Chapter 6

Landscape and Visual Amenity

SP ENERGY NETWORKS

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6.1 Landscape and Visual Amenity

6.1.1 Introduction

1. This Chapter presents the findings of the assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed development described in **Chapter 4: Development Description** on landscape character and visual amenity.

2. This Chapter describes the methodology used to assess the landscape and visual effects, the baseline conditions that currently exist and any mitigation measures proposed. It considers landscape character within and around the Study Area (as defined in **Section 6.1.4** of this Chapter) and key viewpoint locations that are representative of the receptors and the views experienced.

3. Further details relating to this Chapter including the methodology used, baseline information and assessment findings are presented in the following appendices and figures:

- Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology;
- Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment;
- Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Appendix 6.4 Viewpoint Sheets;
- Appendix 6.5 Wireline and Photomontage Sheets;
- Figure 1.1: Location and Context;
- Figure 6.1: Landscape & Visual Study Area;
- Figure 6.2: Landscape Designations;
- Figure 6.3: SNH Landscape Character Types;
- Figure 6.4: Access Routes;
- Figure 6.5: Topography; and
- Figure 6.6: ZTV and Viewpoint Locations.

4. In accordance with the Electricity Work (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (as amended) ("the EIA Regulations"), the assessment of landscape and visual effects considers potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity which may arise during the construction and operational phases.

6.1.2 Legislation and Policy Context

5. Legislation and Policy Information relating to relevant national and local planning policy and legislation is provided in **Chapter 5: Planning Policy**.

6.1.3 Consultation

6. To inform the preparation of the application for development consent, SPEN undertook a pre-application consultation process, which included the preparation of a Scoping Report which was submitted to the Scottish Government Energy Consents Unit on 24 June 2020 in accordance with the EIA Regulations. South Lanarkshire Council provided a Scoping Response on 4 December 2020 which confirmed that they were content with the proposed scope of the Landscape and Visual Amenity assessment.

7. In its response dated 4 September 2020 to the request for a Scoping Opinion, NatureScot, another consultee stated:

'We are broadly content with the approach to the assessment of landscape and visual impacts outlined in the Scoping Report. While noting the likely viewpoints to be included in the EIA, we will be pleased to agree the final viewpoint list with the applicant if this would be helpful. Cumulative landscape and visual impacts are likely to be key issues for consideration in the EIA given the overall complexity of development in the Douglas Valley area and the fastpaced nature of change. The cumulative landscape and visual impact assessment should take account of the current baseline (i.e. development which is existing or under construction). Other development scenarios; e.g. consented but not constructed schemes should be considered under the cumulative scenarios in accordance with our cumulative guidance.'

8. With respect to the comment above, following completion of the assessment it is not considered that cumulative landscape and visual impacts are a key issue, primarily because construction work has commenced at three of the four consented wind farms within the Study Area, with the boundary of the fourth windfarm (Broken Cross) located 1 km north-east of Coalburn Substation and the closest wind turbine to the proposed development likely to be around 2 km away. Developments where construction work has commenced are considered within the existing baseline.

9. E-mail correspondence with NatureScot on potential viewpoints and photomontages was undertaken in March 2021 and February 2022. The final viewpoint list was agreed with Nature Scot.

10. No further consultation feedback specifically relating to the landscape and visual impact assessment has been received.

6.1.4 Scope

Spatial Scope of Study Area

11. The landscape assessment focusses on those areas which are likely to experience significant effects. The visual assessment focusses on those groups of receptors which are likely to experience significant effects.

12. The Study Area for the landscape and visual assessments extends up to 2 km either side of the proposed route for the proposed development as shown in **Figure 6.1**. This is because experience of similar projects has shown that it is highly unlikely that a timber Trident pole would give rise to significant effects at distances of 1 km or greater. The Study Area is extended from 1 km to 2 km to ensure a worst-case scenario is considered and also to take account of the local topography, where longer distance views may be possible from high ground. The 2 km Study Area also allows for inclusion of potentially sensitive receptors such as those within the village of Douglas which are over 1 km from the proposed route.

13. The 2 km Study Area covers the construction of all elements of the proposed development.

Temporal Scope

14. The assessment takes account of the effects of the proposed development at the following points in time:

- Construction – the point at which the construction works would be visible; and
- Operation Year 1 – the point at which the proposed development would first be visible in its entirety.

15. Short-term effects are typically those which would arise during the construction phase of the proposed development. Construction of the proposed development is anticipated to take 12 months.

16. Medium and long-term effects are typically those which would arise between years one and 15 of operation.

17. Long-term residual effects of the proposed development are typically those which would remain after a minimum 15 years.

Areas Scoped out of the LVIA

18. Effects on receptors greater than 2 km from the proposed route as shown on **Figure 6.1**.

19. As per the Scoping Report for the proposed development it was considered that the introduction of a Trident wood pole as part of the proposed OHL would not impact any residential property to the level that a full Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) was required. In addition a RVAA was not requested during the consultation process.

