

06.

Landscape and Visual

6. Landscape and Visual

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), as presented within this chapter, assesses the likely significant landscape and visual effects arising from construction and operation of the Project, as part of this Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).
- 6.1.2 Whilst interrelated, the LVIA distinguishes between effects on the landscape as a resource and effects on visual amenity. The landscape assessment considers the nature and components of the landscape itself, while the visual assessment considers the views and changes experienced by people. The scope of the LVIA and the LVIA methodology have been informed by and agreed through consultation with the statutory stakeholders.
- 6.1.3 A full description of the Project is provided in Chapter 4 and should be read in conjunction with this LVIA. The main components of the Project are shown on Figure 4.2.
- 6.1.4 As explained in section 6.4.7 below, the scope of this LVIA considers the following aspects of the Project due to the potential to give rise to likely significant landscape and visual effects:
- New-build Overhead Line (approximately 19 km of a new 400kV overhead line between Bonnybridge Substation and an existing overhead line (known as the 'XX Route') north of Glenmavis);
 - Where the Up-rated Overhead Lines interfaces with the New-build Overhead Line (tie-in between XX Route and New Build Overhead Line at Glenmavis, selected existing 275kV overhead line towers will be decommissioned, dismantled and removed, before new towers will be constructed and installation of 4 new L8c towers including foundations between existing towers XX019 and XX022 will then be undertaken. These 4 new towers are required to facilitate the tee in at Glenmavis);
 - Removal of the existing 132kV CB Route (removal of approximately 11km of an existing 132kV overhead line between Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substation);
 - Undergrounding of sections of the existing 132kV AA Route (two sections of the existing 132kV overhead line between Bonnybridge and Bathgate, where it is crossed by the new overhead line);
 - Works and extensions to a the existing Bonnybridge Substation (the 'Bonnybridge Substation Extension') are required as part of the Project;
 - Works and extensions to the existing Cumbernauld Substation (the 'Cumbernauld Substation Extension') are required as part of the Project; and
 - Distribution Line Diversion Works (diversions to other SPD infrastructure are required as part of the Project, excluding only those works that would proceed irrespective of the Project).
- 6.1.5 Other elements of the wider Project, including the uprating of the existing ZG, XX and XR overhead line routes and works at Denny North, Easterhouse and Wishaw Substations, have been scoped out of the LVIA at the outset, in accordance with the Scoping Report, on

the basis that they are not anticipated to give rise to likely significant landscape and visual effects due to their limited, localised, temporary or contextually contained nature.

- 6.1.6 The LVIA includes consideration of likely significant effects arising during both the construction phase and the operational phase of the Project. The LVIA also considers likely significant cumulative effects of the Project in combination with other developments, as detailed in Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects.
- 6.1.7 The LVIA has been carried out by Chartered Landscape Architects, with extensive experience in assessing infrastructure projects in Scotland, including overhead lines and substation developments. The assessment was conducted in accordance with best practice guidance and consultation with statutory stakeholders.
- 6.1.8 This chapter is accompanied by the following figures presented in Volume 2:
- Figure 6.1: Topography;
 - Figure 6.2: Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.3: New Towers Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.4: Landscape Designations and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.5: Landscape Character Types and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.6: Local Landscape Character Areas/Units and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.7: Representative Viewpoints and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.8: Cumulative Schemes and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
 - Figure 6.9: Outline Landscape Mitigation Plan – Bonnybridge Substation Extension; and
 - Figure 6.10: Outline Landscape Mitigation Plan – Cumbernauld Substation Extension.
- 6.1.9 Visualisations of the New Build Overhead Line, the removal of the CB Route, the undergrounding of sections of the existing AA Route, and the works at Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substations have been produced in accordance with the standards established by the Landscape Institute (LI) in the Technical Guidance Note 06/19 (TGN 06/19): Visual Representation of Development¹. These visualisations are contained in Volume 4: Visualisations and further information on the methodology is located within Volume 3, Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology. The visualisations contained in Volume 4 have been produced for each of the representative viewpoints, listed as follows:
- DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 1: A803 Falkirk Road;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 2: Bridge over Forth and Clyde Canal;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 3: Falkirk Wheel;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 4: Rough Castle Roman Fort;

¹ Landscape Institute (2019), Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Landscape Institute, London. [Visualisation of development – The Landscape Institute](#)

- DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 5²: Core Path off Beam Road;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 6: Core Path along Arns Road;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 7: Cumbernauld House Park;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 8: Forest Road;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 9: Core Path East of Cumbernauld;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 10: Palacerigg Golf Course and Country Park;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 11: Greengairs;
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 12: Brackenhist Road; and
 - DWNO EIAR Viewpoint 13: Alnwick Crescent, Golfhill, Glenmavis.
- 6.1.10 The number and location of viewpoints have been selected to provide a proportionate and representative assessment of the Project, having regard to its scale, nature and the distribution of sensitive landscape and visual receptors. Viewpoints were identified during the scoping stage to capture a range of distances, directions of view and receptor types, including residential, road and recreational receptors, and representative landscape contexts. The representative viewpoints were submitted as part of the scoping process and were subsequently agreed with stakeholders following review of the Scoping Opinion.
- 6.1.11 This chapter is also accompanied by the following technical appendices presented in Volume 3:
- Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology;
 - Appendix 6.2 Additional Landscape Baseline;
 - Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment; and
 - Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.
- 6.1.12 The following terminology has been used throughout the assessment:
- Landscape Character Types (LCT): Areas of relatively homogenous landscape character. They are defined by the combination of elements that contribute to landscape context, character and value. Typical landscape elements include landform, land use, built development, vegetation and open space. Additional criteria are also considered such as scale, unity, the sense of remoteness, enclosure and perceptual quality.
 - Visual amenity: Relates to the way in which people visually experience the surrounding landscape. Adverse visual effects are likely to occur through the intrusion of new elements into established views, which are out of keeping with the existing structure, scale and composition of the view. Beneficial visual effects can occur where an attractive focus is created in a previously unremarkable view, or the influence of previously detracting features is reduced. The likely significance of effects would vary,

² Note: This viewpoint comprises two directional views: Viewpoint 5a, looking northeast, and Viewpoint 5b, looking southeast.

depending on the nature and degree of change experienced and the perceived value and composition of the existing view³.

- **Landscape receptors:** Landscape components that are likely to be affected by the Project. They include overall character and key characteristics, individual elements or features, and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects. It is the interaction between the different components of the Project and these landscape receptors which has potential to result in landscape effects (both adverse and beneficial).
- **Visual receptors:** Special interest ⁴or viewer groups who would have views of the Project. Visual receptors have been identified through desk study and fieldwork. As defined in GLVIA3, the receptor is the person experiencing the view at that location. This includes, for example, residents, users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW), or visitors to heritage assets.
- **Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV):** A computer-generated map based on a 3D model of the Project and the topography within the surrounding landscape, which shows areas of land within which the Project would theoretically be visible.
- **Study Area:** It is a defined geographical extent proportionate to the nature of the development and the scale of its potential impacts. Its boundaries are informed by the potential for likely significant landscape and visual effects.

6.1.13 Further explanation and definitional LVIA terminology, including sensitivity, susceptibility to change, magnitude of effects and significance of effects are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology.

6.2 Legislation and Policy

6.2.1 This section identifies and describes legislation and policy of relevance to the assessment of the likely significant landscape and visual effects associated with the Project. Legislation and policy have been considered on an international, national, regional and local level. The following legislation and policy has informed the scope and methodology of the LVIA and informed the assessment of the sensitivity of the receptors and requirements for mitigation.

Legislation

Landscape Convention

6.2.2 The European Landscape Convention (ELC)⁵ was signed by the UK Government in 2006 and came into effect in March 2007. The ELC requires parties to recognise landscape in law. It focuses specifically on landscape issues and highlights the importance of

³ This assessment of visual amenity differs from a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA). Whilst visual amenity considers the experience of the public, RVAA focuses specifically on the private visual amenity of individual dwellings to determine if a development would result in 'overbearing' or 'oppressive' effects that render a property an unattractive place to live. A detailed RVAA is not considered necessary in this case due to the sufficient separation distances between the Project and the nearest residential properties, combined with the presence of intervening vegetation and topography. RVAA was scoped out during the Scoping stage of the Project.

⁴ Where 'special interest' groups are identified, this refers to specific viewers whose interest in the landscape or particular views is a primary reason for their presence at a location. Examples include members of local history societies, birdwatchers at a nature reserve, or 'friends-of' groups associated with a specific landmark, whose appreciation of the visual environment is often more focused than that of the general public.

⁵ Council of Europe Landscape Convention (ETS No. 176) (2000), Council of Europe, Florence. <https://rm.coe.int/1680080621>

integration of landscape into areas of policy, to promote protection, management and planning of all landscapes including the assessment of landscape and analysis of landscape change.

- 6.2.3 The ELC defines landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/ or human factors’. The ELC considers landscape as a whole (land or marine), from urban to rural areas, and whether special or degraded.

National Planning Policy

- 6.2.4 National planning policy relevant to landscape and visual matters includes:

- National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)⁶; and
- Planning Advice Note 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (PAN 60) (⁷ (withdrawn)⁸.

- 6.2.5 NPF4⁶ is a long-term strategy for Scotland identifying a national spatial strategy. NPF4 highlights the importance and value of landscape to Scotland and notes the importance of landscape in place making and sustaining local distinctiveness.

- 6.2.6 Policy 3 of NPF4 sets out the intent to protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks. It notes under criterion (b) that:

- *“Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment would only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This would include future management.”*

- 6.2.7 Policy 11 of NPF4 supports the transition to net zero, setting out that development proposals for Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure, such as overhead line connections, will be supported due to their fundamental role in connecting and transmitting the output from new on and offshore renewable capacity. Under criterion (e)(ii), the policy notes that developments must demonstrate how project design and mitigation have addressed any significant landscape and visual impacts. It provides however, that it should be recognised that such impacts are to be expected for some forms of renewable energy and where impacts are localised and/or appropriate design mitigation has been applied, they would generally be considered acceptable.

- 6.2.8 NPF4 (page 04) sets out six overarching spatial principles as follows:

- *“Just transition: We would empower people to shape their places and ensure the transition to net zero is fair and inclusive;*

⁶ National Planning Framework 4 (2023). The Scottish Government, Edinburgh. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/documents/>

⁸ PAN is now withdrawn. There is no replacement at time of EIA Report submission. The PAN notice was applicable at the time of EIA Report production'

- *Conserving and recycling assets: We would make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure, and services, locking in carbon, minimizing waste, and building a circular economy;*
- *Local living: We would support local liveability and improve community health and wellbeing by ensuring people can easily access services, greenspace, learning, work, and leisure locally;*
- *Compact urban growth: We would limit urban expansion so we can optimize the use of land to provide services and resources, including carbon storage, flood risk management, blue and green infrastructure, and biodiversity;*
- *Rebalanced development: We would target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand; and*
- *Rural revitalisation: We would encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognizing the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together.”*

6.2.9 By applying these spatial principles, the national spatial strategy would support the delivery of:

- Sustainable Places where we reduce emissions, restore, and better connect biodiversity;
- Liveable Places where we can all live better, healthier lives; and
- Productive Places where we have a greener, fairer, and more inclusive wellbeing economy.

6.2.10 Table 6.1 Relevant Policies in NPF4 to Landscape and Visual Matters), outlines the policies in NPF4 most relevant to the Project in relation to landscape and visual matters.

6.2.11 Of note, Policy 4 (part d) refers to development proposal effects on local landscape designations. The policy sets out that ‘*Development proposals that affect a site designated as a local nature conservation site or landscape area in the LDP would only be supported where:*

- *“i. Development would not have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified; or*
- *ii. Any significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of at least local importance.”*

Table 6.1 Relevant Policies in NPF4 to Landscape and Visual Matters

Sustainable Places	Policy	Policy Principles
Tackling the Climate and nature crises	Policy 1	Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate development that addresses the global climate emergency and nature crisis. Policy Outcomes: • Zero carbon, nature positive places.

