along the southern fringe of East Leake
- There are few hedgerow trees within the landscape; this in combination with low hedgerows creates an open character to fields. Hedgerow trees tend to be concentrated around smaller pastoral fields
- Relatively low level of woodland cover comprising prominent geometric blocks of woodland on high ground, infrequent hedgerow trees, and clumps along watercourses including willow pollards. The most significant blocks of woodland are at Stanford Hall and the formal lake and entrance at Kingston Hall around the parkland margins which includes ornamental species
- Parkland is a distinctive feature around Kingston Hall and Stanford Hall where permanent pasture and parkland trees are prominent
- Prominent halls framed by vistas of trees such as lime avenues. Formal brick wall boundaries define the edges of parkland
- Small estate cottages at Kingston on Soar and lodge houses are features in these areas
- One large nucleated commuter settlement is at East Leake; the southern edge of the village is prominent within views
- Costock is a small linear settlement with a pocket of prominent new development concentrated along the western edge
- New apartment buildings for Nottingham Trent University are a localised urbanising feature within the landscape and contrast with other smaller-scale buildings
- Network of farms each often contains a large red brick and pantile roofed farmstead with modern timber or metal outbuildings; older red brick barns are also frequent
- Views vary from enclosed and channelled views from lower ground along watercourses to open often expansive views from higher ground, particularly to the south and beyond the borough boundary
- Views are rural in character, with frequent dispersed villages and open farmland; small woodland blocks are a feature on high ground
- A sand and gravel quarry has a localised influence on the landscape character of the DPZ
- Roads through the area often have narrow grassed ditches on either side

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

This area is characterised by its gently rolling landform with a prominent river corridor along Kingston Brook. It has a rural character with open views across mostly arable farmland with localised enclosure along smaller pastoral fields. Small villages, frequent farmsteads and two parkland estates are features.

Fields are a mixture of small fields close to watercourses and large-scale fields which are mostly arable with some pasture farming. These include both modern and older enclosures. Older enclosures are around the watercourse and village fringes.

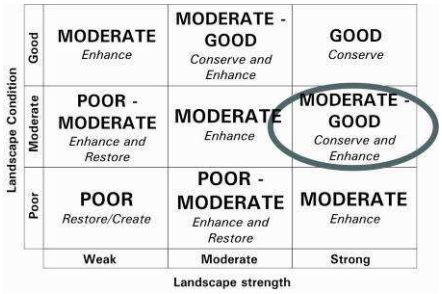
The area has a low level of woodland cover. Woodland tends to be small broadleaved geometric blocks on high ground which gives them greater prominence in the landscape. Other woodland is concentrated within parkland around the fringes of halls and contains coniferous and ornamental species. Parkland trees are also distinctive in these areas.

The landscape condition is **MODERATE.** Features are generally well maintained although there is evidence of fragmentation where fields have expanded and where fields are subdivided for horse grazing using electric tape and fencing. The man-made landform changes around the power station have an influence.

Landscape Strength

Views are often over quite long distances due to the undulating landform. On high ground views extend to Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station and the hills surrounding it and across rolling farmland towards Leicestershire. The character of this landscape extends into Leicestershire so when viewed from outside the area is seen in this context; it is screened to the north by Bunny Hill, Gotham Hill and West Leake Hill.

The strength of character of the area is **STRONG**. The area has a strong intact rural character with arable and pasture farming, prominent small woodlands, villages and a network of farmsteads key features. A minor amount of fragmentation is present in the north of the area where land has been altered adjacent to the power station.



The overall landscape strategy is **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE.**

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Landscape features

- Conserve the older field patterns within the character area such as those reflecting open systems and the semi-regular geometric patterns
- Conserve the prominence of woodlands on high ground
- Conserve and enhance the regular dispersal of small geometric broadleaved copses and woodlands often on high ground
- Conserve the rural character with built form infrequent in views
- Conserve hedgerows and where present ensure that infill planting is undertaken where gaps occur rather than infilling or replacement with fencing
- Enhance the distribution of hedgerow trees by encouraging greater planting of trees within hedgerows. Species used should be a mostly ash with some oak.
- Conserve the formal parkland and pasture within Kingston and Stanford Halls
- Conserve the ornamental broadleaved woodlands around the parkland fringes enclosed by red brick walls
- Conserve the framed vistas towards the halls from adjacent roads
- Conserve areas of permanent pasture where present in the DPZ and ensure that hedgerows and hedgerow trees at the boundaries are maintained
- Restore hedgerows and encourage planting of new hedgerow trees to provide unity between more open land at East Leake and the more enclosed and wooded pasture fields.
- Conserve and enhance the character of watercourses through retention of willow pollards and planting of new riparian vegetation
- Conserve and enhance the small scale field pattern present along watercourse fringes; where arable farming is present encourage new tree planting to integrate the fields with smaller pastoral fields

Built form

- Conserve the estate character of Kingston on Soar and the estate lodges at entrances to halls
- Conserve the regular distribution of built form and villages within the DPZ
- Enhance the fringes of the new apartment buildings at University of Trent through localised woodland planting
- Conserve the rural scale and vernacular style of buildings in smaller villages through restricting new development. Where development occurs it should make a positive contribution to the local vernacular, scale and massing of the

village.