20. As explained in **Chapter 4: Development Description**, as the proposed development is considered by SPEN to be a permanent installation, decommissioning effects are scoped out of the assessment.

6.2 Guidance and Methodology

6.2.1 Guidance

21. This assessment is carried out in accordance with the principles contained within the following documents:

- Landscape Institute and IEMA (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3):

- Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment;
- Natural England (2019) An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management;
- IEMA (2011) The State of Environmental Impact Assessment Practice in the UK;
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals;
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA);
- The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations (2017);
- Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) (2018) A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment, Appendix 2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Version 5; and
- The Holford Rules: Guidelines for the Routeing of New High Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines (with National Grid Company plc (NGC) 1992 and Scottish Hydro-Electric Transmission plc (SHETL) 2003 Notes).

6.2.2 Methodology

22. The detailed methodology, as agreed with Naturescot and South Lanarkshire Council, for the landscape and visual assessment (LVIA) is presented in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology**. It is based on best practice and information in GLVIA3, which is the established industry-standard guidance for LVIA.

23. Landscape and visual effects are closely linked which means there is some overlap of assessment methodology, although the two topics are assessed separately.

24. The term 'landscape effects', as defined in GLVIA3 (para 2.21), means effects on *'the landscape as a resource in its own right*'. It includes direct effects upon the fabric of the landscape (such as the addition, removal or alteration of structures, woodlands, trees or hedgerows), which may alter the character and perceived quality of the area, or more general effects on landscape character and designated areas of landscape arising from the introduction of new man-made features. In landscapes designated or valued for their scenic or landscape quality, such changes can affect its perceived value or the purpose of the designation.

25. An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the composition of views available to people and their visual amenity. GLVIA3 defines visual amenity as *'Meaning the overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings as they live, work, recreate, visit or travel through an area'*. The concern is with assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements. In accordance with GLVIA3, the assessment has focused on public views experienced by those groups of people who are likely to be most sensitive to the effects of the proposed development. This includes local communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area; tourists and visitors to the area; people using recreational routes, features and attractions; and road users.

6.2.3 Assumptions and Limitations

26. A number of assumptions and limitations were made in relation to the information presented in this Chapter:

- All assessment work applied a precautionary principle and a realistic worst-case scenario was assessed e.g. effects on visual amenity were considered during winter months following the autumn leaf fall;
- A lighting assessment was not prepared because there is no requirement for night-time lighting during construction or operation;
- Given the type of development being proposed it is assumed that predicted effects would be adverse (negative) unless otherwise stated;
- The assessment considered the geographical and temporal flexibility allowed for within the planning system. For assessment purposes indicative locations have been shown for each of the wood poles, however during construction the poles may have to be slightly relocated to allow for localised ground conditions, the presence of protected species or landowner requirements. This flexibility for micro-siting[1] is to be sought within the application for section 37 consent and deemed planning permission and, unless otherwise stated in the assessment, would not affect the outcome of the assessment as reported, which is based on a worst-case scenario; and
- The curtilages of private residential properties were not accessed during site survey work, therefore the assessment of potential effects on the visual amenity of residents was undertaken from nearby roads and footpaths.

[1] Through the infrastructure Location Allowance

6.2.4 Determining the Significance of Effects

27. To determine the overall significance of each identified landscape or visual effect, the separate judgements about the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of effect were combined to allow a final judgement to be made about the level of importance of the overall effect, and whether or not the effect should be considered significant. This involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative assessment and the application of professional judgement. This process is consistent with GLVIA3 and is explained further in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology**.

28. The relationship between receptors and effects is not typically a linear one and there are no hard or fast rules about what makes an effect significant. However, as explained in **Chapter 2: Approach to the EIA**, effects identified as moderate or greater are considered to be significant. This is a precautionary approach to ensure all likely significant effects are categorised as such. Doing otherwise could lead to an under reporting of likely significant environmental effects. The rationale in support of the assessment is set out for each receptor so that it is clear how each judgement has been made.

29. In terms of landscape effects, paragraph 5.56 of GLVIA3 notes that at opposite ends of the spectrum:

- *'Major loss or irreversible negative effects, over an extensive area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that are key to the character of nationally valued landscapes are likely to be of the greatest significance; and*
- *Reversible negative effects of short duration, over a restricted area, on elements and/or aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to, but are not key characteristics of the character of landscapes of community value, are likely to be of the least significance and may, depending on the circumstances, be judged as not significant.'*

30. In terms of visual effects, paragraph 6.44 of GLVIA3 notes the following:

- *'Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant;*
- *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant; and,*
- *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features which are already present within the view.'*

31. Identified effects on landscape and visual amenity have been categorised as major, moderate, minor or negligible. Each of these four categories covers a broad range of effects and represents a continuum or sliding scale. Any effect judged to be major or moderate is deemed to be significant.

