Appendix D3

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

APPENDIX D3 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

East Claydon Greener Grid Park
Land north of the East Claydon substation

URBAN GREEN

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

APRIL 2025

East Claydon Greener Grid Park

URBAN GREEN

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Project No.:	UG2507		
Project:	East Claydon Greener Grid Park		
Location:	Land north of the East Claydon substation		
Title	Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment		
Document Type:	LVIA	**Issue No.:**	P05
Date:	April 2025		
Prepared By:	ME	**Signature:**	ME
Checked By:	NV	**Signature:**	NV

Revision Status:

Rev:	Date:	Issue/Purpose/ Comment:	Prepared:	Checked:
DRAFT	20/12/24	Review	ME	NV
P01	14/03/25	Planning	ME	NV
P02	10/04/25	Planning	ME	NV
P03	11/04/25	Planning	ME	NV
P04	23/04/25	Planning	ME	NV
P05	24/04/25	Planning	ME	NV

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Urban Green and provides an Assessment of the Proposed Development of the East Claydon Greener Grid Park at Land north of the East Claydon substation ('the Site'). The location of the Site is shown at Fig. 1.1, on the following page.

The current Greener Grid Park compounds cover an area of circa 8.6ha area, within the wider 45.3ha site.

The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) component will have a capacity of 500MW. It will store excess energy generated by the National Grid, and, in doing so, provide a reserve power supply to the local electricity grid and in a wider context will enable further renewable energy generation to deploy onto the grid.

The BESS would comprise 4 quadrants of 125MW capacity, with each block consisting of modular battery energy storage units, inverter and transformers. The BESS Facility will include the elements listed below:

1. 144 battery block units with inverters. Approximately 36 battery container units would be located within each block, and each unit would be approximately 30.9m x 5m and 4.5m in height. The units will be of a recessive colour, likely to be olive green;
2. 1 metering substation compound, comprising a 400kV substation and a transformer yard (61m (W) x 74.5m (L)), containing 2no. 400kV/33kV transformers (8.4m (W) x 12.6m (L)) x 12.5m (H));
3. 2no sync comp buildings (24m L x 16m W x 7m H) housing 2no. synchronous compensator machines each (4 synchronous compensators in total)
4. Mini substation south of the main BESS compound, including two transformers (6.5m high) and command and LV room (47 mL x 45 mW and 6.2 m H);
5. 12no. air-cored reactors (1.5m d x 1.67m H)
6. 4no. emergency diesel generators (4.37m L x 1.6m W x 3.5m H);
7. 2no. coolers (11.68m L x 2.4 m W x 2.7m H)
8. 4no. control containers (12.2 mL x 2.5 mW and 2.85m H);
9. 2no. switchgear rooms (25.11 m L x 6.24m W x 6.25m H);
10. 2no. control & metering rooms (14m L x 4.86m W x 6.25m H);
11. 2no. store buildings (6.0 m L x 2.4m W and 2.6m H);
12. 2no. comms & LV rooms (12.16 mL x 5.63 mW and 6.25 m in H);
13. 2no. welfare and office buildings (9.75 mL x 3.05 mW and 2.73m high);
14. 1no. operations compound (14.1m L x 3.7m W x 5.55m H);
15. Internal access roads and 13no. car parking spaces for maintenance personnel;
16. Underground water tank (13 mL x 2.5 mW) and hydrants as part of the fire protection system;
17. Lighting and CCTV masts (6m H);
18. Drainage works and landscaping;
19. Noise attenuation fence (4m H) and bund (5m H); and
20. Palisade perimeter and high voltage compound fencing (at a standard 3.4m H) to secure the Site, and
21. Livestock fence outside this (1.1m H)

The four synchronous compensators each with a 'fly wheel' and associated equipment will be housed in buildings south of the two transformers, in the central main compound. The dimensions of each of the buildings are: 24m L x 16m W x 7m H providing a total footprint area of 329.6 sq.m (GIA).

The aim of this document is to identify the key landscape and visual sensitivities of the Site, and provide recommendations to support the appropriate development of the Site for the proposed Greener Grid Park.

This document considers changes to:

- The character of the landscape, vegetation, landscape features and designations within and surrounding the Site; and
- The composition of selected views from identified visual receptors as a result of the Proposed Development.

The landscape and visual analysis was prepared following Site visits in April, May and October 2024 and February 2025. This Assessment describes and evaluates the anticipated change to landscape and visual amenity, and the extent to which these changes will affect the perception and views of the landscape.

The visual assessment is supported by the use of photomontages to help in the visualisation of the Proposed Development. Of the 23 viewpoints, it was considered that 5 of the views would be particularly useful to see as photomontages, as they are considered to be representative; due to their proximity to the Site and visual receptors and will demonstrate how the Proposed Development would sit within views of the existing landscape. Visualisations are included for years 1, 5, 10 and 15 of the operational stage for completeness, however, the assessment of visual effects are reported for years 1 and 10.

1.0 INTRODUCTION & SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

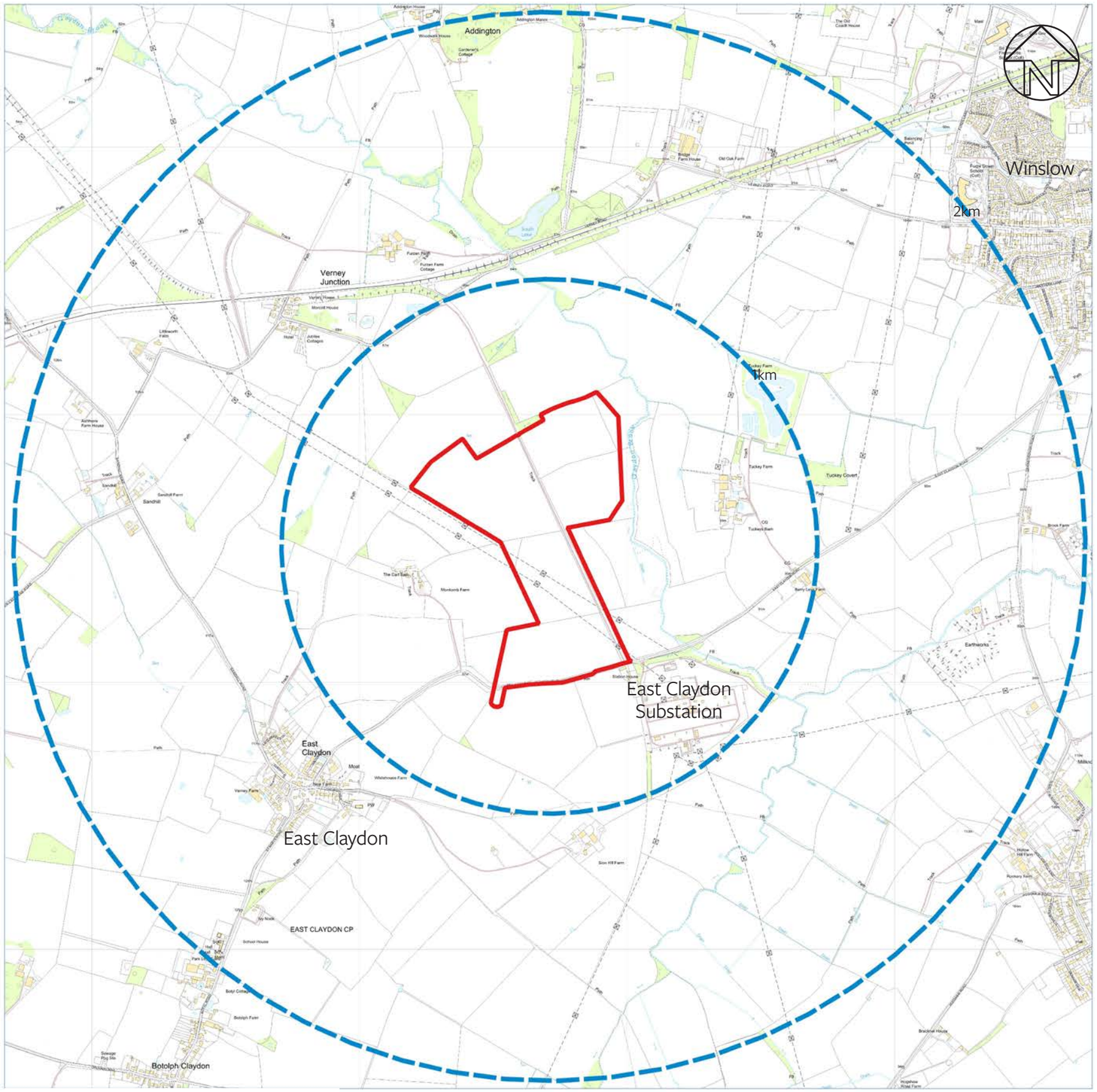


Figure 1.1 - Site Location and Study Area

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

The National planning policy for England is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework (herein referred to as the NPPF) that has distilled the content of previous Planning Policy Statements into one comprehensive document. The NPPF is the relevant national planning policy document against which to test the proposals. A revised NPPF was issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 12 December 2024.

General Considerations

As a central theme, the NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11) for which it defines three mutually interdependent objectives of sustainability (para. 8) to be jointly sought (economic, social and environmental). With relevance to landscape and visual matters the third objective states:

"an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; (...)"

The planning system is identified as the vehicle for guiding development to sustainable solutions but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

Strategic Policies

Paragraph 20 discusses the role of strategic policies within the plan-making framework. It suggests that sufficient provision should be made for the:

d. *"conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation."*

Section 12 Achieving well-designed places

This section of the NPPF identifies that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve (para. 131). It states that policy should ensure that developments (para. 135):

b. *"(...) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

c. *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*

d. d. *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

e. *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; (...)"*

In regards to trees in new developments, paragraph 136 states:

"Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users."

Section 15 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

This section of the NPPF identifies a requirement in favour of (para. 187):

a. *"protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*

b. *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; (...)"*

As listed in the NPPF, these valued landscapes include:

- National Parks;
- The Broads; and
- National Landscapes.

The Site is not located within any of the above mentioned valued landscapes.

Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

For proposals affecting heritage assets, the NPPF places a requirement on applicants to (para. 207):

"describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance."

Para. 208 also states:

"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

Para. 210 states:

"In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a. *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

b. *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

c. *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

It is also considered that (Para. 220):

"Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance."

Local Policy

The Site and the whole of the study area lie within the jurisdiction of Buckinghamshire Council. Key local policies relating to landscape and visual matters are briefly outlined below.

Adopted Policy

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 places a requirement upon local authorities when determining planning applications to do so in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The current development plan covering the study area is the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (2021). The relevant policies within the above document are as follows:

Policy BE1 is concerned with heritage assets and states that:

"The historic environment, unique in its character, quality and diversity across the Vale is important and will be preserved or enhanced. All development, including new buildings, alterations, extensions, changes of use and demolitions, should seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, including their setting, and seek enhancement wherever possible.

Proposals for development shall contribute to heritage values and local distinctiveness. Where a development proposal is likely to affect a designated heritage asset and/or its setting negatively, the significance of the heritage asset must be fully assessed and supported in the submission of an application. The impact of the proposal must be assessed in proportion to the significance of the heritage asset and supported in the submission of an application. Heritage statements and/or archaeological evaluations will be required for any proposals related to or impacting on a heritage asset and/or possible archaeological site.

Proposals which affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be properly considered, weighing the direct and indirect impacts upon the asset and its setting. There will be a presumption in favour of retaining heritage assets wherever practical, including archaeological remains in situ, unless it can be demonstrated that the harm will be outweighed by the benefits of the development. Heritage statements and/or archaeological evaluations may be required to assess the significance of any heritage assets and the impact on these by the development proposal.

The council will:

a. *Support development proposals that do not cause harm to, or which better reveal the significance of heritage assets*

b. *Require development proposals that would cause substantial harm to, or loss of a designated heritage asset and its significance, including its setting, to provide a thorough heritage assessment setting out a clear and convincing justification as to why that harm is considered acceptable on the basis of public benefits that outweigh that harm or the four circumstances in paragraph 133 of the NPPF all apply. Where that justification cannot be demonstrated proposals will not be supported, and*

c. *Require development proposals that cause less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset to weigh the level of harm against the public benefits that may be gained by the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.*

Development affecting a heritage asset should achieve a high quality design in accordance with the Aylesbury Vale Design SPD and the council will encourage modern, innovative design which respects and complements the heritage context in terms of scale, massing, design, detailing and use."

Policy BE2 discuses the design of new development and states that:

"All new development proposals shall respect and complement the following criteria:

a. *The physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings including the scale and context of the site and its setting*

b. *The local distinctiveness and vernacular character of the locality, in terms of ordering, form, proportions, architectural detailing and materials*

c. *The natural qualities and features of the area, and*

d. *The effect on important public views and skylines.*

More guidance on the detail for the application and implementation of this

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

KEY

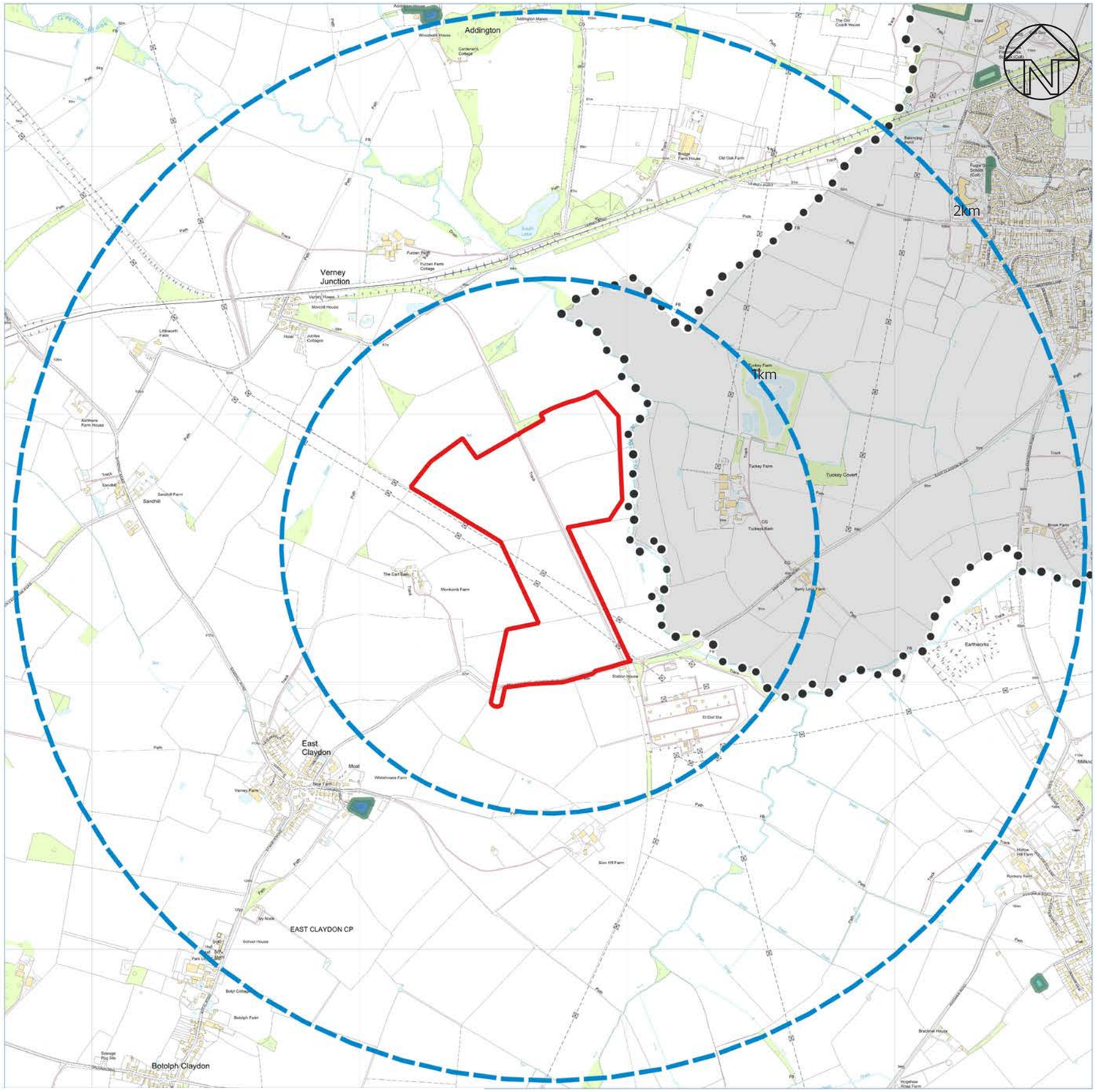
- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Planning Policy

- Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Open Greenspace

- Allotments Or Community Growing Spaces
- Cemetery
- Play Space
- Religious Grounds



0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

Figure 2.1 - Local Planning Policy

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

policy will be provided in the Aylesbury Vale Design SPD."

Policy NE1 relates to Biodiversity and Geodiversity and states that:

"Protected Sites

Internationally or nationally important Protected Sites (SACs and SSSIs) and species will be protected. Avoidance of likely significant adverse effects should be the first option. Development likely to affect the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC will be subject to assessment under the Habitat Regulations and will not be permitted unless any significant adverse effects can be fully mitigated.

Development proposals that would lead to an individual or cumulative adverse impact on an internationally or nationally important Protected Site or species, such as SSSIs or irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland or ancient trees, will be refused unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated as follows:

a. *the benefits of the development at this site significantly and demonstrably outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it internationally or nationally important and any broader impacts on the national network – for example of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and*

b. *the loss can be mitigated and compensation can be provided to achieve a net gain in biodiversity/geodiversity*

Sufficient information must be provided for the council to assess the significance of the impact against the importance of the Protected Site and its component habitats and the species which depend upon it. This will include the area around the Protected Site and the ecosystem services it provides and evidence that the development has followed the mitigation hierarchy set out in (d) below

Protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity will be achieved by the following:

c. *A net gain in biodiversity on minor and major developments will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing biodiversity resources, and by creating new biodiversity resources. These gains must be measurable using best practice in biodiversity and green infrastructure accounting and in accordance with any methodology (including a Biodiversity Impact Assessment) to be set out in the Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Accounting SPD.*

d. *If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, then development will not be permitted. If a net loss in biodiversity is calculated, using a suitable Biodiversity Impact Assessment (see c) then avoidance, mitigation and compensation, on site first, then offsite must be sought so the development results in a net gain (percentage of net gain to meet any nationally-set minimum standard and or as detailed in an SPD) in order for development to be permitted. Mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be secured and should be maintained in perpetuity. These assessments must be undertaken in accordance with nationally-accepted standards and guidance (BS 8683 Biodiversity net gain in project design and construction; and CIRIA Biodiversity Net Gain Good practice principles for development).*

e. *Development which would result in damage to or loss of a site of biodiversity or geological value of regional or local importance (such as Local Wildlife Sites or Local Geological Sites) including habitats of principal importance (known as Priority Habitats) or the habitats of species of principal importance (Priority Species) or their habitats will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances where the need for, and benefits of the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm it would cause to the site, and the loss can be mitigated and compensation provided to achieve a net gain.*

f. *The Council will, where appropriate, expect ecological surveys for planning applications. These must be undertaken by a suitably qualified person and consistent with nationally accepted standards and guidance (BS 42020: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for planning and development; and CIEEM Ecological Report Writing guidance) as replaced*

g. *Where development proposals affect a Priority Habitat (As defined in the Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Action Plan or UK Biodiversity Action Plan and as listed in accordance with s41 of the NERC Act 2006) then mitigation should not be off-site. Where no Priority Habitat is involved then mitigation is expected to follow the mitigation hierarchy, where options for avoidance, mitigation and compensation on- site, and then offsite compensation, should be followed in that order as outlined in d. When there is a reasonable likelihood of the presence of protected or priority species or their habitats, development will not be permitted until it has been demonstrated that the Proposed Development will not result in adverse impacts on these species or their habitats. The only exception will be where the advantages of development to the protected site and the local community clearly outweigh the adverse impacts. In such a case, the council will consider the wider implications of any adverse impact to a protected site, such as its role in providing a vital wildlife corridor, mitigating flood risk or ensuring good water quality in a catchment.*

h. *Development proposals will be expected to promote site permeability for wildlife and avoid the fragmentation of wildlife corridors, incorporating features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value on site. Existing ecological networks should be identified and maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and ecological corridors including water courses should form an essential component of green infrastructure provision in association with new development to ensure habitat connectivity*

i. *Planning conditions/obligations will be used to ensure net gains in biodiversity by helping to deliver the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Biodiversity Action Plan targets in the biodiversity opportunity areas and other areas of local biodiversity priority. Where development is proposed within, or adjacent to, a biodiversity opportunity area, biodiversity surveys and a report will be required to identify constraints and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Development which would prevent the aims of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area from being achieved will not be permitted. Where there is potential for development, the design and layout of the development should secure biodiversity enhancement and the council will use planning conditions and obligations as needed to help achieve the aims of the biodiversity opportunity area. A monitoring and management plan will be required for biodiversity features on site to ensure their long-term suitable management (secured through planning condition or Section 106 agreement).*

j. *Development proposals adversely affecting a Local Nature Reserve will be considered on a case-by-case basis, according to the amount of information available about the site and its significance, relative to the type, scale and benefits of the development being proposed and any mitigation. Any*