Climate mitigation and adaptation	Policy 2	Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate development that minimises emissions and adapts to the current and future impacts of climate change. Policy Outcomes: Biodiversity is enhanced and better connected including through strengthened nature networks and nature-based solutions.
Biodiversity	Policy 3	Policy Intent: To protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks. Policy Outcomes: Biodiversity is enhanced and better connected including through strengthened nature networks and nature-based solutions.
Natural Places	Policy 4	Policy Intent: To protect, restore and enhance natural assets making best use of nature-based solutions. Policy Outcomes: - Natural places are protected and restored. - Natural assets are managed in a sustainable way that maintains and grows their essential benefits and services.
Forestry, woodland, and trees	Policy 6	Policy Intent: To protect and expand forests, woodland, and trees. Policy Outcomes: - Existing woodlands and trees are protected, and cover is expanded. - Woodland and trees on development sites are sustainably managed.
Historic assets and places	Policy 7	Policy Intent: To protect and enhance historic environment assets and places, and to enable positive change as a catalyst for the regeneration of places. Policy Outcomes: - The historic environment is valued, protected, and enhanced, supporting the transition to net zero and ensuring assets are resilient to current and future impacts of climate change. - Redundant or neglected historic buildings are brought back into sustainable and productive uses. - Recognise the social, environmental, and economic value of the historic environment, to our economy and cultural identity.
Energy	Policy 11	Policy Intent: To encourage, promote and facilitate all forms of renewable energy development onshore and offshore. Policy Outcomes: Expansion of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies.

Planning Advice Note 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (PAN 60) (2000)

6.2.12 The Planning Advice Note 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (PAN 60) (withdrawn) as published by the Scottish Government in 2000. This document refers to safeguarding and

enhancing landscape character as well as the use of published Landscape Character Assessments.

Local Policy

- 6.2.13 The spans two local authority areas: Falkirk Council (FC), and North Lanarkshire Council (NLC). The implications of the statutory changes in relation to NPF4 mean that if Local Development Plan (LDP) policies are not in accordance with NPF4, then NPF4 would prevail until such time as the Local Planning Authorities update their LDPs. In cases of incompatibility, the more recently adopted policy would take precedence. Landscape character assessments would remain a relevant consideration where land is designated as a Local Landscape Area, Special Landscape, or similar in the relevant LDPs.

Falkirk Council

- 6.2.14 The Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)⁹, adopted in August 2020, outlines the spatial strategy and policies for future development in the council area for the period 2020-2040. It focuses on sustainable economic growth, the protection of the area's unique natural and built heritage, and the enhancement of the Green Network. The following policies are relevant to the LVIA assessment:
- *“PE01 Placemaking: Existing natural and historic environment features should be identified, conserved, enhanced and integrated sensitively into development’. ‘The scale, siting and design of new development should respond positively and sympathetically to the site’s surroundings, and create a coherent structure of buildings, streets and public spaces that are attractive, distinctive and create a sense of identity within the development’. ‘Development should include landscaping and green infrastructure which enhances, structures and unifies the development, assists integration with its surroundings, manages surface water sustainably, and contributes, where appropriate, to the wider green network.”*
 - *“PE10 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes: There will be a presumption against development which would adversely affect the character, condition, integrity or setting of sites identified in the ‘Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland’, as identified on the Proposals Map.”*
 - *“PE12 Canals: The protection and enhancement of the operational capacity of the canals for recreational use, including the maintenance and improvement of navigation and the provision of moorings and other infrastructure for a wide range of canal users.”*
 - *“PE13 Green and Blue Network: Within the green and blue network the key priorities of biodiversity, outdoor access, landscape character enhancement, climate change, placemaking and serving disadvantaged communities will be promoted, with particular reference to the opportunities detailed in the Proposals and Opportunities Schedule.”*
 - *“PE14 Countryside: Development proposals in the countryside should additionally demonstrate that their scale, siting and design is such that there will be no significant adverse impact on the rural environment, having regard to other policies on the natural*

⁹ Falkirk Council (2020). *Falkirk Local Development Plan 2*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/development-planning/falkirk-local-development-plan-2> (Accessed: 3 September 2025).

and historic environment, and design guidance in Supplementary Guidance SG01 'Development in the Countryside.'"

- *"PE16 Protection of Open Space: Development which will result in the loss of open space will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area, particularly through the loss of amenity space planned as an integral part of a development."*
- *"PE18 Landscape: 'The Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape character and enhance landscape quality throughout the Council area in accordance with Supplementary Guidance SG09 'Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations.' 'Development within Local Landscape Areas should be designed to minimise any adverse effects on the landscape character and scenic interest for which the area is designated.' Development proposals which are likely to have significant landscape and visual effects must be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment demonstrating that, with appropriate mitigation, a satisfactory landscape fit will be achieved."*
- *"PE20 Trees, Woodland and Hedge: There will be a presumption against the removal of safe and healthy trees, non-commercial woodlands or hedgerows, where such removal would be detrimental to landscape, local amenity, nature conservation, recreation or historic environment interests, or erosion and natural flood management."*

6.2.15 In addition, Falkirk Council's supplementary guidance, SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations¹⁶ provides a detailed framework for the assessment by identifying the specific Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) within its boundaries. This guidance offers information on forces for change, sensitivities and development guidance for all Landscape Character Areas.

North Lanarkshire Council

6.2.16 The North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan¹⁰ (NLLDP), adopted in 2022 is a 5- to 10-year strategy for physical development. It identifies key areas for regeneration and specific locations for housing, business, and green network improvements. The following policies are relevant to this assessment:

- *"EDQ (Environmental & Design Qualities) 1 Site Appraisal: To achieve appropriate form and design and to allow consideration of the proposal, Planning Applications will require to be accompanied by an appraisal of the site and its surrounding Land Use Character Areas."*
- *"PP (Placemaking Policies) 5 Purpose of Place (for Countryside): North Lanarkshire Council will resist pressure for sporadic and isolated development in the Countryside, protect and enhance local landscapes and encourage the creation of jobs and services to serve Countryside communities."*
- *"PROM (Promoting & Protecting Policies) LOC4 Special Landscape Areas & Green Network Improvements: North Lanarkshire Council will promote understanding and awareness of the distinctive character and special qualities of the designated Special*

¹⁰ North Lanarkshire Council. (2022). *North Lanarkshire Local Development Plan*. Available at <https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building/development-plans/north-lanarkshire-local-development-plan>

Landscape Areas and the enhancement and development of Seven Lochs Wetland Park and the Green Network, as listed in Area Strategies'. 'Any proposals affecting the Glasgow & the Clyde Valley Green Network in North Lanarkshire and other natural areas and green spaces that contribute to the health and quality of life of local communities will be required to satisfy the provisions of all EDQ and PROT Policies. Local level, small scale improvements will be delivered through specific North Lanarkshire Partnership Local Development Programme. Any proposals affecting the Special Landscape Areas will be required to satisfy the provisions of all EDQ and PROT Policies. Special Landscape Areas are listed within Table 1 of Policy ID2."

- *"PROM (Promoting & Protecting Policies) ID2 POLICY Utilities Improvements: North Lanarkshire Council will support utilities development in principle, subject to the assessment criteria listed below and consideration of other Policies in the Plan, and encourage the use of capacity from heat producing sources for heat networks identified through the National Heat Map."*
- *"PROT (Protecting Assets) A Natural Environment and Green Network Assets: North Lanarkshire Council will protect natural and resilient sustainable places by safeguarding natural heritage assets. When considering future development affecting the natural environment and the specific Green Network Assets identified in this Policy, the Council will seek guidance where appropriate from NatureScot. NatureScot has produced a variety of policy and guidance documents for aspects of the natural environment which the Council will utilise and will expect developers to consider in preparing proposals. Site categories identified in this Policy are locations protected for their importance for species or habitats, or other environmental value."*

- 6.2.17 North Lanarkshire Council has also published the Local Landscape Character Assessment Background Report¹¹, which provides a detailed framework for landscape assessment. The report, prepared in 2015, identifies and evaluates a series of Local Landscape Units (LLUs) within the Council area.

6.3 Consultation

- 6.3.1 Consultation with stakeholders relating to the LVIA is summarised within Table 6.2 Summary of Consultation Responses and Actions Taken. This includes reference to pre-scoping and scoping consultation with the Energy Consents Unit (ECU), Falkirk Council (FC) and North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) with reference to the Scoping Report and Scoping Opinion.
- 6.3.2 Following receipt of the Scoping Opinion, a meeting was undertaken with NLC to discuss the scope of receptors following comments received. Details of post-scoping engagement and how responses have been addressed are summarised in Table 6.2 Summary of Consultation Responses and Actions Taken.

¹¹ Local Landscape Character Assessment Background Report (2018). North Lanarkshire Council.
<https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/documents/1360/Local-Landscape-Character-Assessment-Background-Report.pdf>

Table 6.2 Summary of Consultation Responses and Actions Taken

Date	Consultee	Key Topics	Summary of Response	Action Taken
7 October 2025 (Scoping Opinion)	ECU	Viewpoint selection	The scoping report identified viewpoints at Figure 5.3 (Appendix A), Table 5-1 Representative Viewpoint to be assessed within the landscape and visual impact assessment. See Guidance note on options for this section.	No guidance note referring to the identified viewpoints was received from the ECU following scoping opinion receipt. As a result, no further action has been taken.
24 September 2025 (Scoping Opinion)	FC	LVIA EIAR scope	FC broadly agreed with the conclusions in relation to likely environmental effects. FC had no further comment at this stage.	No further action based on comments.
24 September 2025 (Scoping Opinion)	NLC	LVIA EIAR scope and tree removal concerns	NLC noted that tree removal and access improvements may result in permanent or long-term changes to landscape character, and visual impacts may affect sensitive receptors in Glenmavis, Chapelhall, Newarthill, and surrounding communities. NLC also noted the EIAR should also include a proportionate LVIA of the uprated overhead lines and Substation Works within North Lanarkshire, particularly where works may alter character or affect visual amenity.	A meeting was held on 23 October 2025 with NLC to discuss the scope of receptors to be included in the LVIA. NLC requested further information, including Project Plans, Elevations, and Project Descriptions, to determine whether the scope of the LVIA was justified. An email containing the required information was sent on 19 November 2025. 'DWNO-Landscape and Visual Matters' (October 2025) was an attachment within the email to explain the approach and the scope of the LVIA, and the justifications. Regarding the landscape assessment, this would be based on NatureScot LCTs, supplemented by key characteristics from local landscape character areas where relevant. The Palacerigg Country Park is recognised as having recreational value and would be assessed through effects on Viewpoint 10. Regarding the visual assessment, specific viewpoints were selected for better representation: Viewpoints 3B and 7B. Uprating works, including overhead lines (XX and XR routes) (other than where interfacing with the new build New Build

Overhead Line) and Substation Works at Wishaw and Easterhouse, would be scoped out due to minimal landscape and visual effects. Tree removal is limited to localised areas for access and avoids vegetation where possible. Confirmation that the existing wayleave corridor would not be widened. Wishaw substation would involve minor, localised extension along the east and southeastern perimeter with limited vegetation removal. Therefore, no landscape mitigation is proposed to reinstate removed vegetation. Easterhouse substation would be confined to the southeastern part of the existing compound, as the extension works proposed at the scoping stage are no longer proceeding. As a result, no significant landscape or visual effects are anticipated, and the works are therefore, scoped out of the LVIA.				
24 September 2025 (scoping response)	British Telecomms (BT)	LVIA EIAR scope	BT requires 100m minimum clearance from any structure at height to the radio link path.	Landscape mitigation plans will ensure no tree planting occurs within 100m of any BT lines, with detailed planting proposals to be confirmed at the detailed design stage when constraints are fully defined.
2 December 2025	NLC	LVIA Scope	NLC agreed with the contents of the 'DWNO-Landscape and Visual Matters' (October 2025) document. However, NLC questioned the inclusion of Viewpoint 3, as it was located outside the NLC area.	The LVIA is in accordance with the approach as explained in the email sent on 19 November 2025. It was clarified to NLC that the viewpoints were selected to cover the entire project and span across NLC and FC. Acknowledged that Viewpoint 3 was located within FC. Agreement from NLC on the remaining scope, including LVIA methodology, landscape receptors and viewpoint selection.

6.4 Methodology

Introduction

- 6.4.2 The following section summarises the methodology for the LVIA which builds on the general assessment methodology presented in Chapter 2. A full explanation of the criteria used to assess sensitivity, magnitude of effect and classification of landscape effects is included in Volume 3, Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology.
- 6.4.3 It should be noted that the methodology for the LVIA does not use the standard significance matrix set out within Chapter 2, as the approach to determining significance is based on professional judgement supported by narrative descriptions. For clarity and in

accordance with good practice, the assessment of likely significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity, although closely related, are undertaken separately.