6.2.5 Cumulative Impact Assessment

32. Cumulative landscape and visual effects are the likely additional landscape and visual effects to arise from the proposed development when considered in conjunction with other relevant development proposals.

33. Details on the methodology of the Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLIVA) are provided in **Appendix 6.1 Landscape and Visual Assessment Methodology** and details on any identified cumulative landscape and visual impacts are provided in **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment** and **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**, respectively.

6.3 Baseline Conditions

34. The landscape baseline forms the basis for the identification and description of the landscape changes that may result from the proposed development. It establishes the character of the area, based on reference to published characterisation studies, such as the NatureScot (formerly SNH) 'Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland'. Designated landscapes (national and local) and other sensitive landscape receptors are identified via GIS datasets and other desk-based research.

35. The visual baseline is informed by the landscape baseline. The visual baseline (existing views and visual amenity) forms the basis for the identification and description of the visual changes that may result from the proposed development. It establishes the areas from where the development may be visible, the different groups of people who may experience views of the proposed development, the locations, or viewpoints where they will be affected and the nature of the views at those locations. It also establishes the relative number of receptors within each group of people who are likely to be affected by changes in their views or visual amenity.

36. Potential landscape and visual receptors are identified through a review of the baseline studies, by responses from consultees and through site survey to verify the extent of potential visibility.

6.3.1 Existing Landscape Baseline

37. **Figures 6.2-6.5** illustrate the landscape character, designations and constraints within the Study Area referenced in this section of the Chapter.

Overview of the Proposed Route

38. This section outlines the broad landscape of the proposed development commencing at the Kennoxhead Windfarm Substation connection point and finishing at Coalburn Substation.

39. The initial 3.3 km of the proposed development is an underground cable which runs north and then north-east through an area of commercial forestry to the north-west of Kennox Water. The underground cable is within the boundary of the Kennoxhead Wind Farm, for which construction has commenced, and commercial forestry. Some existing commercial forestry will be felled as part of the construction works for the Wind Farm (i.e. not for the underground cable works). The underground cable exits the forestry, and the proposed development continues as an OHL, overhead pole no. 1 is located in the valley moorland separating the forestry from Kennox Water along the valley floor.

40. From the location of overhead pole no. 1 and heading broadly north-east the proposed route follows the valley moorland landscape located between Kennox Water and an area of commercial forestry, with limited publicly accessible visual receptors. The proposed route then crosses an area of degraded land (from opencast workings). As the proposed route reaches and passes Carmacoup and the A70 it would be in the vicinity of a small number of residential properties. The proposed route continues broadly north-east and enters the Douglas Water valley with the village of Glespin and the A70 to the south, both of which host receptors from where the OHL may be visible on the moorland of the valley slopes.

41. As the proposed route continues north-east through the Douglas Valley, it would pass through the Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA), and to the north-west of the village of Douglas. Within the SLA the tree cover associated with the former designed landscape around the village of Douglas increases and the overall landscape becomes more aesthetically pleasing. Within the SLA there are a number of Core Paths, from which the OHL would be likely to be visible. To the north-west of Douglas, the proposed route passes Douglas Substation, where there are a number of existing OHLs.

42. At this section, the proposed OHL route is to the east of the newly built Douglas West Wind Farm and west of the existing woodland, approximately 2.1 km north-north-east of Douglas Substation the proposed route changes direction, as it loops round the windfarm, and heads north-west and exits the SLA. The proposed route continues north-west across a landscape comprising moorland and large opencast mining areas (including Dalquhandy opencast coal site). To the immediate west of the Douglas West Wind Farm is Dalquhandy Wind Farm for which construction work has commenced. The proposed route continues and passes in between Dalquhandy Wind Farm (to the south) and Coalburn (to the north) and loops around the south-west of the village of Coalburn. Intervening woodland provides some separation of the landscape between the proposed route and the periphery of the village. To the west of Coalburn the proposed route briefly runs through a transitional landscape between upland and lowland landscapes.

43. The final northern section of the proposed route runs through a simple moorland landscape, with signs of former and current opencast mine working visible within the landscape. The proposed route runs to the east of Hollandbush Golf Club and then in relatively close proximity to individual properties at Glaikhead and Johnshill Farm. In this location the relatively level/ slightly undulating lowland landscape is host to roadside, garden and other vegetation which provides a visual filter between likely receptors, including users of the golf course and local residents, and the proposed route.

Landscape Character

44. The landscape character of Scotland was classified in the NatureScot July 2019 mapping of landscape character types within Scotland. The landscape is classified in terms of broad character types and areas referred to as Landscape Character Types (LCT). There are three different LCT within the Study Area, all of which are crossed by the proposed route, as presented on **Figure 6.3**:

- LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley;
- LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley; and
- LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.