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Note: there are no Ecological Designations within the study area

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

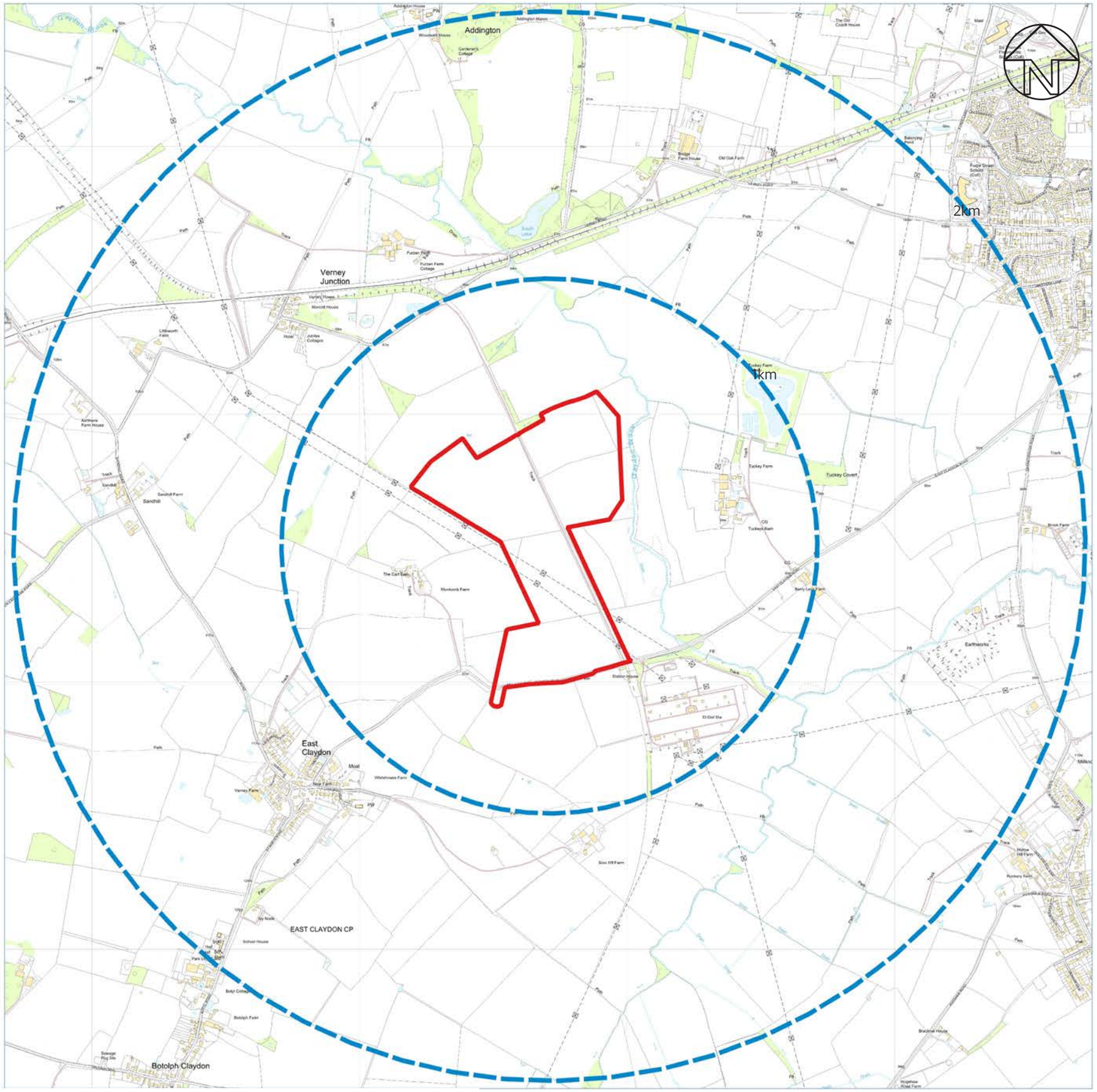


Figure 2.2 - Local Planning Policy - Ecological Designations

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

mitigation strategy will need to include co-operation with the nature reserve managers."

Policy NE4 discusses landscape character and locally important landscapes and states that:

"Development must recognise the individual character and distinctiveness of particular landscape character areas set out in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), their sensitivity to change and contribution to a sense of place. Development should consider the characteristics of the landscape character area by meeting all of the following criteria:

a. *minimise impact on visual amenity*

b. *be located to avoid the loss of important on-site views and off-site views towards important landscape features*

c. *respect local character and distinctiveness in terms of settlement form and field pattern, topography and ecological value*

d. *Carefully consider spacing, height, scale, plot shape and size, elevations, roofline and pitch, overall colour palette, texture and boundary treatment (walls, hedges, fences and gates)*

e. *minimise the impact of lighting to avoid blurring the distinction between urban and rural areas, and in areas which are intrinsically dark and to avoid light pollution to the night sky*

f. *ensure that the development is not visually prominent in the landscape, and*

g. *not generate an unacceptable level and/or frequency of noise in areas relatively undisturbed by noise and valued for their recreational or amenity value*

The first stage in mitigating impact is to avoid any identified significant adverse impact. Where it is accepted there will be harm to the landscape character, specific on-site mitigation will be required to minimise that harm and, as a last resort, compensation may be required as part of a planning application. This reflects the mitigation hierarchy set out in paragraph 152 of the NPPF (2012). Applicants must consider the enhancement opportunities identified in the LCA and how they apply to a specific site.

The Policies Map defines areas of attractive landscape (AALs) and local landscape areas (LLAs) which have particular landscape features and qualities considered appropriate for particular conservation and enhancement opportunities. Of the two categories, the AALs have the greater significance. Development in AALs and LLAs should have particular regard to the character identified in the report 'Defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District' (Final Report, 2016) and the LCA (2008).

Development will be supported where appropriate mitigation to overcome any adverse impact to the character of the receiving landscape has been agreed.

Where permission is granted, the council will require conditions to best ensure the mitigation of any harm caused to the landscape."

Policy NE8 considers trees, hedgerows and woodlands and states that:

"Development should seek to enhance and expand Aylesbury Vale's tree and woodland resource, including native black poplars.

Where trees within or adjacent to a site could be affected by development, a full tree survey and arboricultural impact assessment to BS 5837 (as replaced) will be required as part of the planning application. The implementation of any protective measures it identifies will be secured by the use of planning conditions.

Development that would lead to an individual or cumulative significant adverse impact on ancient woodland or ancient trees will be refused unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated that the impacts to the site are clearly outweighed by the benefits of the development.

Development that would result in the unacceptable loss of, or damage to, or threaten the continued well-being of any trees, hedgerows, community orchards, veteran trees or woodland which make an important contribution to the character and amenities of the area will be resisted. Where the loss of trees is considered acceptable, adequate replacement provision will be required that use species that are in sympathy with the character of the existing tree species in the locality and the site.

Where species-rich native hedgerow (as commonly found on agricultural land) loss is unavoidable the developer must compensate for this by planting native species-rich hedgerow, which should result in a net gain of native hedgerow on the development site.

Developers should aspire to retain a 10m (with a minimum of 5m) natural buffer around retained and planted native hedgerows (100m with a minimum 25 m natural buffer around woodlands) for the benefit of wildlife, incorporating a dark corridor with no lighting.

Development must provide buffers to Ancient Woodland and should provide additional planting to join up fragmented areas of woodland as part of the development's GI. Buffers should allow the maximum space proportionate to the development, and would generally be expected to be a minimum of 50m between the ancient woodland and any built development or grey infrastructure. Within the buffer, native trees may be planted along with other ecology features to secure net gains in biodiversity and/or landscape mitigation unless the achievement of this would be contrary to other policies in the plan."

Policy C3 relates to renewable energy and states that:

"All development schemes should look to achieve greater efficiency in the use of natural resources.

Planning applications involving renewable energy development will be encouraged provided that there is no unacceptable adverse impact, including cumulative impact, on the following issues:

a. *landscape and biodiversity including designations, protected habitats and species*

b. *visual impacts on local landscapes*

c. *the historic environment including designated and non designated assets and their settings*

d. *the Green Belt, particularly visual impacts on openness*

e. *aviation activities*

f. *highways and access issues, and*

g. *residential amenity. (...)"*

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Heritage

- Listed Building
- Conservation Area

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

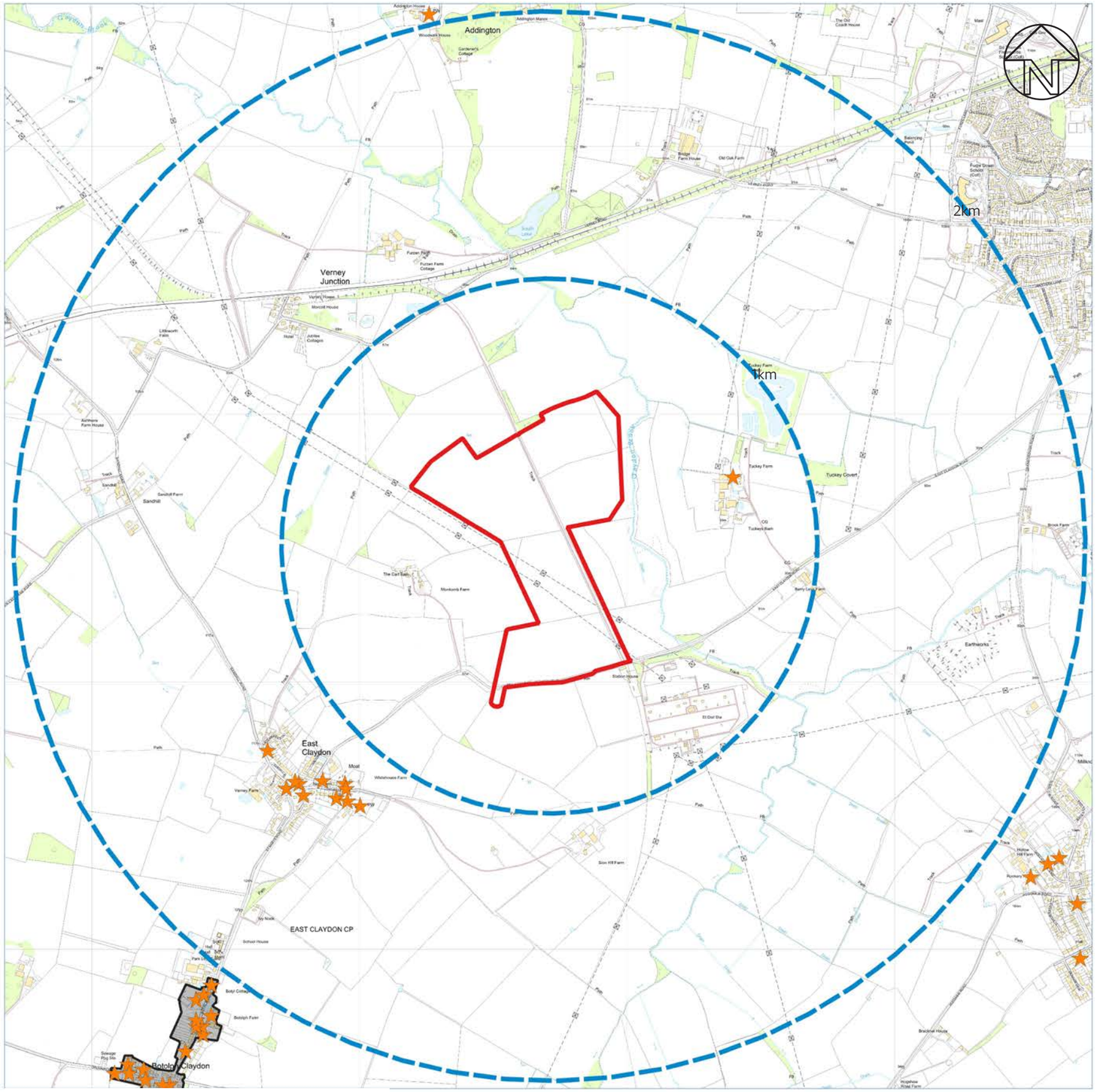


Figure 2.3 - Local Planning Policy - Heritage Assets

2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Policy C4 seeks to protect public rights of way and states that:

"The council will enhance and protect public rights of way to ensure the integrity and connectivity of this resource is maintained.

The protection and conservation of public rights of way needs to be reconciled with the benefits of new development, to maximise the opportunity to form links from the development to the wider public rights of way network, public transport, recreational facilities and green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to retain and enhance existing green corridors, and maximise the opportunity to form new links between existing open spaces. Planning permission will not normally be granted where the Proposed Development would cause unacceptable harm to the safe and efficient operation of public rights of way."

Policy I1 relates to the provision of Green infrastructure and states that:

"Green Infrastructure should provide a range of functions and provide multiple benefits for wildlife, improving quality of life and water quality and flood risk, health and wellbeing, recreation, access to nature and adaptation to climate change. The council will support proposals for green infrastructure where there is no significant adverse impact on:

a. *Wider green infrastructure networks including public rights of way and green infrastructure opportunity zones identified by the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership*

b. *Potential to contribute to biodiversity net gains*

c. *Management of flood risk and provision of sustainable drainage systems*

d. *Provision of a range of types of green infrastructure*

e. *Provision of sports, recreation facilities or public realm improvements*

f. *Potential for local food cultivation by communities*

g. *Achieving a satisfactory landscaping scheme including the transition between the development and adjacent open land. (...)".*

The east portion of the study area is located within the area covered by the Winslow Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2033 which was made in September 2014. Key policies within the Winslow Neighbourhood Plan pertinent to that portion of the study area include:

- Policy 12 Local Green Spaces; and
- Policy 13 Environment and Heritage.

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

Landscape Baseline – Landscape Character

The assessment of landscape character is a method of understanding the particular attributes or factors that have influenced the historic development, current and future features of an area, and what makes that area distinctive from other areas. Natural England describes landscape character assessment as a:

"...systematic way of analysing and describing landscape identifying areas of distinctive character, classifying and mapping them. The process involves identifying the patterns, elements and features that give landscapes homogeneity and make them different from each other.""

Landscape characterisation is a process which has been developed extensively by local authorities to assist them in the planning process. Published studies of landscape character provide a source of information to enable the fuller understanding of landscape character – whether at a regional or national scale or at a local district scale; it is of course possible to carry through the process of analysis to individual sites or parts of sites. Typically, the published assessments provide character descriptions of specific areas and consider factors likely to influence future character and / or set out prescriptions for change.

There is a range of published assessments at national, regional, and local levels relevant to the Site. Each is considered below. It is important to recognise that these are purely assessments of landscape character; they are not, and are not intended to be, the development plan, and thus what the documents may say about the potential effects of development in any location cannot of itself be considered determinative as a matter of policy.

National Landscape Character Assessment

At a National level the Site and the majority of the study area lies within National Character Area (NCA) 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales. The key characteristics pertinent to the study area and Site are described as:

- *"Low-lying clay-based flood plains encircle the Midvale Ridge. Superficial deposits, including alluvium and gravel terraces, spread over 40 per cent of the area, creating gently undulating topography. The Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous clays and the wet valley bottoms give rise to enclosed pasture, contrasting with the more settled, open, arable lands of the gravel.*

- *The large river system of the River Thames drains the Vales, their headwaters flowing off the Cotswolds to the north or emitting from the springline along the Chilterns and Downs escarpments. Where mineral extraction takes place, pits naturally fill with water, and limestone gravels from the Cotswolds give rise to marl formation. There are a high number of nationally important geological sites.*

- *Woodland cover is low at only about 3 per cent, but hedges, hedgerow trees and field trees are frequent. Watercourses are often marked by lines of willows and, particularly in the Aylesbury Vale and Cotswold Water Park, native black poplar.*

- *Wet ground conditions and heavy clay soils discourage cultivation in many places, giving rise to livestock farming. Fields are regular and hedged, except near the Cotswolds, where there can be stone walls. The Vale of White Horse is made distinct by large arable fields, and there are relict orchards on the Greensand.*

- *In the river corridors, grazed pasture dominates, with limited areas of historic wetland habitats including wet woodland, fen, reedbed and flood meadow. There are two areas of flood meadow designated for their importance at a European level as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). There are also rich and extensive ditch systems.*

- *Gravel extraction has left a legacy of geological exposures, numerous waterbodies and, at the Cotswold Water Park, a nationally important complex of marl lakes.*

- *Wetland habitat attracts regionally important numbers of birds including snipe, redshank, curlew and lapwing and wintering wildfowl such as pochard. Snake's head fritillary thrives in the internationally important meadows. The area also supports typical farmland wildlife such as brown hare, bats, barn owl, tree sparrow and skylark.*

- *Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site, including its Capability Brown landscape, is the finest of many examples of historic parkland in this NCA. There are many heritage features, including nationally important survivals of ridge and furrow, Roman roads, deserted medieval villages and historic bridges.*

- *Brick and tile from local clays, timber and thatch are traditional building materials across the area, combined with limestone near the Cotswolds and occasional clunch and wichert near the Chilterns.*

- *Settlement is sparse on flood plains, apart from at river crossings, where there can be large towns, such as Abingdon. Aylesbury and Bicester are major urban centres, and the outer suburbs of Oxford and Swindon spread into this NCA. Market towns and villages are strung along the springlines of the Chilterns and Downs. Major routes include mainline rail, canals, a network of roads including the M40 and M4 and The Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails."*

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

County / Local Landscape Character Assessment

Aylesbury Vale District Council & Buckinghamshire County Council published the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment, prepared by Jacobs Engineering UK Ltd, in 2008.

Within the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment Report, at County Level the Site and majority of the study area is located within Landscape Character Type (LCT) 5 Shallow Vales. Key characteristics and features pertinent to the Site and study area include:

- *"Shallow often poorly defined valleys*
- *Flat or gently sloping landscape*
- *Elevation range 65M to 105M AOD*
- *Mixed land use with predominance of pasture in most areas*
- *Medium sized fields*
- *Strong hedgerow pattern*
- *Low level of woodland cover*
- *Scattered very small woodlands*
- *Ponds*
- *Lack of settlement*
- *Highest historic landscape sensitivity associated with meadow adjacent to streamlines and settlement*
- *Remote and tranquil away from roads*
- *Small bridges over rivers and streams*
- *Willows often pollarded adjacent to watercourses*
- *Limited road access*
- *Views contained by surrounding higher ground*
- *Views up to historic settlements and church spires*
- *Black poplars*
- *Ridge and furrow*
- *Nucleated well preserved historic villages*
- *Disused railway lines*
- *Grand Union Canal*
- *Buckinghamshire Railway Centre*
- *Quainton windmill*

(...) The Shallow Valleys are located from the south-east of Buckingham to the south-west of Aylesbury. To the north they drain into the Great Ouse and to the south into the river Thame. In the west the Twyford Vale extends into Oxfordshire, as does the Thame valley on the district's southern edge. The valleys are generally shallow with the gradient often imperceptible. In geological terms the type is divided between Oxford Clays and Boulder Clays in the north and Kimmeridge clays in the south, overlain by a layer of Greensand in the Thame valley west of Aylesbury. The Shallow Valleys lie between the higher ground of LCT 4 Undulating Clay Plateau, LCT 7 Wooded Rolling Lowland and LCT 9 Low Hills and Ridges.