Guidance and Standards

- 6.4.4 The LVIA has been undertaken using the following best practice guidance:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)¹²;
 - Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3) Technical Guidance Note - 2024-01¹³;
 - Assessing landscape value outside national designations, Technical Guidance Note 02/21¹⁴;
 - Landscape Institute (2019) Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals¹; 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)¹⁵.
- 6.4.5 GLVIA3 places a strong emphasis on the importance of professional judgement in identifying and defining the significance of landscape and visual effects. The LVIA has been undertaken by Chartered Landscape Architects who are experienced in undertaking and reporting assessments of similar types of projects. Professional judgement has been used in combination with structured methods and criteria to determine the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors (informed by their value and susceptibility to change), the magnitude of effects on those receptors (i.e., the nature of the effect), and the significance of effects.
- 6.4.6 The method for the production of visualisations in Volume 4 is set out in Volume 3, Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology.

Scope of Assessment

- 6.4.7 The assessment considers the likely significant effects during the two phases of the Project lifespan as identified in Chapter 4. The phases comprise construction and operation.
- 6.4.8 In line with the Scoping Report and the Scoping Opinion, the LVIA scope had focused on the New-build Overhead Line and directly associated works that could materially influence landscape and visual receptors, namely the removal of the existing 132kV CB Route, the undergrounding of sections of the 132kV AA Route where crossed by the New

¹² Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition) (2013). Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

¹³ Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3) Technical Guidance Note - 2024-01 (2024). Landscape Institute (2024). Available at: https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/LITGN-2024-01-GLVIA3-NC_Aug-2024.pdf (Accessed: 16/10/2024).

¹⁴ Assessing landscape value outside national designations Technical Guidance Note 02/21 [Online] (2021). Landscape Institute. Available: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/publication/tgn-02-21-assessing-landscape-value-outside-national-designations/> (Accessed: 16/09/2024).

¹⁵ National Grid Company & Scottish Hydro-Electric Transmission plc. (2003). The Holford Rules: Guidelines for the routing of new high voltage overhead transmission lines (with National Grid Company plc (NGC) 1992 and Scottish Hydro-Electric Transmission plc (SHETL) 2003 notes). National Grid. Available: <https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/13795-The%20Holford%20Rules.pdf>

Build Overhead Line, the connections into Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substations, and SPD Distribution Line Diversion Works. Other elements of the wider Project, including the uprating of the existing ZG, XX and XR overhead line routes and works at Denny North, Easterhouse and Wishaw Substations, have been scoped out of detailed LVIA on the basis that they were not anticipated to give rise to likely significant landscape and visual effects due to their limited, localised, temporary or contextually contained nature.

6.4.9 Landscape and visual effects can differ from one stage of the Project to the next and change over time as mitigation planting establishes and matures. The assessment therefore considers the likely significant effects of the Project at each of the following stages:

- Construction: This phase involves all temporary structures and work areas, such as temporary construction compounds, worker accommodation, lay-down areas, and the movement of plant and machinery. The construction programme, detailed in Chapter 4 identifies specific periods when the presence of plant, movement of materials, and construction activities will be most significant.
- Operation year 1: This stage assesses likely significant effects associated with the Project following completion of the construction phase and associated reinstatement of temporary construction works areas. This stage is intended to represent the likely worst-case operational effects prior to establishment of mitigation planting; and
- Operation year 15: This stage assesses longer-term likely significant effects of the Project 15 years after becoming operational. This stage is intended to help demonstrate how proposed mitigation planting would influence effects once it is established.

Study Area

6.4.10 The Study Area for this assessment comprises a 3 km corridor on either side of the new-build overhead line, as well as the application boundary of the Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substations Extension Works, identified through a combination of desk and site-based review. The final extent of the Study Area was determined by analysing the ZTV diagram (Figures 6.2 and 6.3), aerial photography, and Ordnance Survey mapping, site work and applying professional judgement. This approach ensures the Study Area is proportionate to the scale of the Project.

Assessment Methods

6.4.11 The detailed description of the assessment methodology is included in Volume 3, Appendix 6.1: Landscape and Visual Methodology.

Landscape Effects

6.4.12 In assessing and classifying the likely significant effects to the landscape resulting from the Project, the following criteria are considered:

- Landscape character baseline characteristics;
- Landscape sensitivity;
- Magnitude of landscape effects (note GLVIA3 refers to 'magnitude of effect' rather than 'magnitude of impact' as used in other chapters); and

- Resulting significance of landscape effects.
- 6.4.13 Landscape effects associated with the Project consider the change on landscape elements and features (or components), as well as the effect upon the general landscape character of the surrounding area and how it is experienced.
- 6.4.14 The relationship between sensitivity and magnitude of effect allows an assessment of the relative significance of predicted landscape effects to be made. The sensitivity of the landscape to change is a combination of the value of the LCT combined with the degree to which a particular LCT or feature can accommodate changes or new features, without unacceptable detrimental effects to its key characteristics.
- 6.4.15 The magnitude of landscape effect relates to the size, extent or degree of change likely to be experienced as a result of the Project. The magnitude takes into account whether there is a physical change resulting in the loss of landscape components, or a change beyond the land-take of the Project that might have an effect on the character of the area, and whether the effect is permanent or temporary.
- 6.4.16 The combination of the sensitivity of the landscape receptor and the magnitude of landscape effect determines the significance of landscape effects. For the purposes of this LVIA, moderate and major effects would be deemed 'significant'. Where significant environmental effects are identified, measures to mitigate these effects are proposed (where feasible) and remaining residual effects are identified.

Visual Effects

- 6.4.17 In assessing and classifying the likely significant effects on the visual amenity resulting from the Project, the following criteria are considered:
- Visual baseline characteristics and identified visual receptors;
 - Visual sensitivity (combining susceptibility to change and the value attached to the view);
 - Magnitude of visual effects (incorporating size/scale, geographical extent, and duration/reversibility); and
 - Resulting significance of visual effects.
- 6.4.18 Visual effects consider the change to the composition of the view, including the extent to which the Project would alter existing features or distract from focal points. The assessment accounts for whether changes are viewed fully, partially, or as glimpses, and the angle of the view relative to the receptor's main activity.
- 6.4.19 The relationship between sensitivity and magnitude of effect allows an assessment of the relative significance of predicted visual effects to be made. The magnitude of visual effect is an expression of the scale of change and the degree of contrast introduced. Key factors include the proportion of the view occupied by the Project and whether the change occurs in the foreground, middle ground, or background.
- 6.4.20 The magnitude of visual effect relates to the degree of change likely to be experienced. This takes into account the scale of change in the view, the proportion of the view occupied by the Project, the angle and distance of the viewpoint, and whether the change is permanent or temporary.

- 6.4.21 The combination of the sensitivity of the visual receptor and the magnitude of visual effect determines the significance of visual effects. For the purposes of this assessment, moderate and major effects are deemed 'significant'. Where significant environmental effects are identified, measures to mitigate these effects are proposed (where feasible) and remaining residual effects are identified.

Scope

- 6.4.22 The LVIA considers the landscape and visual effects of the following components of the Project as summarised in Table 6.3 Components of the Project Included as Part of Scope:

Table 6.3 Components of the Project Included as Part of Scope

Scope	Details
New-build Overhead Line	Approximately 19 km of new 400 kV overhead line between Bonnybridge Substation and Glenmavis (New Build Overhead Line). This also includes 4 new towers as part of the XX Route at Glenmavis.
Upgraded Overhead Lines (where interface with New-build Overhead Line)	Selected existing 275kV overhead line towers will be decommissioned, dismantled and removed, before new towers will be constructed. The installation of 4 new L8c towers including foundations between existing towers XX019 and XX022 will then be undertaken.
Ancillary Works	Dismantling and removal of the CB Route and undergrounding of the AA Route. Extension works to the western side of Bonnybridge Substation. Extension works to the Cumbernauld Substation. Distribution Line Diversion Works.

- 6.4.23 Items scoped out of the LVIA are referred to within Table 6.2 Summary of Consultation Responses and Actions Taken detailed in Table 6.4 Components of the Project Excluded as Part of Scope) as follows. As noted above, this approach was agreed with NLC:

Table 6.4 Components of the Project Excluded as Part of Scope

Scope	Details
Denny North Substation Works	The works and the associated internal works would be seen within the context of the existing substation. Therefore, they were scoped out during scoping stage as it was not likely to result in significant effects on landscape and visual receptors.

Easterhouse Substation Extension	Scoping feedback from NLC (p.13, Appendix 2.3: Scoping Opinion) advised that the works associated with the Easterhouse Substation Extension should be considered due to the potential for long-term changes to landscape character and visual effects on sensitive receptors. As outlined in Chapter 1, the Easterhouse Extension is required independently of the Project and has therefore been removed from the EIA Report.
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Wishaw Substation Extension	Scoping feedback from NLC (p.13, Appendix 2.3: Scoping Opinion) raised the need for consideration of the proposed works at Wishaw Substation within the LVIA due to the potential for effects on landscape character and visual amenity. A meeting with NLC subsequently took place. It was agreed that the extension would include three permanent bays. While permanent, these bays would be seen within the context of the existing substation in views and when considered in relation to the surrounding landscape character. The extension would mainly be on species poor grassland to the east of the existing substation. There may be some minor vegetation removal required but this would be highly localised therefore no landscape mitigation plan is proposed to reinstate removed vegetation.
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Upgraded Overhead Lines (except where interface with New-build Overhead Line)	The upgrading of the ZG route is scoped out as per the Scoping Report, and no further comments were received. Scoping feedback from NLC (p.13, Appendix 2.3: Scoping Opinion) advised that the XX and XR routes should be considered as having the potential for effects on landscape character and visual amenity. A meeting with NLC subsequently took place, during which it was agreed that the XX and XR routes could be scoped out on the basis that the majority of likely significant impacts on landscape character and visual amenity would be temporary in nature and of a short duration, primarily related to construction operations. Any effects would also be experienced within the context of the existing towers, which would limit the degree of change.
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In relation to tree removal, the Scoping Report noted that there could be the removal of trees required to create a wider wayleave corridor; however, it has since been agreed that this will not be required, and the existing wayleave will not be widened. There is likely to be some localised tree removal associated with access, but this has been routed to avoid vegetation where possible through the use of existing access routes.

It is anticipated that these aspects would be limited and highly localised, and either temporary or reversible. As such, these

uprating works would have little or no influence on the character of the landscape or the nature of views

- 6.4.24 It was agreed with NLC that the LVIA would provide a high-level review of landscape and visual effects of the scoped-out elements of the Project, including consideration of localised tree removal. The review is provided at paragraph 6.9.58 of this chapter. This agreement was confirmed following a meeting and subsequent written correspondence, through which NLC agreed to the proposed scope of assessment.
- 6.4.25 The published landscape receptors within the Study Area are detailed below. A rationale for their inclusion and exclusion is also provided, informed by professional judgment, fieldwork, and the analysis of various Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) plans (shown in Figures 6.2 to 6.6). This is not undertaken for visual receptors as published studies are not available in the same way and representative viewpoint locations have been chosen.

Table 6.5 Landscape Assessment Scope

Receptor	Inclusion/ Exclusion in landscape assessment	Rationale for inclusion or exclusion
Landscape receptors		
The Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area	Included (western part only due to lack of intervisibility in the eastern part)	The Local Landscape Area is classified as a Special Landscape Area (formerly Areas of Great Landscape Value) in Appendix 2 of SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations (Falkirk Council Local Development Plan (LDP2)) ¹⁶ . Whilst not located within the Study Area, significant effects on the key characteristics are considered likely due to the proximity to the Project, its spatial relationship and intervisibility between the two.
Palacerigg Country Park	Excluded	Country Parks are not designated as landscape features. Following an agreement with NLC on 23 November 2025, the Country Park will not be included as a landscape receptor for the purposes of this assessment. The likely significant effects of the Project will be assessed relating to visual amenity (Viewpoint 10).

¹⁶ Falkirk Council (2021) SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations: Supplementary Guidance (Appendix 2). Available at: <https://fcwebsites.blob.core.windows.net/www/media/bdfaf1d9-dd7b-4604-939e-b3c4ee350a6d/SG09%20Landscape%20Character%20Assessment%20and%20Landscape%20Designations.pdf?v=20250529075905> (Accessed: 17/12/2025).

Landscape Character Types

LCT 150 Lowland Hill Fringes - Central	Excluded	No potential for significant effects on the key characteristics due to intervening vegetation coverage within the LCT resulting in limited intervisibility with the Project.
LCT 151 Lowland Plateaux - Central	Included	Potential for likely significant effects on the key characteristics due to proximity and intervisibility with the Project.
LCT 152 Lowland River Valleys - Central	Included	Potential for likely significant effects on the key characteristics due to proximity and intervisibility with the Project.
LCT 200 Rolling Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Excluded	No potential for significant effects on the key characteristics due to intervening vegetation coverage within the LCT resulting in limited intervisibility with the Project.
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Included	Potential for likely for significant effects on the key characteristics due to proximity and intervisibility with the Project.
LCT 203 Urban Fringe Farmland	Included	Potential for likely significant effects on the key characteristics due to proximity and intervisibility with the Project.
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Included	Potential for likely significant effects on the key characteristics due to proximity and intervisibility with the Project.

