



Technical Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Derril Water Solar Farm

01/03/2021



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Neo Environmental Ltd has been appointed by Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for a proposed solar farm development and associated infrastructure (the “Proposed Development”) at lands circa 1.2km southwest of the village of Pyworthy, Devon (the “Application Site”).
- 1.2. The overall design of the Proposed Development has considered its setting within the confines of the LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land Dorset and the setting and character of the Upper Tamar AGLV Great Landscape Value (AGLV), c. 1.2km to the south to ensure the potential effects upon landscape and visual receptors are limited. The siting of the Proposed Development within agricultural fields delineated by a mix of mature trees and hedgerows will help integrate the Proposed Development within the local landscape.
- 1.3. The relatively low elevation of the Application Site, low heights of the various proposed structures, and presence of existing vegetation across the landscape of the study area all greatly help to screen potential inward views of the Proposed Development from the majority of visual receptors. Actual views are limited to a small number of receptors within relatively close proximity to the Proposed Development.
- 1.4. Mitigation measures will include tree and hedgerow planting, infill planting along the boundaries of the Application Site and allowing existing hedgerows to mature. Additional biodiversity opportunities will include bat and bird boxes, bee banks, hibernaculum and invertebrate hotels.
- 1.5. The Proposed Development will locally alter the existing agricultural land use of the Application Site to a landscape comprising a solar farm with associated infrastructure, mixed agricultural land use and improved hedgerow and tree planting. During operation the Proposed Development will initially have a **Moderate** landscape effect on the characteristics of the Application Site, which will reduce to **Moderate/Minor adverse effect** by c. Year 5 as proposed mitigation planting becomes established and help integrate the Proposed Development into the local rural landscape.
- 1.6. The Proposed Development will directly affect LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land and will result in a solar farm located over c. 66.33 hectares of this landscape. This will result in a very localised (within c. 1km) direct **Moderate** landscape effect and a **Minor adverse** effect for this LCT as a whole. The landscape effect will reduce to **Moderate/Minor adverse** effect locally by c. Year 5 as the proposed mitigation planting matures helping to further contain and integrate the Proposed Development.
- 1.7. In terms of designated landscapes, the introduction of the Proposed Development will indirectly affect a small eastern part of the Upper Tamar AGLV. During operation a very localised effect will range from **Minor adverse** to **No change**. It is considered unlikely that the characteristics and qualities of the Upper Tamar AGLV will be compromised by the introduction of the Proposed Development.

- 1.8. The potential visibility of the Proposed Development was found to be localised given the relatively low elevation of the Application Site, low heights of the various proposed structures, and presence of existing vegetation across the landscape of the study area. Inward views from visual receptors (people) were identified to be largely limited to those within around c.1km. Actual views of the Application Site are largely restricted to partial and screened views, within close proximity with opportunity for some longer distance views within 1km to the east and southeast.
- 1.9. During fieldwork, visibility of the Application Site was found to be largely limited to partial localised inward views gained from the minor road passing through the Application Site and from short sections of the PRoW to the southeast (Footpaths 1 and 3). Informed by desk study, fieldwork and consultation, a total of 10 representative viewpoints are assessed in the LVA. The appraisal identifies operational **Moderate adverse** and **Moderate/Minor adverse** visual effects from Viewpoints 8 (Footpath 1), and 9 (Footpath 7) respectively. From other visual receptors with potential views of the Proposed Development visual effects during operational Year 0 will range from **Moderate/Minor** to **Minor adverse**, reducing to **Minor adverse** or less by around c. operational Year 5 as mitigation planting establishes.
- 1.10. Cumulative effects are largely limited to localised interactions with the baseline of existing elements of energy infrastructure developments including Crinacott Solar Farm which will result in a **Moderate adverse** cumulative landscape effect on LCT 5A. **Moderate adverse** cumulative visual effects are limited to recreational receptors on the PRoW to the southeast (Viewpoint 8). From other receptors cumulative visual effects will be limited and will range from localised **Minor adverse** effects to **No Change**.
- 1.11. At the end of the Proposed Development's lifespan, the predicted effects are reversible as the lands can be returned to similar use.

INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.12. Neo Environmental Ltd has been appointed by Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Ltd to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for a proposed solar farm development and associated infrastructure (the “Proposed Development”) at lands circa 1.2km south-west of the village of Pyworthy, Devon (the “Application Site”).
- 1.13. Please see **Figure 4 of Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings** for the layout of the Proposed Development.
- 1.14. This report has been undertaken in compliance with the principles of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in accordance with GLVIA3¹. This LVA provides an appraisal of the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the existing landscape and visual amenity of the Application Site and surrounding area. The appraisal methodology for the LVA is detailed in **Appendix 1C**.
- 1.15. This appraisal deals with landscape and visual effects separately, including consideration of cumulative landscape and visual effects. The LVA is supported by **Figures 1.1 to 1.14** found within **Appendix 1A** including the **Landscape & Ecology Management Plan (LEMP, Figure 1.14)** which shows the landscape mitigation measures incorporated into the overall design scheme.

Development Description

- 1.16. The Proposed Development will consist of the construction of bi-facial solar photovoltaic (PV) panels mounted on metal frames, new access tracks, underground cabling, perimeter fencing with CCTV cameras and access gates, a temporary construction compound, substation and all ancillary grid infrastructure and associated works.
- 1.17. The Proposed Development will result in the production of clean energy from a renewable energy resource (daylight) and will also involve additional landscaping including hedgerow planting and improved biodiversity management.

Site Description

- 1.18. The Application Site is located on lands circa 1.2km southwest of the village of Pyworthy and c. 1.8km southeast of Bridgerule in Torridge, Devon; the approximate centre point of which is Grid Reference E229936, N101914. Comprising 28 agricultural fields, the Application Site measures 66.33 hectares (ha) in total. See **Figure 1 of Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings** for details.

¹ Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)

- 1.19. Land within the Application Site itself is gently undulating, ranging between 95 - 125m AOD and consists of fields typically of medium scale and generally well enclosed by a mixture of dense treelines, hedgerows and woodland shelter belt, limiting visibility for local settlements and receptors (See **Figure 3 of Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings** for field numbers).
- 1.20. The Application Site is in an area with existing electricity infrastructure, with a solar farm present c. 0.3km southeast and another c. 1.2km to the southwest. Additionally, the electrical Pyworthy Substation is located c. 75m from the northern parcel's eastern boundary, adjacent to Field 16, where the Proposed Development will connect.
- 1.21. The local area is generally agricultural in nature, punctuated by individual properties and farmsteads; the nearest residential areas are Hopworthy and Yeomadon, located 0.7km northeast and southeast respectively. Recreational Routes include two Public Rights of Way (PRoW); one which passes the southeastern boundary of the Application Site (linking Crinacott Farm and Northmoor Farm, both outside the Application Site) and another which passes east of the adjacent substation.
- 1.22. While there are a number of drains and water courses throughout the Application Site, it is mostly contained within Flood Zone 1, an area described as having a "Low probability" of flooding. The exception to this is a small part of the Application Site within Flood Zone 2 and 3, towards the eastern boundary of Field 16. These areas have been avoided within the Proposed Development footprint and therefore lies outside any flood risk areas.
- 1.23. The Application Site will be accessed from four existing entrance points on the unnamed minor road which splits the site into northern and southern parcels. From the western boundary of the site, the road runs in a southwestern direction for c. 0.5km before turning in a general east-northeast direction through the eastern section of the Application Site.

Purpose of this Report

- 1.24. This LVA provides an appraisal of the potential effects of the Proposed Development on the existing landscape and visual amenity of the Application Site and surrounding area. In accordance with the GLVIA3 guidance, the level of appraisal is considered proportional to the development's scale, type and likely effects.
- 1.25. While landscape and visual effects are closely related, they are separately assessed in this appraisal:
- Landscape effects as a result of the Proposed Development may be defined as changes in the physical landscape which may give rise to changes in its character and quality, landscape patterns, designations, features and elements;
 - Visual effects as a result of the Proposed Development comprise changes to the composition of existing views and visual amenity experienced by people, such as residents, recreational or vehicular users; and

- Cumulative landscape and visual effects with other similar existing consented not constructed or Developments (pending planning) in the surrounding area will also be considered where appropriate.

1.26. These effects may have a direct or indirect, adverse (negative), beneficial (positive) or neutral nature. They may vary in duration from short to long-term and have irreversible or reversible effects.

Statement of Authority

1.27. This LVA was prepared by Graham Cameron BSc MA and Naomh Turbett BSc MLA CMLI. Graham Cameron is a Landscape Architect and Associate Member of the Landscape Institute with over six years post qualification consultancy experience. Prior to joining Neo Environmental Graham has specialised in landscape and visual impact assessment, appraisal, and landscape planning projects including renewable energy, linear infrastructure, large infrastructure, mining, and commercial and residential projects in the UK. While at Neo Environmental Graham has conducted landscape and visual impact assessments, appraisals and landscape plans for a wide variety of project types including energy, residential and commercial projects across the UK and Ireland.

1.28. Naomh Turbett is a Landscape Architect and Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute with over six years post qualification consultancy experience. Prior to joining Neo Environmental Naomh has a range of experience in landscape design projects such as housing, public path network, community growing spaces and public parks, prepared park management plans and undertook landscape and visual impact assessment and appraisal projects including renewable energy and infrastructure on behalf of Scottish Water. While at Neo Environmental Naomh has conducted landscape and visual impact assessments, appraisals and landscape plans for a variety of project types.

Scope of The Appraisal

1.29. An initial 5km study area was identified during the desk-based appraisal. During fieldwork the Application Site was found to be largely contained by its generally low elevation, surrounding landform and vegetation. Therefore, a 2km radius has been adopted for the consideration of potential landscape and visual effects. During fieldwork it was identified that potential adverse visual effects on residential views were unlikely to be experienced beyond c. 1km of the Application Site given screening by localised undulations in landform and by intervening vegetation. A focused 1km radius has therefore been adopted to consider visual amenity experienced by visual receptors at publicly accessible locations in the vicinity of residential properties. It is considered unlikely that adverse landscape and visual effects will be experienced beyond these distances.

1.30. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map was produced indicating areas where the Proposed Development may be visible within the study area. The ZTV was based on bare earth

topography and does not therefore take account of potential screening by intervening vegetation and buildings. The ZTV is used as a tool for understanding where potential visual effects may occur. Receptors which are outside the ZTV will not be affected by the Proposed Development and are therefore not considered further in this appraisal. The ZTV and study area are shown on **Figures 1.3 and 1.3a**.

Effects Assessed

1.31. The following effects have been assessed in accordance with the principles of GLVIA3:

- Effects on the physical landscape of the Application Site;
- Effects on landscape character within the focused 2km study area;
- Effects which could be of relevance to the reasons for designation as described by key characteristics and special qualities of designated landscapes within the focused 2km study area;
- Effects on visual receptors (people) at representative viewpoints;
- Effects on visual receptors within settlements;
- Effects on visual amenity experienced by visual receptors at publicly accessible locations in the vicinity of residential properties located within 1km of the Proposed Development;
- Effect on views experienced by visual receptors travelling along roads and recreational routes within the focused 2km study area; and.
- Cumulative landscape and visual effects (including combined, successive and sequential visual effects).

Effects Scoped Out

1.32. On the basis of the desk-based appraisal and fieldwork undertaken, the professional judgment of the LVA team, experience from other relevant projects and policy guidance or standards, the following topic areas have been scoped out of this appraisal:

- Effects on landscape character and visual receptors beyond a 2km radius from the Proposed Development, where it is judged that potential adverse effects are unlikely to occur;

- Effects on designated landscapes beyond a 2km radius from the Application Site, from where it is judged that potential adverse effects on key characteristics and/or special qualities, or views are judged unlikely to occur;
- Effects on landscape and visual receptors (people) that have minimal or no theoretical visibility as indicated by the ZTV and accounted for during fieldwork, and are therefore unlikely to experience the Proposed Development;
- Effects on residential views experienced by the Landowners for the Proposed Development, including New Park, Monks Farm, Westlake Cottage and the Trelana Cluster; and
- Cumulative landscape and visual effects beyond 2km, where it is judged that potential adverse cumulative effects are unlikely to occur.

Assumptions / Constraints

- 1.33. It is necessary to select a range of representative viewpoints across the study area as the scope of the appraisal does not allow for all potential visual receptors to be assessed individually. Many receptors are located within private lands, e.g. residences, and cannot be accessed, therefore, where required, a nearby representative point was chosen on the public road. Variations in the weather can bring about differences in the degree of visibility experienced within the Application Site or from a viewpoint on the day of the field work, and any other given day. Fieldwork, including baseline photography was carried out in September 2020 under sunny and overcast conditions when deciduous trees were in full leaf.
- 1.34. This appraisal only considers the Proposed Development as per the site layout in **Figures 4 and 5 of Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings**.

Supporting Documents

- 1.35. The report is supported by the following Figures and Technical Appendices:

Appendix 1A: Figures;

- Figure 1.1 – Landscape Character Areas
- Figure 1.2 – Landscape Designations
- Figure 1.3a – Viewpoint Locations Map with ZTV
- Figure 1.3b – Viewpoint Locations Map with ZTV - Close Up Map
- Figure 1.4 – Viewpoint 1: Minor road east of Bounds Farm

- Figure 1.5 – Viewpoint 2: Minor road between Bounds Farm and Trelana
- Figure 1.6 – Viewpoint 3: Minor road south of New Park/Monks Farm
- Figure 1.7 – Viewpoint 4: PRow close to Pyworthy substation
- Figure 1.8 – Viewpoint 5: Minor road west of Application Site
- Figure 1.9 – Viewpoint 6: Western edge of Hopworthy
- Figure 1.10 – Viewpoint 7: Junction between PRow and minor road south of the Old Rectory
- Figure 1.11– Viewpoint 8: PRow near minor road north of East Yeomadon Farm
- Figure 1.12 – Viewpoint 9: PRow near Pyworthy
- Figure 1.13 – Viewpoint 10: Elevated Minor Road
- Figure 1.14 – Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP)
- **Appendix 1B: Plates;**
- Site Photographs 1 to 8 – Internal views of Application Site
- **Appendix 1C: Methodology**

Consultation

- 1.36. Consultation with the Senior Planning Officer for Dorset Council (Laura Davies) was obtained via a pre-application response dated 10th November 2020.
- 1.37. The following requests were made within the pre-application response:
- The Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge Districts (JLCA) and the Landscape Sensitivity² to Onshore Wind Energy & Field Scale Photovoltaic Development in Torridge District³ to be used as the basis for the landscape assessment;
 - A draft LVIA including identification of viewpoint locations and proposed Site Layout Plan;

² LUC (2010) The Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge Districts (JLCA) and the Landscape Sensitivity

³ LUC (2011) An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to Onshore Wind Energy & Field-Scale Photovoltaic Development in Torridge District

- Robust consideration of potential cumulative effects, given the presence of a number of existing operational solar farms with the surrounding landscape; and
- Natural England requested an assessment of potential effects on the Cornwall AONB within 10km of the Application Site.