45. For the purposes of the landscape assessment the effects on the landscape character of LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley have been separated into two assessments. The first assessment covers the LCT hosting, and adjacent to, the proposed underground cable and OHL pole nos. 1 to 27 section of the proposed route and this section is referenced in the remainder of this report as LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (South). The second assessment covers the area of LCT hosting, and adjacent to, pole nos. 66 to 119 around the foot of the uplands to the west and north-west of Douglas valley and this section is referenced in the remainder of this report as LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central). A 400 m section of the proposed OHL (between pole nos. 91 -95) briefly crosses the boundary of LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley (Central) into LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley.

46. The South Lanarkshire Local Development Plan 2 (Adopted April 2021) (SLLDP2) states the South Lanarkshire Landscape Character Assessment (SLLCA) 2010 provides guidance on local landscapes and should be taken into account in the consideration of development proposals. The boundaries of the identified landscape areas in the SLLCA are the same as those identified in the 2019 NatureScot classification programme and accordingly both local landscape character types/areas are not assessed individually, however the assessment of the 2019 LCT is considered interchangeable with the SLLCA character areas, as per the **Table 6.1** below:

NatureScot July 2019 LCT	South Lanarkshire 2010 LCA
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow and Clyde Valley	LCA 7 Rolling Moorland
LCT 207 Upland River Valley – Glasgow and Clyde Valley	LCA 6 Upland River Valley
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland – Glasgow and Clyde Valley	LCA 5 Plateau Farmland

Table 6.1: NatureScot and South Lanarkshire Local Landscape Types/Areas

47. Greater detail and assessment of effects on the LCT is provided in **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment.**

Landscape Designations

There are no designated landscapes of international or national importance within the Study Area. There is a single locally designated landscape – Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) within the Study Area.

Douglas Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA)

48. The Douglas Valley SLA is a locally designated landscape. Policy 14 of the SLLDP2 affords SLA a Category 3 (Local) level of protection, it states '*in Category 3 areas, development which would have a significant adverse impact following the implementation of mitigation measures will only be permitted where the effects are outweighed by significant social or economic benefits'*.

49. Details of the SLA and assessment of effects upon the SLA are provided in **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment.**

Douglas Conservation Area (CA)

50. The proposed route passes approximately 1.3 km north-west of the Douglas CA, which is afforded Category 3 (Local) level of protection by Policy 14 of the SLLDP2. The Douglas CA is focused on the north of the village of Douglas around Main Street. Whilst the Douglas CA helps inform the landscape character of the Study Area any effects upon its setting and value are assessed in **Chapter 10: Archaeology and Cultural Heritage**.

Landscape Elements

51. The proposed route would pass through a generally open moorland landscape, however in addition to the moorland the proposed route would also need to cross water courses and pass-through areas of forestry and scrub vegetation. The proposed route has been designed to minimise the impact on these landscape features and avoid, wherever possible, the loss of mature vegetation. Unfortunately some loss of vegetation is unavoidable.

52. The key landscape elements impacted by the proposed development have been identified as:

- Broadleaved woodland near Carmacoup Farm between poles 30 and 33;
- Scrub near pole no. 125, conifer plantation to the west of Coalburn comprising Japanese larch with Sitka spruce, of variable quality owing to old opencast workings;
- Young amenity planting adjacent to the west of Coalburn Road between pole nos. 149 and 150;
- Naturally regenerated scrub on the old mine working site between pole nos. 151 and 154; and
- Young broadleaved plantation leading to Coalburn Substation between pole nos. 160 and 163.

53. A detailed assessment on the loss of this forestry is provided within **Chapter 11: Forestry**, however the overall assessment on the likely significance of effect on the local forestry resource is considered to be minor adverse, which is not significant in EIA terms.

6.3.2 Existing Visual Baseline

54. The visual baseline and visual envelope for the proposed development is based on the landscape baseline.

55. A computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map has been produced to help establish the likely area of visibility of the proposed development. The ZTV does not take account of vegetation or built form, and as such is a worst-case scenario which has been used to help establish the baseline and identify viewpoints (see below). Field survey work has also been undertaken to ground truth the ZTV and help establish the actual visual envelope of the proposed development. The ZTV is presented on **Figure 6.6**.

56. The Study Area around the route comprises open moorland, commercial forestry, former and existing areas of opencast mining and the river valley around Douglas Water. Away from the areas of commercial forestry, it is generally an open landscape with hedgerow boundaries limited to the landscape around Douglas and to the north of Coalburn. There are occasional small pockets of woodland, not associated with the commercial forestry, within the Douglas Valley SLA.

57. Where commercial forestry exists, primarily at the southern end of the proposed route and on uplands to the south of Coalburn, the forestry would act as a significant screen to long distance views from within these areas, and also when viewing into or past these areas from further afield.

58. The more uniform and open areas of moorland and opencast mining, to the north of and around Coalburn, and the central regions to the west of the Douglas Valley, create a landscape where long-distance views are possible, although occasional vegetation and tree belts can act as a visual filter within the landscape. When crossing the open moorland landscape and areas of opencast mining there is the potential for an OHL to be visually prominent, especially as it crosses the crest of a ridge.