6.5 Limitations and Assumptions

- 6.5.1 Regarding limitations, no technical difficulties or practical problems were encountered in producing the LVIA. Fieldwork to inform the design process and assessment of the Project was undertaken in variable weather with moderate visibility, however, photographs used to inform the assessment were taken with good visibility.
- 6.5.2 Assumptions of the assessment of effects within the LVIA are set out as follows:
- The assessment has been undertaken based on the worst-case scenario of the Project. This includes the maximum heights and footprints of the various component parts of the Project;

- The illustrative bunding shown on Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10 has been identified within desirable locations as part of the iterative design process. As this is an application for section 37 consent and deemed planning permission, and the design is not finalised at this stage, the cut and fill balance is not currently known. Therefore, the assessment has been undertaken on a worst-case basis, assuming the bunding is not present. Any landscape planting proposed in association with these areas would be solely within land over which the Applicant has control and necessary land rights;
- The movement of construction plant, materials and associated machinery would occur during primarily daylight hours as per Section 4.9 of Chapter 4;
- Vegetation clearance will be limited to the minimum area required for safe access, construction and operation of the project. This will include clearance for access tracks, compound sites, and the immediate area around towers and associated infrastructure. It is assumed that contractors will rectify grassland areas to good practice upon the completion of the construction phase;
- All vegetation within the 40m corridor to all overhead lines will be removed for infrastructure and management felling as defined and described in Chapter 14: Forestry, Volume 1;
- All public rights of way, including roads and footpaths, directly impacted by construction activities will be temporarily closed. Public access will be diverted via clearly marked alternative routes, and appropriate signage will be installed to ensure public safety and minimise disruption;
- Lighting requirements would be as follows:
 - Construction: Construction lighting will be utilised as required for all working areas, especially during winter months when daylight hours are limited. All lighting will be directional, downward-facing and shielded to minimise upward spill and horizontal glare;
 - Operation: Full operational lighting for maintenance or emergencies will be temporary and sporadic for the Substation Extensions. The assessment focuses on the permanent, lower-level security/ perimeter lighting which is assumed to operate throughout the hours of darkness in relation to the Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substations. Lights will be directional, downward-facing and shielded to minimise upward spill and horizontal glare; and
- In defining the temporal scope of effects, this LVIA assumes specific duration categories to assess the magnitude of landscape and visual effects, informed by the project programme. The duration of effect is categorised as:
 - Short-term (0–4 years): This covers the main construction and reinstatement period, which for the project spans from early 2027 to late 2029. Key activities include site mobilisation, earthworks, overhead line diversions, and substation construction. It also includes planting and landscape restoration, which will begin immediately after the end of the construction phase (from 2029 onwards) and continue through the early years of operation.

- Medium-term (5–10 years): This period accounts for the establishment and maturation of mitigation measures during Operation, ensuring the effective integration of these measures into the surrounding landscape. Activities include the growth and development of planting schemes implemented immediately after construction, as well as ongoing maintenance to achieve the intended screening and landscape character objectives. By the end of this period, mitigation should be functioning as designed, reducing visual prominence and enhancing landscape fit.
- Long-term (11+ years): This represents the permanent operational lifespan of the Project. During this phase, the infrastructure will remain a fixed element within the landscape, with residual visual and landscape effects persisting for the duration of its operational life. Ongoing maintenance will occur but is expected to be infrequent and localised, resulting in minimal additional effects. By this stage, mitigation planting should be fully mature, providing effective screening and integration of the development into its surroundings. For the purposes of this assessment, the visualisations illustrate the operational effects at Year 15, representing the point at which mitigation measures have reached a level of maturity to achieve their intended design function.

6.6 Baseline Environment

6.6.1 This section provides an overview of the current baseline conditions for landscape and visual amenity. The baseline describes the relevant aspects of the existing environmental state that may be impacted by the development. In accordance with the GLVIA3¹⁷, the visual baseline identifies the “*area in which the development may be visible*” (page 32 of GLVIA3), thereby defining the key characteristics of the current landscape and visual environment within the Study Area.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

6.6.2 The ZTV illustrates the areas where the Project would theoretically be visible. It highlights locations where individuals may experience views of the development and aids in defining the Study Area, the scope of the LVIA, and the Viewpoints in locations likely to experience significant effects. The ZTVs are presented in the accompanying figures (Volume 2).

- Figure 6.2: Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
- Figure 6.3: New Towers Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
- Figure 6.4: Landscape Designations and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
- Figure 6.5: Landscape Character Types and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
- Figure 6.6: Local Landscape Character Areas/Units and Zone of Theoretical Visibility;
- Figure 6.7: Representative Viewpoints and Zone of Theoretical Visibility; and
- Figure 6.8: Cumulative Schemes and Zone of Theoretical Visibility.

6.6.3 The ZTV parameters and limitations are as follows:

¹⁷ Landscape Institute (2024) Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3) Technical Guidance Note - 2024-01. Available at: https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/LITGN-2024-01-GLVIA3-NC_Aug-2024.pdf (Accessed: 16/10/2024).

- The ZTV is based on a digital surface model created using Ordnance Survey (OS) 2025 data. The model includes OS Vector mapping with buildings represented at a height of 7.5 m and forestry from National Forestry Inventory at a height of 10 m, with proposed felling areas removed. This approach accounts for the screening effects of buildings and vegetation.
 - Some areas of theoretical visibility may comprise woodland, plantation, moorland or agricultural land, where there are effectively no public access and the likelihood of views being experienced is consequently low.
 - The ZTV does not take account of the likely orientation of a viewer, such as the direction of travel and there is no allowance for reduction of visibility with distance, weather, or light.
 - Overhead Line Towers: The ZTV is calculated using the centroid of each tower, with a maximum height of the tallest tower above ground level of 20% applied to each of the newly constructed overhead line towers as set out within the Stacking Table (Volume 3, Appendix 4.1) as a worst case scenario.
 - Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substations Extension: The ZTV is determined using the project's site boundary and the maximum structural height specified in the layout plan.
- 6.6.4 These limitations mean that the ZTV plans tend to overestimate the extent of the visibility, both in terms of the area from which the Project is visible and the extent of the Project which is visible. It should be considered as a tool to assist in assessing the theoretical visibility of the Project and not a measure of the visual effect.
- 6.6.5 Field assessment and site appraisal work has determined that a standard steel lattice 400kV overhead line tower can be discerned at distances up to 10 km. However, from distances over 3 km whilst it may be possible to discern an overhead line on a clear day it would be barely perceptible in that view.
- 6.6.6 The following table outlines the maximum height parameter assumptions used within the ZTV maps.

Table 6.6 ZTV Maximum Height Assumptions

Feature	Height (m) Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)	Location of Maximum Elevation on Feature
New Build Overhead Line towers	Variable – 20% applied to the tallest tower using the Stacking Height value	Centroid of each Overhead Line Tower
Bonnybridge Substation Extension	13.25	20m grid across platform area
Cumbernauld Substation Extension	15.5	20m grid across platform area

Landscape Baseline

Landform and Topography

- 6.6.7 The Study Area is characterised by a gently rolling terrain that gradually increases in elevation from both sides of the valley along the Forth and Clyde Canal. The landscape features a mix of plateau moors, farmlands, and forested areas (refer to Figure 6.1, Volume 2).
- 6.6.8 Higher elevations south of the canal include Greengairs (approximately +200m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD)) and Airdriehill (approximately +210 m AOD), where the land rises south and southwest from the valley. Glebe Wood represents one of the higher points to the north of the Canal (approximately +80 m AOD). Beyond the Study Area, the hills on either side of the canal rise further to the southeast and northwest, reaching approximately +280 m AOD and +459 m AOD near Black Hill and in the Garrel Hill, respectively.

Movement and Connectivity

- 6.6.9 There are several motorways, A roads and B roads within the Study Area which are interconnected to a series of minor roads serving local towns and villages. This includes M80 which runs within and adjacent to the north of the Study Area connecting Bonnybridge to Cumbernauld and continues to Glasgow.
- 6.6.10 There are two long-distance recreational routes within the Study Area: the Forth and Clyde/Union Canal Towpath and the John Muir Way (refer to Figure 6.7). Both routes run east–west through the northern part of the Study Area through Falkirk and Bonnybridge, forming a segment of the longer trail between Falkirk and Kirkintilloch. The Towpath is also part of the promoted cycle route, National Cycle Network (NCN 754), which connects Glasgow to Edinburgh and joins at the Falkirk Wheel.

- 6.6.11 Several core paths are located within the Study Area, connecting various visitor locations and settlements. The majority are in and around Falkirk Wheel, Antonine Roman Fort, and Palacerigg Country Park, with a smaller concentration of routes around western Cumbernauld.

Land Use, Built Form and Vegetation

- 6.6.12 The Study Area is characterised by mixed land use, encompassing considerable agricultural activity, existing and disused quarries and opencast workings and widespread forestry operations. These forestry areas include Drum Wood (southwest of Falkirk), South Bellstane Plantation, Cullochrig Plantation, forestry blocks on both the north and south sides of Riggend, and Langdales Plantation (northeast of Greengairs Farm).
- 6.6.13 The largest settlements within the area are Falkirk and Cumbernauld, with smaller settlements including Denny, Bonnybridge, Glenmavis, Airdrie, and Wishaw. Outside these settlements, residential properties are frequently dispersed and clustered across the surrounding landscape, notably in smaller communities such as Greengairs and Chapelhall. Other key land uses include Palacerigg Golf Centre and recreational activities within Palacerigg Country Park southwest to Cumbernauld.
- 6.6.14 Vertical elements within the landscape include the Falkirk Wheel (visitor attraction), numerous wood poles and overhead power lines that are frequent and visible across the landscape.
- 6.6.15 The landscape is primarily defined by a variety of habitats, predominantly semi-improved neutral grassland interspersed with large blocks of broadleaved and coniferous woodland. This composition is typical of the southwest of Falkirk, the northeast and southwest surrounding Cumbernauld, and the northeast of Airdrie.
- 6.6.16 Within this mosaic, large areas of bog and heather are present, particularly to the southeast of Cumbernauld (Fannyside Muir and Garbethill Muir), southeast of Greengairs, and northeast of Airdrie (near Darngavil).

Landscape Designations

- 6.6.17 Parts of the Study Area have been designated for their scenic qualities or historic landscape qualities, as shown on Figure 6.4, Volume 2. The ZTV has been used to identify the extent to which there is theoretical visibility of the Project from these designated landscapes.
- 6.6.18 Any designations that are not within the ZTVs have been scoped out of the LVIA as explained in Table 6.5 Landscape Assessment Scope and are consequently not included within the baseline section as there is no likelihood of the Project giving rise to significant adverse effects on receptors.

The Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area

- 6.6.19 The Local Landscape Area (LLA) is designated as a Special Landscape Area, which was formerly an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) as defined in Appendix 2 of the SG09

Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations, published in April 2021¹⁸.

6.6.20 The published study states that the Slamannan Plateau/ Avon Valley Local Landscape Area “combines two distinct areas separated by Avonbridge. Area of varied land cover and landform to west comprising of worked agricultural land and forestry contrasting with a more intimate and wooded agricultural valley landscape to the east. Settled, but incorporating the most intact and representative areas of landscape in the southern part of the Falkirk Council area”. The western part of the LLA is scoped in to the assessment only. The LLA has special qualities as set out within the published document as follows:

- “Incorporates the most intact and least developed sections of countryside to the south side of Falkirk;
- In west, generally rolling plateau with localised variations and very varied land use, with changing landcover, enclosure size and pattern;
- Farmed and populated rural lowland surrounded by plateau river catchment area and extending to lower ground down river valley eastwards;
- Wide range of woodland and tree cover overall: conifer plantation, small broadleaf blocks, woodland along watercourses, policy woodland, tree avenues, overgrown hedge and field boundary trees and tree groups and small areas of recent woodland;
- Provides an important contribution to setting of Avonbridge, Slamannan, Standburn and Muiravonside.”

6.6.21 The LLA is locally designated and the western part is distinctive with a strong sense of identity in the local landscape, incorporating some of the least developed sections of countryside. The coverage of pockets of woodland and overgrown hedgerows provide functional and natural heritage landscape value. Pockets of woodland create a sense of wildness and tranquillity in places, however this is reduced occasionally due to plantation forestry and energy infrastructure including turbines. The importance as being part of the setting of Avonbridge, Slamannan, Standburn and Muiravonside also enhances its functional landscape value. Considering all these factors, the landscape value of the LLA is considered to be **high**.