1.38. In response, a Landscape and Visual Consultation Letter was provided by Neo Environmental in December 2020 outlining approach to the appraisal, methodology (including cumulative appraisal) and viewpoint selection.

1.39. A response from Torridge Council (Laura Davies) was received in December 2020 confirming the approach outlined and included confirmation of viewpoint locations. No further concerns or requests were made.

LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 1.40. National and local planning authority policies of relevance to landscape and visual issues in relation to the Proposed Development and the 5km study area are outlined below.

European Landscape Convention 2000

- 1.41. The European Landscape Convention 2000 (“the European Landscape Convention”) considers all landscapes as being inclusive and important to everyone not just designated landscapes. The ELC’s definition of landscape which has been consigned within the Planning and Development Act 2000 by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 (No. 30 of 2010) is as follows:
- 1.42. *“Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”.* (Article 1.a. of the European Landscape Convention)⁴.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.43. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁵ outlines the UK Government’s planning policies for England, setting out how these are expected to be applied. Chapter 2 of the NPPF sets out the purpose of the planning system in contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and states that:

“So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).”

- 1.44. Selected points from paragraph 11 of the NPPF which highlights that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development include:

“For **plan-making** this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change...

“For **decision-taking** this means that:

- b) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- c) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

⁴ Council of Europe (2000) *European Landscape Convention and reference documents*. Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016802f80c6>

⁵ Department of Communities and Local Government (2019) National Planning Policy Framework

- a. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁶; or
- b. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

1.45. Paragraph 11 footnote 6 identifies protected areas or assets of particular importance as:

- *“Sites of Special Scientific Interest.*
- *Greenbelt.*
- *Local Green Space,*
- *Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB),*
- *National Park (or within the Broads Authority)*
- *Heritage Coast.*
- *Irreplaceable Habitats.*
- *Designated Heritage Assets.*
- *Areas at Risk of Flooding or Coastal Change.”*

1.46. The Application Site is not located within any of the above noted protected areas or assets.

Local Planning Policy

1.47. The Application Site is covered by the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2011-2031⁶. Key points from policies relevant to the Proposed Development are highlighted below.

Policy ST01: Principles of Sustainable Development

1.48. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“(1) When considering development proposals the Councils will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Councils will always work proactively with applicants and local communities to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.”

⁶ North Devon Council and Torridge District Council (Adopted October 2018) North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2011-2031

Policy ST02: Mitigating Climate Change

1.49. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“Development will be expected to make a positive contribution towards the social, economic and environmental sustainability of northern Devon and its communities while minimising its environmental footprint by:

(b) conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment through the prudent use of key resources including land, buildings and energy, whilst protecting and enhancing the area’s biodiversity, geodiversity, landscape, coastline, air, water, archaeology and culture.”

Policy ST03: Adapting to Climate Change and Strengthening Resilience

1.50. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“Development should be designed and constructed to take account of the impacts of climate change and minimise the risk to and vulnerability of people, land, infrastructure and property by:

(f) adopting effective water management including Sustainable Drainage Systems, water quality improvements, water efficiency measures and the use of rainwater.

(i) conserving and enhancing landscapes and networks of habitats, including cross-boundary green infrastructure links, strengthening the resilience of biodiversity to climate change by facilitating migration of wildlife between habitats and improving their connectivity.”

Policy ST04: Improving the Quality of Development

This policy states that:

“Development will achieve high quality inclusive and sustainable design to support the creation of successful, vibrant places. Design will be based on a clear process that analyses and responds to the characteristics of the site, its wider context and the surrounding area taking full account of the principles of design found in policy DM04.”

Policy ST14: Enhancing Environmental Assets

1.51. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“The quality of northern Devon’s natural environment will be protected and enhanced by ensuring that development contributes to:

“(a) providing a net gain in northern Devon’s biodiversity where possible, through positive management of an enhanced and expanded network of designated sites and green infrastructure, including retention and enhancement of critical environmental capital.

(g) protecting and enhancing local landscape and seascape character, taking into account the key characteristics, the historical dimension of the landscape and their sensitivity to change.”

Policy ST16: Delivering Renewable Energy and Heat

1.52. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“(1) Proposals for development incorporating on-site provision of renewable energy (other than wind energy) or renewable heat and/or low carbon technologies will be supported and encouraged where appropriate.”

(3) Renewable and low carbon energy and heat generating development (other than wind energy) will be supported in the landscape character types where:

(a) landscape sensitivity is best able to accommodate them, assessed in accordance with the Councils' Landscape Sensitivity Assessments and by the landscape's sensitivity to accommodate the scale of development;

(b) there is no significant impact on local amenities; and

(c) the special qualities of nationally important landscape, biodiversity and heritage designations and their settings are conserved or enhanced.

(4) Renewable and low carbon energy development (other than wind energy) will be supported where it can demonstrate that the cumulative impact of operational, consented and proposed development on landscape character does not become a significant or defining characteristic of the wider fabric, character and quality of the landscape.

Policy DM01: Amenity Considerations

1.53. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“Development will be supported where:

(a) it would not significantly harm the amenities of any neighbouring occupiers or uses.”

Policy DM04: Design Principles

1.54. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“(1) Good design seeks to guide overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials, access and appearance of new development. It seeks not just to manage land use but support the creation of successful places and respond to the challenges of climate change. Development proposals need to have regard to the following design principles:

(a) are appropriate and sympathetic to setting in terms of scale, density, massing, height, layout appearance, fenestration, materials and relationship to buildings and landscape features in the local neighbourhood;

(b) reinforce the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed;

(c) are accessible to all, flexible to adaptation and innovative;

(f) retain and integrate existing landscape features and biodiversity to enhance networks and promote diversity and distinctiveness of the surrounding area;

(i) ensure the amenities of existing and future neighbouring occupiers are safeguarded;

(n) provide effective water management including Sustainable Drainage Systems, water efficiency measures and the reuse of rainwater.”

Policy DM08: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

1.55. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“(1) Development should conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests and soils commensurate with their status and giving appropriate weight to their importance. All development must ensure that the importance of habitats and designated sites are taken into account and consider opportunities for the creation of a local and district-wide biodiversity network of wildlife corridors which link County Wildlife Sites and other areas of biodiversity importance.”

Policy DM08A: Landscape and Seascape Character

1.56. Selected points relevant to the Proposed Development include:

“(1) Development should be of an appropriate scale, mass and design that recognises and respects landscape character of both designated and undesignated landscapes and seascapes; it should avoid adverse landscape and seascape impacts and seek to enhance the landscape and seascape assets wherever possible. Development must take into account and respect the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape/seascape asset, considering cumulative impact and the objective to maintain dark skies and tranquility in areas that are relatively undisturbed, using guidance from the Joint Landscape and Seascape Character Assessments for North Devon and Torridge.”

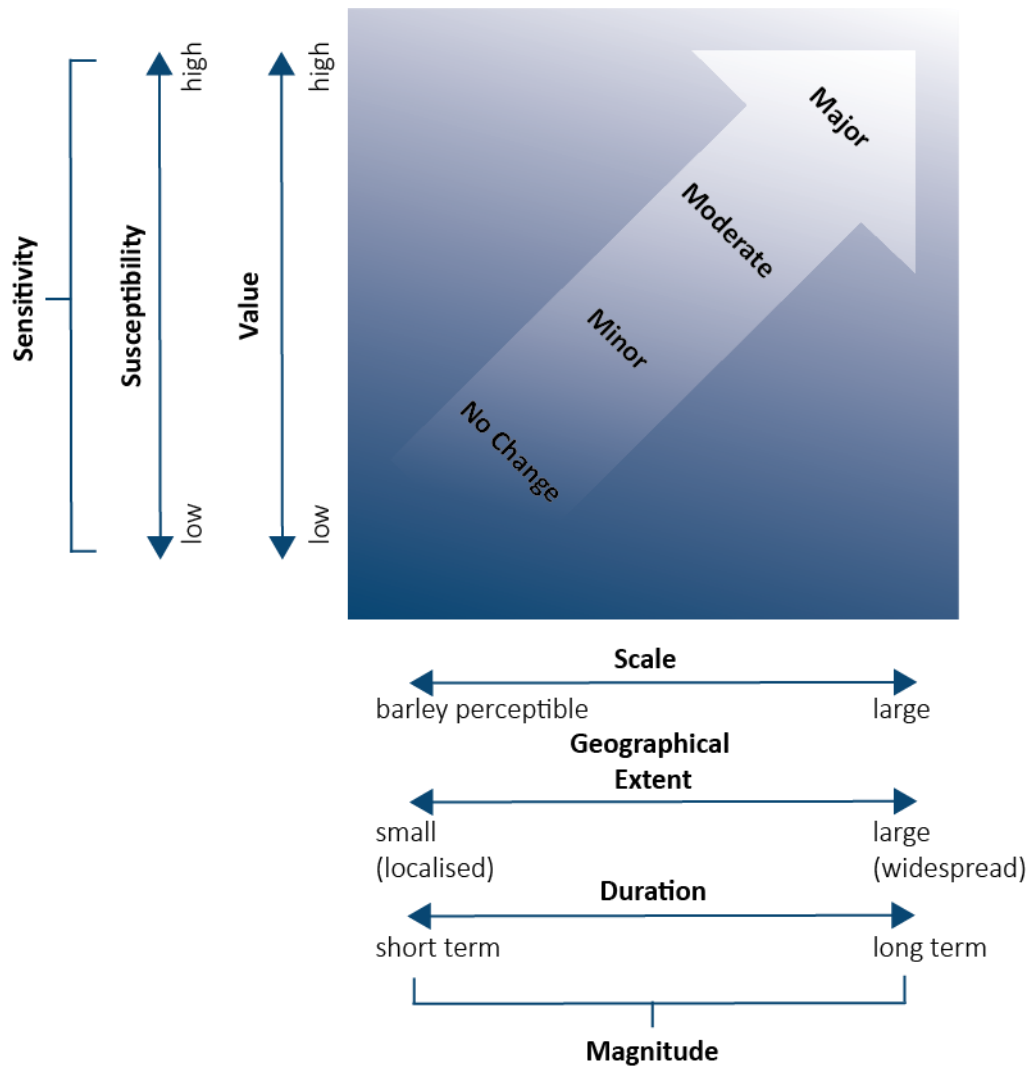
APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

Methodology

- 1.57. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion provided by Torridge District Council sets out the reasons why the Proposed Development does not constitute EIA development and therefore why an EIA is not required to support the planning application.
- 1.58. For non-EIA development types, the Landscape Institute (LI) GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification⁷ states that:
- “In carrying out appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are, or are not, significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes.”*
- 1.59. The scope of the LVA methodology found within **Appendix 1C** reflects the fact that the Proposed Development does not require EIA in the following ways:
- This appraisal does not provide judgement on the relative level of ‘significance’ of landscape and visual effects, given this terms relation to formal EIA; and
 - The term ‘degree’ of landscape or visual effect is used rather than ‘significance’.
- 1.60. The appraisal of landscape and visual effects considers both the sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of effect. **Appendix 1C** provides details of the criteria considered in judging the identified aspects of sensitivity (combining judgements of susceptibility and value) and magnitude of change (combining judgements of size/scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility), and the grades used to describe each. It explains how these judgements are combined to make an informed professional judgment on the degrees of landscape and visual effect.
- 1.61. These effects are attained by combining the level of sensitivity with the level of magnitude of change to provide the effects upon each receptor. These effects are identified as **Major, Major/Moderate, Moderate, Moderate/Minor, Minor or No Change**, either direct or indirect effects and can be characterised as adverse or beneficial. This determination requires the application of professional judgement and experience to take on board the many different variables which need to be considered, and which are given different weight according to site specific and location specific considerations in every instance. Judgements are made on a case-by-case basis guided by the principles set out in the table below.

⁷ Landscape Institute Statement of Clarification 1/13, 10th June 2013

Table 1-1: Degree of landscape and visual effects



Duration of Effects

1.62. For the purposes of this appraisal all construction and decommissioning effects are considered to be short term, temporary and reversible. All operational effects are considered long term and reversible.

Direction of Effects

1.63. The direction of effect (**‘Beneficial’**, **‘Adverse’** or **‘No Change’**) is determined in relation to the degree to which the proposals fit with landscape character and the contribution to the landscape that the Proposed Development makes.

BASELINE CONDITIONS

1.64. This section presents an overview of the landscape and visual baseline within the study area.

Landscape Baseline

1.65. The purpose of collecting and describing the landscape baseline data for the study area is to help establish the context of the landscape into which the Proposed Development is seeking to be located, later using this to assess the potential effects of the Proposed Development.

Application Site

1.66. The landscape and features within the boundaries of the Application Site are described between paragraphs 1.18 and 1.22. Overall, the Application Site is largely well contained by landform and existing hedgerows, treelines and areas of woodland. Field pattern is largely rectilinear with larger fields to the south and smaller fields to the north. There are some opportunities for localised inward views through gaps in vegetation and over local undulations in landform from the nearest individual residential properties and farmsteads; along the minor road which passes through the Application Site; and from short sections of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) to the northeast and southeast.

Study Area

1.67. The study area, shown in **Figures 1.3a and b** extends to a 5km and a focused 2km radius from the boundaries of the Application Site. The majority of the study area within the focused 2km radius is located within the Torridge District Council area and north-western, southern, and western fringes within 2km, are located within the Cornwall Council area.