- Conserve the use of red brick and pantile roofs within farmsteads, barns and properties in villages
- Minimise the influence of larger settlements such as East Leake through small-scale woodland planting along fringes

Other development/ structures in the landscape

- Conserve and enhance the character of hedgerow trees lining roads through the landscape
- Ensure that on completion of quarrying that hedgerow trees, hedgerows and small woodlands are encouraged within the restoration proposals to ensure that the land integrates with the surrounding land
- Conserve grassed ditches along the edge of roads

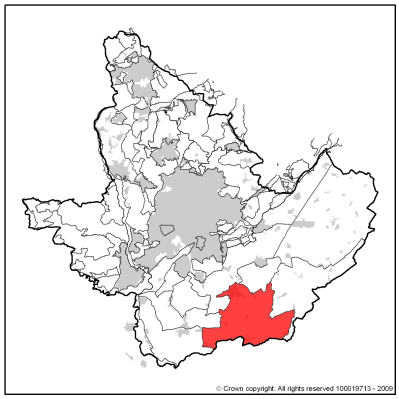
NW03 Widmerpool Clay Wolds

CONTEXT

Regional Character Area: Nottinghamshire Wolds

LDU reference: 187,191

DPZ reference: NW03



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Rolling landscape which forms part of the wider glacial plateau of chalky boulder clay overlying lower lias and Rhaetic beds
- Undulations in the landscape are formed by small streams and tributaries which have cut through softer mudstones and clays
- Distinctive steep slopes present along the western edge of the DPZ
- Frequent watercourses which are often demarcated by landform and riparian trees along their course
- Remote rural character present across the area although there are views towards the urban edge of Keyworth in the north
- Land use is a mixture of arable and pasture although pasture becomes more dominant approaching Widmerpool and Willoughby-on-the-Wolds where the land is continuous pasture and is particularly distinctive
- Field pattern includes medium to large scale regular, semi-regular geometric and irregular field patterns. An area reflecting one of the earliest forms of enclosure within Nottinghamshire is present as a cluster around Thorpe-in-Glebe
- Field boundaries are almost all hedgerows which are generally intact and comprise mostly hawthorn although blackthorn, field maple and hazel are present in places
- Around larger fields, hedgerows show some sign of fragmentation and replacement with timber post and wire and stockproof fencing. In places parkland style fencing provides an element of formality along roads
- Areas of ridge and furrow are locally distinctive
- Woodland comprises a mix of small linear belts, geometric copses and coverts on high ground and around large farmsteads and halls on village fringes
- Wooded impression created through frequent blocks of small woodland, hedgerow trees and mature hedgerows
- The railway is a prominent wooded feature within the landscape
- Prominent Roman road (Fosse Way) is visible within the landscape, traffic movement on it provides a slight urbanising feature
- Frequent small nucleated villages which have a remote and rural character with concentrations of distinctive vernacular buildings and some more modern additions
- Farmsteads are frequent within the landscape, and they often contain a large red brick and pantile roofed farmstead with modern timber or metal outbuildings; older red brick barns are also frequent
- Some villages are set on slightly higher ground and are visible within the landscape. Woodland and trees along the boundaries reduces their prominence and edges are often seen as individual or small clusters of buildings
- Thorpe Le Glebe, a former medieval village site is discernible through undulations within the ground
- Wooded formal parkland present around Widmerpool is a local feature of the landscape
- Views vary from enclosed and channelled views from lower ground to open often expansive views from higher ground
- Views are rural in character with dispersed village fringes and small woodland blocks a feature on high ground
- Distinctive long distance views along western edge of DPZ on the A606 across the adjacent Vale of Belvoir flat farmland



LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

This area is characterised by its gently rolling landform dissected by frequent small wooded streams. The DPZ has a strongly rural and remote character with a mix of arable and pasture farmland and a regular dispersed pattern of small copses and coverts often on higher ground

Fields are a mixture of medium to large scale fields and include pasture and arable farming with both modern and older enclosures. Around Thorpe in Glebe the field pattern is much smaller and regular and represents one of the oldest patterns in the county. The land has a slightly more enclosed character within this area.