59. The Study Area is on the north-western edge of the Southern Uplands and this topography heavily influences the visual envelope. The Douglas Valley is particularly enclosed by the surrounding landform and large forestry plantation to its north, with views into and from the valley limited to the landscape within and immediately adjacent to the valley.

60. The landform of the proposed route is predominantly between 220 and 300 m AOD, with areas of higher ground (up to 488 m AOD at Common Hill) to the immediate west of the proposed route. Common Hill and the adjacent Hagshaw Hill are the dominant landscape features of the wider Study Area as a whole, with views towards the hills, and the windfarms they host, possible from all around the Study Area. To the east of the proposed route the landform drops to around 200 m AOD around Douglas Water and also at the northern end of the proposed route. To the east of Douglas Water valley, the landform rises again to around 388 m AOD at Pagie Hill and 379 m AOD at Parkhead Hill. The high ground enclosing the proposed route acts as a visual screen towards the proposed route from long distances. From the peaks of the higher ground, views of the landscape on the lower slopes are often screened by the intervening landform e.g. views of the proposed route on the lower slopes of Common Hill are not possible from the peak of Common Hill.

61. Whilst generally rural in character there are several visible manmade interventions within the landscape. The most prominent is Hagshaw Hill Wind Farm, Douglas West Wind Farm and Dalquhandy Wind Farm to the west of the proposed route. The M74 and A70 communication networks lie to the east and south-west of the proposed route whilst existing electricity transmission infrastructure is apparent in the Study Area (particularly around Douglas Substation and Coalburn Substation). Due to its location on the lower lying and level landscape of the plateau farmland north of Coalburn, the large hill-like slagheap associated with the former mining works is a prominent visual feature within the Study Area. A 400 kV steel pylon OHL is prominent, running east to west across the north of the Study Area.

62. The Study Area includes a mixture of small settlements and scattered individual properties, connected by a small number of roads and lanes. In addition to the roads and lanes, the landscape is crossed by a dense network of footpaths, particularly around the settlements of Douglas and Coalburn. Whilst the numbers of people using this lane and footpath network may be relatively few, their attention is likely to be focussed on appreciation of the landscape and views of the Douglas Valley.

Settlements and Residential Receptors

63. Settlements within the Study Area and included within the assessment, starting from Kennoxhead and heading north, are:

- Glespin;
- Douglas:
- Coalburn;
- Auchlochan Garden Village;
- New Trows; and
- Lesmahagow.

64. Further detail on these settlements and the assessment upon the visual amenity of residents and visitors to the settlements is provided in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**.

65. In addition to the settlements listed above, there are a number of scattered small property groupings and individual properties/ farms within the Study Area. As well as considering general impacts on the main settlements the visual assessment has considered likely impacts on the residents of all properties within 200 m of the proposed route. The consideration of likely impacts on receptors at these properties does not constitute a RVAA. However, as noted above, there were no likely impacts on any of the residential properties which would require that a full RVAA be undertaken.

66. Starting from Kennoxhead and heading north, properties within 200 m of the proposed route are:

- Cleughs, located 500 m west of the Kennoxhead connection point and 100 m east of the proposed underground cable;
- The Bungalow, located 180 m south-east of proposed OHL pole no. 33;
- Viaduct Cottage, located 130 m north-west of proposed OHL pole no. 33;
- Longhouse, at the western end of Glespin, located 120 m south-east of proposed OHL pole no. 37;
- Braeface Cottages and adjacent properties, located 170-200 m south-east of the proposed route between proposed OHL pole no. 38 and OHL pole no. 40;
- 10 properties at the southern end of Coalburn Road, Coalburn, 200 m east of the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 130 and 132;
- Four properties on Coalburn Road at Glaikhead, between 170 m north of the proposed route at proposed OHL pole no. 150, to 200 m west of the proposed route at proposed OHL pole no. 154; and
- Johnshill Farm, Coalburn Road, approximately 160 m west of proposed OHL pole no. 162.

67. Effects upon these receptors are considered in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**.

Transport Routes

68. The main transport routes within the Study Area, plus local roads within the vicinity of the proposed route, are:

- A70, which would be crossed by the proposed route to the west of Glespin between proposed OHL pole nos. 33 and 34. The proposed route would run parallel to, and within 500 m of the A70, for approximately 1.5 km;
- Shoulderigg Road would be crossed to the west of Coalburn between proposed OHL pole nos. 141 and 142;
- Coalburn Road would be crossed to the north of Coalburn between proposed OHL pole nos. 150 and 151. The proposed route would run parallel to, and within 400 m of the Coalburn Road, for approximately 1.5 km;
- B7078 runs broadly north to south to the east of the Study Area and proposed route and is mainly outside the Study Area, however approximately a 900 m stretch of the B7078 is within 2 km of the proposed route from proposed OHL pole no. 157 to the northern end of the proposed route at Coalburn Substation; and
- M74 cuts through the very northern end of the Study Area and is within 2 km of the proposed route from proposed OHL pole no. 159 to the northern end of the proposed route at Coalburn Substation.