1.68. The Application Site is set within a wider undulating predominately settled rural landscape influenced by a number of existing electricity infrastructure features. The immediate landscape around the Application Site comprises agricultural fields delineated by a mix of mature informal hedgerows, treelines and areas of woodland. Areas of mature broadleaf woodland borders the north-western part of the site and parts of the eastern and western boundaries. Woodland to the north and northwest follows a former railway line. Surrounding agricultural land comprises mixed use largely rectilinear arable and pastoral fields. Watercourses within c. 2km include the Derril Water, which the site drains into and the River Tamar c. 1.9km to the southwest of the Application Site.

1.69. Existing electricity infrastructure features include pylon lines and single wind turbines which are seen against localised and longer distance skylines. Pyworthy substation, partly contained by woodland is located c. 0.08km to the east. Operational Crinacott Solar Farm is located c. 0.3km to the southwest and is seen backclothed by landform in localised views from PRoW to the southeast and in longer distance views to the southwest.

- 1.70. Individual residences and farmsteads are relatively scattered, although there are clustered groups at Bounds Cross c 0.4km west and a linear ribbon development at Furze Farm c. 0.6km north of the Application Site. Individual properties and property groups considered in the appraisal are detailed in **Table 1-5** below.
- 1.71. There are no major roads within the study area. The A3072 passes c. 2.7km to the north and the B3254 passes c. 2.4km to the west of the Application Site. Within 2km, a network of minor roads connects individual farmsteads, residential properties, hamlets and villages. National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 3 shares the minor road between Bridgerule and Pyworthy c. 1km north of the Application Site. The closest PRoW includes Footpaths 1, 3 and 7 to the northeast, and southeast respectively.

Landscape Character

- 1.72. At a national level the Application Site is located within the National Character Area (NCA) 149 The Culm⁸. At a district level Landscape Character Types (LCTs) which cover the Application Site and much of the 2km study area are covered by the JLCA and the 2011 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within southern and western parts of the study area are located in Cornwall Council area, and are covered by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study⁹. LCTs and LCAs within the study area are shown on **Figure 1.2 of Appendix 1A**.
- 1.73. During fieldwork, the Application Site was found to be largely contained by its surrounding landform and vegetation. Therefore, a 2km radius has been adopted for the consideration of potential landscape receptors and appraisal of landscape effects. The theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development (ZTV coverage) on LCTs within 2km of the Application Site is described in the table below. This is used as a means of identifying which LCAs require appraisal.

Table 1-2: Landscape Character

LCA/LCT	Theoretical Visibility of Proposed Development
Torridge District Council LCTs	
1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland	Within c. 1km east of the Application Site, the ZTV indicates theoretical visibility from the western fringes of this LCT. However, taking account of intervening vegetation screening along the site’s eastern boundary and the field boundary vegetation and blocks of woodland further east, adverse indirect effects on this LCT are considered unlikely. This LCT is therefore not considered further.
3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors	The ZTV indicates limited to no visibility therefore this LCT is not considered further.

⁸ Natural England (2014) National Character Area profiles

⁹ Cornwall Council (2007) The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Landscape Character Study

5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land	Host LCT, considered within the appraisal.
Cornwall Council LCAs	
CA 31 Upper Tamar and Ottery Valleys	Within c. 1.2km south of the Application Site, the ZTV indicates theoretical visibility from elevated northern parts of this LCA, considered within the appraisal.
CA 37 Western Culim Plateau	Within c. 1.7km southwest and of the Application Site, the ZTV indicates theoretical visibility from eastern parts of this LCA. However, taking account of intervening vegetation screening along the site’s southern and western boundaries and the field boundary vegetation and blocks of woodland further west and southwest adverse indirect effects on this LCT are considered unlikely. This LCT is therefore not considered further.

1.74. The landscape appraisal therefore considers direct effects on LCA 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land and indirect effects on CA 31 Upper Tamar and Ottery Valleys.

Landscape Sensitivity Studies

1.75. The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Torridge District, 2011 identifies key sensitivities and opportunities for solar farm development, based on the LCTs included in the Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon & Torridge Districts, 2010. Some additional information and revisions were made to the previous landscape assessment LCAs and their classification.

Landscape Designations

National to Local Landscape Designations

1.76. The Application Site is not located within any nationally or locally designated landscapes. It should be noted that the Cornwall Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) is located c. 9.4km northwest of the Application Site. It was stated in consultation by Natural England that potential effects on the special qualities resulting from the introduction of the Proposed Development of this AONB should be considered. The Proposed Development is located entirely outside of the Cornwall AONB and potential effects will therefore be indirect. Given the low heights of the proposed structures (c. 2.8m for the solar panels), the Proposed Development will be entirely screened by intervening landform vegetation and buildings. Therefore, the introduction of the Proposed Development will not indirectly compromise the character and special qualities of the Cornwall AONB and is not considered further in this appraisal.

1.77. The locally designated Cornwall Council Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Upper Tamar is located c. 1.2km to the south of the Proposed Development. Much of the Upper Tamar AGLV within 2km is located within CA 31 Upper Tamar and Ottery Valleys. Other Cornwall

AGLVs in closest proximity included the Gooseham to Launcells AGLV located c. 2.2km to the northeast and the Week St Mary AGLV, located within c. 2.5km to the southwest. Potential indirect adverse effects on the characteristics and qualities of the Week St Mary AGLV and Gooseham to Launcells AGLV are considered unlikely given the intervening distance and screening by landform and vegetation and are therefore not considered further in the appraisal. **Effects on the Upper Tamar AGLV are considered further in the appraisal given the potential for some limited longer distance elevated views into the Application Site.**

1.78. Local landscape designations are show on **Figure 1.2: Appendix 1A**.

Other Designations

Built, Archaeology & Cultural Heritage and Ecological Designations

1.79. A number of historic and ecological designations which contribute to the area's landscape characteristics and quality are found within the study area. These designations are briefly outlined below and considered in detail within **Technical Appendix 3: Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA)** and **Technical Appendix 2: Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)** and their supporting figures.

Visual Baseline

Analysis of Visibility of the Proposed Development

- 1.80. The ZTV (**Figures 1.3a and 1.3b: Appendix 1A**) indicates theoretical visibility is largely focused within 2km, with some ZTV coverage indicated beyond 2km from some elevated areas to the north, east, south and west.
- 1.81. However, as observed during fieldwork, given the generally low elevation of the Application Site, local undulations in landform and existing external vegetated field boundaries and the existing vegetation within the surrounding area, actual visibility of the Proposed Development will be considerably less than predicted by the ZTV.
- 1.82. Potential views of the Proposed Development are largely confined to local receptors within around c. 1km of the Application Site's outer boundaries. The extent of these receptor's views will vary, due to differences in their orientation, distance from the Application Site and any natural or built elements which may aid screening of inward views.
- 1.83. Several views have been recorded from within the Application Site, which help illustrate the existing character of the site and varying degrees of outward visibility (**See photos 1 to 8: Appendix 1B**).

Viewpoint Selection for Appraisal

- 1.84. The viewpoint list is a representative selection of locations identified through desk study and fieldwork. It is not an exhaustive list of locations from which the Proposed Development will be visible.
- 1.85. A total of ten viewpoints were identified, this includes three viewpoints illustrated by photomontage. Viewpoints are all in locations which can be accessed by the public. The viewpoints include:
- Locations selected to represent the experience of different types of receptor;
 - Locations at different distances to provide a representative range of viewing distances (i.e. short, medium and longer distance views); and
 - Locations which represent a range of viewing experiences (i.e. static views and points along sequential routes).
- 1.86. The views have been recorded and annotated to show the extent of the Proposed Development within each photo view and whether it is visible or not, as illustrated in **Figures 1.4 to 1.13; Appendix 1A**. The Proposed Development has been modelled onto three existing view (Viewpoints 3, 8 and 9) to show how it will appear at Year 0 (with the initial planting), see **Figures 1.6b, 1.11b and 1.12b: Appendix 1A**, and the anticipated view at Year 5 (with the more established planting), see **1.6c, 1.11c and 1.12c: Appendix 1A**.
- 1.87. Viewpoints used to assess visual effects are listed in the table below and their locations are shown on **Figures 1.3a and 1.3b**.

Table 1-3: Appraisal Viewpoints

Viewpoint		LCA/LCT ¹⁰ and Landscape Designation	Reason for choosing	OS Grid Reference		Distance (km) ¹¹
1	Minor road east of Bounds Farm	LCT 5A	Represents views experienced by road users and similar residential views from Bounds Farm.	229131	102114	0.01km

¹⁰ Viewpoint located within LCTs and local landscape designations as defined by the North Devon Council and Torridge District Council (Adopted October 2018) North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2011-2031 and the Cornwall Local Plan 2010-2030

¹¹ Approximate distance measured in kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Application Site.

2	Minor road between Bounds Farm & Trelana	LCA 5A	Represents views experienced by road users.	229182	102086	0.01km
3	Minor road south of New Park/Monks Farm	LCA 5A	Represents views experienced by road users.	229811	101967	0.01km
4	PRoW close to existing substation	LCA 5A	Represents views experienced by walkers on the PRoW close to the eastern part of the site.	230483	102232	0.2km
5	Minor road west of site Application Site	LCA 5A	Represents transient views from the minor road west of the site.	228821	101307	0.4km
6	Western Edge of Hopworthy	LCA 5A	Represents views experienced from the minor road near the cluster of properties and farmsteads at Hopworthy.	229890	102910	0.5km
7	Junction between PRoW and minor road south of the Old Rectory	LCA 5A	Represents views experienced by walkers on the PRoW south of the Old Rectory.	231048	102102	0.8km

8	PRoW near minor road north of East Yeomadon Farm	LCA 5A	Represents views experienced by walkers on the PRoW southeast of the site close to East Yeomadon Farm.	230872	101119	0.8km
9	PRoW near Pyworthy	LCA 5A	Represent views experienced from the PRoW near the western settlement edge of Pyworthy.	231066	102570	0.9km
10	Elevated Minor Road	CA31 Cornwall Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)	Represents longer distance elevated views southwest of the site. Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) within the neighbouring Cornwall Council area.	228725	098806	2.3km

Settlements

- 1.88. Settlements are those defined as such within the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan. The theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development is described in the **Table 1-4** below. This is used as a means of identifying which settlements are to be assessed.

Table 1-4: Settlements

Settlement	Theoretical Visibility of the Proposed Development
Pyworthy	Within c. 1.2km northeast of the Proposed Development. The ZTV indicates theoretical visibility from much of the settlement. Actual views looking east towards the Proposed Development will be largely screened by intervening features. Considered within the appraisal given proximity to the Proposed Development.
Bridgerule	Within c. 1.8km northwest of the Proposed Development, the ZTV indicates theoretical visibility from south-eastern and western parts of the settlement. However, views looking south, southeast toward the Proposed Development will be largely screened by woodland along and close to the north western boundary of the Application Site and vegetation between the Application Site and the settlement. Potential adverse effects on residential views are considered unlikely therefore this settlement is not considered further.

Residential Visual Amenity

- 1.89. During fieldwork it was identified that potential adverse visual effects on residential views were unlikely to be experienced beyond c. 1km of the Application Site given screening by localised undulations in landform and by intervening vegetation. Consideration of residential properties within the appraisal has therefore been limited to those within 1km. The theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development is described in **Table 1-5** below. This is used as a means of identifying which residential properties are to be assessed. Where properties are likely to experience similar views, they have been grouped.

Table 1-5: Residential Properties

Residential Property	Theoretical Visibility of the Proposed Development
New Park, Monks Farm, Westlake Cottage and the Trelana Cluster (Landowner for the Proposed Development)	Within c. 0.01km of the Proposed Development. Residential views from landowner properties are not considered within the appraisal.

Bounds Farm	Within c. 0.01km of the Proposed Development. Considered within the appraisal given proximity to the Proposed Development.
Furze Farm ribbon development group	Within c. 0.6km north of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Some partial views looking south of the Application Site. Considered within the appraisal.
Hopworthy cluster	Within c. 0.5km north of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking south are largely screened by intervening landform and vegetation woodland. Considered within the appraisal.
Duxs Cottages	Within c. 0.5km north of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking south are screened by woodland, not considered further.
Hopworthy Moor	Within c. 0.7km northeast of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking southeast are screened by woodland, not considered further.
The Old Rectory	Within c. 0.7km east of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking east are screened by hedgerows and tree lines, not considered further.
Crinacott Farm	Within c. 0.3km southeast of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking west, and north west are screened by immediate agricultural buildings and intervening field boundary vegetation, not considered further.
East Yeomadon Farm/West Yeomadon Farm/Oak Meadow	Within c. 0.7km southeast of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking northwest are largely foreshortened by localised landform and screened by roadside hedgerows, not considered further.
Northmoor Farm/South Moor Farm/ Oak Moor Cottage	Within c. 0.1km south of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking north are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by hedgerows and tree lines, not considered further.
Tinney Moor Farm	Within c. 0.9km south of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking north are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by tree lines, not considered further.
Worthen Farm cluster	Within c. 0.6km southwest of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking northeast are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by woodland, not considered further.
Strawberry Bank cluster/ Eastthrope Farm/Warthen Court	Within c. 0.4km southwest of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking northeast are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by hedgerows and treelines, not considered further.

Pinkworthy Farm cluster	Within c. 0.1km southwest of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking northeast are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by hedgerows and treelines, not considered further.
Bradford Manor cluster/Holemoor	Within c. 0.7km west-southwest of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking east-northeast are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by woodland, not considered further.
Bounds Cross cluster	Within c. 0.4km west of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking east are foreshortened by localised landform and screened by woodland, not considered further.
Veals Farm/ Penborn	Within c. 0.1km northwest of the Proposed Development, within ZTV coverage. Inward views looking east are screened by hedgerows and treelines, not considered further.

Routes

1.90. Visual effects on roads, and recreational routes located within the 2km study area and that fall within the ZTV are listed in the table below.