Other Relevant Designations

6.6.22 No other statutory landscape designations are present within the Study Area. Beyond the Study Area, apart from the Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area, there are other landscape designations which fall within areas of theoretical visibility as indicated by the ZTV. However, these designations are located at considerable distance from the Study Area, and intervisibility with the Project is further limited by intervening topography, vegetation and settlements. Consequently, other landscape designations are not considered further in the current assessment.

¹⁸ Falkirk Council (2021) SG09 Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Designations. Available at: <https://fcwebsites.blob.core.windows.net/www/media/bdfaf1d9-dd7b-4604-939e-b3c4ee350a6d/SG09%20Landscape%20Character%20Assessment%20and%20Landscape%20Designations.pdf> (Accessed: 29/01/2026).

- 6.6.23 Other designations located either within the boundary of the Project Site or within a 1 km buffer zone, which may contribute to the landscape value but are not specifically assessed in relation to landscape and visual matters, include the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site Buffer Zone, a range of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area, Scheduled Monuments, and Listed Buildings. For additional details on these and other relevant designations, refer to Chapter 7: Cultural Heritage, Volume 1 and Chapter 8: Biodiversity.
- 6.6.24 Palacerigg Country Park which is a non-statutory designation is within the Study Area. While the Country Park itself is not assessed as a landscape receptor, the land it occupies is captured within the assessment of the relevant landscape character areas. As agreed with the Council as mentioned in 6.3 Consultation, potential effects on users of Palacerigg Country Park are considered separately as part of the visual assessment. Viewpoint 10, which is situated within the Country Park, is proposed and detailed in Table 6.7 Representative Viewpoints. This viewpoint will be presented later in the baseline analysis under the Visual Receptors section.

Landscape Character Types

- 6.6.25 The following section provides baseline information and a landscape value judgement for all those LCTs scoped into the assessment on landscape character as defined by NatureScot¹⁹ (Figure 6.5, Volume 2). In addition, relevant elements of Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs), as defined by FC, and Local Landscape Units (LLUs), as defined by NLC, have also been considered where appropriate to provide a more locally nuanced understanding of the landscape character baseline. This is achieved by reviewing the local units to identify specific site-level characteristics not fully captured within the broader NatureScot LCT descriptions, ensuring these are accounted for sensitivity in the assessment.
- 6.6.26 Further detail on the LLCAs and LLUs is presented in Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline, which should be read in conjunction with this section to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the baseline and value judgements applied (Volume 2, Figure 6.6).

LCT 151 Lowland Plateaux - Central²⁰

- 6.6.27 LCT 151 is located in the central part of the Study Area, to the east of Wardpark Industrial Estate and east of Glen Village south to Falkirk. The key characteristics of this LCT as set out within the published study are included as follows:
- *“Undulating and rolling plateau landform, dissected by numerous streams and small river courses.*

¹⁹ NatureScot (2019). *Landscape character assessment in Scotland*. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment/landscape-character-assessment-scotland>. [Accessed 26th February 2026].

²⁰ NatureScot (2019). *Landscape Character Type 151: Lowland Plateaux - Central*. Scottish Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/LCA/LCT%20151%20-%20Lowland%20Plateaux%20-%20Central%20-%20Final%20pdf.pdf> [Accessed: 23 April 2026].

- *Predominantly open moorland and semi-improved grassland landcover, including important designated areas of grassland and peatland, birch scrub and small wetland habitats and lochans.*
- *Medium and large blocks of coniferous forest form prominent features across plateau.*
- *Kippen Muir is largely free of settlement, with some isolated farmsteads scattered amongst the farmland away from minor roads.*
- *Small former mining villages at the south of the Slamannan plateau the subject of recent expansion, with occasional remnants of open-cast mining, some screened by surrounding woodland.*
- *Rolling plateau landscape often contains external views, including open dramatic views to the Forth carselands and neighbouring hill masses from some areas.”*

6.6.28 This LCT overlaps with LLCA 3(ii) Darnrig/Gardrum Plateau Moorland, which is characterised by a large-scale, open, featureless plateau with peatland and rough grassland of national and international importance, and LLCA 3(iii) Castlecary/Shieldhill Plateau Farmland, which is characterised by gently undulating farmland with a well-wooded character, rectilinear fields, and overhead power lines and towers. Detailed descriptions of the characteristics for LLCA 3(ii) and LLCA 3(iii) are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline.

6.6.29 The LCT lies partially within the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site Buffer Zone which increases the cultural heritage value. Within the LCT, designated areas of grassland, peatland, birch scrub, and wet habitats provide functional and natural heritage value. Occasional remnants of open-cast mining areas, surrounded by woodland, add archaeological and cultural interest. The rolling landform enables distant views of neighbouring hills, contributing to scenic qualities, however this is reduced in part by plantation forestry cover and existing energy infrastructure including overhead lines and towers. Whilst the area is primarily covered by open moorland and semi-improved grassland, reflecting a typical rural character, considering all the factors above, the overall value of the LCT within the Study Area is regarded as **medium**.

LCT 152 Lowland River Valleys - Central²¹

6.6.30 LCT 152 is located in the northern part of the Study Area bounded by Dennyloanhead and Larbert, Bainsford and Camelon. The key characteristics of the LCT as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *“Well-defined river corridors, most with flat valley floor enclosed by often commanding hills.*
- *Strong topographic and visual identity, with varying scale and character.*
- *Glacial terrain and deposits located on valley margins, often subject to mineral extraction.*

²¹ NatureScot (2019). *Landscape Character Type 152: Lowland River Valleys – Central*. Scottish Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/LCA/LCT%20152%20-%20Lowland%20River%20Valleys%20-%20Central%20-%20Final%20pdf.pdf> [Accessed: 23 April 2026].

- *Relatively high proportion of tree cover, with roadside and hedgerow trees and seminatural woodland.*
- *Dense areas of coniferous forest cover the slopes surrounding the reservoir in the Upper Carron Valley.*
- *Road corridors often running parallel to river corridor form key linear features.*
- *Settlement often closely linked to the river corridor and parallel road corridors.*
- *Intensive settlement and urban development on margins of valleys south and north of Firth of Forth.*
- *Predominance of traditionally managed estate, policy and designed landscapes.*
- *Nature conservation importance of river and associated habitats.*
- *Frequently enclosed and focussed views along the river valley.*
- *Visibility of remnant derelict land, motorway and road corridors, power lines, wind farms and industrial sites from the urban fringe of Falkirk/Denny.”*

6.6.31 This LCT overlaps with LCA 4(iii) Bonny Water, which is characterised by an open, medium-large scale valley of the Bonny Water LCA closely following the southern edge of the urban conurbation, railway lines, the canal and the Antonine Wall, and LCA 4(iv) Lower Carron/Bonny Water, which is characterised by a wide swathe of low, very gently rolling land with numerous power lines and towers. Detailed descriptions of the characteristics for LCA 4(iii) and LCA 4(iv) are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline.

6.6.32 The LCT lies partially within the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site Buffer Zone which increases the cultural heritage value. Within the Study Area, the high proportion of tree cover contributes to natural heritage value. Rivers and associated habitats provide functional value and also contribute towards distinctiveness. The perceptual qualities of the LCT, such as tranquillity is reduced in areas with road corridors and industrial sites. River valleys offer focused, scenic views when framed by surrounding hills and forests, although areas containing remnants of derelict land and major road or energy infrastructure lack scenic qualities. Considering all these factors together, the overall landscape value is assessed as **medium**.

LCT 201 Plateau Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley²²

6.6.33 LCT 201 is located in the central and southern parts of the Study Area. The northern edge of the LCT lies at the southern edge of Cumbernauld and extended southwards across Glenmavis, Chapelhall until the eastern edge of Wishaw. The key characteristics of the LCT as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *“Extensive, open, flat or gently undulating landform.*
- *Dominance of pastoral farming, but with some mosses surviving.*

²² NatureScot (2019). *Landscape Character Type 201: Plateau Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley*. [online] Scottish Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/LCA/LCT%20201%20-%20Plateau%20Farmland%20-%20Glasgow%20%26%20Clyde%20Valley%20-%20Final%20pdf.pdf> [Accessed: 23 April 2026].

- *Limited and declining tree cover.*
- *Visually prominent settlements and activities such as mineral working.*
- *Rural character of the Plateau Farmland has reduced as tree cover has declined and the visual influence of settlements, transport infrastructure and mineral working has increased.”*

6.6.34 This LCT overlaps with LLU 5 Fragmented Farmlands (5a Area either side of M73 Road Corridor, south of the A80), which is characterised by generally undulating topography with hummocky structures, fragmented field patterns disrupted by motorway corridors, and overhead transmission lines and towers; LLU 6 Plateau Farmlands (6a Northern Plateau Farmland), which is characterised by flat or gently undulating topography, well-defined field patterns, scattered farmsteads, and numerous overhead lines and towers crossing the landscape, together with evidence of former quarrying and opencast workings; and LLU 7 Plateau Moorland, which is characterised by an elevated, large-scale flat or gently undulating topography with a strong sense of exposure and openness, extensive areas of commercial coniferous plantation, numerous former opencast sites and quarries, and a considerable number of overhead transmission connections and wind farms. Detailed descriptions of the characteristics for LLU 5a, LLU 6a and LLU 7 are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline.

6.6.35 There is recreational value within Palacerigg Country Park in the northern part of the LCT as well as other core paths. Whilst the declining tree cover and visual influence of detracting features in the landscape reduces the natural heritage value and scenic quality there are aspects of the landscape which demonstrate well-defined field patterns and native woodland along the valleys and within the Local Nature Reserves which positively influence the natural heritage and scenic qualities of the LCT. The dominance of pastoral farming with moss decline reduces the functional value of parts of the LCT whilst the Local Nature Reserves and Special Protection Area within the northern part of the LCT provide enrichment. Therefore, considering all these factors together, the overall landscape value is assessed as **medium**.

LCT 203 Urban Fringe Farmland²³

6.6.36 LCT 203 is located in the eastern and central parts of the Study Area. It is bounded by the City of Glasgow and Coatbridge in the eastern portion, and by New Stevenston, Chapelhall, and Newarthill in the southern portion. The key characteristics of the LCT as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *“Landform ranges from gently undulating topography associated with the plateau farmlands to more hummocky patterns where fluvio-glacial action has created drumlins and eskers.*
- *Primarily located along major transport routes on urban fringes.*
- *Pockets of remnant pastoral farming, in some areas retaining a strong structure of hedges and trees, but in others suffering serious decline.*

²³ NatureScot (2019). *Landscape Character Type 203: Urban Fringe Farmland*. [online] Scottish Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/LCA/LCT%20203%20-%20Urban%20Fringe%20Farmland%20-%20Final%20pdf.pdf> [Accessed: 23 April 2026].

- *Visual influence of the urban edge, former and current industrial sites, and transport infrastructure.*
- *Urban fringe issues including blight, management decline and anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping.”*

6.6.37 This LCT overlaps with LLU 5 Fragmented Farmlands (5a Area either side of M73 Road Corridor, south of the A80), which is characterised by generally undulating topography with hummocky structures, fragmented field patterns disrupted by motorway corridors, and overhead transmission lines and towers; LLU 6 Plateau Farmlands (6a Northern Plateau Farmland), which is characterised by flat or gently undulating topography, well-defined field patterns, scattered farmsteads, and numerous overhead lines and towers crossing the landscape, together with evidence of former quarrying and opencast workings. Detailed descriptions of the characteristics for LLU 5a and LLU 6a are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline.

6.6.38 Some areas retain a strong structure of hedges and trees around pockets of remnant pastoral farming, which provide functional value. However, the LCT is largely dominated by urban fringe features, limiting perceptual qualities including wildness and tranquillity. The presence of hummocky patterns with drumlins and eskers creates distinctions from a typical agricultural landscape. Nevertheless, urban issues such as blight, management decline, and anti-social behaviour, including fly-tipping, discourage recreational use and further reduce perceptual value. Considering all these factors, the landscape value of this LCT within the Study Area is assessed as **low**.

LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow & Clyde Valley²⁴

6.6.39 LCT 213 is located in the east-central part of the Study Area. It is bounded by the administrative boundary separating North Lanarkshire and Falkirk on the north, and by Hartwood on the south. The key characteristics of the LCT as set out within the published study are included as follows:

- *“Large scale landform.*
- *Undulating hills and sloping ridges in the western areas; a more even plateau landform in the east.*
- *Distinctive upland character created by the combination of elevation, exposure, smooth plateau landform, moorland vegetation.*
- *Predominant lack of modern development.*
- *Extensive wind turbine development, including one of the largest wind farms in Scotland, Black Law.*
- *Sense of apparent naturalness and remoteness which contrasts with the farmed and settled lowlands, although this has been reduced in places by wind energy development.”*

²⁴ NatureScot (2019). *Landscape Character Type 213: Plateau Moorlands – Glasgow & Clyde Valley*. [online] Scottish Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: <https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/LCA/LCT%20213%20-%20Plateau%20Moorlands%20-%20Glasgow%20%26%20Clyde%20Valley%20-%20Final%20pdf.pdf> [Accessed: 23 April 2026].

- 6.6.40 This LCT overlaps with LLU 5 Fragmented Farmlands (5b Area east of Airdrie), which is characterised by a rolling landscape with valleys and small hummocks, a fragmented and disjointed field pattern, numerous small developments and farms, and an overhead power line that is locally prominent; LLU 6 Plateau Farmlands (6b Southern Plateau Farmland), which is characterised by flat and slightly undulating landform, extensive transport and telecommunications networks, well-defined field patterns strengthened by hedgerows and shelterbelt tree planting, and prominent evidence of former industry; and LLU 7 Plateau Moorland, which is characterised by an elevated, large-scale flat or gently undulating topography with a strong sense of exposure and openness, extensive areas of commercial coniferous plantation, numerous former opencast sites and quarries, and a considerable number of overhead transmission connections and wind farms. Detailed descriptions of the characteristics for LLU 5b, LLU 6b and LLU 7 are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Additional Landscape Baseline.
- 6.6.41 A distinctive upland character is evident in areas where moorland vegetation combines with exposure which provides scenic qualities and natural heritage value. The perceptual value, including wildness and tranquillity, is reduced in parts due to the influence of wind energy and plantation forestry. There is also limited recreational value other than within Palacerigg Country Park in a small part of the LCT. Considering all these factors, the landscape value of the LCT within the Study Area is assessed as **low**.

Visual Baseline

Visual Receptors

- 6.6.42 Visual receptors are defined as specific locations or groups of people who may experience changes in the composition or character of available views resulting from the Project. The visual assessment determines the degree of anticipated change to visual amenity experienced these receptors by considering static and sequential effects. This is achieved through the analysis of individual viewpoints, considered representative of the range of views within the Study Area.
- 6.6.43 Visual receptors within the scope of this assessment are described in the following section and are grouped into the following categories:
- Residential, comprising those in residential dwellings;
 - Recreational, including users of walking and cycling routes;
 - Visitors to places of interest; and
 - Road users, including users of the local transport network.
- 6.6.44 The visual receptors included within this scope of assessment are those located within the area of theoretical visibility shown on the ZTV plans (Figure 6.7, Volume 2) as those outside of this theoretical visibility are not considered likely to be significantly affected by the Project.
- 6.6.45 While several residential properties and farmsteads are located in close proximity to the route, a separate Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) was scoped out during the previous assessment stage. This is because a large proportion of the New Build Overhead Line runs in parallel or close proximity to the existing CB Route which is to be removed. Furthermore, the Project includes substation extensions that are located largely

within the existing perimeters or in close vicinity to current infrastructure. The New Build Overhead Line and associated Substation Works, therefore, represent a replacement and expansion within a working landscape where residential properties are intermingled with farmsteads. Hence, even where properties are located nearby, the Project does not result in an overbearing sense of enclosure or a fundamental loss of living conditions. On this basis, a separate RVAA is not considered necessary.

- 6.6.46 Nonetheless, there are a number of settlements and scattered properties within the Study Area. Residential receptors are present who experience a range of views that are likely to be significantly affected by the Project. Effects on these receptors—including those arising from the substation extensions—are captured within the visual assessment through the use of selected representative viewpoints.

Residential

- 6.6.47 **Denny:** This settlement is located in the northwest portion of the Study Area between Falkirk and Cumbernauld. It consists of a mixture of lowland terrain, generally undulating with gentle hills, valleys and river plains. Agricultural and arable land can be seen in the much of the surrounding area with a mix of residential, industrial and green spaces transitioning into the countryside. Denny is accessed by the A883 road from Falkirk. Existing views are influenced by the sloping landform and are majority rural in nature. Scattered residential properties in the surrounding context have more prominent views towards the existing network of electrical infrastructure present.
- 6.6.48 **Falkirk:** This settlement is located in the northeast portion of the Study Area. Residential receptors along the western edge of Falkirk currently experience views (facing west) towards the more rural landscape with blocks of woodland/green space, Forth and Clyde Canal and backdrop of hills. Electrical infrastructure is present across parts of the skyline however the majority of the views are rural in nature.
- 6.6.49 **Bonnybridge:** Bonnybridge is a village in a valley within the Central Lowlands, about four miles west of Falkirk. It is located north of the Forth and Clyde Canal in a gently rolling landscape. The village has the well-preserved section of the Antonine Wall and the remnants of Rough Castle Roman Fort on higher ground to the south. Views are generally contained by the surrounding valley landform and comprise a mix of built-up areas, the Forth and Clyde Canal, and historic sites associated with the Antonine Wall and Rough Castle Roman Fort. Views experienced from residential receptors within Bonnybridge are represented by Viewpoint 1, as shown within Volume 4.
- 6.6.50 **Airdrie:** This settlement is located in the south portion of the Study Area. It consists of dense residential areas and has an existing presence of electrical infrastructure, in the surrounding landscape, in the form of wind turbines, towers and overhead lines. Wind farms are particularly prominent due to upland exposure. Key views are influenced by the elevated location of the town, offering panoramic vistas, especially from areas like Rawyards woodland.
- 6.6.51 **Greengairs:** A ribbon development that is located 5km northeast of Airdrie. It sits on rising ground between Blacktongue Farm to the north and opencast workings about 1.2 km to the south, providing contrast to the more settled lowlands. Views are predominantly rural and expansive, with a sense of openness and exposure. The landscape is also influenced

by existing and former industrial development. Views experienced from residential receptors within Greengairs are represented by Viewpoint 11, as shown within Volume 4.

6.6.52 **Glenmavis:** This is a small settlement northwest of Airdrie situated on a gently undulating landform. The landscape is described as having a rural nature with a distinct sense of openness. Its key visual qualities are the slightly more open and panoramic views towards the west, with residents experiencing vistas of fields and distant hills. Views experienced from residential receptors within Glenmavis are represented by Viewpoint 13, as shown within Volume 4.

6.6.53 **Individual properties and farmsteads:** Residential receptors are dispersed throughout the Study Area, including areas near the A73 and B803 networks. These comprise both individual dwellings and clusters of residences, often located along transportation routes. While views from these properties typically extend to landscapes of rural character, distant views are often partially screened by roadside vegetation or obstructed by intervening landforms. Views experienced from residential receptors within individual properties and farmsteads at Beam Road, Arns Road, and Brackenhirst Road are represented by Viewpoints 5A and 5B, 6, and 12, respectively, as shown in Volume 4.

Recreational

6.6.54 Recreational routes and core paths are shown on Figure 6.7, Volume 2 and are described below.

6.6.55 **Recreational routes:** The Forth and Clyde Canal Towpath and John Muir Way run from Bonnybridge to Falkirk within the Study Area. Walkers and cyclists along this route experience low-lying views of the surrounding landscape. These views are typically heavily filtered by the abundant boundary trees and hedgerows that line on both sides of the cycle and walkway. Views experienced from recreational routes are represented by Viewpoints 2 and 3, as shown within Volume 4.

6.6.56 **Core Paths:** The Study Area contains a number of core paths. The majority of these paths are located in and around Cumbernauld and Bonnybridge. Views vary due to their proximity to settlements and the network of forestry plantations and landform, which restrict views in some places. However, from higher elevations, these paths afford wide panoramic views of farmlands, moorlands, woodlands, and undulating terrain. Views experienced from core paths are represented by Viewpoints 4, 5A and 5B, 6, 7, 8 and 9, as shown within Volume 4.

Visitors to Places of Interest

6.6.57 **Falkirk Wheel:** The Falkirk Wheel is a tourist destination and functional boat lift in Falkirk and it is located along the Union Canal connecting to the Forth and Clyde Canal. The elevated ground south of the wheel allows for distant views of the surrounding landscape, which is dominated by grassland and farmland enclosed by woodland and distant, gently rolling hills. The continuous skyline is occasionally interrupted by wind turbines. Views experienced by visitors to the wheel are represented by Viewpoints 2 and 3, as shown in Volume 4.

6.6.58 **Antonine Wall (World Heritage Site):** The wall is situated on a sloping hill and is interconnected with the Falkirk Wheel as a recreational route. The primary path leading to

the historic feature is lined on both sides by mature tree lines, which results in low visibility towards the surrounding landscape. Overhead lines occasionally intrude upon the skyline between the tree belts. In some areas, visibility to distant hills is possible through gaps in the trees. Views experienced by visitors to the Wall are represented by Viewpoint 4, as shown in Volume 4.

- 6.6.59 **Palacerigg Country Park:** The Country Park is a recreational destination near Cumbernauld. It features a looped path that allows visitors to explore a mix of woodland, grassland, and wildlife habitats. The park is largely enclosed by mature woodland, creating a sense of tranquillity, although views toward the distant agricultural landscape are often filtered by tree cover. The skyline remains largely uninterrupted, with only occasional glimpses of transmission infrastructure and wind turbines. Views experienced by visitors of the park are represented by Viewpoint 10, as shown in Volume 4.

Road Users

- 6.6.60 Road users with potential visibility towards the Project exist along main and local road routes such as the M80, A73, A803 and B803 (key routes within the Study Area).
- 6.6.61 **M80/M876:** The M80/M876 is a main motorway route that runs through the study area, passing between Denny and Bonnybridge and then to the northwest of Cumbernauld. Due to the speed of travel, visibility from this route is intermittent and fleeting, with views often restricted by roadside planting, cuttings, and embankments. The scope of visibility from the motorway is limited, with only glimpses of the wider landscape, which includes a mix of settlements, agricultural land, and intermittent woodland.
- 6.6.62 **A73:** The A73 runs from Airdrie to Cumbernauld. Views to the surrounding landscape vary primarily between scattered residential houses and open landscapes. These open areas are often dominated by low hedgerows with grassland on one side and woodland on the other. Existing overhead line infrastructure is visible in areas with relatively flat, open ground.
- 6.6.63 **A803:** This route is located in the northwest portion of the study area, dissecting the M80. Residential properties run along either side of the route with occupational line of tree belts. Situated on the higher ground has some visibility to the rolling upland on the southern side comprised of primarily agricultural and grassland with occasional woodlands. Visibility to distant hills on the southern side is limited due to density of residential properties on either side. Views experienced from the local road network are represented by Viewpoint 1 as shown within Volume 4.
- 6.6.64 **B803:** The B803 is located in a predominantly rural, gently undulating landscape with scattered farmsteads and properties. Overhead lines run along and directly adjacent to the southern side of the road. Occasional glimpses of domestic wind farms are visible in the open agricultural land southeast, between Greengairs and Upperton. Visibility is generally limited due to the landform, with fleeting views likely along more open and exposed stretches. Views experienced from the local road network are represented by Viewpoint 11 as shown within Volume 4.

Viewpoints

- 6.6.65 Table 6.7 Representative Viewpoints provides a list of thirteen representative viewpoints and their corresponding receptors. These viewpoints were chosen through a desktop study, ZTV analysis, and site work to provide a range of viewing distances and experiences of the Project during both construction and operation. They were agreed upon with Statutory Consultees and the relevant planning authorities, and their locations are shown in Figure 6.7, Volume 2.
- 6.6.66 The visualisations are shown within Volume 4, and it should be noted that for Viewpoint 5 two angles of view are shown, as 5a to the northeast and 5b to the southeast respectively, to capture the key parts of the horizontal extent of the Project shown in the view.