69. Effects upon these receptors are considered in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**.

70. There are other minor local roads within the Study Area connecting the settlements, such as Coalburn, with the wider highways network and larger towns outside the Study Area; and within the settlements. Likely effects on users of any roads not detailed above would never be greater than negligible adverse and they are not considered further within this assessment.

Recreation

71. As presented on **Figure 6.4** there are a number of Core Paths and Aspirational Core Paths (ACP) within the Study Area, particularly around the settlements of Coalburn and Douglas. Where the proposed OHL crosses the paths, users of the paths would potentially see the OHL at very close range and may also have views of multiple poles 'stacked' against one another.

72. Starting at the Kennoxhead connection point and heading north, the proposed route would cross:

- CL/5891/1 (ACP);
- CL/3454/1;
- CL/3453/1;
- CL/3457/1;
- CL/5733/1 (ACP) also referenced as SL103 (right of way);
- CL/5729/1 (ACP);
- CL/5157/1 (Wider Network);
- CL/5714/1 (ACP);
- CL/5735/3;
- CL/5735/4
- CL/5734/1;
- CL/5736/2 (ACP);
- CL/5909/1 (ACP);
- CL/5738/1 (ACP); and
- CL/3310/1.

73. In addition to those Core Paths crossed by the proposed route, desk-based research and field survey work has also identified other Core Paths within the Study Area and ZTV from which perceptibility of the proposed development is likely for users of the paths. Starting at Kennoxhead connection point and heading north, those considered within the assessment are:

- CL/5890/1 (ACP);
- CL/3455/1;
- CL/5887/1 (Wider Network);
- CL/3451/1;
- CL/3452/1;
- CL/3458/1;
- CL/5721/1 (ACP);
- CL/5728/2 (ACP);
- CL/5735/2;
- CL/5735/1;
- CL/5737/1 (ACP);
- CL/5835/1;
- CL/5736/1 (ACP);
- CL/3311/1;
- CL/5190/1;
- CL/5171/8 (Wider Network);
- CL/3744/1 (Wider Network on Road);
- CL/5742/1 (ACP);
- CL/5718/1 (ACP); and
- CL/5965/2 (Wider Network).

74. Where appropriate, the assessment of effects on users of paths has been grouped together.

75. National Cycle Route No.74 follows the route of the B7078 and lies within the Study Area at the northern end of the proposed route.

76. The proposed route passes to the south and east of Hollandbush Golf Club for approximately 1 km between proposed OHL pole nos. 148 and 160 and likely visual effects on visitors to the Golf Club are considered within the assessment.

77. Effects upon the visual amenity of the above recreational receptors are considered in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**.

Relevant Developments for Inclusion with CLVIA

78. Only one scheme is considered relevant for inclusion within the cumulative landscape and visual impact assessment and that is the consented Wind Farm at Broken Cross to the east of the M74, within the north-east of the Study Area.

79. All other consented wind farms within the Study Area – at Kennoxhead, Dalquhandy and Douglas West – are all under construction and therefore as per standard practice are considered within the existing baseline.

80. No other overhead electricity transmission lines have been identified for inclusion within the cumulative landscape and visual impact assessment.

Viewpoints and Photomontages

81. A series of viewpoints representative of the receptors within the Study Area were visited and are presented, together with relevant information and commentary, in **Appendix 6.4 Viewpoint Sheets**. **Table 6.2** lists the viewpoints.

No.	Name	Location	Distance & Direction from nearest pole	Relevance
1	CL/5890/1 and A70, Carmacoup	E279933 / N627781	142 m S from 35	Walkers, motorists and residents
2	CL/5118/1 and local road south of Glespin	E281303 / N627577	1.2 km SE from 38	Walkers, motorists and residents. SLA
3	CL/5119/1 and Glespin Main Street (A70)	E280374 / N628061	180 m SE from 38	Walkers, motorists and residents
4	CL/3457/1 Arkney Hill	E281393 / N631576	470 m NW from 76	Walkers. SLA
5	CL/3457/1, Douglas Substation	E282066 / N631010	370 m E from 71	Walkers and residents. SLA