Table 1-6: Routes

Route	Theoretical Visibility of the Proposed Development
Roads	
Minor Road Network	Minor road within the Application Site and the minor road network within c. 0.5km are considered within the appraisal .
Cycling and Walking Routes	
PRoW network	The ZTV indicates visibility across much of the local PRoW network. Actual visibility will be limited by landform and intervening vegetation to inward views from the closest recreational routes. Given the limited visibility anticipated a full appraisal of potential effects on the PRoW network with 2km has not been undertaken. However, Viewpoints 4, 7, and 8 represent views from the PRoW within closest proximity to the Application Site. These locations represent a 'maximum or worst-case scenario' and are considered within the appraisal . It should be noted that Footpaths 11 and 12 are not considered as views from these locations as they will be limited by intervening buildings, vegetation and local undulations in landform.
NCN Route 3	The ZTV indicates visibility from a section of this route between Bridgerule and Pyworthy c. 1km north of the Application Site. However, actual visibility will be largely screened by the linear woodland directly north of the Application Site and intervening field boundary vegetation. It is considered unlikely that adverse visual effects will be experienced on this route and is therefore not considered further.

IDENTIFICATION OF CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

- 1.91. GLVIA3 refers to Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) guidance in describing cumulative effect as: *“the additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effects of a set of developments, taken together”* (SNH, 2012: 4¹²).
- 1.92. Given the low height of the Proposed Development and the contained nature of the Application Site, potential cumulative interaction with similar existing, consented and proposed developments are considered unlikely to occur beyond around c. 2km.
- 1.93. A search of the Torridge online planning application portal accessed on the 2th February 2020 was undertaken and incorporated a 5km study area. Similar cumulative developments including solar farms, wind turbines and elements of existing electricity infrastructure are identified in **Table 1-7** below. No similar application developments in planning were identified during the planning application search.
- 1.94. During fieldwork it was identified that potential cumulative landscape and visual interactions resulting from the introduction of the Proposed Development would be largely localised and the cumulative appraisal has therefore been limited to considering similar operational and consented developments within 2km, as indicated on **Figure 13 of Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings**.
- 1.95. It should be noted that during the cumulative search a consented solar farm: Land at Southland Farm (1/0756/2015) was found on lands c. 0.1km northwest of Field 10. However, the consent for this development lapsed in March 2019 and has therefore not been considered in this appraisal.

Table 1-7: Cumulative Developments

Ref. No:	Name	Development	Status	Distance & Direction from the Site
Operational				
n/a	Pyworthy substation	Substation	Operational	0.75km east of Field 18
n/a	Overhead Lines (275kV)	Overhead Lines	Operational	Passes through Field 20
1/0883/2012	Crinacott Farm/	Solar Farm	Operational	0.3km southeast of Field 20

¹² SNH (2012) *Assessing the cumulative impact of onshore wind energy developments*

1/0753/2015	Land West of Parsonage Farm (Crinacott extension)			
1/1005/2015/FUL	Land At Bradford Manor Farm	Solar Farm	Operational	1.2km southwest of Field 2
1/0833/2012	Pitworthy Farm Solar Park	Solar Farm	Operational	2.2km north, northwest of Field 12
1/0218/2011/FULM 1/1131/2020/FULM (Extension to operational life)	Great Knowle Farm Solar	Solar Farm	Operational	2.7km northeast of Field 16
1/0978/2012/FULM	Derriton Fields Solar Farm	Solar Farm	Operational	2.7km east of Field 16
1/1318/2007/FUL	Crinacott Farm	Wind Turbine (12m blade tip)	Operational	0.3km southeast of Field 20
1/0766/2013/FUL	Taston Farm	Wind Turbine (45m blade tip)	Operational	1.1km northwest of Field 10
1/0657/2013/FUL	East Balsdon Farm	Wind Turbine (77m blade tip)	Operational	1.3km southwest of Field 1
PA13/05242	Hollafrench Farm (Cornwall Council)	Wind Turbine (37m blade tip)	Operational	2.5km southeast of Field 27
PA14/07283	Haydon Farm (Cornwall Council)	Wind Turbine (37m blade tip)	Operational	3.8km southwest of Field 1
Consented				
1/1107/2008/FUL	Yeomadon Farm	Wind Turbine (9m blade tip)	Consented	1km southeast of Field 27

1/0502/2015/FULM	Holladon Farm	Wind Turbine (57m blade tip)	Consented	1.7km north of Field 15
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General Observations – Current Baseline (Operational Solar Developments)

1.96. General observations on the location, pattern and scale of existing operational solar energy development within 2km is summarised below:

- Operational Crinacott Solar Farm (Crinacott Farm/Land West of Parsonage Farm/Crinacott extension) occupies c. 6 agricultural fields on lands c. 0.3km southeast of Field 20; and
- Operational Bradford Solar Park (Land At Bradford Manor Farm) occupies c. 3km agricultural fields on lands c. 1.2km southwest of Field 2.

1.97. These operational developments are located within the 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land LCT.

1.98. Operational Crinacott Solar Farm is evident in similar localised views to the Application Site from PRoW Footpaths 1 and 3 which pass through this existing development and in glimpsed views from short sections of the minor road to the south of East Yeomadon Farm. In views from residential properties, Crinacott Solar Farm is largely limited to glimpsed views from properties beyond 1km of the Application Site given the local undulations in landform and screening by intervening vegetation.

1.99. Operational Bradford Solar Park is not seen in similar local views to the Application Site with visibility from publicly accessible locations largely limited to more elevated areas beyond 2km of the Application Site. Such locations include short, elevated sections of the B3254 and the elevated minor roads within the Cornwall Council area (Viewpoint 10).

1.100. In terms of existing intervisibility between these developments combined, successive and sequential views of operational Crinacott Solar Farm and Bradford Solar Park are largely limited to longer distance elevated views beyond 2km of the Application Site to the southwest.

1.101. Nevertheless, the appraisal will consider potential cumulative landscape and visual effects, including combined, successive and sequential views of the Proposed Development with these operational solar developments.

POTENTIAL FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

1.102. The three different phases of the Proposed Development include: construction, operation and decommissioning. Each phase will have varying effects on landscape resources and visual amenity. These phases are briefly outlined below and will be fully considered in this appraisal. Full details on the built structures, overall site layout and construction works are provided within the Planning Statement and illustrated by the supporting figures in **Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings**.

Sources of Effects During Construction

1.103. The construction period will occur over a duration of approximately 6 months and be of a temporary nature. The Application Site will be accessed from four points on the unnamed minor road which splits the site into a northern and southern parcel and runs in an east to west direction, southeast of Bridgerule and southwest of Pyworthy. The main construction activities across the Application Site which may potentially impact upon the landscape resources or visual amenity include:

- Clearance of vegetation and breaks in the hedgerow at new or widened access points within the Application Site, including visibility splay at the north;
- Movement of site traffic to/from the site and through the site;
- Erection of the security fencing around the site boundary and CCTV poles - the fence line being set back 5m from the existing field boundaries;
- Installation of 2 x temporary site compound areas covering an area of approximately 6,000m² in total;
- Clearing of topsoil, up to 300mm depth, and laying of 4m wide gravel access track by the main entrance and internal tracks stretching 3.1km long (2km of new access track, 1.1km of existing track) through the fields and hardstanding areas next to the Inverter Substations and Grid Substation;
- Clearing of the ground, laying of concrete foundations and installation of the Inverter Substations and Grid Substation;
- Piling of supporting steel posts into the ground and the installation of panels onto the open aluminium frames;

- Trenching and backfilling of the electrical cabling running from the CCTV and rear of the solar arrays to the Inverter and Grid Substations, within trenches of circa 1m deep and up to 1m wide, estimated at 5,000m²; and
- Implementation of the landscaping and ecological enhancement measures once all other site works are complete.

Sources of Effect During Operation

1.104. Once constructed, the Proposed Development will remain on these lands for the agreed planning consent period of 40 years. The completed site will consist of the final elements which may potentially impact upon the landscape resources or its visual amenity. These include:

- The solar panels attached up to a maximum of 4 panels deep to aluminium frames known as 'solar arrays' which are tilted between 10-40 degrees and fixed to the pile driven galvanised steel posts. The maximum height of the arrays will be 2.8m high;
- 2,920 module racks, 75,920 modules. 29,200 pile driven poles;
- 1 x Grid Substations, maximum height 4m - consider the whole area as disturbed (25m(L) x 24.1m(W)= 602.5m²);
- 14 x Inverter Substations, maximum height 3m (16.0m(L) x 6.0m(W)) = 1,344m²;
- 12 x Inverter Substation Hardstanding Areas hardstanding areas (16.00m(L) x 16.0m(W) x 12 = 3,072m²;
- The external finish of the substation will be agreed with the local authority;
- Deer fencing with wooden posts at 3m centres. Fence is 2.4m high with a 0.1m gap at the bottom. In total it is 8.7km long. 2,884 posts;
- 85 CCTV Posts 3.5m in height at c. 0.64m² footprint each = 54.4m²;
- No lighting in site except for emergency lighting on the substation buildings which will only be turned on when required for servicing;
- Structural landscape planting will consist of a mix of native tree and hedgerow planting added to the outer field boundaries as detailed further on the LEMP, see **Figure 1.14 Appendix 1A**. A grassland mix will be added to the lands between and beneath the arrays to allow the lands to retain an agricultural use maintained by sheep grazing or cutting;

- Wildflower mix strips along with habitat housing in the form of bat and bird boxes, bee banks, hibernaculum and invertebrate hotels will also be provided as part of the ecological enhancement measures; and
- Occasional access by light traffic vehicles and a small number of personnel will be required to manage the landscape mitigation boundary planting, grassland and to service the Proposed Development's various structures.

1.105. The overall proposed footprint constitutes a relatively small percentage of the total area of the Application Site (66.33ha):

- 24,072.9m² for infrastructure (c. 3.63% of the Application Site area); and
- 320.12m² for piling (c. 0.05% of the Application Site area).

Decommissioning Phase

1.106. Decommissioning works will be similar in nature to those undertaken during the construction phase but in reverse order, including:

- Movement of site traffic to, from and through the site during the works;
- Removal of the above-ground Proposed Development's structures from the site, with some temporary storage of materials necessary; and
- Where necessary, disturbed ground will be gently graded, cultivated and reseeded to return it to suitable conditions for agricultural use.

MITIGATION

Mitigation During Construction

1.107. The following good practice measures will be implemented throughout the construction phase:

- A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will be prepared, and construction activities will be conducted in accordance with this plan;
- Existing landscape features such as hedgerows, woodland, and treelines will be retained as far as practicable, including the protection of existing vegetation within the Application Site boundaries;
- Construction vehicles will not track across undisturbed areas outside their defined working areas and access corridor;
- Materials and machinery will be stored tidily during the works. Machinery will not be left in place for longer than required for construction purposes to minimise effects on views and visual amenity;
- Any disturbance to or temporary removal of existing field boundaries to facilitate construction will be undertaken sensitively to ensure successful reinstatement of these features following completion of construction activities;
- Lighting of compounds and works will be restricted to agreed working hours and that which is necessary for security; and
- On completion of construction, all remaining construction materials and equipment will be removed from the site, and any disturbed areas, including temporary areas of hard standing, broken up and restored.

Mitigation During Operation

- Lighting will be emergency only so as not to contribute to light pollution;
- The palette of colours and materials used to create the new infrastructure will be selected to be unobtrusive and reflect the existing environment;
- The site will be maintained in a clean and uncluttered state and this will be monitored;

- Existing vegetation will be retained as far as practicable (See **Figure 10.4 of Appendix 10A: Technical Appendix 10: Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)** and protected in accordance with best practice (including *BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction*); and
- Compensatory mitigation hedgerow and tree planting will be introduced along the boundaries of the Proposed Development and hedgerows allowed to mature to c. 4m in height as shown on **Figure 1.14**. This will include compensatory planting near the proposed removal of hedgerows to facilitate visibility splays.

RESIDUAL EFFECTS

Residual Construction Effects

1.108. The appraisal of effects assumes all construction related mitigation measures are implemented. Therefore, the residual effects arising from construction will remain as identified in the appraisal below.

Residual Operational Effects

1.109. The appraisal of operational affects assumes all proposed mitigation is implemented (as indicated in **Figure 1.14**); therefore, the residual effects arising during the operational phase will remain as identified in the appraisal below.

1.110. It is anticipated that by c. Year 5 proposed vegetation will have established as indicated in **Figures 1.6c, 1.11c and 1.12c**.

APPRAISAL OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

1.111. This section describes the operational effects resulting from the Proposed Development on the landscape fabric of the Application Site, and the LCT and LCA identified as requiring detailed consideration in the **Landscape Baseline**.

Duration of Effects

1.112. All construction and decommissioning landscape effects are considered to be short term, temporary and reversible. All operational landscape effects are considered to be long term and reversible.

Landscape Effects on the Application Site

Location and baseline description:

1.113. The site is described in detail in the Site Description between paragraphs **1.18** and **1.22**.

Sensitivity:

1.114. The Application Site covers an area of existing agricultural land use, a common feature of the landscape within the study area and can be replaced. The Application Site is directly and indirectly influenced by existing pylon lines within the site, single wind turbines and Crinacott Solar Farm outside the site. The lightly undulated agricultural fields delineated by hedgerows with individual trees and treelines are considered to have a medium susceptibility to the type of change proposed. The pastoral farmland and hedgerows of the Application Site are of reasonable quality and considered to have a medium landscape value.

1.115. Overall, the sensitivity of the site is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

1.116. During the construction phase, there will be a notable change in the land use from agriculture to a construction site across the extent of the Application Site. The main activity will be centred around the temporary compound areas located in Fields 10 and 24 (See **Figure 3 of Volume 2: Planning Application Drawings** for field numbers).

1.117. The proposed site works will involve the movement of machinery, temporary construction compounds, car parking, lighting and the installation of the solar arrays, substation, inverter stations, cabling, access tracks and landscaping. However, the construction phase is temporary and will last for a short duration of c. 6 months.

1.118. The Proposed Development will follow the existing topography of the site with only very minor grading required to provide a level base for the various buildings or trackways. Any

disturbance to the ground surface from the installation of the various structures, cabling and movement of machinery will be reinstated by gently grading back and reseeding to minimise any adverse effects.