Much of the biodiversity interest centres on the river corridors of these shallow valleys, with riparian interest present in the form of riparian mammals including otter and bird species associated with rivers and streams such as kingfisher.

Three fields associated with RAF Westcott are designated as County Wildlife Sites for their botanical interest. The Coombes Meadows complex of unimproved and semi-improved meadows and pastures lies to the south of Thornborough. Wet Stocks Meadow is a County Wildlife Site between North Marston and Hoggeston, designated for its secluded hay meadow rich in plant species.

The historic landscape of greatest sensitivity tends to be focused in areas close to the rivers and streams where there are pre eighteenth century meadows and on the small historic settlements often on slightly higher ground. Locally there is a pre 18th century enclosure pattern but this is generally on the more defined valley sides the majority of the area on gently sloping ground tends to be associated with Parliamentary and later enclosure. The predominance of grassland has resulted in the preservation of ridge and furrow, particularly fine examples of this can be found at Granborough and North Marston. Historic villages are well preserved and have often retained the historic transition between historic settlement and countryside without new development. At Thornborough there remains a medieval bridge over the Padbury Brook, close by there are two rare Roman barrows and the site of a Roman temple. Both the bridge and the barrow site are Scheduled Monuments. Notley Abbey is a grade 1 listed country manor dating from the 13th century."

The LCT is further broken down at district Level into Local Character Areas (LCA) at a District Level, the Site and the central portion of the study area is located within LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley. This area is described as:

- *"Shallow valley*
- *Meandering brook on flat valley bottom*
- *Lack of settlement apart from isolated farms on slightly higher ground above flood plain*
- *Strong irregular field pattern*
- *Predominantly small and medium fields*
- *Mixed farming - greater area of pasture but large arable fields are visually dominant*
- *Biggin Grange archaeological earthworks*
- *Good mix of tree and shrub vegetation adjacent to brook*
- *Narrow bridge and ford crossing brook to north of Granborough*
- *Disused railway line with trees and shrubs*
- *Tuckey Covert*
- *Unimproved grassland*
- *Pylon lines radiating from sub-station northwest of Granborough*
- *Traffic on A413*
- *Small sewage works*

The shallow valley lies immediately to the south of Winslow. The northern boundary is defined by the southern edge of the town and the ridge of higher ground either side. The southern extent is marked by the higher ground of East Claydon, Granborough and Bennett's Hill. To the east the valley dissipates into a more undulating low clayland and to the west the confluences of the Claydon and Padbury Brooks.

The shallow valley has a strong agricultural character notable for its lack of

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

settlement and locally strong field pattern. The area has very small blocks of woodland and variable tree cover in hedgerows. There are good views across the valley from the upper valley sides.

The top of the valley sides to the north and south are approximately 110 – 120m AOD. These slope down fairly steeply at first and then flatten out giving a wide, very gently sloping area either side of the brook. There are several tributary streams coming into the valley.

Agriculture predominates and is mixed varying from very small fields of pasture to large arable fields where hedgerows have been removed. Elsewhere the hedgerow pattern is strong with well established mature hedgerows.

The area is notable for its lack of settlement. There are no villages within the valley; the only settlements are isolated farms on slightly higher ground close to the valley floor and a few cottages.

Five pylon lines radiate from the electricity sub-station to the west of Granborough beyond the boundary. Some cross the LCA, others are visible from it and in combination have a significant negative visual impact.

There are no major woodlands but small dispersed pockets or coverts occur on the valley sides. The banks of the brook and tributary have a higher level of tree cover including many unmanaged willows in places forming small linear areas of wet woodland. There is also good tree and scrub cover along the disused railway line. Trees within hedgerows are variable tending to be most evident on the higher valley sides. Patches of significant young elm regeneration suggest this was once a significant tree locally.

The area contains a high proportion of arable habitat although large areas of grassland are also present throughout. Most of the grassland is improved but unimproved areas can be found largely in the southern half. A block of neutral grassland – a broad habitat type, and of unimproved grassland can also be found in the northwest.

Fragments of woodland are generally small and do not form a significant area of habitat within this area. Woodland is largely restricted to the northern half of the area and is broadleaved in nature – a broad habitat type.

Another broad habitat type is found in the aquatic habitats provided by brook and streams, which thread through the agricultural habitats and in conjunction with the hedgerows and woodlands provide good habitat connectivity. Small areas of standing water habitat are also present as ponds."

The landscape of the area is mostly comprises early parliamentary enclosure fields dating to 1767. There is a cluster of regular and irregular pre 18th century enclosures on the western fringe concentrated mainly close to the boundary with East Claydon. Small pockets of flood meadow land are dispersed along the bottom of the Claydon valley and its southern tributary. The area is predominantly parliamentary enclosure land and dispersed areas of other 19th century enclosure. There are four parcels of prairie landscape spread over the area and notably a large electricity grid sub-station located on the southern boundary of the LCA.

The area contains no historic buildings of note although the landscape does form a part of the setting for Winslow Hall, it's south facing aspect commands views across this landscape. The archaeology of the area comprises some surviving ridge and furrow which is found in patches across the area. The most significant site is the earthworks of what is believed to be Biggin Moated Grange, a medieval manorial site dating to the medieval/post medieval period.

The landscape has a good amenity value with several promoted rights of way running through the area."

Further LCAs located within the study area include:

- LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge
- LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale
- LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands
- LCA 5.8 Marston Undulating Claylands
- LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl

Landscape Designations

There are no landscape designations covering the Site.

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Natural England

National Character Area

- Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands
- Upper Thames Clay Vales

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

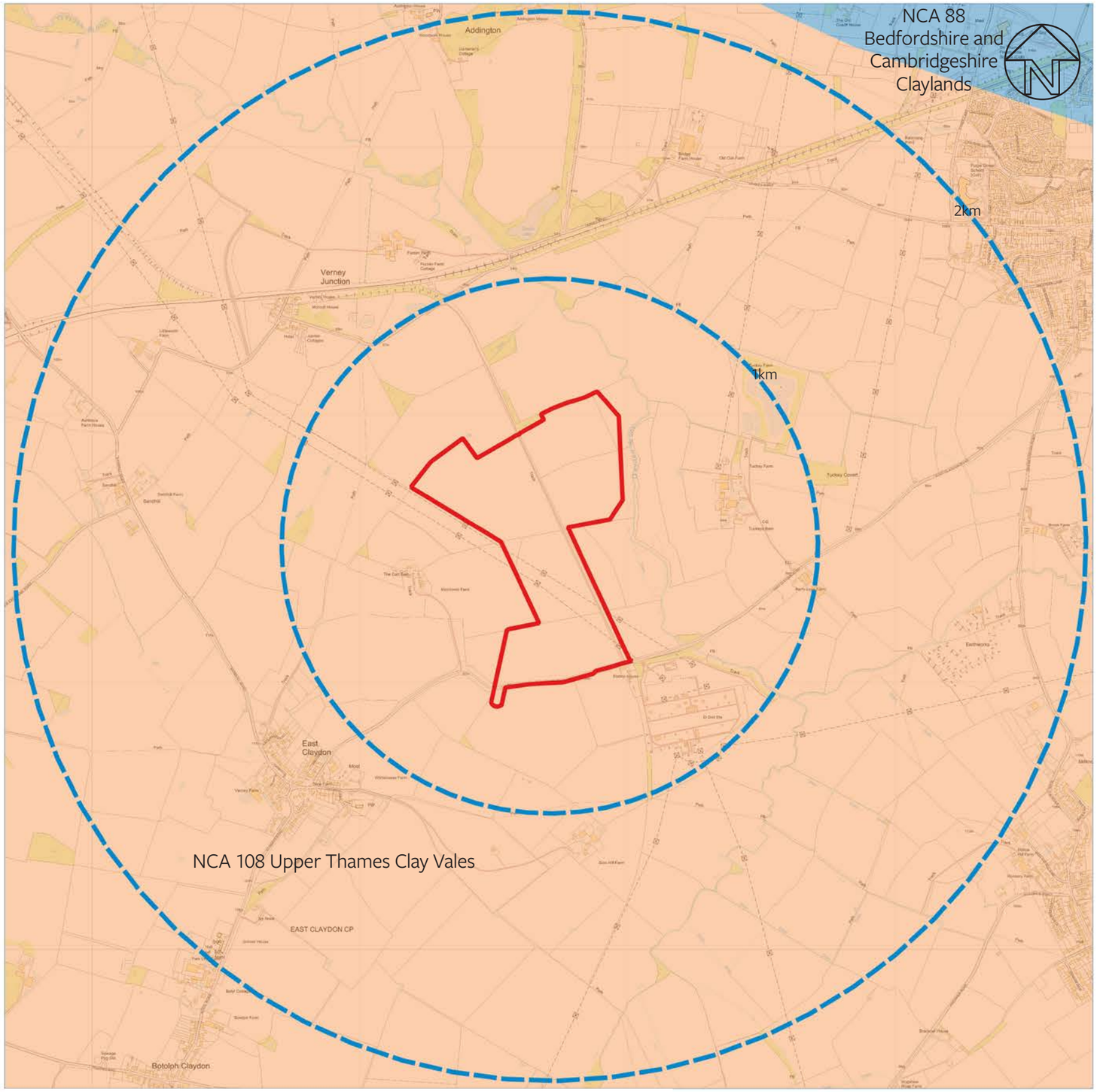


Figure 3.1 - Landscape Character

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

Approximate Site Location

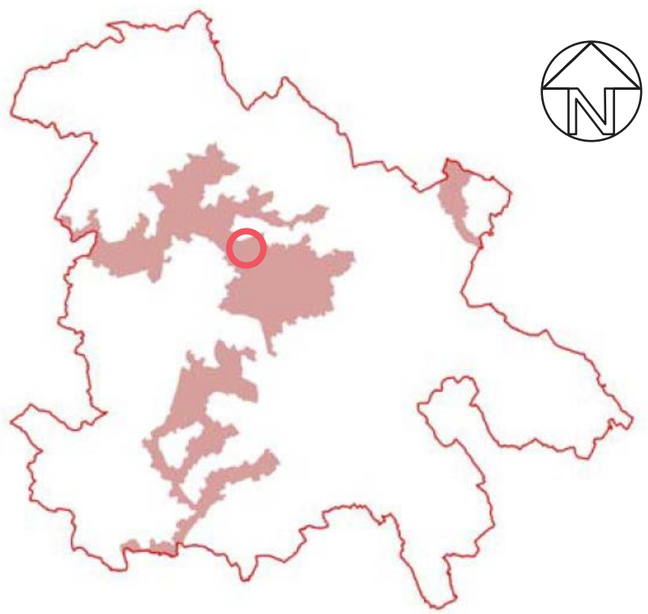


Figure 3.2 - Landscape Character Type 5 Shallow Vales
Aylesbury Vale District Council & Buckinghamshire County Council (2008).

KEY

Site Boundary

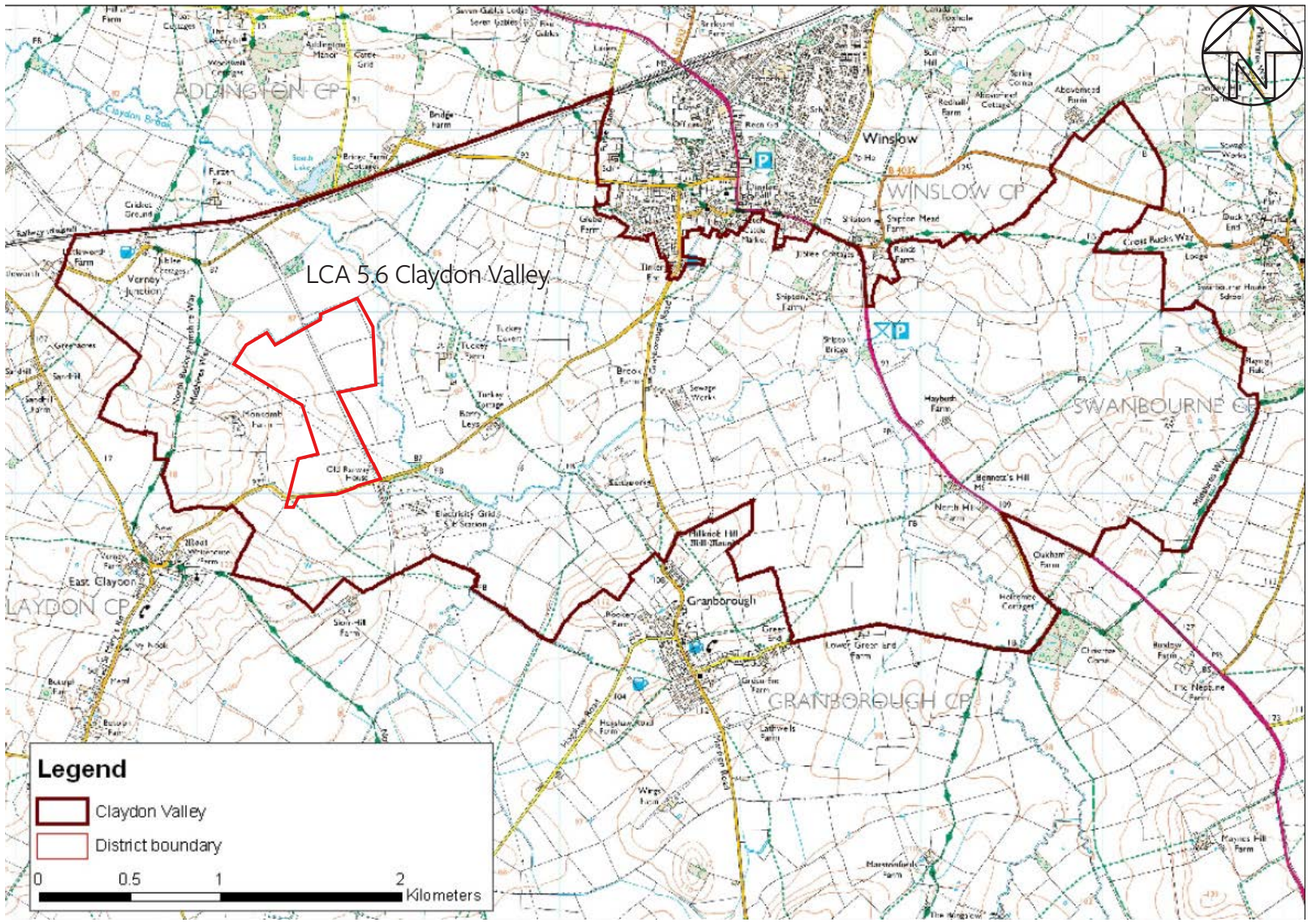


Figure 3.3 - Landscape Character Area 5.6 Claydon Valley - Aylesbury Vale District Council & Buckinghamshire County Council (2008).

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Public Rights of Way

- Footpath
- Bridleway

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

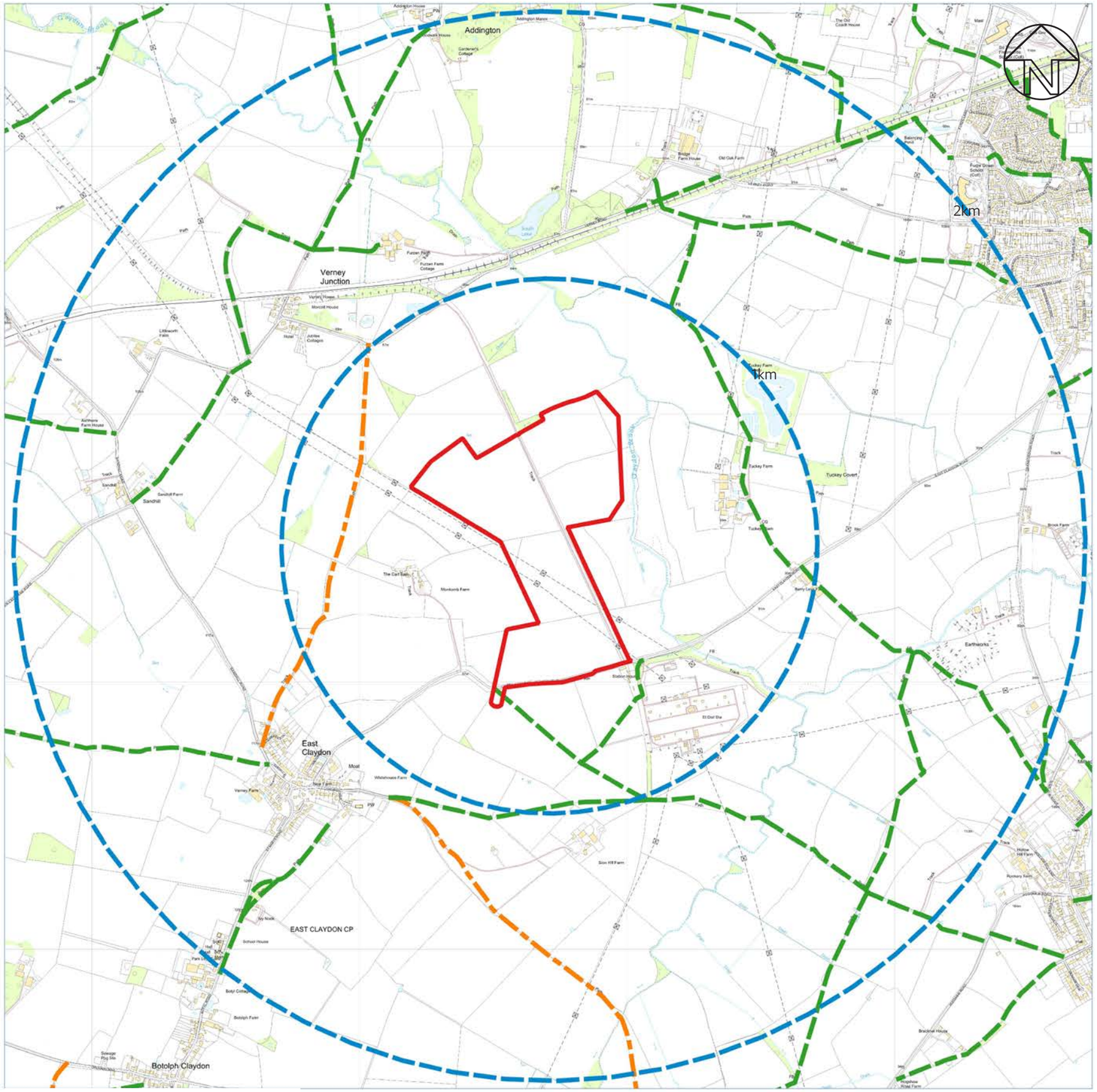


Figure 3.4 - Public Rights of Way

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Topographical

- Watercourses

10m Contours

- 80
- 90
- 100
- 110
- 120

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

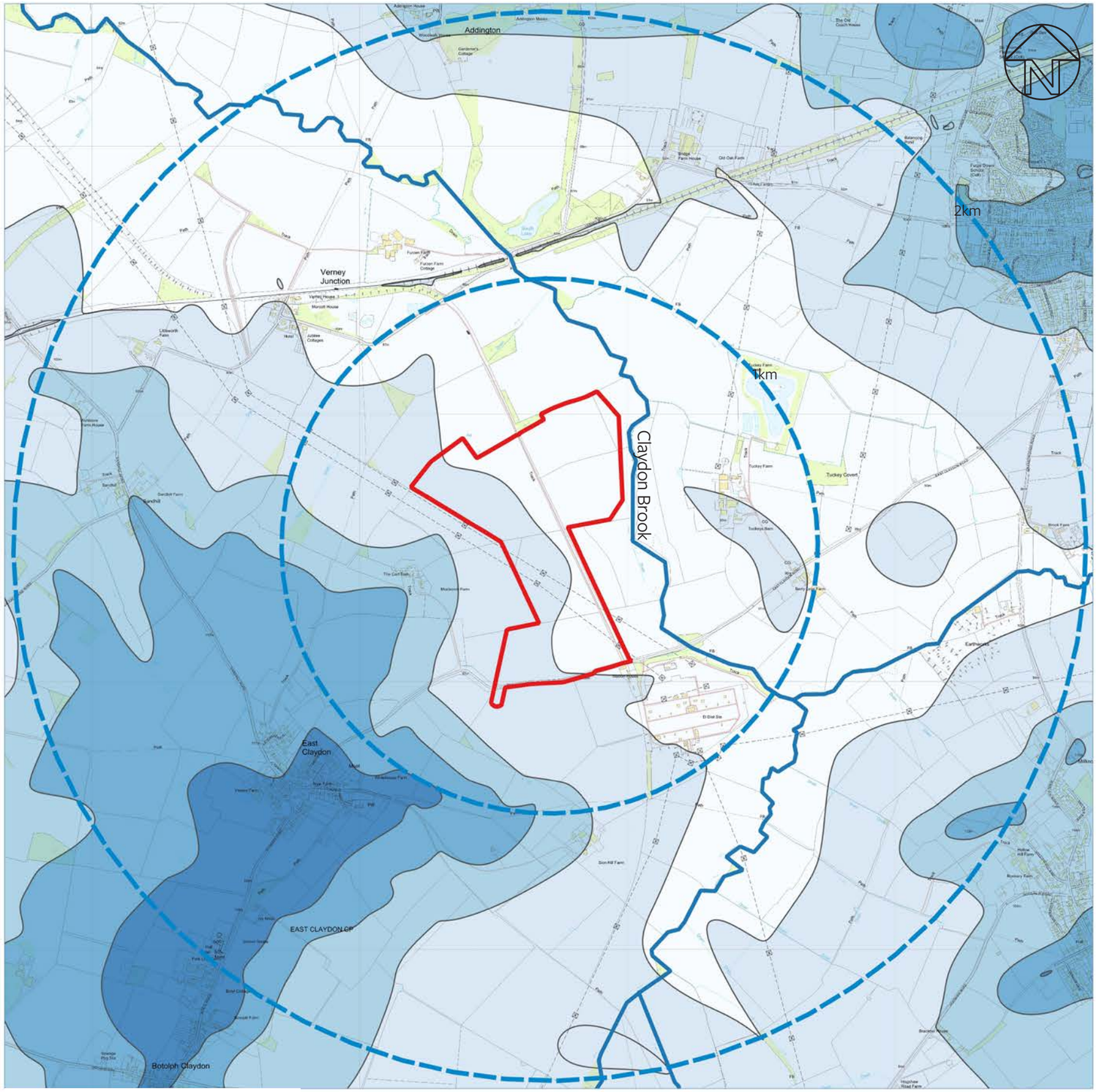


Figure 3.5 - Landform

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

Characteristics of the Site

Land Use

The Site consists of seven arable and pastoral field parcels to the north east of East Claydon, accessed from East Claydon Road from the south. Field boundaries are largely defined by mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees. The tree lined route of a disused railway line dissects the Site centrally into two parts broadly from north to south.