No.	Name	Location	Distance & Direction from nearest pole	Relevance
6	CL/5163/1 and A70, Douglas	E283287 / N630211	1.6 km E from 66	Walkers, motorists and residents. SLA
7	Earl of Angus Statue, Douglas	E283476 / N630942	1.4 km SE from 82	Walkers and residents
8	CL/5735/1, near Wallace's Cave, West Toun	E282498 / N633518	300 m NNE from 107	Walkers
9	CL/5187/1 and Bellfield Road, Coalburn	E281310 / N634508	500 m E from 130	Motorists and residents
10	CL/5173/1 and Bellfield Road, Bellfield	E281830 / N634734	1.05 km E from 130	Motorists and residents
11	CL/3310/1 west of Coalburn	E280174 / N635113	350 m W from 137	Walkers
12	Village Green, Coalburn	E281125 / N635297	630 m E from 139	Residents and recreational users
13	Shoulderigg Road west of Coalburn	E280396 / N635876	290 m WNW from 144	Motorists
14	CL/5178/1 and Coalburn Road, south of Glaikhead	E281189 / N636124	45 m SE from 150	Walkers, motorists and residents
15	CL/3744/1 and Coalburn Road, near Johnshill Farm	E281610 / N637428	335 m WNW from 164	Motorists and residents
16	CL/3747/1, Auchlochan	E280330 / N636988	1.1 km W from 157	Motorists and recreational users
17	CL/5526/1 and New Trows Road, New Trows	E280963 / N638275	1.3 km NW from 165	Motorists and residents
18	Shearwater Grove, Lesmahagow	E281793 / N638277	895 m N from 166	Residents
19	B7078 Carlisle Road (NCN No. 74 and CL/5965/2), nr Auldtonheights	E282996 / N637810	865 m NE from 169	Residents, cyclists and motorists
20	B7078 Carlisle Road (NCN No. 74 and CL/5965/2)	E283268 / N637113	1 km E from 169	Cyclists and motorists

Table 6.2: Viewpoints

83. Other potential viewpoint locations have been excluded from the final viewpoints. The viewpoints were excluded as field survey work confirmed that the proposed development would not be visible, they included the track approaching The Cleughs near the Kennoxhead Connection point, footpath SL174 (right of way) to the south of Kennoxhead Connection point and Core Path CL/3461/1 on Common Hill. In addition, the construction work at Douglas West Wind Farm and Dalquhandy Wind Farm has meant restricted access to some footpaths within these areas. It was not possible to access Core Path CL/3451/1 to the east of Hazelside during the field survey work as the landowner had restricted access due to it being lambing season.

6.4 Assessment of Effects

84. This section presents the assessment of the likely significant landscape and visual effects only of the proposed development as described in **Chapter 4: Development Description**.

85. Assessments of all identified landscape effects and visual effects (significant and non-significant) are provided in **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment** and **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment** respectively.

6.4.1 Effects during Construction

Sources of Construction Effects

86. The most immediate effects arising from construction of the proposed development would be those associated with access and clearance of the proposed route, and creation of temporary access tracks and laydown areas. Landscape pattern can be affected by the felling of individual mature trees, woodland, shelterbelts, or screen planting as these often provide the landscape with a distinctive character or local identity, however the proposed route is predominantly on moorland or landscape previously degraded by mine works and there would be minimal tree loss (outside of areas of commercial forestry plantations) resulting from the proposed development. Where new access tracks and wayleaves are required, potential landscape effects may occur when a new straight access track is routed across open moorland, or through forestry, creating a visible man-made mark on the landscape.

87. Construction of the proposed development would take approximately 12 months, but this would be phased across the length of the proposed route, with works in any one pole location taking approximately 1 – 2 days. The potential effect of constructing the proposed development would be almost immediate and the creation of new access tracks, construction compounds, storage areas and hardstanding may affect local landscape character, although in most instances such effects would be temporary as land used for tracks and compounds would be reinstated upon completion of the works.

Landscape Assessment

88. Due to the temporary nature of the construction works, and the limited loss of trees and other landscape elements, no construction effects have been identified that have been assessed as being significant.

89. An assessment of all identified landscape effects (significant and non-significant) is provided in **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment.**

Visual Assessment

90. As explained in the visual amenity assessment in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**, no receptors identified in the environmental baseline would experience significant visual effects during construction. During construction users of Core Paths crossed by the proposed development would not experience significant visual effects as any effects experienced would be transient and of very short duration. The works at Coalburn Substation would not give rise to any significant effects as they would be short term and undertaken within the existing substation boundary where views would be merged with, and screened by, the existing infrastructure.

91. An assessment of all identified visual effects (significant and non-significant) is provided in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment.**

Cumulative Assessment

92. As detailed in the cumulative effects assessment sections of **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment** and **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**, no significant cumulative landscape or visual amenity effects have been identified as a result of the proposed construction works when considered in combination with other relevant developments.

6.4.2 Effects during Operation

Sources of Operational Effects

93. The main effects of the proposed development during its operational life would be the presence of additional wood pole structures within the countryside. Once constructed, however, there would be no moving parts or lighting and the proposed development would only require rare visits by SPEN for maintenance and repair.

94. The main features of the proposed development which would give rise to landscape and visual effects would be the wood poles, their appearance, height and spacing. As with any external material, wood poles are susceptible to weathering and consequent colour variations. The colour of the poles at the time of construction would be dark brown, but this would fade over time to a noticeably lighter silver-grey. The rate of colour change would depend on the prevailing weather conditions and to some degree on the type of timber and timber treatment that were used. Over time these changes would tend to reduce the perceptibility of elements viewed above the skyline but may increase the visibility of structures when viewed against a dark background such as coniferous plantation. The metal bracing and the conductors would be constructed from aluminium, which is initially shiny but tends to dull over time to dark matt silver.