- 1.119. The proposed structures will be offset by approximately 5m from the nearest existing hedgerows and 5m from watercourses and field drains. The new access tracks and buildings will be clustered together near to the field boundaries, utilising the existing farm tracks and field entrances where possible. Some small areas of existing vegetation will need to be removed to facilitate the introduction of the access tracks and security fence. Micro-siting of the security fence will help minimise disturbance to the existing hedgerows. Retained field hedgerows will be enhanced with similar species as part of the mitigation planting.
- 1.120. The Proposed Development will result in a medium size change to the landscape of the Application Site experienced locally, contained within the existing field pattern. Overall, the magnitude of landscape change for the Application Site is judged to be **Medium**. Taking account of the medium sensitivity of the site, this will result in a **Temporary Moderate adverse** degree landscape effect during construction.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.121. Once operational, the Proposed Development will result in the placement of a series of solar arrays and associated infrastructure across the extent of the Application Site for the duration of the permitted planning consent period.
- 1.122. The existing mature field boundary hedgerows, mitigation hedgerow and infill planting will be maintained throughout the operational phase helping to improve the condition of these hedgerows and further enclosing the new solar farm structures within each field.
- 1.123. The additional mitigation planting will also be maintained to help increase biodiversity across the Application Site. The current areas of agricultural landcover will be replaced by a species rich grassland between the solar arrays which will be managed by light grazing of sheep or maintained by cutting.
- 1.124. The Proposed Development will be unmanned, with only occasional servicing of the solar farm equipment and landscape maintenance as required throughout the year. The level of traffic will be minimal with one or two vehicles and a small number of personnel requiring access at any given time.
- 1.125. Existing pylon line passes through Fields 16, 20, 25 and 28. The introduction of the operational Proposed Development will increase the influence of electricity infrastructure in combination with these existing elements at the site level.
- 1.126. The Proposed Development will result in a medium scale change experienced locally. Overall, the magnitude of landscape change for the Application Site is judged to be **Medium** reducing as mitigation planting matures. Taking account of the medium sensitivity of the Application Site this will result in a **Moderate adverse** landscape effect operational Year 0. This will reduce

to a **Moderate/Minor adverse** degree landscape effect by c. operational Year 5 as the proposed planting matures helping to further contain and integrate the Proposed Development within the landscape of the Application Site.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects

1.127. Activities across the Application Site will be similar to those of the Construction Phase. The disturbed lands will be reinstated to a similar state to their current agricultural use. The mature mitigation planting will be left intact. The proposed planting along the boundaries of the Application Site will partly screen these activities. The direct effects upon the Application Site during the construction phase will be temporary and short-term lasting for the construction period. They will have a **Medium** magnitude of change which will result in a **Temporary Moderate adverse** degree landscape effect during decommissioning.

Post Decommissioning

1.128. The landscape of the Application Site will have returned to its previous use with the proposed planting (which will have matured) retained. This will result in a **Minor beneficial** degree landscape effect at the Application Site level.

Potential for Future Cumulative Effects:

1.129. The introduction of the Proposed Development will extend the presence of electricity infrastructure across the Application Site in combine with the existing overhead lines this will result in a low magnitude of cumulative landscape change and a **Minor Adverse** cumulative landscape effect.

Landscape Effects on LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land

Location and baseline description:

- 1.130. The entirety of the Proposed Development will be located within this LCA. Key characteristics of LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land identified in the JLCA are:
- *“Elevated land cut by a series of tributaries forming folds in the landform. Parts are high and remote with far-reaching views to Dartmoor, including summits of over 200 metres.*
 - *Underlying geology of Culm Measures – comprising smooth bands of mudstones, siltstones and harder outcrops of sandstone. Rich red soils are often exposed through ploughing.*

- *Tributary valleys lined by broadleaved and wet woodland providing contrasting shelter and texture. Small farm woods, occasional conifer blocks and avenues of mature beech on hill summits and along roadsides.*
- *Medium-scale regular fields of recent enclosure, with pockets of smaller fields of medieval origin on valley slopes and tracts of unenclosed rough grazing along valley bottoms.*
- *Fields enclosed by mixed species hedges (predominantly thorn) with flower-rich banks and frequent hedgerow trees in sheltered locations. Some locally distinctive hedges topped with gorse and beech (e.g. near Hele and around Holsworthy). Occasional amalgamated fields bounded by fences.*
- *Strong farmed character with pasture fields grazed by cattle and sheep, occasional fields of arable cultivation and rough grazing of rushy meadows along valleys.*
- *Linhays (traditional livestock shelters) of local stone and cob, with corrugated iron or slate roofs, forming notable features of the farmed landscape.*
- *Local vernacular of white-washed buildings with slate or thatch roofs, often with red brick detailing. Some buildings of local sandstone with red bricks around window/door frames. Square church towers with ornate pinnacles form distinctive local landmarks (e.g. Bradworthy).*
- *Scattered historic features including clusters of Bronze Age bowl barrows on summits, an Iron Age hillfort overlooking the Tamar Valley at Northcott Wood, Iron Age enclosure and Roman marching camp at Higher Kingdon and the remains of the 13th century Frithelstock Priory.*
- *Farms dispersed throughout the landscape often on exposed ridges, sheltered by groups of trees of evergreen shelterbelts. Nucleated villages also occupying prominent ridgeline positions, with linear development of white/cream houses and bungalows often spreading outwards from the historic core.*
- *Straight roads traversing ridges and dipping down into valleys, crossing streams on sandstone bridges.*
- *Landscape's strongly rural character diluted by the presence of prominent pylon lines, wind turbines near Bradworthy, industrial developments outside Holsworthy and busy roads including the main A388.*

- *Overall high levels of tranquillity with dark night skies.*
- *Important sites of Culm grassland (including Brendon Farm and Common Moor Langtree SSSIs and Kismeldon Meadows SSSI and SAC), species-rich fen and rush pasture, valley mire, unimproved grasslands and scrub in valley bottoms and areas of impeded drainage.”*

1.131. The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Torridge District, 2011, states that that for LCT5A:

1.132. *“The strategy is for a landscape with occasional solar PV developments (size of development should relate to landscape scale which varies within the LCT, up to and including medium scale)”.*

1.133. Key points of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Torridge District, 2011 Landscape Strategy for LCT 5A relevant to the Application Site are:

- *“Locate development in sheltered folds in the landscape where it will be least visible and have least influence on landscape character – avoid the most prominent and elevated slopes.*
- *Preserve the strong field patterns, particularly relating to the medieval enclosures, by minimising the number of adjacent fields that are developed and setting PV panels back from the edges of fields.*
- *Avoid siting solar PV developments within the HLC types of medieval strip fields rough ground.*
- *Use existing landscape features, such as hedgerows and woodlands to screen solar PV development wherever possible, ensuring that any additional screening provided is in character with the landscape.*
- *Ensure solar PV development does not adversely affect the Culm grassland, broadleaved and wet woodland in tributary valleys, or rough grazing areas as sensitive features of this landscape.*
- *Protect the special qualities of the landscape as recorded in the District’s LCT description, including the long views from elevated ridges, the patchwork of fields and hedges, the working rural character of the landscape, the valued Culm grassland and the quiet relaxed and tranquil nature of the landscape – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these”.*

Sensitivity:

- 1.134. The characteristics of this landscape are judged to combine in a medium susceptibility to renewable energy development of this nature, given the largely contained nature of the Application Site and the presence of existing infrastructure within the study area including the existing pylon lines, Pyworthy substation, operational solar farms and single wind turbines. Landscape value is considered to be medium for much of the LCT with areas of higher value associated with riparian valleys and more open elevated locations.
- 1.135. Taking into account the judgements of susceptibility and value, overall sensitivity is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.136. During the temporary construction phase there will be a notable increase of construction activity occurring across the extent of the Application Site. The works will have a localised temporary disturbance to a small portion of the rural landscape of LCT 5A.
- 1.137. The Proposed Development will locally alter the character of LCT 5A. The scale of change is considered to be medium locally up to around c. 1km representing a localised geographical extent.
- 1.138. The magnitude of landscape change is judged to be **Medium** locally, reducing to **Low** beyond a distance of around c. 1km. Taking account of the medium sensitivity of this landscape and construction phase of c. 6 months, there will be a **Temporary Moderate adverse** landscape effect locally and a **Temporary Minor adverse** effect LCT 5A as a whole.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.139. Once operational, the Proposed Solar Farm and associated infrastructure elements will be (as described in paragraphs **1.105** to **1.106**) located over c. 66.33 hectares of agricultural lands within LCT 5A. This will directly affect key characteristic fields and their farmed character.
- 1.140. However, the Proposed Development has been designed around the confines of the existing field boundaries, retaining as much of the existing site's elements, features and agricultural land use as possible, which already contribute to the rural character. The land around and beneath the solar arrays can be lightly grazed or cut, maintaining an agricultural use throughout the lifespan of the Proposed Development.
- 1.141. The mitigation measures and landscape management will help improve the condition of the existing hedgerows within the red line boundary over the lifespan of the Proposed Development. The retention of the Application Site's field hedgerows and additional similar hedgerow and tree planting will help contain the various structures of the Proposed Development within the local area and limit their overall visibility within the immediate rural landscape.

- 1.142. Operational Solar Farms within this LCT include Crinacott Solar Farm, c. 0.3km southeast and Bradford Solar Park c. 1.2km southwest of the Proposed Development. Other existing electricity infrastructure features include pylon lines within and close to the eastern side of the Proposed Development (Fields 16, 20, 25 and 28), Pyworthy substation c. 0.75km to the east and a number of single operational wind turbines.
- 1.143. Parts of the overall Proposed Development (foreshortened by landform and partly screened by vegetation) will be seen in very localised combined, successive and sequential views with parts of to the full extent of operational Crinacott Solar Farm. This includes localised areas within southern parts of LCT 5A where Crinacott Solar Farm is already visible including from short sections of the minor road (Viewpoint 3) and PRoW to the southeast (Viewpoint 8).
- 1.144. It is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will be seen in combined, successive and sequential views from within LCT 5A with operational Bradford Solar Park given the intervening distance and screening by intervening landform and vegetation (Viewpoint 10).
- 1.145. A small part of the overall Proposed Development will also be seen locally in limited combined views with Pyworthy substation (Viewpoint 4) and in localised views largely below other electricity infrastructure elements including pylon lines and single turbines which are evident against the skyline within this LCT. The introduction of the Proposed Development will locally extend the physical presence of solar farm and energy infrastructure development within south to south-eastern parts of LCT 5A. Visibility of the Proposed Development from localised south eastern parts of the LCT within around c. 0.5km to 1km will locally extend the current influence of Crinacott Farm. Beyond this distance intervisibility between the Proposed Development and other operational solar farms within LCT 5A is considered unlikely.
- 1.146. The Proposed Development will mainly locally alter the internal character of the agricultural fields within the Application Site within LCT 5A. Field pattern and landform will remain largely unaltered. The size/scale of change is considered to be medium locally within around c. 0.5 to 1km of the site, representing a localised geographical extent.
- 1.147. The retained and strengthened field systems, along with the continued light agricultural use of the lands, are in keeping with key points of the Landscape Strategy from the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Torridge District, 2011.
- 1.148. Overall, the magnitude of landscape change for the LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land is judged to be **Medium** locally, extending to approximately 1km radius from the Proposed Development, reducing with distance and as mitigation planting matures. Taking account of the medium sensitivity of the landscape this will result in a **Moderate adverse** landscape effect experienced locally and a **Minor adverse** effect for LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land as a whole. The degree of landscape effect will reduce locally to **Moderate/Minor** locally by c. Year 5 as the proposed mitigation planting matures helping to further contain and integrate the Proposed Solar Farm within the landscape of the Application Site.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.149. Activities across the Application Site will be similar to those of the Construction Phase. The disturbed lands will be reinstated to a similar agricultural use. A similar magnitude of change and degree of landscape effect is anticipated for the decommissioning phase. This will result in a very localised **Temporary Moderate adverse** and a **Temporary Minor adverse** landscape effect on the LCT 5A as a whole during decommissioning.

Post Decommissioning

- 1.150. Post decommissioning the mitigation planting which will have matured will be retained resulting in a localised **Minor beneficial** effect.

Potential for Future Cumulative Effects:

- 1.151. Given the medium magnitude of landscape change predicated across a localised area of LCT 5A, and the location of operational Crinacott Solar Farm, Bradford Solar Park, and other elements of existing energy infrastructure, the cumulative magnitude of change for this LCT will be medium and the cumulative landscape effect will be **Moderate adverse**.

Landscape Effects on CA 31 Upper Tamar and Ottery Valleys

Location and baseline description:

- 1.152. The Proposed Development is located 1.2km north of CA 31 Upper Tamar and Ottery Valleys. The 2007 Landscape Character Assessment key characteristics are defined as:
- *“Gently rolling, inland hills and sheltered valley landscape.*
 - *Larger rivers have distinctive floodplains with valley floor pasture, in particular the Tamar and Ottery.*
 - *Small areas of "Culm grassland" (wetland on the Culm measures with Purple Moor Grass and Rush*
 - *Pasture and Fens) along river valleys.*
 - *Medium sized fields of improved grassland with some arable land and strong Cornish hedges and hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees.*
 - *Broadleaved and coniferous woodland blocks on valley sides particularly to the east. South Dalton Church spire is a prominent landmark in the relatively featureless landscape. Occasional free-standing, mature trees on floodplains or hedge banks providing parkland-like landscape character.*

- *Launceston Castle, village churches and stone bridges across rivers, forming features.*
- *Slate giving a dark appearance to riverbeds and as "shillet" used in vernacular architecture."*

1.153. The 2007 Landscape Character Assessment notes for CA 31 does not specifically account for solar development. However, much of CA 31 is located within Cornwall Councils locally designated AGLVs which would suggest some sensitivity to the type of development proposed.

Sensitivity:

1.154. The characteristics of this landscape are judged to result in a medium susceptibility to renewable energy development of this nature, given the medium to large scale of the landscape and the presence of existing infrastructure within the study area including existing pylon lines and single wind turbines.

1.155. Much of this landscape is located within AGLVs and includes a number of recreational routes. On balance the landscape value for CA 31 is considered to be high.

1.156. Taking into account the judgements of susceptibility and value, overall sensitivity is judged to be **High**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

1.157. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Development within neighbouring LCT 5A: **Inland Elevated Undulating Land** directly north will be largely screened by existing field boundary vegetation and blocks of broadleaf and conifer woodland from residential properties and roads within this LCA. Occasional longer distance views of construction activities within southern parts of the Proposed Development filtered and screened by intervening vegetation will be experienced from some limited more open elevated fields in the northern part of the LCA.