Adjoining Land Uses

The Site is bound by East Claydon Road with arable land beyond to the south, the Monkomb Farm complex and arable farm land to the west, agricultural fields to the north, Claydon Brook and agricultural fields to the east and East Claydon Substation to the south east.

Topography

The Site is relatively flat falling broadly from west to east from a high point of approximately 96.1m AOD to the west to a low point of approximately 85.0m AOD to the east near Claydon Brook. Landform within the wider study area rises to the south west towards the village of East Claydon and the north east towards Winslow.

Vegetation

A tree survey of the Site and the immediate surrounding area has been carried out in accordance with BS 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction' by Keen Consultants, in April 2024. The report revealed the Site contains a total of 67 individual trees, 16 groups, 25 hedgerows and 1 woodland. Of these there were 11 category 'A'; 43 category 'B'; 53 category 'C'; and 2 category 'U'.

There are mix of tree species; those typically characteristic of a lowland agricultural landscape. Species include; oak, elm, crack willow, ash, field maple, hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn, elder, grey poplar, sycamore, alder, beech, southern beech, cherry, Scots pine and Norway spruce. The principal arboricultural features of good to fair health are formed by the individual trees, boundary groups / woodlands and hedgerows i.e. those of A and B Grade categories. These trees are prominent within the Site and form a strong green infrastructure to the Site. Off Site trees have been considered during this survey and the development of the proposals.

Water Features

An existing field ditch follows part of the route of the disused railway line centrally within the Site. Claydon Brook bounds the Site to the east.

Built Elements

There are three electricity pylons and associated high voltage cables within the Site, dissecting the Site north west to south east. Further built elements in the Site are limited to field boundaries of post and wire fencing and field gates.

Public Rights of Way

A short section of Footpath BM ECL 3/1 crosses the south west portion of the Site that extends across East Claydon Road. Footpath BM ECL 3A/1 starts approximately 40m the south west of the Site and Bridleway BM ECL 2/1 is approximately 200m west of the Site.

Heritage

There are no heritage assets within or in the immediate vicinity proximity to the Site. The closest heritage asset to the Site is the Grade II Listed Tuckey Farmhouse approximately 410m to the east. There are also a number of Heritage Assets within East Claydon the closest of which are the Grade II* Listed Church of St Mary approximately 615m to the south west, the Grade II Listed White House Farmhouse (including Wall to the front) approximately 625m to the south west and the Grade II Listed Beech House approximately 650m to the south west. Botolph Claydon Conservation Area exists to the south west of the study area.

Ecology

There are no ecological designations within the Site or study area.

Night Time Character

The Assessment Site is currently unlit and light emitting features are limited in the immediate vicinity of the Site. Local light sources include East Claydon Substation, Monkomb Farm complex, Station House, the Tuckey Farm complex. The Site is generally dark and the sight of light within and adjacent to the Site is limited.

Table 3.1
Summary of Contextual & Site Landscape Receptors & Value

Landscape Receptors	Value
NCA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales	Medium
NCA 88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands	Medium
LCT 5 Shallow Vales	Medium
LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley	Medium
LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge	Medium
LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale	Medium
LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands	Medium
LCA 5.8 Marston Undulating Claylands	Medium
LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl	Medium
Site Landscape Character	Medium
Land Use	Medium
Topography	Medium
Vegetation	Medium
Water Features	Medium
Heritage	High
Night Time Character	Medium

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

Landscape Baseline – Landscape Resource

Landscape character areas differ in their range of Landscape features and the patterns these create, and consequently in their ability to accommodate different types of development. Some areas may be particularly sensitive and others more resilient. When judged against the criteria set out in Appendix 1 Table 1, the Site is considered to be in Ordinary Condition. This conclusion is reached on the basis that there are limited recognisable landscape features evident within the Site, there are some features worthy of conservation primarily the existing hedgerows and trees, with those present in a reasonable condition. The Site is typical in character of the surrounding landscape context.

Landscape Baseline – Landscape Receptors

From the above analysis of the Landscape Baseline, it is concluded that the Landscape Receptors relevant to the Site that need to be assessed in the following section on Landscape Effects are:

- Landscape Character Areas both on Site and within the study area
- Public Rights of Way within and in close proximity to the Site; and
- Vegetation and landscape features within the Site and along its boundaries.

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

KEY

Site Boundary

Heritage

Listed Building

Public Rights of Way

Footpath

Bridleway

Planning Policy

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Open Greenspace

Religious Grounds

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

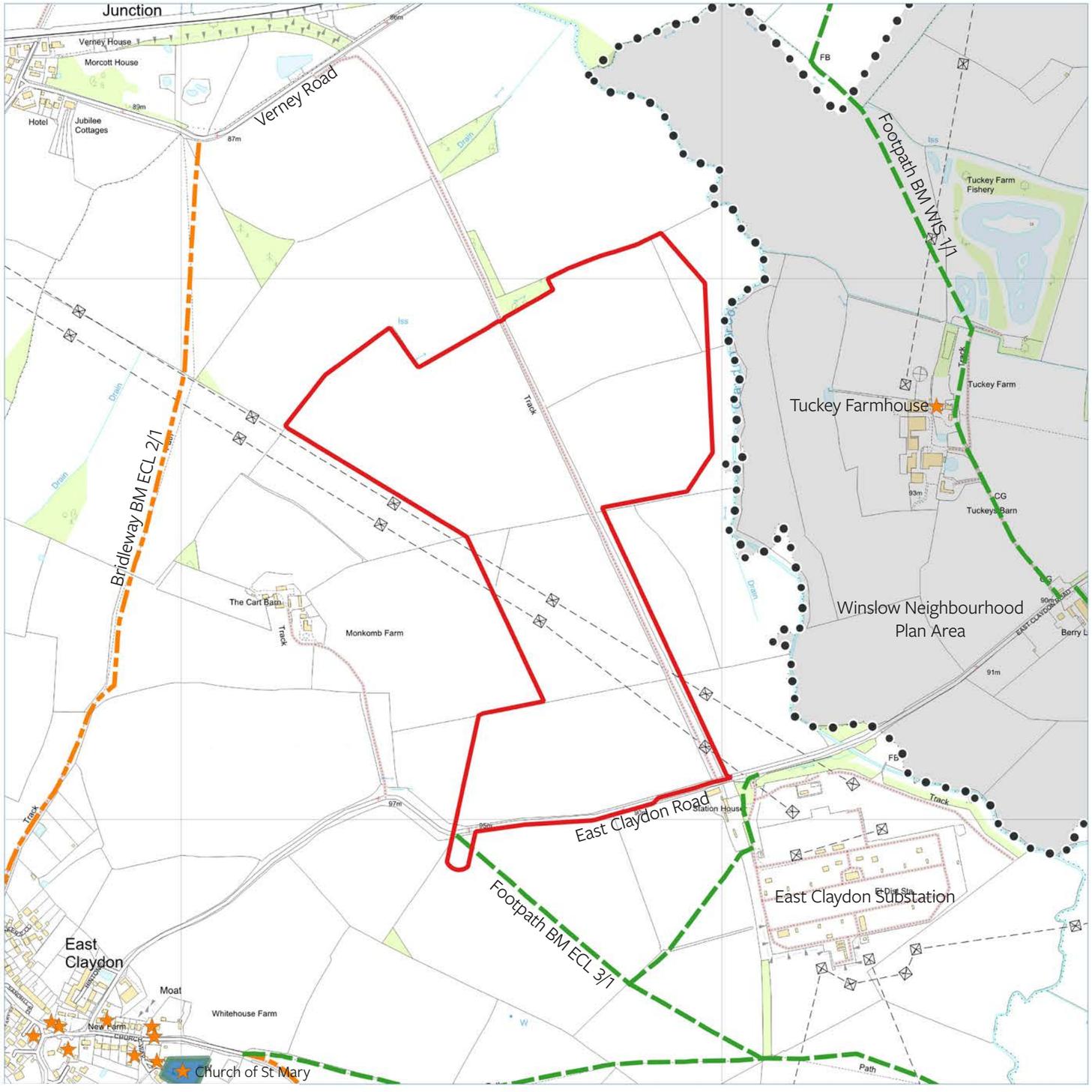
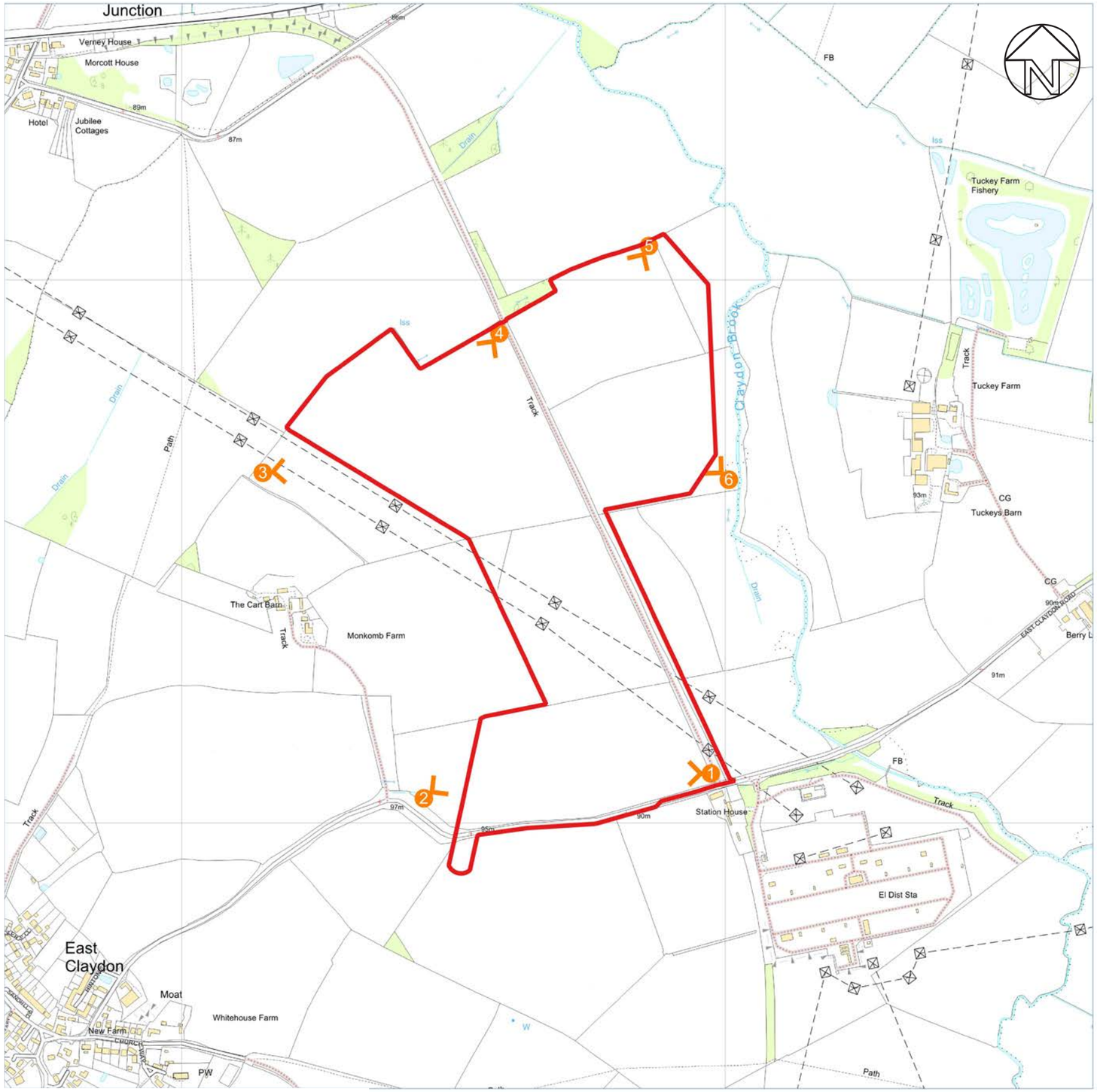


Figure 3.6 - Designations - Site Level

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

A visual inspection of the Site was conducted in April, May and October 2024.



KEY

Site Boundary

Site Context Photography

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

Figure 3.7 - Internal Site Context Photographs

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

Internal Site Context Viewpoint 1 - View looking west towards Monkomb Farm, from within the Site, across the south west portion of the Site. The improved grassland of the south west field parcel is prominent in the foreground of this view. Views out of the Site include the rising land towards Monkomb Farm to the west of the Site. A line of electricity pylons, beyond the Site is visible centrally. The tree lined former railway line obscures views to the east.

Internal Site Context Viewpoint 2 - View looking north east towards Winslow, from adjacent to the Site, across the south west portion of the Site. The improved grassland of the south west field parcel is again prominent in the foreground of this view. Views out of the Site include East Claydon Substation to the south of the Site. A line of electricity pylons, within and beyond the Site is visible centrally. The tree lined former railway line is also visible centrally.

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

Internal Site Context Viewpoint 3 - View looking east towards Winslow, from adjacent to the Site, across the north west portion of the Site. The improved grassland of the north west field parcel is prominent in the foreground of this view. Views out of the Site include the Monkomb Farm complex to the east of the Site. A line of electricity pylons, within and beyond the Site is visible centrally. The tree lined former railway line is also visible centrally.

Internal Site Context Viewpoint 4 - View looking south west towards Monkomb Farm, from within the Site, across the north west portion of the Site. The improved grassland of the north west field parcel is prominent in the foreground of this view. Views out of the Site include the rising land towards Monkomb Farm to the west of the Site. A line of electricity pylons, beyond the Site is visible centrally. The tree lined former railway line obscures views to the east.

3.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

Internal Site Context Viewpoint 5 - View looking south west towards East Claydon, from within the Site, across the north east portion of the Site. The improved grassland of the north east field parcel is prominent in the foreground of this view. Views out of the Site include the East Claydon Substation to the south of the Site. A line of electricity pylons, within and beyond the Site is visible centrally. The tree lined former railway line is also visible centrally.

Internal Site Context Viewpoint 6 - View looking north west towards Verney Road, from adjacent to the Site, across the east portion of the Site. The improved grassland of the east field parcel is prominent in the foreground of this view. A line of electricity pylons, beyond the Site and the tree lined former railway line are visible centrally.

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

This LVIA considers a study area of 2km radius from the Site boundary, in order to establish the spatial parameters of the Site and identify the potential landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development. It is considered that views from receptors beyond 2km will be at such distances that the proposals would form only a very minor proportion of the wider view and are barely perceptible to the casual observer. It is noted that there is an area of rising land near Quainton Hill, approximately 4.2km to the south of the Site. A long distance Viewpoint has been included from this location (Viewpoint 23).

A field survey was undertaken in April, May and October 2024 which identified a range of views offering a wide coverage of the Site from a number of representative viewing locations, ranging from within the Site and its immediate proximity, to longer distance views. The viewpoints were revisited in February 2025 to capture winter views. A summary of key visual receptors is provided below, and a selection of representative viewpoints is presented at Table 4.1.

The assumed baseline, including the presence of the adjacent replacement substation, is relevant to the visual baseline and the assessment of effects, due to the proximity of the replacement substation and Site and the degree of intervisibility. The assumed worst case scenario for this assessment is if Proposed Development and the replacement substation are under construction at the same time.

Residents of Dwellings

There are open and partial views across the western and central portions of the Site including the ground plane of the western field parcels and mature existing vegetation within the Site for residents of the elevated Monkomb Farm complex to the immediate west of the Site.

There are open and partial views to the mature vegetation within the Site lining East Claydon Road, portions of the ground plane of the south west field parcel and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from Station House to the immediate south of the Site, adjacent to East Claydon Substation.

There are potential partial glimpsed views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from Tuckey Farmhouse Complex to the east of the Site (refer to Viewpoint 13). There are partial views of the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from Berry Leys Farm to the east of the Site (refer to Viewpoint 14).

There are also anticipated to be locations within eastern fringe East Claydon where the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site are visible in views from the upper storey windows of dwellings. The location of these views is limited to a small number of dwellings on Church Way, Hinton Close and Lacemakers Close and is dependent on the orientation of the dwelling in relation to the Site and the degree of intervening mature vegetation.

Further views for residents in dwellings in the study area are anticipated to be truncated due to the intervening land form, built form or mature vegetation.

Road Users

There are open and partial views to the mature vegetation within the Site lining East Claydon Road, portions of the ground plane of the south west field and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from portions of East Claydon Road immediately adjacent to the Site boundary (refer to Viewpoints 2 and 4). There are also some partial views of the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from sections of East Claydon Road to the west of the Site before reaching East Claydon and portions of East Claydon Road between Station House and Berry Leys Farm to the east (refer to Viewpoints 1 and 5).

There is a partial glimpsed views of the Site from Verney Road including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and the ground plane of the north east field parcel seen through a gap in the mature vegetation lining this route (refer to Viewpoint 19).

There is also an elevated partial view of the Site from Church Way including the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site seen through a gap in the mature vegetation lining this route (refer to Viewpoint 6).

Views from other routes within the study area are anticipated to be truncated due to the intervening landform, built form or mature vegetation within the surrounding landscape context.

Public Rights of Way

There are partial views to the Site from limited elevated sections of Bridleway BM ECL 2/1 in close proximity to the Monkomb Farm complex including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and glimpses of the ground plane of the north west field parcel within the Site (refer to Viewpoint 9), further views from this route are truncated due to the intervening landform and mature vegetation (refer to Viewpoints 8 and 10).

There are open and partial views of the Site from Footpaths BM ECL 3/1 and BM ECL 3A/1 to the south of the Site including the ground plane of the south west field parcel and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site (refer to Viewpoints 2, 3 and 4). Open and partial views from these routes are likely to be limited to locations in close proximity to East Claydon Road due to the intervening built form of the replacement substation.