Table 6.7 Representative Viewpoints

Viewpoint Number	Description / Location	Reasons for Selection
VP1	A803 Falkirk Road Eastings: 283627, Northing: 680742	Representative of views from residential receptors from eastern edge of Bonnybridge and road receptors along A803.
VP2	Bridge over Forth and Clyde Canal Eastings: 285313, Northing: 680244	Representative of recreational receptors along the core path network (route 001/61/1) and residential receptors.
VP3	Falkirk Wheel Eastings: 285285, Northing: 680068	Representative of recreational receptors at the Falkirk Wheel and on the core path network (route 001/15/1).
VP4	Rough Castle Roman Fort Eastings: 284163, Northing: 679892	Representative of views from recreational users along the Antonine Wall within the World Heritage Site at Rough Castle Roman Fort and the core path network (route 013/399/1).
VP5	Core Path off Beam Road Eastings: 283226, Northing: 678476	Representative of views from recreational users along core path network (route 013/384/1) and residential receptors in scattered properties.
VP6	Core Path along Arns Road Eastings: 281213, Northing: 675549	Representative of views from recreational users along core path network (NL/131/1), residential receptors in scattered properties and road users along Arns Road.
VP7	Cumbernauld House Park Eastings: 277181, Northing: 675676	Representative of views from recreational users along core path network (NL/136/1) and inside Cumbernauld House Park, and residential receptors in Cumbernauld.
VP8	Forest Road Eastings: 277434, Northing: 674450	Representative of views from road users of Forrest Road and recreational users along core path network (NL/123/1).

VP9	Core Path East of Cumbernauld Eastings: 277853, Northing: 674209	Representative of views from recreational users along core path network (NL/136/1).
VP10	Palacerigg Golf Course and Country Park Eastings: 278573, Northing: 673561	Representative of views from recreational users of Palacerigg Country Park.
VP11	Greengairs Eastings: 279026, Northing: 670810	Representative of views from nearby residential receptors with Greengairs, users of the core path network and road users along the local road network.
VP12	Brackenhirst Road Eastings: 275880, Northing: 669617	Representative of residential receptors along Brackenhirst Road and road users along Brackenhirst Road.
VP13	Alnwick Crescent, Golfhill, Glenmavis Eastings: 275561, Northing: 668249	Representative of views from residential receptors on the northern edge of Glenmavis.

Viewpoint 1: A803 Falkirk Road

- 6.6.67 This is a representative viewpoint which is experienced by residential and road users. The viewpoint is located on the eastern edge of the settlement of Bonnybridge within the northern part of the Study Area. The viewpoint is located at the midpoint of a bridge along the A803 Falkirk Road, positioned over the Rowan Tree Burn, and is to the southwest of the existing Bonnybridge Substation. The receptors include residential properties and road users of the A803 Falkirk Road.
- 6.6.68 The foreground is occupied by the A803 Falkirk Road and rolling agricultural land adjacent to each side of the road. Roadside elements include a stone wall on the north side of the road and post-and-wire fencing with interplanted vegetation on the southern side of the road.
- 6.6.69 The middle ground contains a prominent line of mature vegetation on the northern side, which largely screens views towards the background; however, filtered views towards the existing Bonnybridge Substation are visible through areas with less dense vegetation. The southern side of the middle ground consists of hedgerow lines and smaller blocks of vegetation defining the rolling agricultural land as it gently rises southwards away from the viewpoint location.
- 6.6.70 The background of the view has a continuous line of overhead lines and towers which extends across the entire width of the view and with several towers and lines converging associated with the existing Bonnybridge Substation. The lower extents of towers and overhead lines are partially screened by the mature vegetation in the middle ground, with the upper extent of the towers being visible above the tree line. The towers and overhead lines are, however, fully visible in the centre and to the right of the view where the vegetation is lower in height and provides minimal screening. The Falkirk Wheel is barely visible above the existing tree line on the southern side of the view in the background.

Existing transmission infrastructure is seen in the context of other vertical features, including distant wind turbines, communication masts, and wood poles.

- 6.6.71 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view and has no associated signage. The view shows a typical urban fringe where scenic qualities are contributed by deciduous and mixed broad-leaf woodland, roadside/hedgerow trees, and agricultural enclosure, and there is a distant view to the Falkirk Wheel. However, these qualities are compromised by the presence of overhead power lines and road infrastructure. The value of the view is therefore deemed to be **low**.

Viewpoint 2: Bridge over Forth and Clyde Canal

- 6.6.72 This viewpoint is representative of views experienced by residential and recreational receptors, including visitors to the Falkirk Wheel. The viewpoint is located at the midpoint of a bridge crossing above the Forth and Clyde Canal, northeast of the local attraction, Falkirk Wheel, and southwest of the residential properties of Carmuir. It is on the main access route to the Falkirk Wheel Visitor Centre and to a number of recreational paths, including those leading to Roughcastle Tunnel and the Antonine Wall.
- 6.6.73 The foreground is dominated by open views towards and channelled down the Forth and Clyde Canal, which includes a metal-fenced walkway descending to a floating dock or pontoon on the southwestern side. There is also infrastructure along the canal edge, including fencing and lighting columns. Tall reed and wetland planting lines the northern edge of the Canal. The Canal, at the centre of the view, and the adjacent Towpath extend westwards into the background.
- 6.6.74 In the middle ground, the southwestern side features a bank that rises gradually from the canal edge towards the Falkirk Wheel Visitor Centre, which is further backed by a grassy bank. The northeastern side consists of the Towpath extending towards the background, accompanied by large mature vegetation on the far right. The Falkirk Wheel is also visible to the south of the receptor.
- 6.6.75 The background has a continuous, dense line of mature trees that extends across the entire width, limiting long-distance views. Above the tree line to the west are wind turbines located at the top of a distant hill which is visible against the sky. On the southwestern side, the tree line is positioned behind a line of brightly coloured huts with vertical lighting columns.
- 6.6.76 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view. Although the view contains some energy infrastructure in the distance, it provides a view of the Canal with dense woodland, offering some naturalistic characteristics. The combination of water and mature vegetation contributes to the scenic qualities. The presence of the Falkirk Wheel is located nearby and this is marked on Ordnance Survey mapping. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **medium**.

Viewpoint 3: Falkirk Wheel

- 6.6.77 This viewpoint is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors visiting the Falkirk Wheel and users of the core path (route 001/15/1). The viewpoint is located

approximately 30m from the intersection of a footpath leading to Roughcastle Tunnel and another leading to Lime Road, southeast of the Falkirk Wheel. It is located along, and connected to, a number of recreational paths, including those leading to Roughcastle Tunnel and the Antonine Wall.

- 6.6.78 In the foreground, there is a sloping, grassy verge and a rough, dark gravel path stretching across the view. A wire-mesh fence with metal posts runs horizontally across the entire width of the view, separating the path from the central area.
- 6.6.79 The middle ground is dominated by the Falkirk Wheel. The rotating structure of the Wheel is positioned on the northern side of the view, with a high aqueduct at the top extending horizontally across the frame. This aqueduct is supported by large, circular concrete pillars spaced at equal intervals across the view. The space beneath the aqueduct is open, well-maintained grass, allowing unobstructed views through to the background up to the line of trees.
- 6.6.80 The background contains a continuous, dense line of mature, dark green trees and deciduous woodland running across the entire view, situated behind the aqueduct and grassy field. Transmission infrastructure is visible above the tree line in the southern part of the view. Distant wind turbines are present in the wider landscape context to the north but outside the extent of the viewpoint.
- 6.6.81 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy. The view is dominated by the engineering structure. The view is noted on Ordnance Survey mapping as a viewpoint, it is likely to be in tourist maps and there is a nearby bench for viewing the Falkirk Wheel. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **high**.

Viewpoint 4: Rough Castle Roman Fort

- 6.6.82 This viewpoint is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors along the Antonine Wall within the World Heritage Site at Rough Castle Roman Fort and the core path network (route 013/399/1). The viewpoint is located east of the intersection of the Antonine Wall and Rowan Tree Burn, and north of the remnants of Rough Castle Roman Fort where the site of the Bath House was.
- 6.6.83 In the foreground, there is a sloped, open, grassy bank with rougher patches of scrub vegetation stretching across the view. The ground presents a series of gentle, undulating mounds and dips, primarily covered in short grass.
- 6.6.84 The middle ground is characterised by deep, shadowed trenches and raised mounds running through the centre of the scene. The sides of the mounds are interspersed with clumps of low, dark green bushes and small scrubby trees. The open space across the centre allows views through to the line of trees behind the raised mounds in the middle ground. A tower (CB Route) is visible on the south side, and its associated overhead lines run horizontally across the skyline in a south-north direction.
- 6.6.85 The background of the view contains a continuous, dense line of mature, dark green trees and mixed woodland running across the view. Above the tree line, another set of overhead lines running in a south-north direction is visible which is parallel to those in the middle ground (AA Route).

- 6.6.86 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy. The view has influence of electrical infrastructure. The view has cultural associations, it is likely to be in tourist maps and signage associated with the heritage boundary of the Antonine Wall. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **high**.

Viewpoint 5: Core Path off Beam Road

- 6.6.87 This viewpoint is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors along the core path network (route 013/384/1) and residential receptors in scattered properties. The viewpoint is approximately at the midpoint of Beam Road looking northeast, located about 180 m northwest of Wester Drum, opposite the entrance leading to Drove Loan.
- 6.6.88 When looking northeast (as illustrated by Viewpoint 5a), the foreground is dominated by pastoral agricultural land, edged at the front by long grasses and scrubby bushes. The foreground slopes away from the view to the east.
- 6.6.89 The middle ground comprises an expansive view of pastoral agricultural land. A low bank of trees forms a horizontal line at the centre of the view, separating the closer field from the more distant one. Wood poles run across the field in a north-south direction.
- 6.6.90 The background contains the farthest agricultural fields and a wide, undulating horizon line. Distant hills are visible where they meet the skyline. While overhead lines and towers are faintly visible at the centre of the view, with backcloth provided by distant hills, wind turbines on the northern side are more visible with distant hills behind them. There are also distant pockets of settlement and scattered residential properties and farmsteads visible as well as harsh edges associated with forestry plantation.
- 6.6.91 When looking southeast (as illustrated by Viewpoint 5b), the foreground is similar, comprising grazing grassland bordered by untidy grasses and scrubby bushes, with the terrain descending eastward, moving away from the viewer.
- 6.6.92 The middle ground shows a line of vegetation comprised of mature trees and shrubs, which provides screening to a yellow field of grassland behind.
- 6.6.93 On the southern side of the background, the grassland behind and the skyline are only partly visible, as the distant landscape is obstructed by the field and vegetation in the middle ground. On the northern side of the background, overhead lines and towers are visible above the tree line that runs across the north-south axis.
- 6.6.94 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape (other than potentially within distant views of hills). The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view and has no associated signage. Whilst the expansive character of the agricultural fields and distant hills provides some visual interest, the presence of wood poles in the middle ground and energy infrastructure in the background compromise the overall scenic qualities. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **low**.

Viewpoint 6: Core Path along Arns Road

- 6.6.95 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by recreational receptors along the core path network (Route NL/131/1), residential receptors in scattered properties, and road users along Arns Road. The viewpoint is located along Arns Road approximately 250m east of Arns House and directly opposite Old Shields.

- 6.6.96 In the foreground, the view is dominated by an irregular and structurally loose verge consisting of long, dense grasses and scrubby bushes located in the lower part of the view. Immediately behind the verge is a stone wall, with a line of post-and-wire fences running parallel to it.
- 6.6.97 The middle ground is a flatter expanse of rough agricultural land stretching horizontally across the view, with wooden poles visible and running east-west across this view. This middle ground gently rolls away from the viewer northwards up to the background. The rising ground is mostly a mix of darker earth and patchy, dry grass. On the east side, the land is covered by scattered trees and shrubs.
- 6.6.98 The background contains the farthest extent of the landscape, characterised by low, rolling hills that form the horizon. There are existing overhead towers and lines visible in the background of the view. The upper part of the horizon is topped by a dark, continuous line of woodland plantation at the centre. Existing overhead lines break the skyline above woodland plantation which is broken up on part of the skyline.

The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape (other than potentially within distant views of hills). The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view and has no associated signage. While the view is expansive and captures the open, agricultural character of the landscape, the relatively irregular and structurally loose vegetation in the foreground and the presence of the overhead lines intrude on the skyline, compromising the overall scenic quality. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **low**.

Viewpoint 7: Cumbernauld House Park

- 6.6.99 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by recreational receptors along the core path network (route NL/136/1) and users of the Cumbernauld House Park, and residential receptors located on the northeastern part of Cumbernauld. The viewpoint is located at the southwestern corner of the Park, about 80 m northwest of Meadow View.
- 6.6.100 In the foreground, the view is dominated by an expansive, relatively flat surface of well-maintained green lawn stretching across the entire width of the view, with a large, mature fastigate tree situated on the southwest side.
- 6.6.101 The middle ground comprises a large, central, open lawn space. Behind this area, a scattered line of mature deciduous trees runs horizontally across the centre of the view.
- 6.6.102 In the background, on the southwest side, a multi-story residential block with a light-coloured façade and a dark roof stands partially visible behind the trees in the middle ground. To the further southwest of this housing block are some smaller, single-story buildings backed by a distant line of trees as a backdrop. Looking southeast, the upper part of an overhead line tower (CB Route) is visible above the tree line against the skyline.
- 6.6.103 It should be noted that when in the park, the focal direction is to the north as the landform falls away and the views to the wider hills. The benches within the park face in this direction.
- 6.6.104 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view. Although absent from the immediate view, there are benches northwest of the viewpoint location, suggesting

value and higher expectations of the view. Overall, the view enables a large expanse of maintained lawn and trees that contribute to some scenic qualities, despite the presence of extensive residential blocks and some infrastructure at distance. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **medium**.