1.158. This will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally, limited to a northern part of CA 31. Overall, the magnitude of landscape change is judged to be **Negligible** reducing to **None** beyond a distance of around 2km. Taking account of the high sensitivity of the landscape, this will result in a very localised **Minor adverse** landscape effect and a **No Change effect** on CA 31 beyond c. 2km.

Appraisal of operational effects:

1.159. Once operational, the Proposed Development will be largely screened from view by intervening hedgerows and tree lines. Visibility of the Proposed Development will be further reduced as mitigation matures. Although some occasional longer distance views glimpsed

through gaps in intervening vegetation are likely to remain experienced from more open elevated fields within the northern part CA 31.

- 1.160. Overall, the magnitude of landscape change for CA 31 is judged to be **Negligible** locally reducing to **None** beyond a distance of c. 2km. Taking account of the high sensitivity of the landscape this will result in a **Minor adverse** landscape effect experienced locally and a **No change** effect for CA 31 beyond c. 2km.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.161. Activities across the Application Site will be similar to those of the Construction Phase. The disturbed lands will be reinstated to a similar state and use. The mitigation planting which will have matured will largely screen views of these activities from CA 31 this will result in a localised a **Temporary Minor adverse** to **No Change** beyond c. 2km.

Post decommissioning

- 1.162. Retained mitigation planting within neighbouring LCT 5A is unlikely to be experienced from much of CA 31 resulting in a **No Change** landscape effect.

Potential for Future Cumulative Effects:

- 1.163. Given the **Negligible** magnitude of landscape change from the introduction of the Proposed Development in neighbouring LCT 5A and screening by intervening features, cumulative landscape effects on CA 31 are likely to be limited to combined long distance views of the Proposed Development with existing elements of electricity infrastructure including pylon lines and single wind turbines. Such combined views will be largely limited to more open fields in the northern part of the LCT. It is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will be seen in combined, successive or sequential views with other operational, or consented developments identified in **Table 1-7**.
- 1.164. The cumulative magnitude of change is considered to be **Negligible** and will result in a localised **Minor Adverse** cumulative landscape effect for CA 31 and a **No Change** effect beyond a distance of around c. 2km.

APPRAISAL OF VISUAL EFFECTS

1.165. This section presents the assessment of visual effects of the Proposed Development on views and visual amenity for receptors identified in **Tables 1-3, 1-4, 1-5 and 1-6** of the **Visual Baseline**.

Visibility of the Proposed Development & Potential Receptors

Duration of Effects

1.166. All construction and decommissioning visual effects are considered to be short term, temporary and reversible. All operational visual effects are considered to be long term and reversible.

Visual Effects on Appraisal Viewpoints

1.167. The appraisal of visual effects from the eight viewpoints selected to represent views of the Proposed Development are set out below.

Viewpoint 1. Minor road east of Bounds Farm

Grid Reference	229131, 102114	Figure Number	1.4
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	Northeast	Distance from Proposed Development	0.01km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

1.168. This viewpoint represents sequential views from the minor road which passes south of Field 10, c. 0.01km northeast of Bounds Farm. Some similar oblique residential views are anticipated from the upper storey windows of Bounds Farm orientated to the north, northwest.

1.169. In views looking northeast from a gated access in a mature hedgerow, Field 10 of the Application Site is seen in the foreground of view backed by a mature hedgerow in the middle distance further east and to the north by mature woodland. A rolling rural landscape comprising woodland and agricultural fields is seen beyond Field 10 in the background of view. In the very background of view, the roofs of some buildings on the western side of Pyworthy are partially seen through gaps in vegetation. From Bounds Farm, ground level views are screened by the existing hedgerow north of the road, however some oblique views

of Field 10 are likely to be gained from the upper storey windows partly filtered and screened by individual trees within the field boundary hedgerow.

- 1.170. From Bounds Farm, other fields within the Application Site including Fields 8 and 9 to the southeast will be foreshortened by landform and largely screened by intervening hedgerows in views from the property.
- 1.171. Existing elements of energy infrastructure include two pylon lines seen against the skyline and partly backclothed in the middle distance and background of view. No other existing solar farms are seen within a similar frame of view nor in successive views from this location.
- 1.172. **Plate 1 of Appendix 1B** indicates views looking southwest towards Bounds Farm from within Field 10.

Sensitivity:

- 1.173. Transient receptors are considered to be of lower susceptibility to changes in view. The viewpoint is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape nor part of a promoted recreational route. This will be a brief glimpsed view from the road and therefore, the overall sensitivity of transient receptors at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium** and **High** for Bounds Farm residents.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.174. Construction activities within Field 10 will be apparent in the middle distance of view from the field entrance gap in the hedgerow. From Bounds Farm, visibility of construction activities within Field 10 will be limited to oblique views from the upper storey windows partly filtered and screened by individual trees within the roadside hedgerow. There will also be an increase in traffic associated with construction experienced from the road. Construction vehicles are unlikely to be experienced from Bounds Farm as they will access the Application Site from the east. This will result in a medium to an occasionally higher scale change experienced locally (when construction works evident in Field 10 are seen in combination with associated vehicles on the minor road).

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.175. In the initial operational years, a small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the middle distance of view within Field 10. This will include some south facing solar panels, CCTV cameras and short sections of the security fence which will be partly screened by the proposed mitigation planting and backclothed by the background hedgerow. Once mitigation planting has matured the Proposed Development will be screened with some limited opportunity for very filtered views through mitigation planting during the winter months following leaf fall.

- 1.176. Similar oblique residential views are anticipated from the north facing upper storey of Bounds Farm. By c. Year 5 inward oblique views from the Bounds Farm will be largely screened by the mitigation planting.
- 1.177. The elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident in Field 10 in views looking east from this location will be seen in front of and below the existing overhead lines, marginally extending the influence of electricity infrastructure in the initial years of operation. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.
- 1.178. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a medium scale change experienced locally reducing to a small scale change as mitigation planting matures.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.179. Decommissioning activities will be similar to those of the construction phase however these will be largely screened by mitigation planting which will have matured. This will result in a medium scale change experienced locally. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Low** (Operational Year 0) reducing to **Negligible** (Operational Year 5); **Medium** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on residential receptors (Bounds Farm oblique views from northern upper storey windows): **Temporary, Major/Moderate adverse** (Construction); **Moderate/Minor adverse** (Operational Year 0) reducing to **Minor adverse** as the mitigation boundary planting matures (Operational Year 5); **Temporary Moderate adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change/ Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on transient receptors (minor road): **Temporary, Moderate adverse** (Construction); **Minor adverse** (Operational 0) reducing to **Minor adverse/No change** as the mitigation boundary planting matures (Operational Year 5); **Temporary Moderate/Minor adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change/Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.180. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view the initial cumulative magnitude of change will be **Low** reducing to **Negligible** as mitigation planting matures c. Year 5. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse/No change**.

Viewpoint 2. Minor road between Bounds Farm and Trelana

Grid Reference	229182, 102086	Figure Number	1.5
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LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	South	Distance from Proposed Development	0.01km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

- 1.181. This viewpoint represents sequential views from the minor road which passes south of Field 10 and north of Field 8, between Bounds Farm and Trelana.
- 1.182. In views looking south from a gated access in a mature hedgerow Field 8 is seen foreshortened by landform in the middle distance of view backed by mature treelines. Fields 2, 3 and 4 are largely screened in the background of view by field boundary vegetation. A wood pole line is seen partly against the skyline and partly backclothed in the foreground of view. A pylon line is seen in the background of view partly screened by vegetation.
- 1.183. No other existing solar farms are seen within a similar frame of view nor in successive views from this location.

Sensitivity:

- 1.184. Transient receptors are considered to be of lower susceptibility to changes in view. The viewpoint is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape nor part of a promoted recreational route. This will be a brief glimpsed view from the road, the overall sensitivity of transient receptors at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.185. Construction activities within Field 8 will be apparent in the middle distance of view from the field entrance gap in the hedgerow. There will also be an increase in traffic associated with construction experienced from the road. This will result in medium to occasionally higher scale change experienced locally (when construction works are evident in Field 10 and associated vehicles are experienced on the minor road).

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.186. In the initial operational years, a small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the very southern part of Field 8 and through limited gaps in vegetation to Fields, 2, 3 and 4. This will include the backs of solar panels, CCTV cameras and short sections of the security fence which will be largely screened by the proposed mitigation planting and backclothed by the background hedgerow within Fields 2, 3 and 4. Once mitigation planting has matured the Proposed Development will be screened with some limited opportunity for very filtered views through mitigation planting during the winter months following leaf fall.

- 1.187. The elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident in in views looking south from this location will be seen in front of and below the existing overhead lines, very marginal extending the visual influence of electricity infrastructure in the initial operational years. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.
- 1.188. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a small scale change experienced locally reducing to a barely perceptible scale change as mitigation planting matures.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.189. Decommissioning activities will be similar to those of the construction phase however those within Field 8 will be largely screened by mitigation planting which will have matured. This will result in a medium scale change experienced locally. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Low** (Operational Year 0) reducing to **Negligible** (Operational Year 5); **Medium** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect: **Temporary, Moderate/Minor adverse** (Construction); **Minor adverse** (Operational Year 0) reducing to **Minor/No Change** (Operational Year 5) as the mitigation boundary planting matures; **Temporary Moderate/Minor adverse** (Decommissioning); **Minor beneficial to No Change** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.190. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view the initial cumulative magnitude of change will be **Negligible** reducing as mitigation planting matures c. Year 5. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse/No change**.

Viewpoint 3. Minor road south of New Park/Monks Farm

Grid Reference	229811, 101967	Figure Number	1.6
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	South	Distance from Proposed Development	0.01km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

- 1.191. This viewpoint represents views from the minor road directly south of New Park (landowner for the Proposed Development).

- 1.192. From the viewpoint location in views looking south from a gated access in a mature hedgerow, Field 18 of the Application Site is seen in the foreground of view backed by a mature hedgerow at lower elevation in the middle distance. Rolling agricultural land is seen beyond the hedgerow in the background of view bound by hedgerows, treelines and interspersed with pockets of woodland. The roofs of some agricultural buildings at Crinacott Farm can be seen in the middle distance of view above the intervening vegetation. A pylon line is also seen against the skyline and partly backclothed in the middle distance of view.
- 1.193. The back and sides of some solar arrays which are part of existing operational Crinacott Solar Farm are seen below the skyline partly screened by field boundary vegetation and backclothed by vegetation and landform to the northeast of the agricultural buildings at Crinacott.
- 1.194. No other existing operational solar farms are seen within a similar frame of view nor in successive views from this location.
- 1.195. **Plate 1 of Appendix 1B** indicates views looking northwest towards New Park from Field 21 towards Bounds Farm.

Sensitivity:

- 1.196. Transient receptors are considered to be of lower susceptibility to changes in view. The minor road is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape. The view is influenced by existing elements of energy infrastructure including pylon lines seen against the skyline and part of operational Crinacott Solar Farm at lower elevation. On balance the value of view is considered to be medium. Overall sensitivity for transient receptors is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.197. Construction activities within Field 18 will be apparent in the foreground and middle distance of view. There will also be an increase in traffic associated with construction experienced from the road.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.198. From the minor road, in the initial operational years, a small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the foreground and middle distance of view. Elements of the Proposed Development which will be seen within Field 18 will include the backs of solar panels, CCTV cameras and short sections of the security fence. The substation will be screened from view from this location by the higher landform.
- 1.199. The elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident in views looking south from this location will be seen in front of and below the existing overhead lines. The Proposed Development will also be seen in combined views in front of a small part of operational

Crinacott Solar Farm. The introduction of the Proposed Development will extend the presence and influence of energy infrastructure to the northwest of the existing pylon line and operational Crinacott Solar Farm. Once mitigation planting has matured, the Proposed Development will be largely screened with some limited opportunity for very filtered views through mitigation planting during the winter months following leaf fall.

- 1.200. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a medium scale of change experienced locally. The scale of change will reduce in views from the minor road as mitigation planting matures.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.201. Decommissioning activities will be similar to those of the construction phase however those This will result in a medium scale change experienced locally from New Park and a medium to small scale change seen briefly from the minor road. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Operational Years 0 and Year 5 are illustrated by illustrated by **Figures 1.4a and 1.4b of Appendix 1A.**

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Medium** (Operational); **Medium** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on transient receptors (minor road): **Temporary, Moderate adverse** (Construction); **Minor adverse** (Operational Year 0) reducing to **Minor/No change** (Operational Year 5) as the mitigation boundary planting matures; **Temporary Moderate/Minor adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change to Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.202. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present, including a small part of Crinacott Solar Farm in the view the initial cumulative magnitude of change will be **Low** reducing as mitigation planting matures c. Year 5. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse** from a short section of the Minor road.

Viewpoint 4. PRow close to Pyworthy substation

Grid Reference	230483, 102232	Figure Number	1.7
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A



Direction of view	West	Distance from Proposed Development	0.2km
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Viewpoint location and existing view:

- 1.203. This viewpoint is located on the PRoW directly east of Pyworthy substation. This PRoW links Pyworthy to the minor road south of the substation. In views looking west from this location Pyworthy substation is seen in the middle distance of view backed by mature trees. An agricultural field delineated by hedgerows is seen rising in the background through a gap in vegetation. The two-storey property New Park is seen on the horizon. Wood pole and pylon lines are seen against the skyline. The upper western part of Field 17 is seen behind the substation and to the east of New Park.
- 1.204. No other existing solar farms are seen within a similar frame of view nor in successive views from this location.