There are partial and partial glimpsed views from portions of Footpaths BM WIS 1/1 and BM ADD 14/1 to the east of the Site including views of the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site.

There are partial views of the Site from limited elevated portions of Footpath BM ECL 4/1 including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site, electricity pylons within the Site and glimpses of the ground plane of the south west field parcel within the Site (refer to Viewpoint 18).

There are also distant, partial glimpsed views of the Site from elevated sections of this route which is just discerned in the context of the existing East Claydon Substation. From this distance, the Site is perceived through an understanding of the Site's location relative to the existing built form of East Claydon Substation and landscape elements in the view and may not be as apparent therefore to the casual observer (refer to Viewpoint 23).

Views from other routes within the study area are anticipated to be truncated due to the intervening landform, built form or mature vegetation within the surrounding landscape context.

Heritage Assets

There are potential partial glimpsed views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from the Grade II Listed Tuckey Farmhouse to the east of the Site.

Views from other Heritage Assets within the study area are anticipated to be truncated due to the intervening landform, built form or mature vegetation within the surrounding landscape context.

Employees at their Place of Work

Views of the Site for employees at their place of work are anticipated to be limited to visitors to the replacement substation where there anticipated to be partial views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site.

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

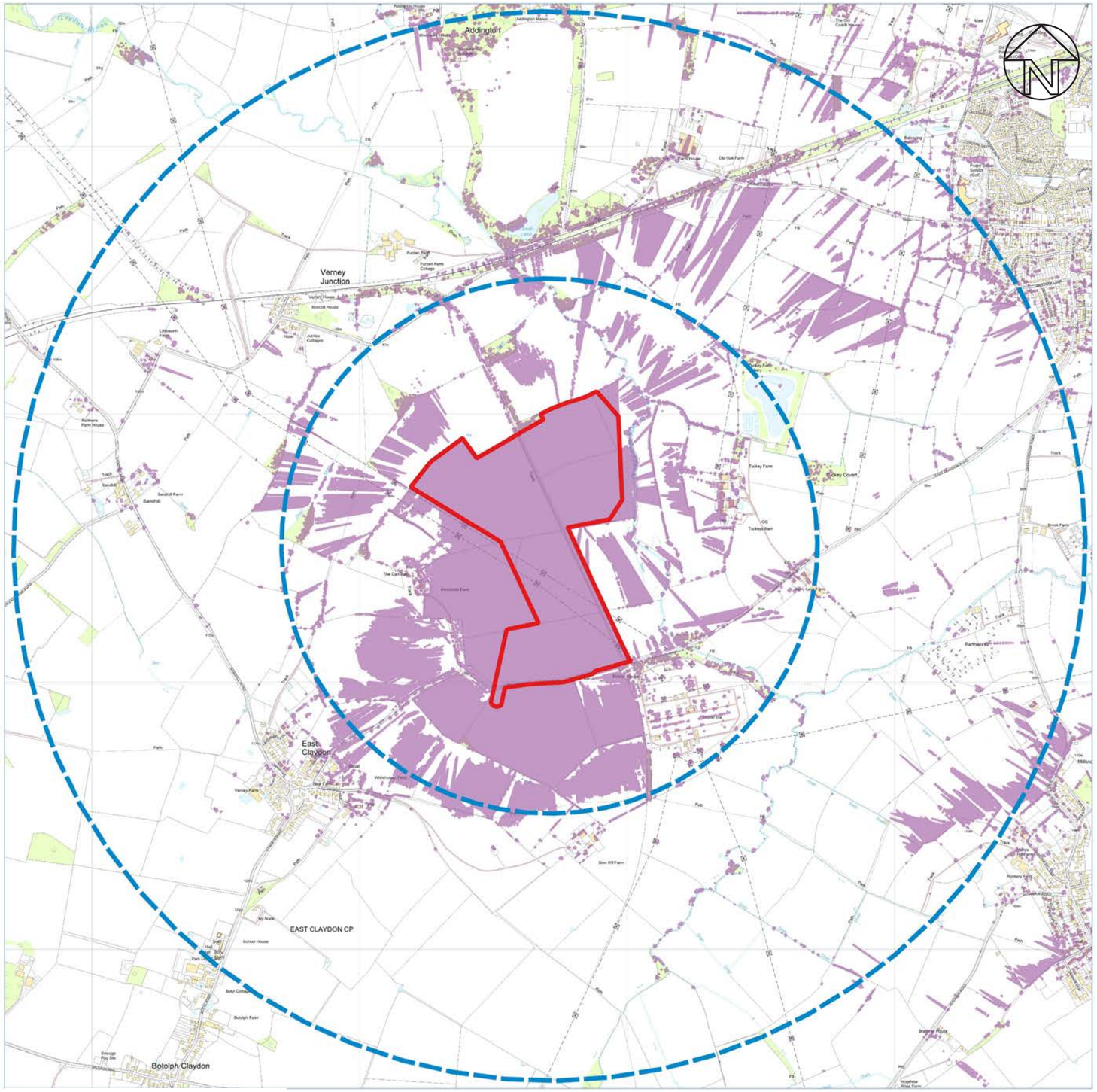


Figure 4.1 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

KEY

Site Boundary

Viewpoints

0 100 200 300 400 500 m

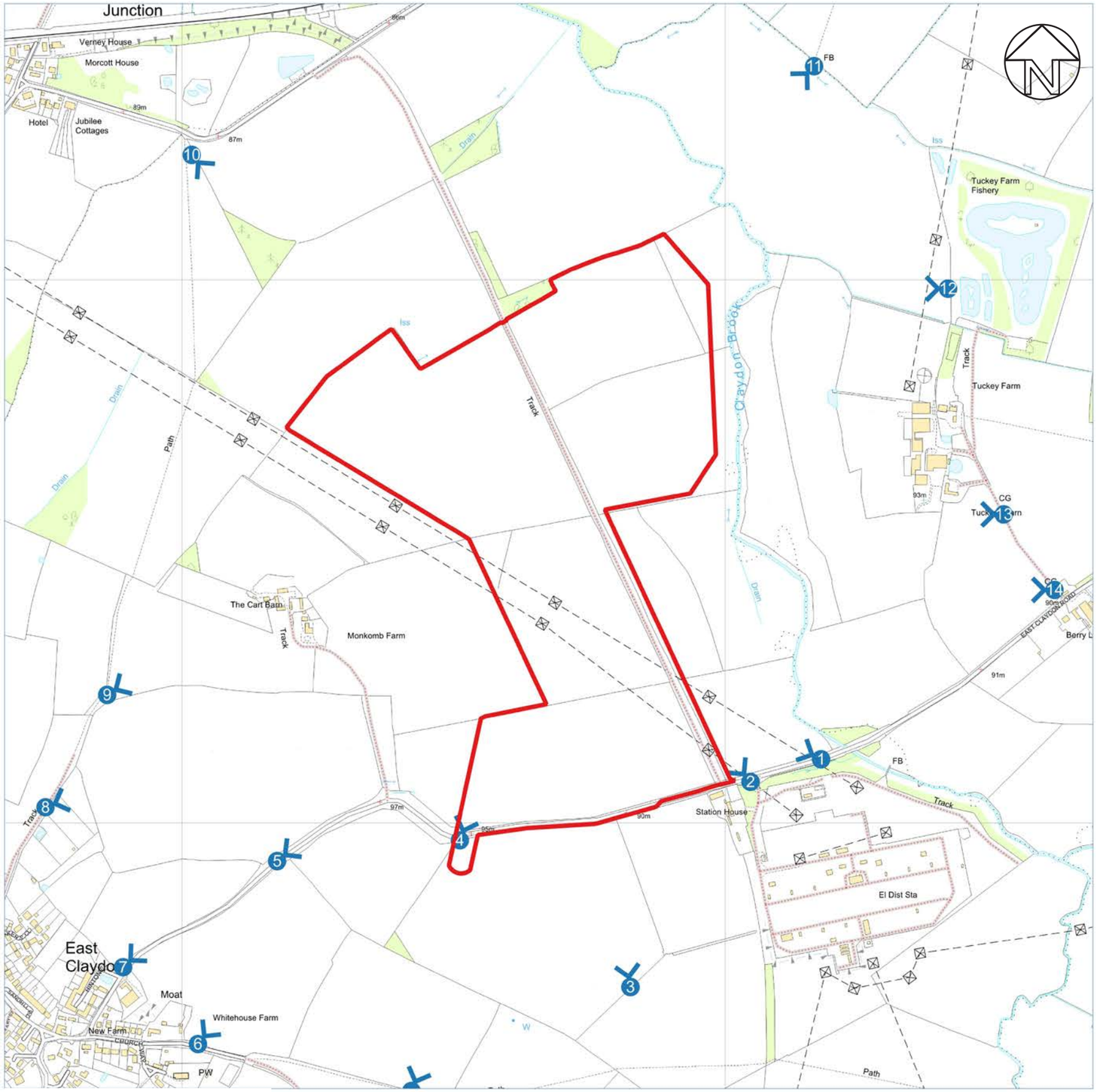


Figure 4.2 - Viewpoints - Close Range

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km
- Viewpoints

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

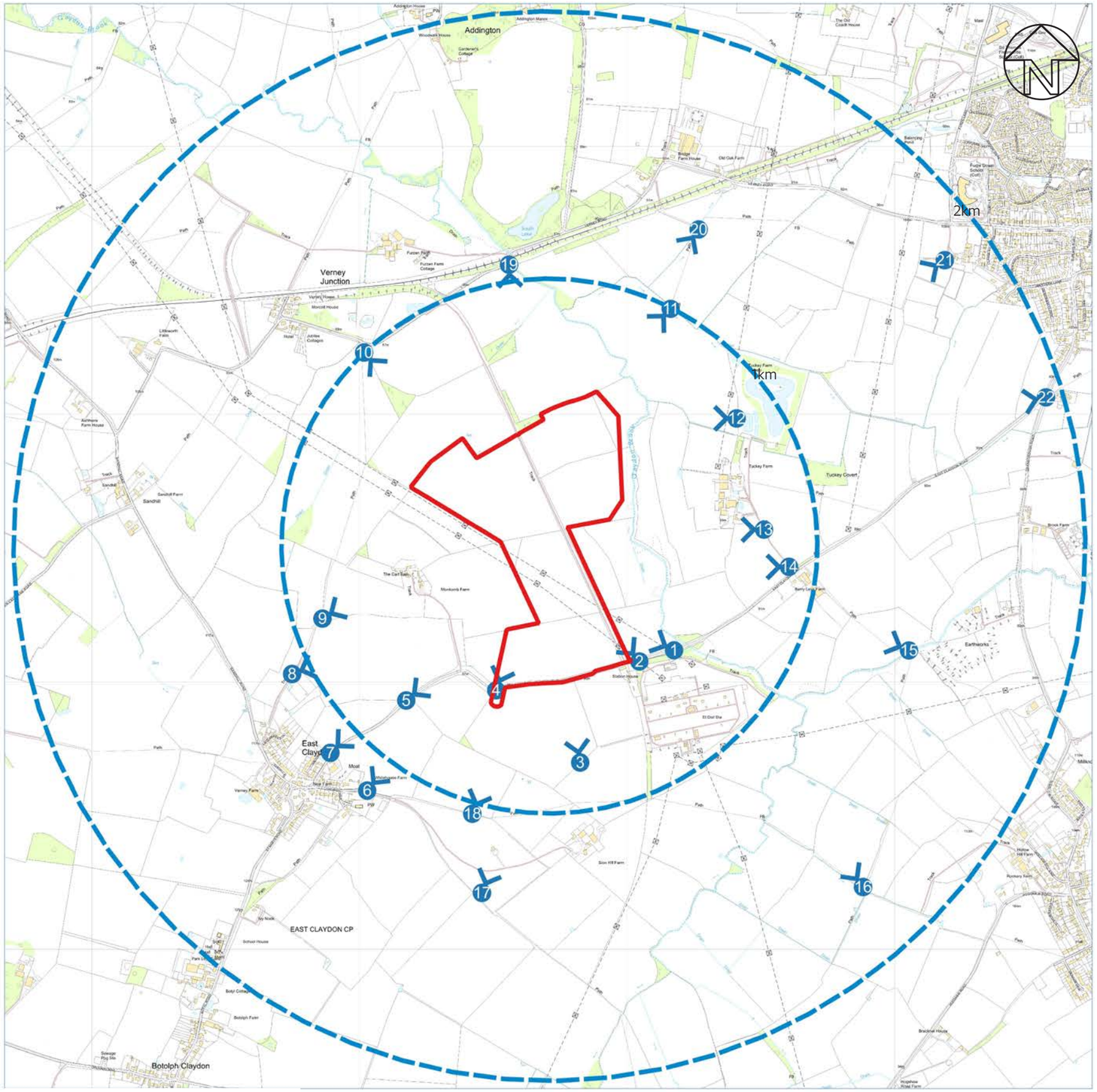


Figure 4.3 - Viewpoints - Mid Distance

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km
- 3km
- 4km
- 5km
- Viewpoints

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 m

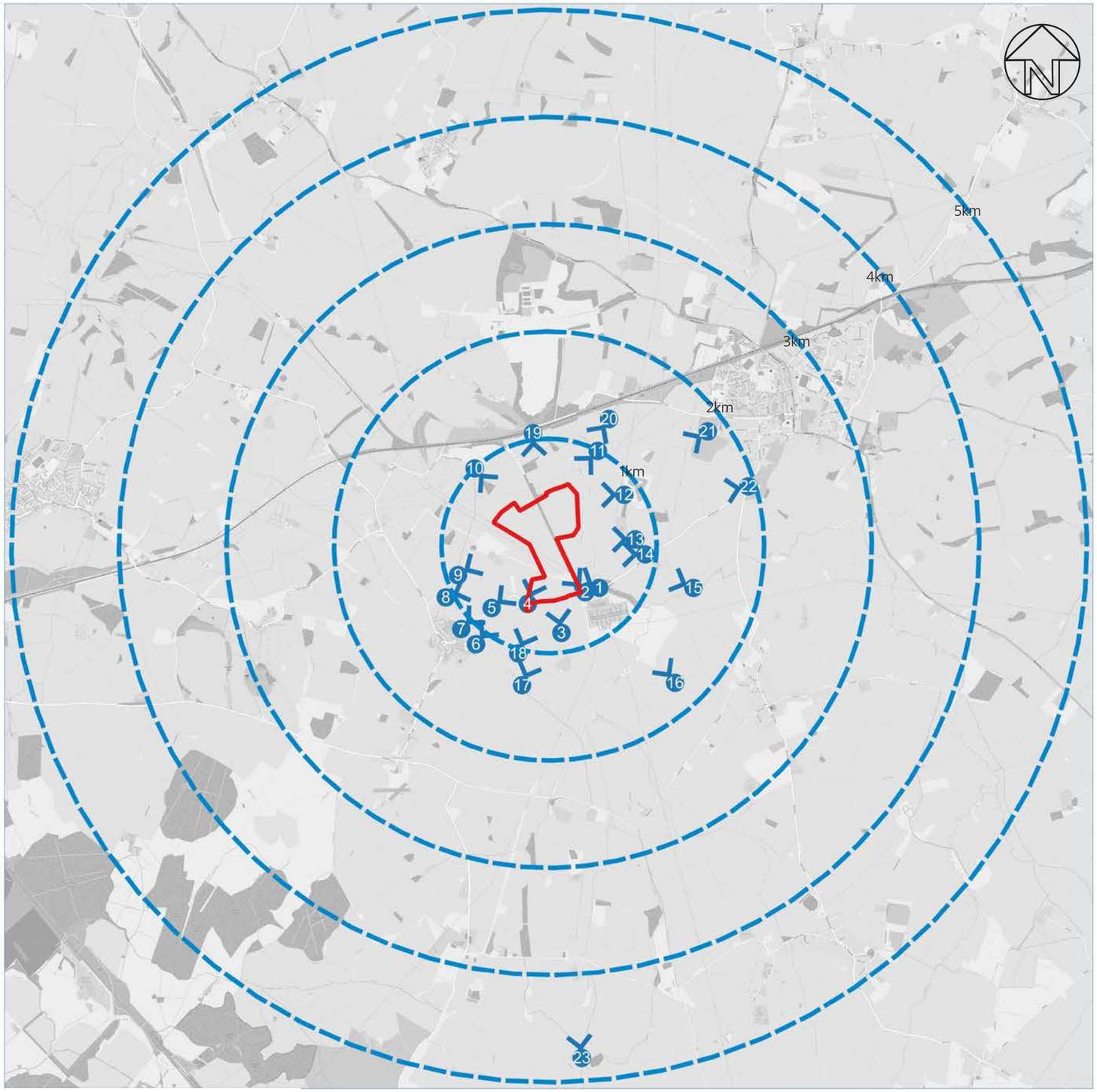


Figure 4.4 - Viewpoints - Long Distance

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Table 4.1 - Visual Receptors

Viewpoint No.	Location	Viewing Direction	Distance to Site	Visual Receptor(s)	Value	Visibility of Site
1	East Claydon Road	North west	~175m	Road users	Low / Medium	Partial Views
2	East Claydon Road, Footpath BM ECL 3A/1	North west	~40m	Road and footpath users, residents of dwellings, employees at their place of work	Medium	Open and partial views
3	Junction of Footpaths BM ECL 3A/1 & BM ECL 3/1	North	~310m	Footpath users	Medium	Open and partial views (truncated following construction of the replacement substation)
4	East Claydon Road, Footpath BM ECL 3/1	North	Within	Road and Footpath users	Medium	Open and partial views
5	East Claydon Road	North east	~310m	Road users	Low / Medium	Partial views
6	Church Way	North east	~565m	Road users, setting of Heritage Asset	Medium	Partial views
7	East Claydon Road	North east	~630m	Road users, residents of dwellings	Medium	Views are truncated
8	Bridleway BM ECL 2/1	East	~750m	Bridleway users	Medium	Views are truncated
9	Bridleway BM ECL 2/1	East	~690m	Bridleway users	Medium	Partial views
10	Bridleway BM ECL 2/1	South east	~485m	Bridleway users	Medium	Partial glimpsed views
11	Junction of Footpaths BM ADD 14/1 & BM WIS 1/1	South west	~415m	Footpath users	Medium	Partial glimpsed views
12	Footpath BM WIS 1/1	West	~440m	Footpath users	Medium	Views are truncated
13	Footpath BM WIS 1/1	West	~530m	Footpath users, residents of dwellings, setting of Heritage Asset	Medium	Partial glimpsed views

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

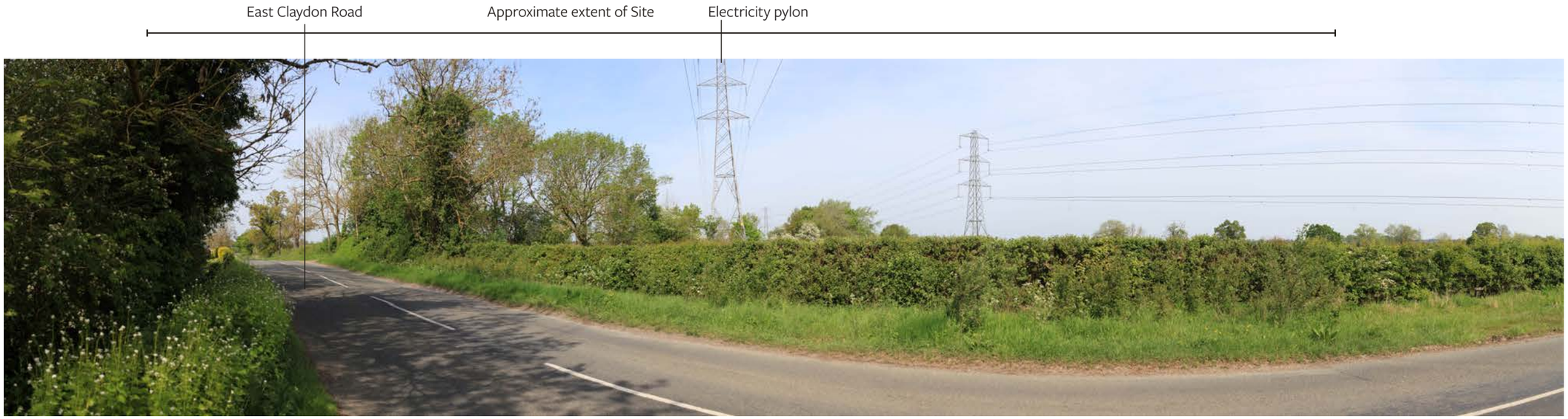
Viewpoint No.	Location	Viewing Direction	Distance to Site	Visual Receptor(s)	Value	Visibility of Site
14	Footpath BM WIS 1/1	West	~690m	Footpath users, residents of dwellings	Medium	Partial views
15	Footpath BM WIS 1/2	North west	~1050m	Footpath users	Medium	Partial glimpsed views
16	Footpath BM GRA 2/1	North west	~1225m	Footpath users	Medium	Views are truncated
17	Bridleway VBM ECL 5/1	North	~700m	Bridleway users	Medium	Views are truncated
18	Footpath BM ECL 4/1	North east	~415m	Footpath users	Medium	Partial views
19	Verney Road	South	~560m	Road users	Low / Medium	Partial glimpsed views
20	Footpath BM ADD 14/1	South west	~720m	Footpath users	Medium	Partial glimpsed views
21	Footpath BM WIS 4/1	South west	~1360m	Footpath users, residents of dwellings	Medium	Views are truncated
22	Junction of Granborough Road, East Claydon Road & Footpath BM WIS 2/2	West	~1650m	Footpath and road users, residents of dwellings	Medium	Views are truncated
23	Bridleway HOG 9/3 on the ridge of Quainton Hill	North	~4185m	Bridleway users	Medium	Distant, partial glimpsed views (reduced following construction of the replacement substation)

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 1 - View looking north west towards the Site from East Claydon Road. There are partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation lining the disused railway line within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation lining East Claydon Road. Value: Low / Medium.