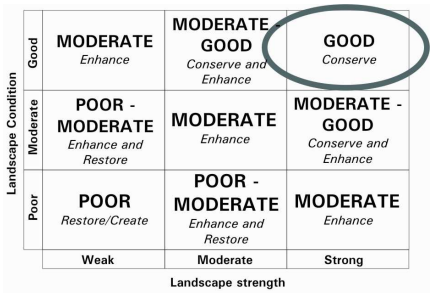
The area has a wooded impression although relatively low woodland cover. Woodland comprises small geometric shaped coverts and copses and some smaller linear blocks on the edges of fields. Most is broadleaved and on high ground. A small area of ornamental and conifer woodland is present around Widmerpool Hall to the south west of Widmerpool.

The landscape condition is **GOOD.** Features are generally well maintained although there is a minor amount of fragmentation where fields have expanded in the south and north of the area.


Landscape Strength

Views are either local short distance views from low ground or expansive long distance views from higher ground over rolling landform with frequent woodland and farmsteads. There is a particularly distinctive view along the A606 from the plateau to lower ground in the Vale of Belvoir. The escarpment on the eastern edge of the character area forms a backdrop to views within the Vale of Belvoir.

The character strength of the area is **STRONG**. The area has a strong intact rural character with arable and pasture farming and pockets of woodland key features. There is a minor amount of fragmentation where fields have expanded in the south and north of the area. In these places hedgerows trees in fields are a remnant of a former pattern.



The overall landscape strategy is **CONSERVE**.

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Landscape features

- Conserve the older field patterns within the character area such as those reflecting open systems and the semi-regular geometric patterns
- Conserve and maintain open views along A606 from high ground to the Vale of Belvoir
- Conserve the regular dispersed patterns of small geometric broadleaved copses and woodlands often on high ground
- Conserve the rural character with built form infrequent in views
- Conserve hedgerows and where present ensure that infill planting is undertaken where gaps occur rather than infilling with fencing
- Conserve the regular distribution of hedgerow trees and ensure that where overmature and senescent that a programme for replacement is undertaken. Species used should be mostly ash with some oak.
- Conserve ridge and furrow and the earth mounding of the deserted medieval village at Thorpe in Glebe
- Conserve the formal wooded parkland adjacent to Widmerpool
- Conserve areas of permanent pasture to maintain the pastoral character of the DPZ