Sensitivity:

- 1.205. Recreational users focused on the surrounding landscape are generally considered to have a higher susceptibility to changes in the view. This PRoW is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape and features existing elements of electricity infrastructure, on balance the value of view is considered to be medium.
- 1.206. Overall sensitivity of recreational receptors at this location is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.207. Construction activities within Field 17 will be evident in the middle distance of view behind the substation and framed by intervening vegetation. This will result in a medium to small scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.208. Once operational, a very small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the middle distance of view within Field 17 behind the existing substation and framed by field boundary vegetation. This will include some south facing solar panels CCTV cameras and short sections of the security fence which will be backclothed by landform and vegetation. Once mitigation planting has matured the Proposed Development will be partly screened, although opportunity for views into the higher northern parts of Field 17 will remain. Wider elements of the Proposed Development within Field 17 will become marginally more apparent in largely filtered views during the winter months following leaf fall.
- 1.209. The elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident in Field 17 in framed views looking west from this location will be seen behind and in combination with part of Pyworthy

substation and its associated infrastructure including the overhead lines. This will marginally extend the influence of electricity infrastructure within a small portion of the overall frame of view. While mitigation planting will help screen elements of the Proposed Development within the lower parts of Field 17 elements to the west are likely to remain visible in combination with Pyworthy substation. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.

- 1.210. Similar views are experienced along a short section of this PRoW. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of decommissioning effect

- 1.211. Decommission activities will be similar to those of construction and partly screened by mitigation planting. This will result in a medium to small scale change experienced locally. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Low** (Operational); **Medium** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect: **Temporary Moderate adverse** (Construction); **Minor Adverse** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary Moderate adverse** (Decommissioning). **Minor beneficial to No Change** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.212. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view the initial cumulative magnitude of change will be **Low** reducing as mitigation planting matures c. Year 5. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse**.

Viewpoint 5. Minor road west of Application Site

Grid Reference	228821, 101307	Figure Number	1.8
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	North, northeast	Distance from Proposed Development	0.4km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

- 1.213. This viewpoint is located on the minor road between Bounds Cross (north) and Strawberry Bank (south). In views looking east from this location through a gated access framed by hedgerows an access track and agricultural field are seen in the foreground of view. An agricultural building is seen at the end of the access. Behind the agricultural building woodland and field boundary vegetation is seen in the middle distance and background of view. Agricultural fields and buildings, including farm buildings at Trelana are glimpsed through gaps in vegetation in the background and Pylon lines are seen against the skyline. The Application Site is largely screened by intervening vegetation.

Sensitivity:

- 1.214. Transient receptors are considered to be of lower susceptibility to changes in view. The viewpoint is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape nor part of a promoted recreational route. This will be a brief glimpsed view from the road, the overall sensitivity of transient receptors at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.215. Construction activities will be largely foreshortened by landform and screened by intervening vegetation although the upper jibs of machinery are likely to be occasionally evident above lower sections of hedgerow and where gaps in vegetation are evident. This will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.216. Once operational the Proposed Development will be screened by landform and the existing vegetation. There is likely to be some limited opportunity for very filtered views through the existing hedgerow and trees during the winter months following leaf fall. Similar views are anticipated from a short section of this road between Bounds Cross (north) and Strawberry Bank (south). The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a barely perceptible scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.217. A similar magnitude of change and degree of visual effect to that of the construction phase is anticipated.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Low** (Construction); **Negligible** (Operational); **Low** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect: **Temporary Minor adverse** to **No Change** (Construction); **No Change** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary Minor adverse** to **No Change** (Decommissioning); **No Change** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

1.218. The Proposed Development will not be seen in combination with any similar operational or consented developments from this location. Therefore, there will be **No Change** cumulative visual effects predicted from this location.

Viewpoint 6. Western edge of Hopworthy

Grid Reference	229890, 102910	Figure Number	1.9
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	Southwest	Distance from Proposed Development	0.5km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

1.219. This viewpoint is located on the minor road c. 0.06km west of Hopworthy. This viewpoint is representative of longer distance sequential views experienced by road users. Some similar views are likely to be experienced by some Hopworthy residents. In views looking southwest from this location an arable field is seen in the foreground of view through a gated access framed by mature hedgerows, this field foreshortens views of the agricultural landscape seen in the middle distance beyond. Monks Farm is seen partly screened by existing vegetation and New Park is seen just below the horizon towards the centre of view. A pylon line partly backclothed and partly seen against the skyline is evident extending into the distance. The hubs and blades of three single wind turbines are seen against the skyline in slightly successive views further east.

1.220. Limited views of the western parts of Fields 15 and 17 are seen in the middle distance partly screened behind the intervening landform and vegetation.

1.221. There are no other operational, consented or proposed developments visible in successive views from this location.

Sensitivity:

1.222. Transient receptors are considered to be of lower susceptibility to changes in view. The viewpoint is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape nor part of a promoted recreational route. This will be a brief glimpsed view from the road, the overall sensitivity of transient receptors at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium** and **High** for Hopworthy residents.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.223. Construction activities within the western parts of Fields 15 and 17 will be seen in longer distance views to the southeast from this location foreshortened by landform and partly screened by intervening vegetation. Other fields within the Application Site will be screened by landform and vegetation. Although the upper gibs of machinery may occasional be seen above intervening vegetation in other fields to the northwest of Monks Farm. This will result in a small scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.224. Once operational, a very small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the middle distance within the upper western parts of Field 15 and 17. This will include limited very visibility of the backs of some solar panels and short sections of the security fence which will be filtered and screened by existing vegetation and backclothed by the landform.
- 1.225. The limited elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident within the western sides of Fields 15 and 17 in framed views looking southwest from this location will be seen in combination in front of the existing pylon lines and single operational wind turbines.
- 1.226. Similar views are experienced between Holsworthy and where the road passes through an underpass c. 0.4km to the west. It is considered unlikely that mitigation planting will further reduce the visibility. This will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.227. A similar magnitude of change and degree of visual effect to that of the construction phase is anticipated. Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape in the middle distance.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Low** (Construction); **Negligible** (Operational); **Low** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect (on transient receptors and Hopworthy residents): **Temporary Minor Adverse** (Construction); **Minor Adverse/No Change** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary Minor** (Decommissioning). **Minor Beneficial/No Change** (Post Decommissioning).

Given the limited visibility it is considered unlikely that the degree of visual effect experienced from Hopworthy will be greater than that experienced from the minor road.

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

1.228. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view the cumulative magnitude of change will be **Negligible**. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse/No change**.

Viewpoint 7. Junction between PRoW and minor road south of the Old Rectory

Grid Reference	231064, 102011	Figure Number	1.10
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
West	Northwest	Distance from Proposed Development	0.8km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

1.229. This viewpoint is located close to the junction between the PRoW (Footpath 1), northeast of Crinacott Farm and the minor road south of the Old Rectory. Though a gated access a large rectilinear arable field is seen in the foreground of view bound to the south by a hedgerow and to the north and east by a combination of hedgerows and treelines. The landform of the arable field slopes down out of view in the middle distance towards the Derril Water. A rural landscape forms the background of view with agricultural buildings at Trelana evident further west. The pylon lines which largely follow the Derril valley are seen in the middle distance partly backclothed and partly visible against the skyline. The hub and blades of a single turbine are seen against the skyline above and behind Trelana.

1.230. The Application Site is largely screened by intervening landform and vegetation with small portions of Field 18, 24 and 25 visible in the background of view.

1.231. In slightly successive views to the south west the pylon lines are seen extending into the distance and five single wind turbines are seen in the background of view punctuating the rural landscape partly backclothed with turbine blades evident against the skyline. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.

Sensitivity:

1.232. Recreational users focused on the surrounding landscape are generally considered to have a higher susceptibility to changes in the view. This PRoW is not located within a nationally or locally designated landscape and features existing elements of electricity infrastructure, on balance the value of view is considered to be medium.

1.233. The overall sensitivity of recreational receptors at this location is judged to be **High**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.234. Construction activities within portions of Field 18, 24 and 25 will be partly screened by field boundary vegetation although the upper jibs of machinery are likely to be occasionally seen where gaps in vegetation are evident. This will result in a small scale of change experienced locally.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.235. Once operational, small portions of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the background of view seen as a distant textural change within the background fields. This will include the tops of some south facing solar panels CCTV cameras and short sections of the security fence which will be largely screened and backclothed by landform and vegetation. Once mitigation planting has matured the Proposed Development will be further screened. Wider elements of the Proposed Development within Fields 18, 24 and 25 will become marginally more apparent in largely filtered views during the winter months following leaf fall.
- 1.236. The Proposed Development will very marginally increase the influence of electricity infrastructure when seen in combination with the pylon lines and single wind turbine. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.237. Decommissioning activities will be similar to those of the construction phase however these will be largely screened by mitigation planting which will have matured. This will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Low** (Construction); **Low** (Operational); **Low** (Decommissioning); **None** (Post Decommissioning)

Degree of Visual Effect: **Temporary Minor Adverse** (Construction); **Minor Adverse/No Change** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary Minor Adverse/No Change** (Decommissioning); **No Change/ Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.238. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view the cumulative magnitude of change will be **Negligible**. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse/No change**.

Viewpoint 8. PRoW near minor road north of East Yeomadon Farm

Grid Reference	230872, 101119	Figure Number	1.11
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	Northwest	Distance from Proposed Development	0.8km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

- 1.239. This viewpoint is on the PRoW (Footpath 1) north of East Yeomadon Farm, northeast of the intersection between the PRoW and minor road. This viewpoint is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors on the PRoW and similar glimpsed views gained from the minor road.
- 1.240. In views looking northwest from this location parts of Fields 18, 19, 22 and 23 are evident in the middle distance to background of view partly foreshortened by landform and partly filtered and screened by hedgerows and tree lines. Landform rises gradually into the background of view with the horizon partly formed by woodland and agricultural fields.
- 1.241. Two pylon lines are seen partly backclothed with the tops of the lattice towers evident against the skyline. An operational wind turbine is seen as a distant feature against the skyline in the background of view. In successive views looking north from this location the operational solar farm at Crinacott Farm is seen in the middle distance backclothed by landform.
- 1.242. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.

Sensitivity:

- 1.243. The attention of walkers on the PRoW will be focused on the surrounding landscape and are considered to have a high susceptibility to changes in the view. The viewpoint is not located within a national designated landscape, although walkers are likely to place value on the view. On balance overall sensitivity of transient receptors on the minor road near this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium** and **High** for recreational receptors.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.244. Visibility of temporary construction activities within Fields 18, 19, 22 and 23 will be evident in the middle distance to background of view foreshortened by landform and partly filtered and screened by vegetation. This will result in a large to medium scale change. Similar views will be limited to a localised geographical extent along a short section of this PRoW southeast of Crinacott Farm and similar glimpsed sequential views through gaps in roadside vegetation along a short section of the minor road south of the PRoW.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.245. Once operational, a small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the middle distance of view within Fields 18, 19, 22 and 23 partly foreshortened by landform and partly filtered and screened by hedgerows and tree lines. This will include some south facing solar panels CCTV cameras and sections of the security fence which will be backclothed by landform and vegetation. The proposed substation will be largely screened by the existing hedgerow and treeline in the middle distance of view. Mitigation planting will do little to screen the elements of the Proposed Development that are seen from this location.
- 1.246. The elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident in views looking northwest from this location will be seen in front of and below the existing overhead lines and operational wind turbine. The Proposed Development will also be seen in combined and successive views with operational Crinacott Farm appearing as a separate development, resulting in solar farm development extending across a larger portion of the view. No other operational solar developments are evident in successive views from this location.
- 1.247. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a medium scale change experienced from a localised geographical extent.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.248. Decommissioning activities will be similar to those of the construction. This will result in a medium scale change experienced locally. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Medium** (Operational); **High** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on recreational receptors (PRoW, Footpath 1): **Temporary, Major/Moderate/ adverse** (Construction); **Moderate adverse** (Operational Year 0 and 5); **Major/Moderate adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change/ Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on transient receptors (minor road): **Temporary, Moderate adverse** (Construction); **Minor adverse** (Operational Year 0 and 5); **Temporary Moderate/Minor adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change/Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.249. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view including operational Crinacott Farm the cumulative magnitude of change will be **Medium** for recreational

receptors and **Low** for road users. The cumulative visual effect on recreational receptors will be **Moderate adverse** over the operational period and **Minor adverse/No change** for road users.

Viewpoint 9. PRow near Pyworthy

Grid Reference	231066, 102570	Figure Number	1.11
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	N/A
Direction of view	Southwest	Distance from Proposed Development	0.9km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

- 1.250. This viewpoint is on the PRow (Footpath 7) close to the southwestern settlement edge of Pyworthy (c. 01.km). This viewpoint is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors on the PRow.
- 1.251. In views looking east from this location partial views of Fields 14, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22 and are evident in the middle distance of view partly foreshortened by landform and partly filtered and screened by hedgerows and tree lines. Landform rises gradually into the background of view with the horizon partly formed by woodland and agricultural fields.
- 1.252. Two pylon lines are seen partly backclothed with the tops of the lattice towers evident against the skyline. A number of single operational wind turbines are seen as a distant background features partly seen against the skyline in the background of view.
- 1.253. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.

Sensitivity:

- 1.254. The attention of walkers on the PRow will be focused on the surrounding landscape and are considered to have a high susceptibility to changes in the view. The viewpoint is not located within a national designated landscape, although walkers are likely to place value on the view. On balance overall sensitivity of transient receptors at this viewpoint is judged to be **Medium** and **High** for recreational receptors.

Appraisal of construction effects:

- 1.255. Visibility of temporary construction activities within Fields 14, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22 will be evident in the middle distance to background of view foreshortened by landform and partly filtered and screened by vegetation. This will result in a medium scale change. Similar views will be limited to a localised geographical extent along a short section of this PRow before inward views from higher elevations become more contained by field boundary vegetation.

Appraisal of operational effects:

- 1.256. Once operational, a small part of the overall Proposed Development will be evident in the middle distance of view within 14, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22 partly foreshortened by landform and partly filtered and screened by hedgerows and tree lines. This will include the sides of some south facing solar panels CCTV cameras and sections of the security fence which will be backclothed by landform and vegetation. The proposed substation will be screened by landform. Mitigation planting will do little to screen the elements of the Proposed Development that are seen from this location. Although background panels will become further screened and the Proposed Development will become marginally more apparent during the winter months following leaf fall.
- 1.257. The elements of the Proposed Development which will be evident in in views looking east from this location will be seen in front of and below the existing overhead lines and single wind turbines, marginally extending the influence of electricity infrastructure. There are no other operational developments visible in successive views from this location.
- 1.258. The introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a small scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.259. Decommissioning activities will be similar to those of the construction phase. This will result in a medium scale change experienced locally. Post Decommissioning mitigation planting will have matured integrating with the surrounding landscape.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Low** (Operational); **Medium** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on recreational receptors (PRoW, Footpath 7): **Temporary, Major/Moderate adverse** (Construction); **Moderate/Minor** (Operational Year 0 and Year 5); **Temporary Moderate/Major adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change/ Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.260. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view the initial cumulative magnitude of change will be **Low**. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse** for the operational period.