Viewpoint 1 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE



Viewpoint 2 - View looking north west towards the Site from East Claydon Road, Footpath BM ECL 3A/1. There are open and partial views of the Site from this location including mature vegetation lining East Claydon Road within the Site, the upper portions of mature vegetation lining the disused railway line within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation lining East Claydon Road.
Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 2 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 3 - View looking north towards the Site from the junction of Footpaths BM ECL 3A/1 & BM ECL 3/1. There are open and partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. There are also glimpses of the ground plane of the south west field parcel within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Views of the Site from this location are anticipated to be truncated following the construction of the replacement substation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 3 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 4 - View looking north towards the Site from East Claydon Road, Footpath BM ECL 3/1. There are open and partial views of the Site from this location including the mature vegetation within the Site, the ground plane of the south west field parcel and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation within the Site. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 4 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 5 - View looking north east towards the Site from East Claydon Road. There are partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Low / Medium.

Viewpoint 5 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Approximate extent of Site

Viewpoint 6 - View looking north east towards the Site from Church Way. There are partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. There are also glimpses of the ground plane of field parcels within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation and landform. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 6 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Approximate extent of Site

Viewpoint 7 - View looking north east towards the Site from East Claydon Road. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 7 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Approximate extent of Site

Viewpoint 8 - View looking east towards the Site from Bridleway BM ECL 2/1. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 8 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 9 - View looking east towards the Site from Bridleway BM ECL 2/1 There are partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and glimpses of the ground plane of the north west field parcel within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation and landform. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 9 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Approximate extent of Site

Viewpoint 10 - View looking south east towards the Site from Bridleway BM ECL 2/1 There are partial glimpsed views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 10 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 11 - View looking south west towards the Site from the junction of Footpaths BM ADD 14/1 & BM WIS 1/1. There are partial glimpsed views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 11 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 12 - View looking west towards the Site from Footpath BM WIS 1/1. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 12 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 13 - View looking west towards the Site from Footpath BM WIS 1/1. There are partial glimpsed views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 13 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 14 - View looking west towards the Site from Footpath BM WIS 1/1. There are partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 14 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 15 - View looking north west towards the Site from Footpath BM WIS 1/2. There are partial glimpsed views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 15 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 16 - View looking north west towards the Site from Footpath BM GRA 2/1. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation and built form. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 16 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 17 - View looking north towards the Site from Bridleway VBM ECL 5/1. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation and landform. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 17 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 18 - View looking north east towards the Site from Footpath BM ECL 4/1. There are partial views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and electricity pylons within the Site. There are also glimpses of the ground plane of the south west field parcel within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 18 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Approximate extent of Site

Viewpoint 19 - View looking south towards the Site from Verney Road. There are partial glimpsed views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and the ground plane of the north east field parcel. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Low / Medium.

Viewpoint 19 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Approximate extent of Site

Viewpoint 20 - View looking south west towards the Site from Footpath BM ADD 14/1. There are partial glimpsed views of the Site from this location including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site. Further views in to the Site are truncated by the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 20 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 21 - View looking south west towards the Site from Footpath BM WIS 4/1. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 21 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 22 - View looking west towards the Site from the junction of Granborough Road, East Claydon Road & Footpath BM WIS 2/2. Views of the Site are truncated due to the intervening mature vegetation. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 22 - Winter View

4.0 VISUAL BASELINE

Viewpoint 23 - View looking north from an elevated section of Bridleway HOG 9/3 on the ridge of Quainton Hill. There are distant, partial glimpsed views of the Site from this elevated location which is just discerned in the context of the existing East Claydon Substation. From this distance, the Site is perceived through an understanding of the Site's location relative to the existing built form and landscape elements in the view and may not be as apparent therefore to the casual observer. The replacement substation would also be visible in this view and is anticipated to further obscure views to the Site from this location. Value: Medium.

Viewpoint 23 - Winter View

5.0 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The physical assessment of the Site, subsequent review of its constraints and opportunities and the requirements identified in the NPPF, local planning policies and the local landscape management guidance for the area has led to the development of the revised landscape proposals plan presented on the following page. The revised plan is landscape led and has evolved in conjunction with Statkraft and the consultant team. The proposals include the following key landscape elements:

- To provide a landscape context for the Proposed Development that is consistent, in scale with, and reinforces the landscape character of the locality and of the surrounding landscape context as set out within the local landscape management guidance;
- Set development centrally within the northern field parcel, away from the more sensitive southern boundaries, providing buffers to the existing retained vegetation;
- The retention of existing woodland, tree groups and belts, individual trees and hedges within and adjacent to the boundaries of the Site wherever possible. A limited amount of existing mature vegetation is to be removed to facilitate the development;
- New native tree and shrub planting of appropriate species characteristic of the local landscape to provide screening to the main Greener Grid Park compound and to strengthen the existing mature vegetation to the boundaries of the Site;
- The sowing of species rich wildflower meadow to the areas surrounding the compound to improve biodiversity;
- New wetland meadow planting surrounding the proposed waterbodies; and
- A landscaped bund to the south west corner of the Greener Grid Park compound provides additional screening.

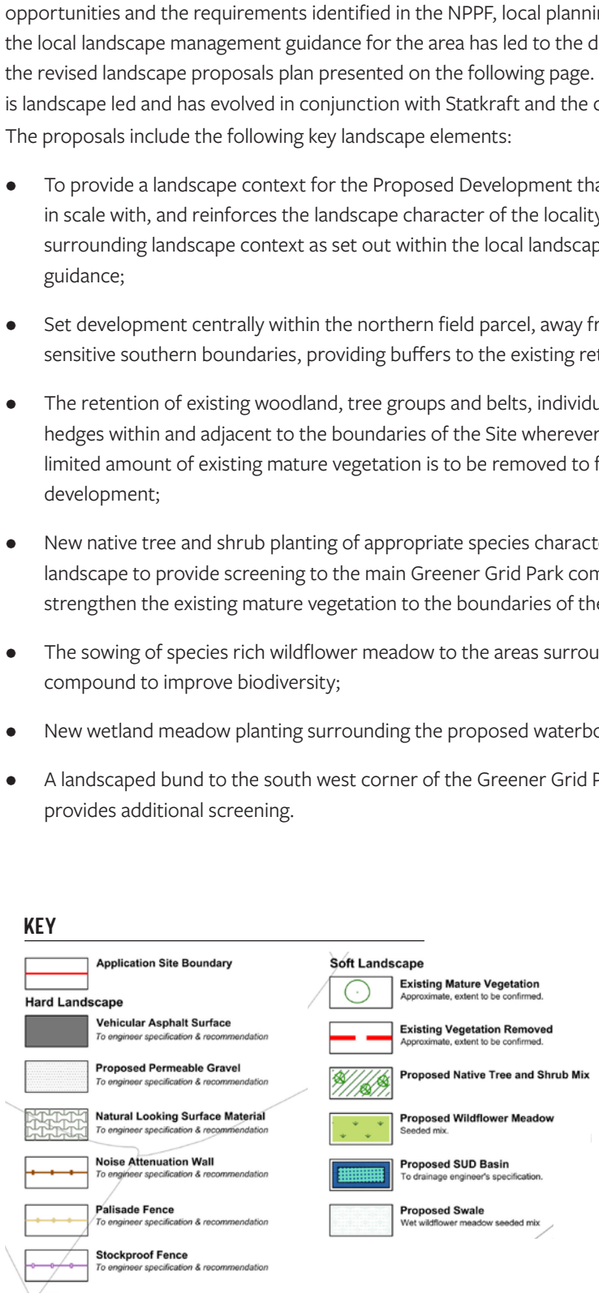


Figure 5.1 - Landscape Strategy

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Table 6.1 - Impact on Landscape Character Areas

Character area / feature / designation	Approx. distance to Site	Description / rationale for judgement	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
						Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
National Landscape Character - National Character Areas (NCA)									
NCA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales	Within	The Site forms a small part of the wider character area; however, there will be a reduction in the arable and pastoral land and limited removal of boundary hedgerows and trees arising from the development of the Site, access and construction access giving a localised change to the NCA 108 - Upper Thames Clay Vales at the national level. The character of the landscape within the Site will have changed from arable and pastoral field parcels to that of a Greener Grid Park development and access routes set within a mature existing landscape structure which can accommodate significant areas of new native tree and shrub planting.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse
NCA 88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands	~1515m	There are not anticipated to be any direct changes to NCA 88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands as a result of the development of the Site due to the distance and limited intervisibility.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
								Year 1	Neutral
								Year 10	Neutral
Local Landscape Character									
LCT 5 Shallow Vales	Within	The Site forms a small part of the wider character type; however, there will be a reduction in the arable and pastoral land and limited removal of boundary hedgerows and trees arising from the development of the Site, access and construction access giving a localised change to the LCT 5 Shallow Vales at the local level. The character of the landscape within the Site will have changed from arable and pastoral field parcels to that of a Greener Grid Park development and access routes set within a mature existing landscape structure which can accommodate significant areas of new native tree and shrub planting.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Table 6.1 - Impact on Landscape Character Areas (continued)

Character area / feature / designation	Approx. distance to Site	Description / rationale for judgement	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
						Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Local Landscape Character									
LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley	Within	The Site forms part of the wider character area. There will be a reduction in the arable and pastoral land and limited removal of boundary hedgerows and trees arising from the development of the Site, access and construction access giving a localised change to LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley at the local level. The character of the landscape within the Site will have changed from arable and pastoral field parcels to that of a Greener Grid Park development and access routes set within a mature existing landscape structure which can accommodate significant areas of new native tree and shrub planting.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Minor / Localised / Long term	Small	Construction	Minor Adverse
								Year 1	Minor Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse
LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge	~595m	There are not anticipated to be any direct changes to LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge as a result of the development of the Site due to the distance and limited intervisibility.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
								Year 1	Neutral
								Year 10	Neutral
LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale	~595m	There are not anticipated to be any direct changes to LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale as a result of the development of the Site due to the distance and limited intervisibility.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
								Year 1	Neutral
								Year 10	Neutral
LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands	~470m	There is a degree of intervisibility between the Site and this LCA, however, there are not anticipated to be any direct changes to LCA as a result of the development of the Site.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Table 6.1 - Impact on Landscape Character Areas (continued)

Character area / feature / designation	Approx. distance to Site	Description / rationale for judgement	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
						Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Local Landscape Character									
LCA 5.8 Marston Undulating Claylands	~1500m	There are not anticipated to be any direct changes to LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge as a result of the development of the Site due to the distance and limited intervisibility.	Medium	Medium	Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
								Year 1	Neutral
								Year 10	Neutral
LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl	~350m	There is a degree of intervisibility between the Site and this LCA, however, there are not anticipated to be any direct changes to LCA as a result of the development of the Site.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Site Landscape Character	Within	Change to the character of the Site, replacing parts of the existing northern arable and pastoral field parcel and introducing new built elements and new native tree, shrub, hedgerow and wildflower planting. Development enables opportunity to manage existing elements of importance such as the retained mature trees and boundary hedgerows and supplement with new planting to integrate the new built form proposed in the Site in to its local environs.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate / Localised / Long term	Medium	Construction	Moderate Adverse
								Year 1	Moderate Adverse
								Year 10	Minor Adverse

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Table 6.2 - Impact on Landscape Features

Landscape feature / designation	Approx. distance to Site	Description / rationale for judgement	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
						Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Landscape Features									
Existing Land Use	Within	Change to the use of the Site, from arable and pastoral field parcels to a new Greener Grid Park development set within the existing retained mature vegetation and considerable areas of new green and blue infrastructure.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate / Restricted / Long term	Medium	Construction	Moderate Adverse
								Year 1	Moderate Adverse
								Year 10	Moderate Adverse
Landform	Within	Topography within the site is relatively flat. Development of the Site will see localised changes in level required to create development platforms, a landscape bund to the south west of the Greener Grid Park compound and to facilitate attenuation basins. The Proposed Development aims to work with the existing contours and will consequently not alter the existing topography considerably.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Minor / Restricted / Long term	Small	Construction	Minor Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Vegetation	Within	Removal of portions of existing boundary hedgerow to the south of the Site to enable construction access to the development, a section of hedgerow to the east of the Greener Grid Park compound and a short portion of mature vegetation lining the former railway line centrally within the Greener Grid Park compound to facilitate the development. The remaining existing tree and hedgerows within the Site and adjacent to Site boundaries will be protected during construction and retained. New native tree, shrub and meadow planting proposed surrounding the Greener Grid Park compound will provide a new tree resource and create a new structure of vegetation to the proposed built elements.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Minor / Restricted / Long term	Low	Construction	Minor Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Beneficial
								Year 10	Minor Beneficial

6.0 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Table 6.2 - Impact on Landscape Features

Landscape feature / designation	Approx. distance to Site	Description / rationale for judgement	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
						Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Landscape Features									
Watercourses	Within	Short sections of the existing ditch within the Site will be culverted to enable the required access routes to the Greener Grid Park compound and Substation There are no further direct changes to any existing water course. New blue infrastructure is proposed in the northern portions of the Site to provide water attenuation within the Site.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Negligible / Restricted / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible Adverse
								Year 1	Negligible Adverse
								Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Existing Public Rights of Way within and in Close Proximity to the Site	Within	Footpath BM ECL 3/1 is located in within the south west portion of the Site. The development proposals will see the cabling route cross a short section of the footpath to connect with East Claydon Electricity Substation. The Proposed Development will see a temporary change to this route during the implementation of the cabling. The footpath route will then be returned to its existing state post construction.	High	High	High	Minor / Restricted / Construction Stage	Small	Construction	Minor Adverse
								Year 1	Neutral
								Year 10	Neutral
Night Time Character	Within	The Site is currently unlit and light emitting features are limited in the immediate vicinity of the Site. The Site is generally dark and the sight of light within and adjacent to the Site is limited. During the construction phase temporary lighting will be required in order to facilitate a safe working environment. Lighting will primarily be located within the compound area, will be low level and will be directional towards the working area. During the operational phase the proposed detailed lighting scheme will have been implemented. The scheme takes into account the surrounding sensitivities including existing neighbouring residential properties and sensitive ecological areas. Lighting is to be operated from Statkraft's central facilities operation and will only be turned on when maintenance workers are on-site during the darker hours of the day.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate / Restricted / Long term	Medium	Construction	Moderate Adverse
								Year 1	Minor Adverse
								Year 10	Minor Adverse

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Residents of Dwellings								
Residents of the Monkomb Farm complex	There are open and partial views across the western and central portions of the Site including the ground plane of the western field parcels and mature existing vegetation within the Site. Following the development of the Site there are anticipated to be views across the Greener Grid Park compound within the Site, seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site and the new landscape structure planting to the west of the compound. Views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Moderate to Minor / Localised / Long term	Medium	Construction	Major / Moderate to Moderate Adverse
							Year 1	Major / Moderate to Moderate Adverse
							Year 10	Minor Adverse
Residents of Station House	There are currently open and partial view to the mature vegetation within the Site lining East Claydon Road, portions of the ground plane of the south west field parcel and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation lining East Claydon Road, the upper portions of the proposed Substation and the proposed construction access seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Views of the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or are not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Minor Adverse
							Year 1	Minor Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Residents of Tuckey Farm complex	There are currently potential partial glimpsed views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from Tuckey Farmhouse Complex to the east of the Site. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation and potentially the upper portions of the proposed HV yard within the Site, seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Further views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible to None / Localised / Long term	Negligible to None	Construction	Negligible Adverse
							Year 1	Negligible Adverse
							Year 10	Neutral

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Residents of Dwellings								
Residents of Berry Leys Farm	There are currently potential partial views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from this location. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation and potentially the upper portions of the proposed HV yard within the Site, seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Further views of the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible to None / Localised / Long term	Negligible to None	Construction	Negligible Adverse
							Year 1	Negligible Adverse
							Year 10	Neutral
Residents of Sion Hill Farm	Views of the development proposals within the Site including the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be truncated from this location due to the layers of intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
							Year 1	Neutral
							Year 10	Neutral
Residents of dwellings on the eastern fringe of East Claydon including those on Church Way, Hinton Close and Lacemakers Close.	There are also anticipated to be locations within eastern fringe East Claydon where the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site are visible in views from the upper storey windows of dwellings. The location of these views is limited to a small number of dwellings on Church Way, Hinton Close and Lacemakers Close and is dependent on the orientation of the dwelling in relation to the Site and the degree of intervening mature vegetation. Views of the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from these locations due to the intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible to None / Localised / Long term	Negligible to None	Construction	Negligible Adverse
							Year 1	Negligible Adverse
							Year 10	Neutral

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Users of Public Rights of Way								
Users of Bridleway BM ECL 2/1	There are partial views across the western portions of the Site including the ground plane of the western field parcels and mature existing vegetation within the Site. Following the development of the Site there are anticipated to be views across the Greener Grid Park compound within the Site, seen in the context of the Monkomb Farm complex, the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site and the new landscape structure planting to the west of the compound. Views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Minor / Localised / Long term	Small	Construction	Moderate Adverse
							Year 1	Moderate Adverse
							Year 10	Minor Adverse
Users of Footpath BM WIS 1/1	There are currently partial and partial glimpsed views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from portions of this route. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation and potentially the upper portions of the proposed HV yard within the Site, seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Further views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from this route due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Minor Adverse
							Year 1	Minor Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Users of Footpath BM ADD 14/1	There are currently partial glimpsed views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from portions of this route. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation and potentially the upper portions of the proposed HV yard within the Site, seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Further views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from this route due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Minor Adverse
							Year 1	Minor Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Users of Public Rights of Way								
Users of Footpath BM ECL 3/1	There are currently open and partial view to the mature vegetation within the Site lining East Claydon Road, portions of the ground plane of the south west field parcel and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from sections of this route, primarily in close proximity to East Claydon Road. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation lining East Claydon Road, the upper portions of the proposed Substation and the proposed construction access seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Views of the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or are not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Minor Adverse
							Year 1	Minor Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Users of Footpath BM ECL 3A/1	There are currently open and partial view to the mature vegetation within the Site lining East Claydon Road, portions of the ground plane of the south west field parcel and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from sections of this route, primarily in close proximity to East Claydon Road. . Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation lining East Claydon Road, the upper portions of the proposed Substation and the proposed construction access seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Views of the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or are not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Minor Adverse
							Year 1	Minor Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Users of Footpath BM ECL 4/1	There are partial views of the Site from limited elevated portions of this route including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site, electricity pylons within the Site and glimpses of the ground plane of the south west field parcel within the Site Views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long term	Negligible	Construction	Minor Adverse
							Year 1	Minor Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Users of Public Rights of Way								
Users of Bridleway HOG 9/3	There are distant, partial glimpsed views of the Site from elevated sections of this route which is just discerned in the context of the existing East Claydon Substation. From this distance, the Site is perceived through an understanding of the Site's location relative to the existing built form of East Claydon Substation and landscape elements in the view and may not be as apparent therefore to the casual observer. The replacement substation would also be visible in this view and is anticipated to further obscure views to the Site from this location. Views of the development proposals within the Site are not anticipated to be readily perceived at this distance.	Medium	High	High / Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
							Year 1	Neutral
							Year 10	Neutral