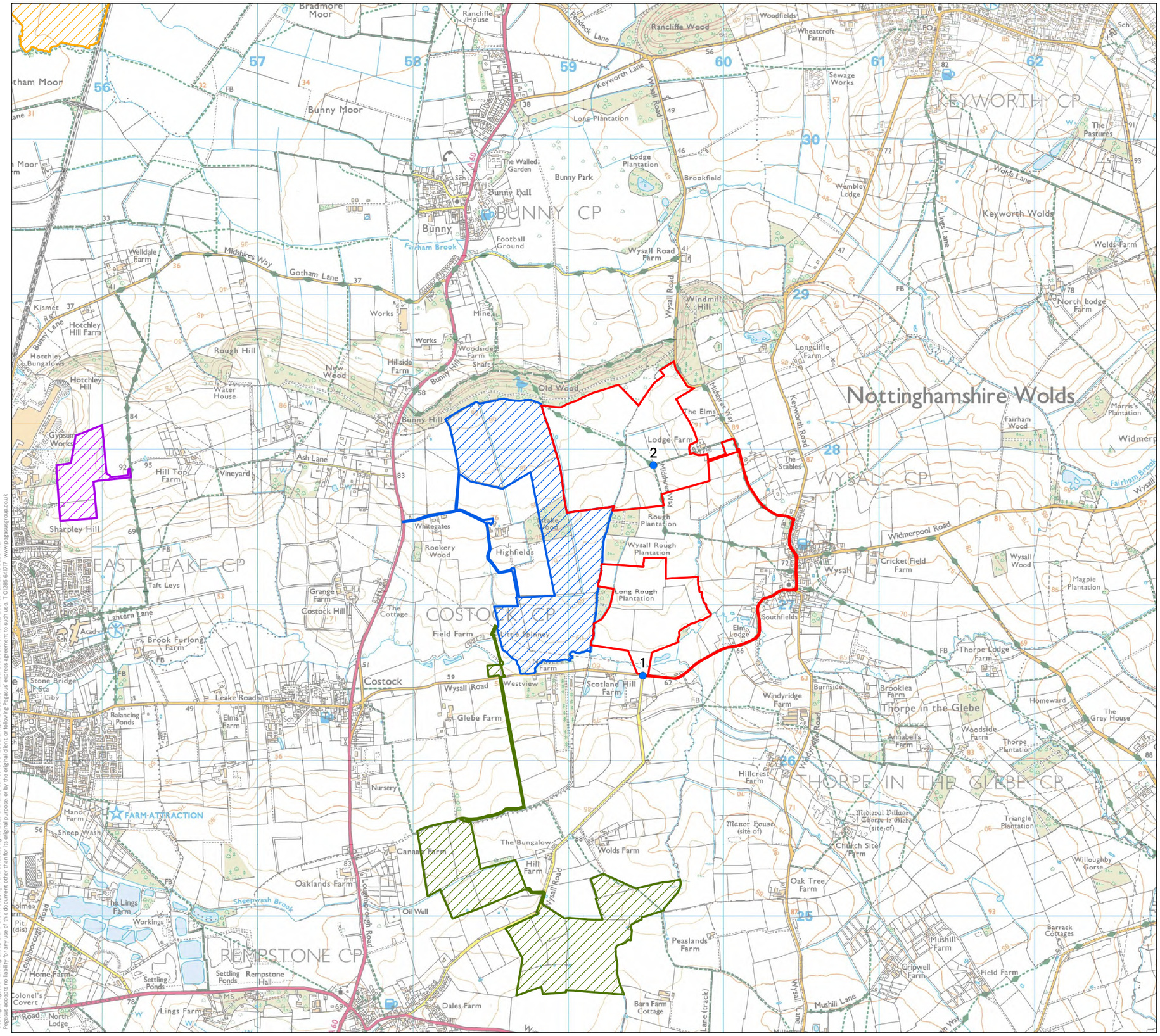
Built form

- Conserve the rural character of villages within the DPZ through ensuring any infill respects the key characteristics and local built form vernacular
- Conserve the sparse distribution of built form and villages within the DPZ
- Conserve the small scale and vernacular style within smaller villages through restricting new development. Where development occurs it should make a positive contribution to the local vernacular, scale and massing of the village
- Conserve the use of red brick and pantile roofs within farmsteads, barns and properties within villages
- Conserve the dispersed nature of village edges through retention and new planting to maintain the appearance of individual or small groups of properties
- Minimise the influence of larger settlements such as Keyworth through small-scale woodland planting along fringes

Other development/ structures in the landscape

- Conserve the narrow winding, rural and remote character of lanes through the DPZ
- Industry is not present or visible within this landscape and this should be conserved through careful consideration of siting of development and planting works

Figure 1 Site Location and Context Plan

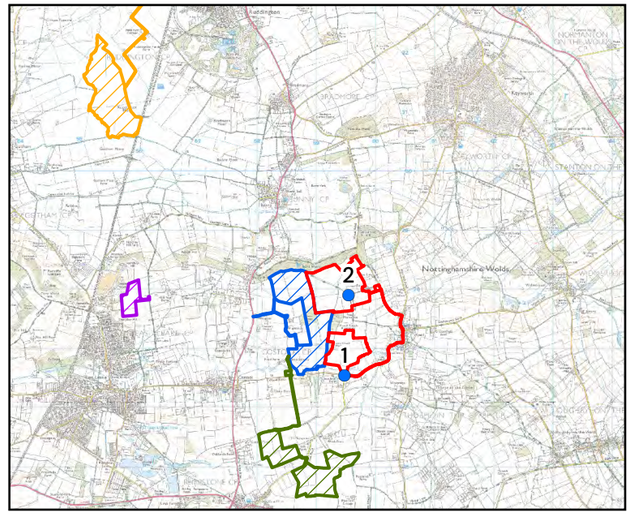


KEY

- Site Boundary
- Site Context Viewpoint Location

Cumulative Sites

- 21/00703/FUL - OS Field 8561, to the rear of Rushcliffe Grove, East Leake, Nottinghamshire
- 22/00303/FUL - Land to the Northeast Of Highfields Farm, Bunny Hill, Costock
- 23/00254/FUL - Land at Fields Farm, Asher Lane, Ruddington, Nottingham
- 23/01073/SCREIA - Land to the East and South-East of Costock, Rushcliffe



NOTES:
REVISIONS:

Site Location & Context Plan

Old Wood Energy Park, Wilsall, Nottinghamshire

Exagen Developments Ltd

N
0 1 km

DATE	SCALE	TEAM	APPROVED
01/12/2023	1:25,000@A3	EH	RC

SHEET	REVISION
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DRAWING NUMBER
P21-2533_EN_02

PEGASUS GROUP

Figure 2 Landscape Proposals