Viewpoint 10. Elevated Minor Road

Grid Reference	228725, 098806	Figure Number	1.11
LCT	LCT 5A	Landscape Designation	AGLV
Direction of view	Northeast	Distance from Proposed Development	2.3km

Viewpoint location and existing view:

1.261. This viewpoint is located on the elevated minor road on the southern side of the Tamar Valley. In longer distance views looking northeast from this location the Application Site is screened by landform and vegetation in the background of view.

Sensitivity:

1.262. Road users are considered to be of medium susceptibility to changes in the view. This minor road passes through the Upper Tamar AGLV and road users are likely to place some value on the view; overall sensitivity is judged to be **Medium**.

Appraisal of construction effects:

1.263. The temporary site works within the Application Site will be screened from view. This will result in no perceptible scale of change.

Appraisal of operational effects:

1.264. Once operational the Proposed Development will be screened from view by landform and vegetation. It is considered unlikely that views of the Proposed Development will become apparent during the winter months following leaf fall. This will result in no perceptible scale of change.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect:

1.265. Magnitude of Change: **None** (Construction); **None** (Operational); **None** (Decommissioning); **None**.

Degree of Visual Effect: **No Change** (Construction); **No Change** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary No Change** (Decommissioning); **No Change/ Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.266. The Proposed Development will not be seen in combination with any similar operational, consented or proposed developments from this location. Therefore, there will be **No Change** cumulative visual effects predicted from this location.

Potential Effects on Views from Settlements

- 1.267. Receptors who will experience views from settlements are assumed in most instances to be local residents at their residential properties and curtilages who will regularly experience the available views. Residential receptors are therefore considered to have a high susceptibility to changes in the view.

Pyworthy

Description:

- 1.268. This small village is located c. 1.2km northeast of the Application Site. The ZTV indicates theoretical visibility across the settlement. Actual visibility of the Proposed Development will be largely limited to residential properties and farmsteads on the south western settlement edge. From these locations It is anticipated that there will be some opportunity for views filtered and screened by intervening field boundary vegetation looking west towards the Proposed Development from some west facing residential upper storey windows.
- 1.269. **Plate 5 of Appendix 1B** indicates views looking east towards this Pyworthy from Field 12.

Sensitivity:

- 1.270. Residential receptors are considered to have a **High** sensitivity.

Appraisal of construction effects

- 1.271. Construction activities within the boundaries of the Application Site will be largely screened from residential views by mature hedgerow and trees along the eastern boundary of the Application Site. Although the upper gibs of machinery may occasional be seen above intervening vegetation in other fields. There is likely to be an increase in traffic associated with the Proposed Development during the construction phase evident from the minor road passing through Pyworthy. This will result in a small scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of operational effects

- 1.272. Once operational the Proposed Development will be largely screened by existing vegetation on the eastern boundary and by intervening vegetation west of Pyworthy. Although the tops of some elements including the solar panels and security fence may be seen in longer distance

views above intervening vegetation. This will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced locally.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

- 1.273. A similar magnitude of change and degree of visual effect to that of the construction phase is anticipated.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect

Magnitude of Change: **Medium** (Construction); **Low** (Operational); **Medium** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect on recreational receptors (south western settlement edge Pyworthy): **Temporary, Moderate/Minor** (Construction); **Minor adverse** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary, Moderate/Minor adverse** (Decommissioning); **No Change/ Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.274. No other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view (pylon lines and single wind turbines) cumulative magnitude of change will be **Negligible**. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse/No change**.

Potential Effects on Views from Residential Properties

- 1.275. Receptors who will experience views from residential properties are assumed in most instances to be local residents at their residential properties and curtilages who will regularly experience the available views. Residential receptors are therefore considered to have a high susceptibility to changes in the view.

Hopworthy

- 1.276. Potential visual effects on the residentials within this small hamlet northeast of the Proposed Development represented by Viewpoint 6 are considered within the appraisal of this viewpoint and are not therefore repeated.

Bounds Farm

- 1.277. Potential visual effects on the residential property southeast of the Proposed Development represented by Viewpoint 1 are considered within the appraisal of this viewpoint and are not therefore repeated.

Furze Farm ribbon development group

Description:

1.278. This linear group of properties are located 0.6km north of the Proposed Development is located c. 0.6km east of the Proposed Development. Visibility will largely be limited to longer distance rear views looking south down towards Field 14 from the properties in the centre of the group. From the other properties to the east and west outward views will be largely screened by immediate woodland.

Sensitivity:

1.279. Residential receptors are considered to have a **High** sensitivity.

Appraisal of construction effects

1.280. Partly screened views of construction activities within the boundaries of the Application Site will be evident within Fields 14. The scale of change experienced from this property group will be small during construction.

Appraisal of operational effects

1.281. Once operational the Proposed Development will be partly screened by the existing field boundaries which will be allowed to mature increasing screening. This will result in a small to barely perceptible scale change experienced from this location during operations.

Appraisal of decommissioning effects:

1.282. A similar magnitude of change and degree of visual effect to that of the construction phase is anticipated although some decommissioning activities will be partly screened by the established mitigation planting. Following decommissioning the mature mitigation planting will be retained.

Magnitude of Change and Degree of Visual Effect

Magnitude of Change: **Low** (Construction); **Negligible** (Operational); **Low** (Decommissioning).

Degree of Visual Effect: **Temporary Moderate/Minor adverse** (Construction); **Minor adverse** (Operational Years 0 and 5); **Temporary Moderate/Minor adverse** (Decommissioning); **Minor beneficial** (Post Decommissioning).

Potential for Future Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.283. It is considered unlikely that other consented developments will be visible from this location. Taking account of the other existing electricity infrastructure elements present in the view (pylon lines and single wind turbines) cumulative magnitude of change will be **Negligible**. The cumulative visual effect will be **Minor adverse**.

Effects on Views from Transport and Recreational Routes

- 1.284. The transport routes in the study area from which potential views of the Proposed Development may be experienced are assessed below.

Minor Road Network and Recreational Routes

- 1.285. 'Worst case or maximum case scenario views' experienced from the nearest minor road are represented by Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10. Potential visual effects on transient receptors on these sequential routes are considered within the appraisal of these viewpoints and are not therefore repeated.
- 1.286. Views from recreational routes are represented by Viewpoints 4 (Footpath 7), 7 (Footpath 1) and 8 (Footpath 1). Potential visual effects on recreational receptors on these sequential routes are considered within the appraisal of these viewpoints and are not therefore repeated. Similar views to those experienced from Viewpoints 7 and 8 are anticipated for a short section of Footpath 3 west of Crinacott Farm.

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Upper Tamar AGLV

1.287. The Proposed Development is located c. 1.2km to the north of this Cornwall Council AGLV at the nearest point. Any effects on the AGLV will therefore be indirect. LCAs within the AGLV include CA 31 Upper Tamar & Ottery Valleys and CA 37 Western Culim Plateau. Much of the AGLV within c. 2km of the Proposed Development is located within CA 31. The appraisal of landscape effects for the CA 31 Upper Tamar & Ottery Valleys are identified below.

Sensitivity of Receptor: **High**

Magnitude of change: **Negligible** locally, reducing to **None** beyond a distance of 2km (Construction, Operational Years 0 and 5, Decommissioning and Post Decommissioning).

1.288. Viewpoint 10 is located within CA 31 Upper Tamar & Ottery Valleys and the Upper Tamar AGLV, on an elevated minor Road. The sensitivity of this transient receptor is **Medium** for which the magnitude of change was identified as **None** (Construction, Operational, Decommissioning and Post Decommissioning).

1.289. On balance the introduction of the Proposed Development will result in a very localised effect on a very small northern part of the of the Upper Tamar AGLV. Potential effects will reduce with screening by landform and vegetation and are unlikely to be experienced beyond around c. 2km. This will result in a very localised **Minor adverse** degree of effect reducing to **No Change** beyond c. 2km (Construction, Operational, (Decommissioning and Post Decommissioning).

1.290. It is considered unlikely that the characteristics and qualities of the Upper Tamar AGLV will be compromised by the introduction of the Proposed Development.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 1.291. Potential interactions resulting from the introduction of the Proposed Development to a baseline of operational solar farms and other existing elements of electricity infrastructure have been considered in turn within the appraisal. Consented solar farms have been considered in turn as part of the appraisal of potential future cumulative effects.

Potential for Future Cumulative Landscape Effects

- 1.292. The introduction of the Proposed Development will locally extend the physical presence of solar farm and energy infrastructure development within south to south-western parts of LCT 5A: **Inland Elevated Undulating Land**. Visibility of the Proposed Development from localised southern western parts of the LCT up to around c. 1km will locally extend the current influence of operational Crinacott Solar Farm. Beyond this distance, intervisibility between the Proposed Development and other operational solar farms within LCT 5A is considered unlikely.
- 1.293. The introduction of the Proposed Development will increase the physical extent of solar farm development within the southern part of LCT 5A. However, it is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will be seen with this consented development from within the LCT given its contained nature.
- 1.294. With the exception of operational Crinacott Solar Farm it is considered unlikely that the Proposed Development will be seen in combination with any other operational developments. Against the existing baseline and consented developments identified in **Table 1-7** this will result in a **Medium** magnitude of change and a localised **Moderate adverse** cumulative landscape effect on LCT 5A.

Cumulative Visual Effects

- 1.295. Localised cumulative visual interactions with existing electricity infrastructure including pylon lines and single wind turbines are experienced from all viewpoints considered in the appraisal. Cumulative interactions with existing Crinacott Solar Farm are largely limited to transient and recreational routes (Viewpoints 3 and 8). Cumulative interactions with Pyworthy substation are largely limited to partial views from Footpath 7 (Viewpoint 4).
- 1.296. Once operational, the addition of the Proposed Development in combination with the existing operational, and consented developments will result in a **Moderate adverse** cumulative visual effect experienced from Viewpoint 8 (Footpaths 1 and 3). From other visual receptors cumulative visual effects will be **Minor adverse** or lower.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Landscape:

- 1.297. The introduction of the Proposed Development will locally alter the existing agricultural use of the Application Site to a landscape comprising a solar farm with associated infrastructure, mixed agricultural land use and new hedgerow and tree planting. During operation, the Proposed Development will initially have a **Moderate adverse** landscape effect on the characteristics of the Application Site, which will reduce to a **Moderate/Minor adverse** effect by c. Year 5 as proposed mitigation planting starts to become established and fills out.
- 1.298. The Proposed Solar Farm will directly affect LCT 5A: **Inland Elevated Undulating Land** and will result in a solar farm located over c. 66.33 hectares of this landscape. This will result in a localised direct **Moderate adverse** landscape effect and a **Minor adverse** effect across the wider extents of this landscape. The landscape effect will reduce to **Moderate/Minor to adverse** locally by c. Year 5 as the proposed mitigation planting matures helping to further contain and integrate the Proposed Development within the LCT 5A: **Inland Elevated Undulating Land**.
- 1.299. In terms of designated landscapes, the introduction of the Proposed Development will indirectly affect a small eastern part of the Upper Tamar AGLV. During operation a very localised effect will range from **Minor adverse** to **No change**. It is considered unlikely that the characteristics and qualities of the Upper Tamar AGLV will be compromised by the introduction of the Proposed Development.

Visual:

- 1.300. Potential views of the Proposed Development within the local landscape will be limited to a small number of the nearest residential receptors and passing transient receptors on recreational routes and minor roads. The visibility of the solar farm and associated structures will be largely contained by the mix of hedgerows and trees within the boundaries of the Application Site and surrounding farmland, along with screening by built elements and local topographical variations. Any such views of the Proposed Development will be limited to parts of the overall development. The potential changes to the existing views of these receptors have been determined from the viewpoints in the above assessment.
- 1.301. The appraisal identifies operational **Moderate adverse** and **Moderate/Minor adverse** visual effects from Viewpoints 8 (Footpath 1), and 9 (Footpath 7) respectively. From other visual receptors with potential views of the Proposed Development visual effects during operational Year 0 will range from **Moderate/Minor** to **Minor adverse**, reducing to **Minor adverse** or less by around c. operational Year 5 as mitigation planting establishes.

Cumulative:

- 1.302. Cumulative effects are largely limited to localised interactions with the baseline of existing elements of energy infrastructure developments including Crinacott Solar Farm which will result in **Moderate adverse** cumulative landscape effect on LCT 5A. **Moderate Adverse** cumulative visual effects are limited to recreational receptors on short sections of Footpaths 1 and 3 (Viewpoint 8). From other receptors cumulative visual effects will be limited and will range from localised **Minor adverse** effects to **No Change**.

Mitigation:

- 1.303. Mitigation measures are proposed to help reduce any potential landscape and visual effects. The existing trees and hedgerows around the Application Site will be retained as far as is practicable. Trees will be introduced along sections of the eastern and southern western boundaries to help screen inward views gained from Footpath 7. Hedgerows and screen planting will also be introduced along open sections of the boundaries to help screen inward views and provide additional biodiversity opportunities.
- 1.304. As the mitigation planting thickening out and increase in height, this will further enclose the Proposed Development.

Conclusion:

- 1.305. The overall design of the Proposed Development has carefully considered its setting within the confines of LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land setting of the Upper Tamar AGLV to ensure the potential effects upon landscape and visual receptors are limited. The siting of the Proposed Development within the limits of the existing field system will help to integrate the Proposed Development within the surrounding rural landscape.
- 1.306. The relatively low elevation of the Application Site, low heights of the various proposed structures, and presence of existing vegetation across the landscape of the study area all greatly help to screen potential inward views of the Proposed Development from the majority of visual receptors. Actual views are limited to a small number of receptors within relatively close proximity to the Proposed Development.
- 1.307. Proposed mitigation measures will further help integrate the Proposed Development within the landscape of LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land. At the end of the Proposed Development's lifespan the predicted effects are reversible as the lands can be returned to an agricultural use similar to its current state, with relative ease.