95. With respect to likely visual effects the routeing process has sought to avoid likely significant effects on visual receptors and has avoided the main residential settlements such as Douglas and Coalburn as far as possible.

Landscape Assessment

96. There are no landscape receptors likely to experience significant direct or indirect effects during operation.

97. An assessment of all identified landscape effects (significant and non-significant) is provided in **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment**.

Visual Assessment

98. A small number of significant adverse effects have been identified on the visual amenity of receptors during the operational phase of the proposed development. Those receptors where significant effects have been identified are detailed below, with further detail on the assessment provided in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**.

Residential Receptors

99. The village of Glespin and two residential receptors to the immediate west of Glespin have been identified as experiencing **moderate adverse (significant)** effects:

- Glespin, located between 100 and 500 m south-east of the proposed development between proposed OHL pole nos. 37 and 47;
- The Bungalow (200 m south-east of proposed OHL pole no. 33), a single property adjacent to Douglas Water slightly set back from the A70; and
- Longhouse (120 m south-east of proposed OHL pole no. 37), a single property to the west of Glespin adjacent to the A70.

Core Paths and Access Routes

100. Twelve footpaths have been identified as experiencing **moderate adverse (significant)** effects. Of these 12, eight would be oversailed by the proposed development. All the identified significant effects are localised to users of the footpaths where the proposed development would oversail the footpaths and/or run adjacent to a significant section of the footpath:

- CL/5891/1 (ACP) c.500 m east to west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 28 and 29;
- CL/3455/1 c.1.3 km east to west path. 45 m north of proposed OHL pole no. 36 at its closest point;
- CL/3454/1 c.180 m south-east to north-west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 37 and 38;
- CL/3453/1 c.2 km north-east to south-west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 39 and 40;
- CL/5729/1 (ACP) c.950 m north-east to south-west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 85 and 86;
- CL/5735/3 c.440 m south-east to north-west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 101 and 102;
- CL/5909/1 (ACP) c.300 m west to east path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 122 and 123;
- CL/5736/1 (ACP) c.230 m north-west to south-east path running parallel for 50 m to the proposed route for its length and between proposed OHL pole nos. 122 and 126;
- CL/5737/1 (ACP) c.620 m east to west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos.125 and 126;
- CL/5835/1 c.670 m north to south path 115 m east of proposed OHL pole no. 129 at its closest point;
- CL/3310/1 c.1.1 km east to west path oversailed by the proposed route between proposed OHL pole nos. 134 and 135; and
- CL/5190/1 c.620 m north-east to south-west path 20 m west of proposed OHL pole no. 142 at its closest point.

101. All other identified effects on visual amenity are considered non-significant. An assessment of all identified visual effects (significant and non-significant) is provided in **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baselines and Visual Impact Assessment**.

Cumulative Assessment

102. As detailed in the cumulative effects assessment sections of **Appendix 6.2 Landscape Character Baseline and Assessment** and **Appendix 6.3 Visual Amenity Baseline and Visual Impact Assessment**, no significant cumulative landscape or visual amenity effects have been identified as a result of the proposed development when considered in combination with other relevant developments.

6.5 Mitigation Proposals

103. As outlined in **Chapter 3: The Routeing Process and Design Strategy**, the main strategy for minimising adverse environmental effects of the proposed development has been avoidance through careful routeing. The key mitigation strategy has therefore been by design to ensure the minimal loss of landscape elements such as mature trees and hedgerows and, as far as feasible, to avoid the proposed development going too close to residential properties and, where feasible, to avoid high ridge lines in the landform.

104. Although no specific additional mitigation measures have been identified, the applicant has acknowledged that a compensatory planting strategy to offset forestry lost through felling would be required for the proposed development and will consult with local landowners on this issue.

6.6 Summary

105. The assessment of landscape and visual effects has taken into account the construction and operational phases of the proposed development. Effects would be likely to arise from the appearance, height and spacing of the poles, and any subsequent landscape losses and intrusion on visual amenity. Any direct effects on the landscape in terms of tree or vegetation loss would occur as part of the construction phase, though these losses would be minimal and locally contained within the construction corridor, access areas and construction compounds. Careful routeing and subsequent micro-siting of poles will assist in further limiting these potential losses. No significant effects have been identified on landscape character.

106. Localised significant effects have been identified on the visual amenity for residents at two properties and the users of 11 footpaths, as detailed above in **Section 6.4.2**.

6.7 References

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition: The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment: 2013

An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment: Natural England: 2014

An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management: Natural England: 2019

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The Electricity Works (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations: 2017

A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment, Appendix 2: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Version 5: Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH): 2018

The Holford Rules: Guidelines for the Routeing of New High Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines

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