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Visitors to Heritage Assets								
Tuckey Farmhouse	There are currently potential partial glimpsed views to the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from Tuckey Farmhouse. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation and potentially the upper portions of the proposed HV yard within the Site, seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Further views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or not available from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound will reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Medium	High	High / Medium	Negligible to None / Localised / Long term	Negligible to None	Construction	Negligible Adverse
							Year 1	Negligible Adverse
							Year 10	Neutral
White House Farmhouse (including Wall to the front)	Views of the development proposals within the Site including the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
							Year 1	Neutral
							Year 10	Neutral
Beech House	Views of the development proposals within the Site including the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
							Year 1	Neutral
							Year 10	Neutral

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Visitors to Heritage Assets								
Church of St Mary	Views of the development proposals within the Site including the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be truncated from this location due to the intervening mature vegetation.	Medium	High	High / Medium	None / Localised / Long term	None	Construction	Neutral
							Year 1	Neutral
							Year 10	Neutral

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Road Users								
Users of East Claydon Road	There are currently open and partial view to the mature vegetation within the Site lining East Claydon Road, portions of the ground plane of the south west field parcel and the upper portions of mature vegetation and electricity pylons within the Site from sections of this route. Following the development of the Site, views will primarily be to the existing vegetation lining East Claydon Road, the upper portions of the proposed Substation and the proposed construction access seen in the context of the existing energy infrastructure within and adjacent to the Site. Views of the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be extremely limited or are not available from this route due to the intervening mature vegetation. Any views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Minor / Localised / Long Term	Small	Construction	Minor to Negligible Adverse
							Year 1	Minor to Negligible Adverse
							Year 10	Negligible Adverse
Users of Verney Road	There is a partial glimpsed views of the Site including the upper portions of mature vegetation within the Site and the ground plane of the north east field parcel seen through a gap in the mature vegetation lining this route. Following the development of the Site, there will be glimpsed views through this gap in the existing vegetation to the east portion of the Greener Grid Park compound and new plating to the north of the compound. Views of the built form within the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long Term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible Adverse
							Year 1	Negligible Adverse
							Year 10	Neutral
Users of Church Way	Views of the development proposals within the Site including the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be truncated from this location due to the layers of intervening mature vegetation.	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	None / Localised / Long Term	None	Construction	Neutral
							Year 1	Neutral
							Year 10	Neutral

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

Table 7.1 - Assessment of Visual Receptors (continued)

Visual Receptor(s)	Description of visual effect	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity of receptor to change	Magnitude of effect		Overall significance of effect	
					Size/ scale, geographic extent and duration	Overall magnitude		
Employees at their Place of Work								
Replacement Substation	Views of the development proposals within the Site including the Greener Grid Park compound are anticipated to be limited from this location due to the layers of intervening mature vegetation.	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Low / Medium	Negligible / Localised / Long Term	Negligible	Construction	Negligible
							Year 1	Negligible
							Year 10	Negligible

8.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The following applications for BESS, Solar Farms and significant infrastructure developments have recently been built or are under construction or had applications submitted (including Section 78 appeal applications) within the study area (refer to Figure 8.1 - Cumulative Developments - Within Study Area and Figure 8.2 - Cumulative Developments - All).

1. Tuckey Solar Farm: Tuckey Farm, East Claydon Road, Winslow
   App Ref: 19/00983/APP and 21/04255/APP

2. Rookery Farm BESS: Rookery Farm, Granborough
   App Ref: 23/03875/APP

3. Fox Covert Solar Farm: Land to the East of Fox Covert Great Horwood
   App Ref: 20/02582/APP

4. Wings Solar Farm: Wings Farm, Marston Road Granborough
   App Ref: 23/01939/SO

5. Rosefield Solar Farm: Adison Road, North of Calvert
   NSIP - Rosefield Solar Farm

6. East West Rail Line

7. Old Brickyard Farm Great Horwood Road Winslow
   App Ref: 19/03482/AOP

8. Land Off Great Horwood Road Winslow
   App Ref: 22/02214/ADP

9. Hogshaw Road BESS: Land To South Of Hogshaw Road Granborough
   App Ref: 24/03262/APP

Due to the distance from the Site, the lack of intervisibility between the Site and the lack of locations where the Site is visible within the same view, the following schemes are scoped out of the landscape and visual cumulative assessment:

- Land To The East Of Fox Covert Great Horwood Buckinghamshire;
- Old Brickyard Farm, Great Horwood Road, Winslow; and
- Land Off Great Horwood Road, Winslow.

Landscape Resources

Cumulatively, based on the information currently in the public domain for the above schemes, the schemes will retain the Majority of existing mature vegetation and the existing landscape features within and adjacent to their respective Site boundaries where possible.

The section of the East West Rail Line scheme in proximity to the Site has been constructed and the proposed landscape scheme has been implemented which provides a degree of landscape mitigation between the scheme and the Site.

New built form within the proposals for each scheme, where information is currently available, is located away from field boundaries in order to preserve these important features within the local landscape context and maintain the local field pattern. The implementation of the proposed new tree, shrub, hedge planting, wildflower meadow planting will also locally supplement the existing green infrastructure network.

The combined magnitude of effect of the above developments (without Scheme 2) and the Site on landscape resource is therefore considered to be low. Therefore, the cumulative effects on the landscape resource of the Site and the above developments (without Scheme 2) are considered to be Minor Adverse.

The combined magnitude of effect of the above developments (with Scheme 2) and the Site on landscape resource is also considered to be low. Therefore, the cumulative effects on the landscape resource of the Site and the above developments (with Scheme 2) are also considered to be Minor Adverse.

Landscape Character

There is not anticipated to be any intervisibility between the Site and Application Ref: 23/01939/SO Wings Farm Solar Farm and Application Ref: 24/03262/APP Hogshaw Road BESS. The schemes are located within neighbouring Landscape Character Areas (LCA) 5.8 – Marston Undulating Claylands and LCA 5.7 – Hogshaw Claylands.

There is not anticipated to be any intervisibility between the Site and Application Ref: 23/03875/APP - BESS at Rookery Farm, however, the scheme is partially located within the same Landscape Character Area (LCA) 5.6 – Claydon Valley.

Application Ref: 19/00983/APP and 21/04255/APP – Tuckey Solar Farm, Rosefield Solar Farm and the East West Rail Line are located in close proximity to the Site. The schemes have a visual relationship with the Site and are located wholly or partially within the same LCA 5.6 – Claydon Valley. Where information is currently available, the development proposals for these schemes have been developed to retain the existing key landscape elements present and incorporate areas of new native tree, hedgerow and meadow planting to strengthen the existing landscape structure.

The combined magnitude of effect of these developments (without Scheme 2) and the Site on landscape character is therefore considered to range from high to medium. Therefore, the cumulative effects on the landscape character of the Site and the above developments (without Scheme 2) are considered to range from Major - Moderate Adverse to Minor Adverse.

The combined magnitude of effect of these developments (with Scheme 2) and the Site on landscape character is also considered to range from high to medium. Therefore, the cumulative effects on the landscape character of the Site and the above developments (with Scheme 2) are also considered to range from Major - Moderate Adverse to Minor Adverse.

Visual Receptors

There is not anticipated to be any intervisibility between the Site and Application Ref: 23/01939/SO Wings Farm Solar Farm Site and Application Ref: 23/03875/APP - BESS at Rookery Farm. Locations where the Site is visible in the same view as these schemes are limited to elevated sections of Bridleway HOG 9/3 near the

8.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

summit of Conduit Hill. At this distance, the Site is not readily perceived in views across the wider landscape context.

Application Ref: 19/00983/APP and 21/04255/APP – Tuckey Solar Farm, Rosefield Solar Farm and the East West Rail Line are located in closer proximity to the Site. The schemes have a visual relationship with the Site and there are a number of locations where the Site and these schemes will be visible within the same view. These locations include portions of East Claydon Road and portions of Footpaths BM WIS 1/1, BM ADD 14/1, BM ECL 3/1, BM ECL 3A/1, BM ECL 4/1, Bridleway BM ECL 2/1. Transient users of these routes may see limited elements of Site and the above schemes in quick succession when travelling along these routes. Any transient, successional views are anticipated to be primarily to the existing mature vegetation and the proposed landscape scheme of the Site and the above schemes, however, there are anticipated to be limited locations where the built form within the Site and the above schemes are seen in the same view.

There are also anticipated to be potential views from Application Ref: 19/00983/APP and 21/04255/APP – Tuckey Solar Farm, Rosefield Solar Farm and the East West Rail Line from the Monkomb Farm Complex, Station House, Tuckeys Farm complex and Berry Leys Farm. Again, views are anticipated to be primarily to the existing mature vegetation and the proposed landscape scheme of the Site and the above schemes but limited views of the proposed built form within the Site and the above schemes may be possible.

The magnitude of cumulative visual effect of these developments (without Scheme 2) is therefore considered to range from medium to low resulting in a Major – Moderate to Moderate Adverse overall significance of effect, primarily for receptors in close proximity to the Site.

The magnitude of cumulative visual effect of these developments (with Scheme 2) is also considered to range from medium to low resulting in a Major – Moderate to Moderate Adverse overall significance of effect, primarily for receptors in close proximity to the Site.

8.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

KEY

- Site Boundary
- 1km
- 2km

Cumulative Developments

Area Developments

1. 1. Tuckey Farm Solar Farm 19/00983/AP
2. 2. BESS at Rookery Farm 23/03875/AP
5. 5. Rosefield Solar Farm
7. 7. Old Brickyard Farm Great Horwood Road Winslow

Linear Developments

6. 6. East West Rail

0 200 400 600 800 1,000 m

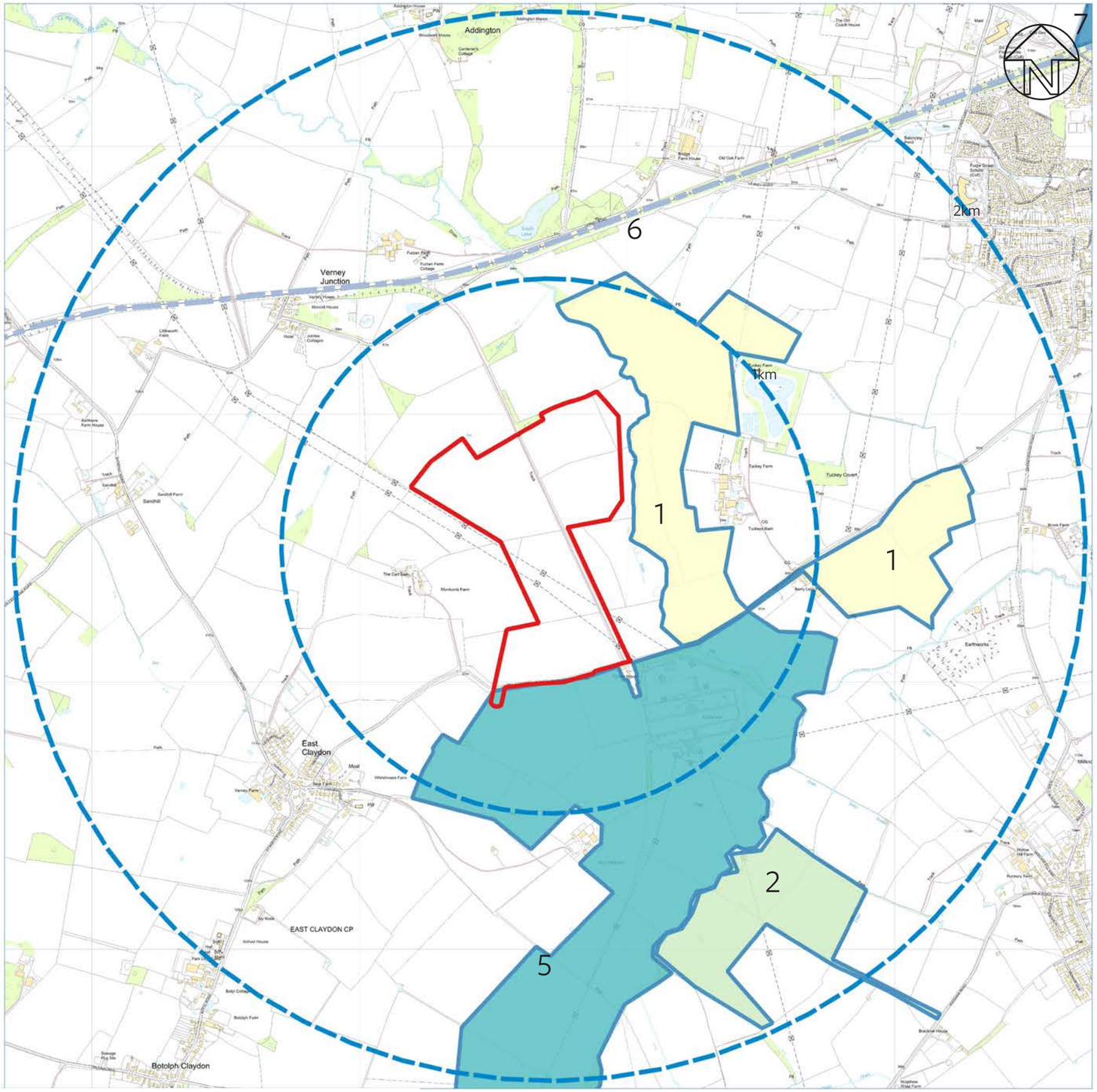


Figure 8.1 - Cumulative Developments - Within Study Area

8.0 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

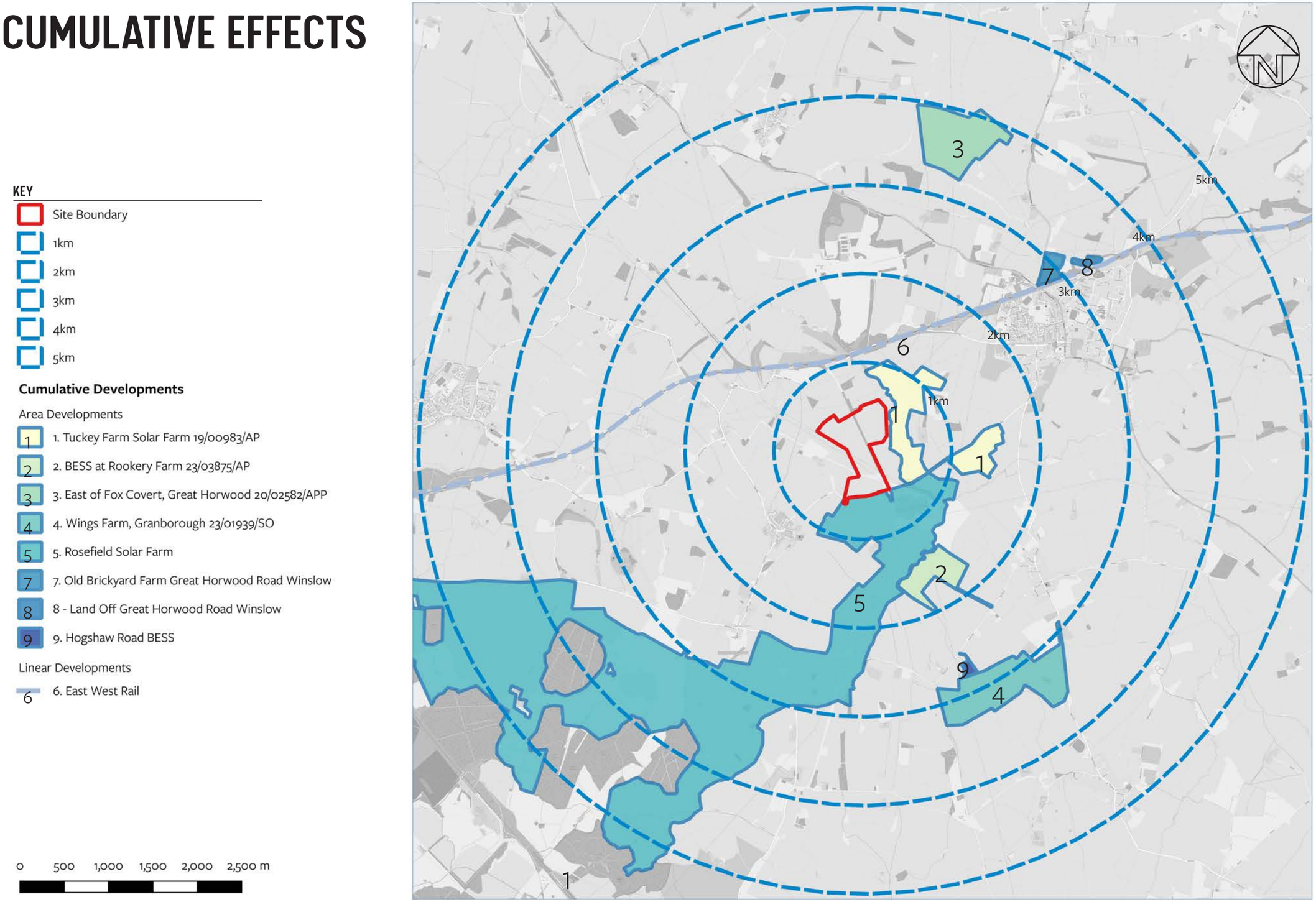


Figure 8.2 - Cumulative Developments - All

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared based on the Third Edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (Routledge, 2013). The Assessment of the East Claydon Greener Grid Park at land north of the East Claydon substation, has been carried out to inform the landscape design response to the outline development proposals in consideration of the landscape and visual issues, current planning policy and emerging guidance.

A review of the landscape designations and planning policy at the national, regional and local level has been carried out. There are no landscape designations which directly cover the Site or the immediate landscape context. The closest Listed Building to the Site is the Grade II Tuckey Farmhouse approximately 410m east of the Site.

The Site lies within lowland gently rolling agricultural landscape. The Site is currently seven field parcels accessed from East Claydon Road to the south. The Site is bound by East Claydon Road with arable land beyond to the south, the Monkomb Farm complex and arable farm land to the west, agricultural fields to the north, Claydon Brook and agricultural fields to the east and East Claydon Substation to the south east.

Open and partial views in to the Site are available from portions of the Monkomb Farm Complex, East Claydon Road, Station House, Bridleway BM ECL 2/1 and from Footpaths BM ECL 3/1 and BM ECL 3A/1 in close proximity to the Site. At greater distances, further views in to the Site are limited or are largely truncated by intervening mature vegetation, landform or built form.

The proposed development has been laid out to largely retain the limited existing landscape features where possible, addressing the current local policy. New landscape planting including new native trees, shrubs and meadow planting where appropriate which will provide a degree of screening and are detailed in accordance with local landscape management guidance. Effects are anticipated to reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.

Minor Beneficial effects are anticipated in relation to vegetation within the Site. Moderate Adverse effects are anticipated to the existing land use and to the Site landscape character. These effects will be borne in an area that has an existing relationship with the energy infrastructure elements including the lines of pylons and East Claydon Substation within the wider landscape setting and will largely be offset by the new landscape scheme. Effects on the local and regional landscape character types and areas are anticipated to range from Minor Adverse to Negligible. Effects on local heritage assets are anticipated to be Negligible Adverse or Neutral.

The proposed built form is located deep within the Site and views from the wider landscape surrounding the Site are limited. Visual effects are anticipated to range from Major - Moderate to Moderate Adverse for residents of the Monkomb Farm complex, Moderate Adverse to Minor Adverse for users of Bridleway BM ECL 2/, Minor Adverse to Negligible for residents of Station House and Minor to Negligible Adverse for users of East Claydon Road.

The proposals are considered to be in accordance with Policies NE 4 and I1, through the provision of new areas of green infrastructure within the Site and to the Site boundaries informed by the local landscape character. The proposals incorporate new native tree, shrub, hedgerows, wildflower meadow and wet meadow planting, in line with local management guidance and will provide new green infrastructure linkages.

In summary, it is considered that the Site will, whilst wholly replacing portions of the landscape character at the Site level, sit within the existing retained landscape character at the local, regional and national level. Whilst some negative adverse landscape and visual effects will arise from the proposed development, landscape and visual effects are largely limited to the Site and local level receptors only, as identified in this Assessment. Where adverse impacts have been identified these have been mitigated through the proposed landscape strategy, which seeks to soften the edge of the development and set built form back away from sensitive boundaries. Any anticipated effects are expected to reduce overtime as planting matures.

A new native tree, shrub, hedgerow and vegetation strategy, guided by local landscape management strategies, will seek to diversify the landscape structure within the Site and will ensure the long term replacement and reinforcement of local green infrastructure networks, ensuring that the longevity and vigour of local vegetation is maintained within the Site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development will site appropriately within the existing landscape character.

APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Guidance and Publications

This Assessment has been carried out in light of the latest relevant guidance as set out in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2013), and 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage (2002). These documents do not set out a prescriptive approach to how assessments should be undertaken, but rather identify key principles and good practice.

Whilst this methodology refers to landscape assessments, the same general principles are also applicable in townscape settings. Further guidance on townscape assessment is given at page 74 of GLVIA3 (2013).

The following guidelines and publications have also been considered when producing this assessment:

- 'Seeing the History in the View: A Method for Assessing Heritage Significance within Views' (English Heritage; 2011);
- 'The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)' (Historic England; 2017); and
- 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals - Technical Guidance Note 06/19' (Landscape Institute; 2019)

The assessment comprises the following stages:

- A summary of the relevant aspects of extant and emergent landscape planning policies;
- A definition the scope of the assessment, Site reconnaissance and desktop background research;
- A description of the existing conditions in respect of the landscape baseline (dealing with matters of current landscape character and existing landscape resources), and the visual baseline (dealing with matters relating to the visibility of the Site);
- Summary of key landscape and visual sensitivities relating to the Site and surrounding land;
- A description of the Proposed Development;
- An assessment of the likely landscape effects; and
- An assessment of the likely visual effects.

Baseline Assessment Methodology

The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- A review of the planning policy relevant to the Site;
- A review of any existing landscape character assessments relating to the study area;
- A review of landscape designations from the English Heritage database and local authority sources; and
- Identification of landscape character and key landscape elements.

The baseline description in this assessment comprises two separate elements:

a. Landscape Baseline; and

b. Visual Baseline.

In this assessment, a distinction has been drawn between the study area and the Site. The Site is the area proposed for development whilst the study area takes in the wider surrounds of the Site. The determination of the study area has been informed by desk top studies of maps and aerial photographs to assess how topography, vegetation and built form in the area surrounding the Site were likely to control views towards the Site.

This work was followed by Site visits to determine the potential visibility of the Site. The study area boundaries were then set to ensure that all relevant areas of potential visibility were assessed. In general terms, it is assumed that the extent of visibility of the Site (and ultimately of Proposed Development upon it) will not exceed a 2km radius.

The Landscape Baseline

The Landscape Baseline comprises two elements; the existing Landscape Character and the existing Landscape Resource.

Landscape Character is defined in GLVIA3 as *"a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."* As such, character is influenced by the physical constituent components of the landscape including geology, soils, topography, vegetation, water features, land utilisation and built elements. Landscape Character Assessment is the process of identifying variation and change in the landscape and using that information to assist in managing future landscape change (arising from development or other factors). Landscape Character Assessments – at differing scales – have typically been prepared by, or on behalf of, national and local government or agencies, and provide a starting point for the consideration of landscape character. As a generality, the more detailed the existing Landscape Character Assessment, the more relevant it will be to the specific Site and/ or the development proposal. There are four main levels at which landscape character assessment has been, or may be carried out, as follows:

a. National Level (the National Character Area Profiles prepared by Natural England);

b. Regional Level (typically produced for Natural England or a regional grouping of local authorities);

c. Local Authority Level (normally at a County, or District level, or for a number of Districts (or specific parts thereof)); and

d. Local Level (typically of a settlement or a group of settlements within a local authority).

APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

In addition to referencing these published documents, a local level character assessment of the Site and its surrounding has been undertaken which describes, in summary, the following elements:

a. Existing Land Use;

b. Adjoining Land Uses;

c. Topography;

d. Vegetation;

e. Water Features; and

f. Public Rights of Way.

The Landscape Resource baseline considers two separate aspects; landscape condition – the physical state of the landscape – and landscape value – how different areas of landscape are valued by society. The following criteria have been used to categorize landscape condition, which is described in the assessment text. The typical examples given provide an indication of the likely landscape condition but it does not necessarily follow that because a Site is within a specific designated area that the categorisation of landscape condition will automatically follow; much will depend on specific Site conditions.

Table 1: Landscape Condition

Category	Criteria	Typical Example
Exceptional	i. Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns, balanced combination of landform and landcover; ii. Appropriate management for land use and landcover; iii. Distinct features worthy of conservation; iv. Sense of place; v. No/ negligible detracting features.	Internationally or Nationally recognised e.g. all or the great majority of which would be World Heritage Site, National Park or AONB.
High	i. Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns, balanced combination of landform and landcover; ii. Appropriate management for land use and landcover but potentially scope to improve; iii. Distinct features worthy of conservation; iv. Sense of place; v. Occasional detracting features.	Nationally or Regionally recognised e.g. parts of National Park or AONB, all or the great majority of AGLV.
Good	i. Recognisable landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and cover are still evident; ii. Scope to improve management for land use and landcover; iii. Some features worthy of conservation; iv. Sense of place; v. Some detracting features.	
Ordinary	i. Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristic ii. Patterns of landform and landcover often masked by land use; iii. Scope to improve management of vegetation; iv. Some features worthy of conservation; v. Some detracting features.	
Poor	i. Weak landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and landcover are often masked by land use; ii. Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation; iii. Frequent detracting features.	
Very poor	i. Degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and landcover are masked by land use; ii. Lack of management / intervention has resulted in degradation; iii. Extensive detracting features.	
Damaged	i. Damaged landscape structure; ii. Disturbed or derelict land requires treatment; iii. Detracting features dominate.	
Derelict	i. Land so damaged by industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment.	

The following criteria have been used to categorise the landscape value of the Site. The categories of Exceptional and High are informed directly by reference to development plan documents; the other categories entail a judgement in respect of the attributes of the area / locality or may be informed by published landscape character assessments.

Table 2: Landscape Value

Value	Typical Criteria	Typical Scale	Typical Example
Exceptional	Very high importance (or Quality) and Rarity. No or extremely limited potential for substitution.	International, National.	World Heritage Site, National Park or AONB.
High	High Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.	National, Regional, Local	National Park, AONB, AGLV, ALLI
Good	Medium Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.	Regional, Local	Undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use.
Ordinary	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity.	Local	Areas identified as having some redeeming feature or features and possibly identified for improvement.
Poor	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity.	Local	Areas identified as having few redeeming features and lots of scope for improvement.
Very poor	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity.	Local	Areas identified for recovery.

From these separate assessments of landscape character and the landscape resource, the overall sensitivity of landscape receptors – defined as those aspects of the landscape that have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development - is determined.

The Visual Baseline

The extent of visibility of the Site, and of the Proposed Development, is determined by the buildings/development surrounding the Site, as well as by existing vegetation and topography. An initial assessment was made, using OS mapping and aerial photographs of potential locations from where the Site might be seen by visual receptors - defined as individuals or groups who have the potential to be affected by the proposal. Potential locations that are identified include residential and commercial properties, roads, PRoW, and areas of public open space/ recreational land.

APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

A field visit was carried out in April, May and October 2024 and in February 2025. The Site was viewed from the surrounding area from a range of locations, including those identified through the desk study and other locations that became apparent from the field assessment. At the time of the field visits vegetation was either not in leaf or partially in leaf and thus visibility in spring, autumn and winter months was observed. In the assessment the potential visual receptors are identified on plan and described in tabular form, which categorizes the receptor by type (i.e. residential property etc.) and distance from the edge of the Site (using the terms set out in Table 3).

Table 3: Distance of Views

Distance of Views	Definition
Adjoining	On the edge of the Site
Close	Less than 250m from the edge of the Site
Middle	From 250m to 500m from the edge of the Site
Long	500m or greater from the edge of the Site

From the field assessment, a number of viewpoints have been identified which are representative of visual receptors in proximity. The viewpoints selected cover three types of views:

- Representative viewpoints: typical of a particular type of visual receptor, e.g. certain points along a PRoW;
- Specific Viewpoints: a key or promoted viewpoint within the landscape possibly related to local visitor attractions or associated with a designated landscape or a cultural landscape; and
- Illustrative Viewpoints: where a particular effect may only be available from certain locations.

Not all of these types of viewpoints will necessarily be present or need to be considered in all assessments. Generally, but not exclusively, the majority of viewpoints identified will be representative viewpoints. All of the viewpoints identified are public viewpoints. Whilst private locations, such as houses, were not visited during the field assessment, an assessment of the likely views from these properties and their visual context was made from nearby locations.

Viewpoint locations are shown in plan form and the views available from the selected viewpoints shown as photographs in the assessment.

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects – General Approach

As defined in GLVIA3, landscape effects are those effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right, and visual effects are those effects on specific views and on the general amenity as experienced by people. The judgement made in respect of both landscape and visual effects is a combination of an assessment of the sensitivity of the receptor against the magnitude of the landscape or visual effect.

The judgement to be made in respect of sensitivity is a combination of the susceptibility of those receptors to the specific change occasioned by the Proposed Development (for both landscape and visual receptors) along with the value attached to that receptor (again for both landscape and visual receptors). Similarly, the judgement to be made in respect of the magnitude of landscape and / or visual effects is derived from a combination of the size or scale of the effect(s); the duration of the effect(s); and whether such effect(s) is / are reversible (or not). The assessment of landscape and visual effects give rise to separate considerations and these are set out in more detail below.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

In respect of the judgment to be made of the sensitivity of landscape receptors, the susceptibility to specific change for each landscape receptor is categorized as set out in the following tables.

Table 4: Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change

Receptor	Susceptibility of Receptor to Change		
	High	Medium	Low
Landscape Character	A highly distinctive and coherent landscape character, with an absence of detracting or intrusive elements. Low or no capacity to accept change.	Distinctive character, with a general consistency, notwithstanding the presence of some detracting or intrusive elements. Some capacity to accept change.	Mixed character, where there is a lack of coherence and detracting or intrusive elements have become dominant or have eclipsed original character. Significant capacity to accept change.
Designated Areas	National designated Landscape such as National Park and AONB	Local landscape designations (e.g. AGLV/Areas of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI) (or similar)	Not designated
Landscape Features	Largely or completely intact, in good condition	Largely in moderate condition – may be in process of improvement	Poor or improving condition
Aesthetic / Perceptual Aspects	Recognised formally as a coherent area/ feature of aesthetic attraction	Some areas/ features of aesthetic attraction	Not noted for aesthetic qualities

The value for each landscape receptor is taken from Table 2 above. The overall sensitivity of each receptor is then categorised on a High/ Medium / Low/ Negligible basis. In respect of the magnitude of landscape effects, Table 5 sets out the judgements to be made, and the categories adopted in respect of the separate considerations of scale, geographic extent, duration.

APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Table 5: Magnitude of Landscape Effects

Type of Effect	Magnitude of Effects			
Size/Scale	**Major**	**Moderate**	**Minor**	**Negligible / None**
	Total loss of, or major alteration to key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/ or the introduction of elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/or introduction of elements that would be evident, but not necessarily uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape	Limited loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/ features/ characteristics of the Site and/ or introduction of elements characteristic with the receiving landscape.	Very minor or no loss or alteration to one or more key elements/ features / characteristics of the Site and/ or introduction of elements characteristic within the surrounding landscape – approximating to a "no change" situation.
Geographic Extent	Extensive	Major	Localised	Restricted
	Effects would be experienced over many landscape character types or area	Effects would extend over the major part of the landscape character type or area	Effects would be confined to the immediate setting of the Site	Effects would not extend beyond the Site
Duration	Long	Medium	Short	Construction Stage
	Over 15 years after completion of construction works	5-15 years after completion of construction works	0-5 years after completion of construction works	Restricted to construction stage (explain likely length of construction and any key stages)

The overall magnitude of landscape effects is then described on the basis of professional judgement on a Large / Medium / Small / Negligible / None basis. The separate assessments in respect of sensitivity and magnitude have been drawn together in the assessment in a single tabular form. An overall conclusion in respect of landscape change – the likely significant landscape effects - is set out in the assessment text. That overall conclusion is expressed by reference to the terms set out in the matrix at Table 6, showing the interrelationship between sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of landscape effect. The principal conclusions deriving from the tabular presentation are then summarised in the assessment text.

Table 6: Landscape Effects

		Sensitivity of Receptor		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
Magnitude of Effect	**Large**	MAJOR	MAJOR/ MODERATE	MODERATE
	Medium	MAJOR/ MODERATE	MODERATE	MINOR
	Small	MODERATE	MINOR	NEGLIGIBLE
	Negligible	MINOR	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE
	None	NEUTRAL	NEUTRAL	NEUTRAL

In Table 6 the terms used to describe overall landscape effects are taken to have the following meanings, particularly in respect of the purpose of the Assessment to identify likely significant environmental effects:

- Major: Would fundamentally change the existing landscape and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Major / Moderate: Would substantially change the existing landscape and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Moderate: Would bring about some change to the existing landscape but would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Minor: Would entail only limited change to the existing landscape and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Negligible: Would entail negligible change to the existing landscape and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Neutral: Would be approximate to a no-change situation.

APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Assessment of Visual Effects

In respect of the judgment to be made of the sensitivity of visual receptors, the susceptibility to specific change for each landscape receptor is categorised as set out below.

Table 7: Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

Type of Visual Receptor	Susceptibility of Specific Change	Notes
Residential Property	High	Residential properties are considered the most sensitive of potential visual receptors and are thus accorded a High susceptibility. It is an established tenet that the planning system does not serve to protect private interests; the issue is not whether owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties would experience financial or other loss (including visual effect) from a particular development but whether such development would unacceptably affect amenities and the existing use of land and buildings which ought to be protected in the public interest. Thus, in seeking to assess the visual effects of development account should be taken of the effects on residential property, but it is pertinent to note that purely private interests may carry less weight than public interests.
Commercial Property / Places of Employment	Low to Medium	Indoor workers are likely to have a Low susceptibility; outdoor workers (e.g. in agriculture) a Medium susceptibility.
Public Roads	Low to Medium	The degree of susceptibility will vary according to the nature of the road and its primary purpose for users. Motorways and trunk roads are taken to have a Low susceptibility; A class roads a Low to Medium susceptibility, and all other roads a Medium susceptibility.
Public Rights of Way / Cycleways	High	The degree of susceptibility will vary according to the nature of the PRoW and its primary purpose for users. Bridleways and PRoW designated locally as specific routes are taken to have a High susceptibility.
Informal Paths	Medium to High	Informal paths have been taken to have a Medium to High susceptibility.
Public Open Space	High	Users of areas of POS are likely to be at leisure, and thus such areas are taken to have a High susceptibility.
Cultural Heritage Sites	High	Users of areas of cultural heritage sites are likely to be at leisure, and thus such areas are taken to have a High susceptibility.
Recreational Land	Medium	Users of recreational land are likely to be at leisure but are taken to be focussed primarily on the recreational activity, and thus such areas are taken to have a Medium susceptibility.

The value of views is categorised as set out below:

Table 8: Criteria for Value of Views

Magnitude	Criteria
High	A unique or identified view (e.g. shown as such on OS map or marked on a tourist map) or one noted in literature
Medium	A typical and/ or representative view from a particular receptor type
Low	Undistinguished or unprepossessing view

In respect of the magnitude of visual effects, Table 9 below sets out the judgements to be made, and the categories adopted in respect of the separate considerations of scale, geographic extent, duration, and reversibility.

APPENDIX 1 – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Table 9: Criteria for Determination of Visual Effect

Type of Effect	Magnitude of Effects			
Size/Scale	**Major**	**Moderate**	**Minor**	**Negligible / None**
	The proposals form a significant and immediately apparent part of the view that will change its overall character.	The proposals will form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall view and will be readily noticed by the observer.	The proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view, which might be overlooked by the casual observer. Awareness of the proposals will not have a marked effect on the overall quality of the view.	Only a very small Part (or no part) of the proposal will be discernible and / or it will be at such a distance that it will be scarcely appreciated, and consequently it will have very little/ no effect on the view.
Geographic Extent	Extensive	Major	Localised	Restricted
	Effects would affect all the visual receptor/ and/ or would be seen at close distance.	Effects would extend over the major parts of the visual receptor and/ or would be seen at medium distance.	Effects would be confined to part/s of the visual receptor and/ or would be seen at long distance.	Effects would be confined to edges of/ glimpse views from the visual receptor and/ or would be seen at long distance.
Duration	Long	Medium	Short	Construction Stage
	The visual effect, even considering mitigation works, will still obtain 15 years after completion of construction works	The visual effect, taking into account mitigation works, will obtain for between 5-15 years after completion of construction works	The visual effect, taking into account mitigation works, will obtain for up to 5 years after completion of construction works	Restricted to construction stage (explain likely length of construction and any key stages)
Reversibility	Irreversible		Reversible	
	The development will entail a permanent effect on the view.		If the development was de-constructed/ demolished the existing view (i.e. without development) would be returned.	

The overall magnitude of visual effects is then described on the basis of professional judgement on a Large / Medium / Small / Negligible / None basis. The separate assessments in respect of visual sensitivity and magnitude have been drawn together in the assessment in a single tabular form. An overall conclusion in respect of visual change – the likely significant visual effects - is set out in the assessment text. That overall conclusion is expressed by reference to the terms set out in the matrix at Table 10, showing the interrelationship between sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of visual effect. The principal conclusions deriving from the tabular presentation are then summarised in the assessment text.

Table 10: Visual Effects

		Sensitivity of Receptor		
		High	**Medium**	**Low**
Magnitude of Effect	**Large**	MAJOR	MAJOR/ MODERATE	MODERATE
	Medium	MAJOR/ MODERATE	MODERATE	MINOR
	Small	MODERATE	MINOR	NEGLIGIBLE
	Negligible	MINOR	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE
	None	NEUTRAL	NEUTRAL	NEUTRAL

In Table 10 the terms used to describe overall visual effects are taken to have the following meanings, particularly in respect of the purpose of the Assessment to identify likely significant environmental effects:

- Major: Would fundamentally change the existing view and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Major/ Moderate: Would substantially change the existing view and would thus constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Moderate: Would bring about some change to the existing view but would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Minor: Would entail only limited change to the existing view and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Negligible: Would entail negligible change to the existing view and would not constitute a significant environmental effect.
- Neutral: Would be approximate to a no-change situation.

APPENDIX 1 - LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Overall Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

The separate conclusions in respect of likely significant landscape and visual (as described above) are set out in the assessment text.

Visual Baseline Conditions

The following specific desk-based tasks have been undertaken:

- Consultation with the local planning authority within the detailed study area, regarding key views and viewpoint locations.
- Identification and field assessment of potential receptors within the visual envelope and an assessment of their sensitivity.
- Appreciation of the nature and importance of existing views experienced by the identified receptors.

The Visual Impact Assessment involved an initial desk-based review of OS mapping to establish the wider context within which views initially appear to be set, followed by Site surveys to establish the form and nature of specific views and the role of the Proposed Development area in such views. The Site survey was informed by the computer generated ZTV mapping which indicates where the development may be visible from.

Methodology for Preparation of Photographs

The Site survey includes a photographic record of the viewpoints. At each of the viewpoints the following details are recorded;

- The grid reference (of the viewpoint);
- The viewer height (measured to the lens of the camera);
- The date (of survey);
- The distance to the development (from the viewpoint).

The photographs have been taken using a digital SLR camera with a 50mm fixed focal length lens, giving a focal length equivalent to 75mm on a 35mm film camera. The photographs were taken in accordance with guidance outlined in the document 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals - Technical Guidance Note 06/19' (Landscape Institute; 2019);

URBAN GREEN