Viewpoint 8: Forest Road

- 6.6.105 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by road users of Forest Road and recreational receptors along the core path network (route NL/123/1). The viewpoint is at the northwestern entrance of Cumbernauld Substation along Forest Road.
- 6.6.106 The foreground is a physical barrier associated with the asphalt path leading to the existing Cumbernauld Substation. The physical barrier comprises horizontal wooden post-and-rail fencing and a metal gate positioned side-by-side at about waist level. Overgrown grasses sit directly behind the fence and extend onto the far side of the physical barrier. On the southwest side of the gate are large shrubs that extend into the middle ground.
- 6.6.107 In the middle ground, the northeast side of the view comprises a metallic palisade fence that encloses the existing Cumbernauld Substation and its ancillary infrastructure. The southwest side, immediately adjacent to the palisade fence, is covered entirely by an asphalt road that links the foreground and the background.
- 6.6.108 In the background, a single tower (CB001) rises above the metal fence in the middle ground at the centre. On the southwest side of the view, a line of mature, dense trees serves as a backdrop to the palisade fence. The line of mature trees continues across the full extent of the background view.
- 6.6.109 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view. The content of the view shows a typical industrial utility setting at the fringe of a developed area. The value of the view is deemed to be **very low**.

Viewpoint 9: Core Path East of Cumbernauld

- 6.6.110 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by recreational receptors along the core path network (route NL/136/1). The viewpoint is southeast of the existing Cumbernauld Substation.
- 6.6.111 In the foreground, the view is defined by a rough, dark grey asphalt or gravel path that runs down the centre towards the background. The immediate sides of this path are bordered by long, structurally loose, wild grasses and scrub. The far northeast side of the view has a dense thicket of shrubs, which limits some visibility to the middle ground and beyond.
- 6.6.112 The middle ground is covered by tall, overgrown grasses that transition to a mix of dark green deciduous shrubs and trees that converge toward the centre of the view. The vegetation in the middle ground limits visibility to the background. The path leading from the foreground descends and bends toward the northeast side.
- 6.6.113 The background contains a single, large transmission tower (CB Route) that stands centrally, dominating the skyline above the trees in the middle ground, with a distant view visible beyond the tower. Low-rise buildings on the urban edge of Cumbernauld are visible in the distance behind and at the lower extent of the tower. Behind, there are views of undulating distant hills.

- 6.6.114 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view. The view is typical of a recreational path at the urban fringe. Whilst the views to the distant hills provides some scenic quality, the intrusion of the large tower compromises the overall quality. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **low**.

Viewpoint 10: Palacerigg Golf Course and Country Park

- 6.6.115 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by recreational receptors within the Palacerigg Country Park. The viewpoint is located in the middle of the Palacerigg Golf Club.
- 6.6.116 In the foreground, the view is dominated by a wide, expansive area of short, well-maintained green lawn stretching across the entire view. Extending into the view from the bottom centre is a rough, light-brown earth track or path that runs toward the middle ground. Further toward each side of the view is the dark foliage of mature, deciduous trees.
- 6.6.117 The middle ground is centred by the path terminating and merging into the open, flat expanse of the lawn. To the north of the view, there are sand traps. This open, managed grassland surrounding the sand traps is backed by a continuous, dense line of mixed deciduous and evergreen trees in the background. The background contains a solid, dark green backdrop across the entire view, composed mostly of tall, mature conifers, which entirely screens views to the wider landscape.
- 6.6.118 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view. The view is located within the Palacerigg Country Park which is likely to be in tourist maps or guidebooks. The view is otherwise a typical view with no factors that would reduce scenic quality. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **medium**.

Viewpoint 11: Greengairs

- 6.6.119 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by residential receptors within Greengairs, recreational users of the core path network, and road users along the local road network. The viewpoint is located at the intersection between Greengairs Road and a minor road leading to Loanhead. It is immediately adjacent to the western properties within Greengairs.
- 6.6.120 In the foreground, the view is dominated by the asphalt road surface extending northwards toward the background at the centre of the view. The road is bordered by wide verges of long, dry, structurally loose grasses and scrub. Wooden poles present in the foreground on the western side, connecting to those leading further away from the viewpoint. Lighting columns extend vertically and are viewed against the wider landscape and break the skyline.
- 6.6.121 The middle ground consists of a broad, slightly lower expanse of vegetation stretching across the entire view behind the tall grass in the foreground. Behind this grassland vegetation is a dense line of dark green conifer plantation that forms a solid, uniform visual band across the view. Interrupting the continuation of the tree band is a building with a white façade and grey roof on the western side of the view.

- 6.6.122 In the background, the horizon is defined by the soft, undulating shapes of distant hills and mountains (Campsies and Ochil Hills) stretching across the entire width of the view and built form within Cumbernauld is visible at the base in part of the view. Wind turbines are visible in pockets in the background of the view, both against the skyline and landform.
- 6.6.123 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape (other than potentially within distant views of hills). The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view and has no associated signage. The viewpoint is typical of an urban fringe setting. Although the view offers a wide, expansive vista of distant hills, large forestry blocks reduce the overall scenic qualities. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **low**.

Viewpoint 12: Brackenhirst Road

- 6.6.124 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by residential receptors in scattered properties and road users along Brackenhirst Road. The viewpoint is located at the intersection between Brackenhirst Road and Cullochrig Road.
- 6.6.125 In the foreground, the view is dominated by the asphalt surface, which splits in the centre, with a wider section toward the western end and a narrower section curving sharply to the eastern side. The edges of the road are bordered by low-cut grass verges that transition into taller vegetation.
- 6.6.126 The landform rises to the middle ground which comprises lines of vegetation immediately bordering the road. On the western side, a low, dark, dense hedge runs parallel to the road, backed by a cluster of small, young conifer saplings enclosed by a green wire fence. On the eastern side, the road is bordered by a high, rough bank of tall, dry grasses, weeds, and thick, dark scrub. The road curves into the distance, almost disappearing behind the vegetation on the eastern side. A wood pole line is also visible which is largely backclothed by the woodland behind.
- 6.6.127 In the background, beyond the hedge and young plantation in the middle ground, a line of mature, dark woodland stretches across the entire view, though the species are uniform for forestry operations. On the far eastern side, a small property is visible between vegetation in the foreground. Wind turbines are present above the tree line in the background of the view.
- 6.6.128 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view and has no associated signage. The viewpoint is typical of a rural landscape. The view's scenic quality is limited by the immediate dominance of the road surface and the plantation forestry. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **low**.

Viewpoint 13: Alnwick Crescent, Golfhill, Glenmavis

- 6.6.129 This viewpoint is representative of the view experienced by residential receptors on the northern edge of Glenmavis. The viewpoint is located at northwestern part of the Dawn Home Mayfield Development at the midpoint of Alnwick Crescent.
- 6.6.130 In the foreground, the view is dominated by a wide, paved street that gently curves into the middle ground. The pavement is a mix of red/brown brick paving and dark asphalt. Along

the edges of the street are strips of neatly manicured green lawn fronting adjacent detached houses.

- 6.6.131 In the middle ground, there are two-story, detached or semi-detached houses featuring a consistent, modern architectural style with light-coloured facades. The background comprises more houses of the same architectural style and views to the wider landscape are largely curtailed by the properties within the housing estate. An existing tower along the XX Route is visible above the houses.
- 6.6.132 It should also be noted that on the northern edge of the development further along Alnwick Crescent, there are views to the wider landscape and this includes towers as part of the existing XX Route in the middle ground.
- 6.6.133 The view is not located within, nor does it overlook, a locally or nationally designated landscape. The view is not identified by policy or a promoted view and has no associated signage. The viewpoint is typical of an urban environment. Visibility to the distant landscape is constrained by the residential built environment. Therefore, the value of the view is considered **low**.

6.7 Future Baseline

- 6.7.1 Predicting the future baseline involves a degree of speculation and uncertainty as acknowledged at paragraph 5.33 in GLVIA3¹². It requires projecting forward any trends in change and considering how they may affect the landscape over time. The nature of the future baseline is influenced by a combination of natural and human processes, including climate change. Scoping and consented development proposals are able to influence the future baseline and are discussed in relation to the cumulative schemes (refer to Chapter 2).
- 6.7.2 The landscape within the Study Area is varied comprising primarily valley and rolling lowland terrain. The vegetation across the Study Area includes semi-improved neutral grassland interspersed with large blocks of broadleaved and coniferous woodland. While this vegetation will continue to mature, the underlying character of a mosaic pattern dominated by agricultural land is unlikely to change substantially. Forestry operations, which involve ongoing cycles of felling and re-growth and are evident across the landscape, are expected to continue in a similar manner, with no substantial changes to current management practices foreseen.
- 6.7.3 As highlighted by the number of schemes included within the cumulative assessment (Volume 3, Appendix 16.1), the rise of energy infrastructure schemes, including solar installations, overhead lines and battery storage developments, is likely to continue. Therefore, it is likely that energy-related infrastructure will expand in this area.
- 6.7.4 Some impact of climate change could occur, such as certain types and species of vegetation not able to cope with differing temperatures; however, it is difficult to predict the extent of change on the landscape.
- 6.7.5 In summary, the future baseline in the absence of the Project is likely to be similar to the current baseline.

6.8 Embedded Mitigation

- 6.8.1 Embedded mitigation measures, which have been incorporated within the design of the Project, or which are standard practice measures that have been committed to, are summarised in Chapter 3: Evolution of Design and Alternatives, Volume 1.
- 6.8.2 All landscape and visual mitigation planting measures associated with the Bonnybridge Substation Extension and Cumbernauld Substation Extension are embedded within the design and are illustrated in Figure 6.9 and 6.10, respectively. These measures are detailed separately below. These measures have been developed collaboratively with ecology, forestry and heritage specialists to ensure a cohesive and integrated mitigation strategy.

Bonnybridge Substation Extension

- 6.8.3 The proposed mitigation planting at Bonnybridge Substation Extension includes a new hedgerow with shrub planting on the southern side of the existing Substation Extension to soften views and to provide some screening for receptors viewing from the south. Bunding of up to 2 m in height (the exact height would be determined by the cut and fill balance at detailed design stage) would be incorporated to further enhance the screening effect. The planting would also help to continue the existing road-edge vegetation along the A803.
- 6.8.4 Additional hedgerow, shrub planting (with feathered trees) and woodland planting are proposed adjacent to the existing substation entrance along A803. This planting would help soften the appearance of the infrastructure within the existing substation when viewed from the south, and would provide some screening of the Bonnybridge Substation Extension when viewed from the south-east.
- 6.8.5 A species diverse meadow is proposed across the remaining landscape areas to create a softer and more naturalistic appearance around the substation. A wet grassland seed mix is proposed where appropriate associated with the proposed drainage aspects of the proposals.
- 6.8.6 The scale of the new planting proposal is given as follows (to note that the following is given an indicative values and species and would be further reviewed at the detailed design stage):

- 600m² native woodland with key species including *Betula pubescens*, *Corylus avellana* and *Sorbus aucuparia*;
- 1965 m² native shrub planting mix with key species including *Pinus spinosa*, *Crataegus monogyna* and *Viburnum opulus*, and feathered trees with key species including *Betula pubescens*, *Corylus avellana* and *Sorbus aucuparia*;
- 21050 m² species diverse meadow mix (Scotiaseeds MG5 Meadow Mix or similar);
- 360 m native hedgerow with key species including *Ilex aquifolium* and *Prunus avium*; and
- 2130 m² wet grassland seed mix (Scotiaseeds Dry Places Wildflower Mix (SCF5 or similar).

Cumbernauld Substation Extension

- 6.8.7 The proposed mitigation planting at Cumbernauld Substation Extension focuses on reinforcing existing landscape structure and softening views of the Substation as a whole.

A new hedgerow with woodland behind it would be proposed to soften views of the Substation for visual receptors located to the west. Bunding of up to 2m in height (the exact height would be determined by the cut and fill balance at detailed design stage) would be incorporated to further enhance screening. Towards the north-eastern part of Forest Road new woodland and shrub planting would extend the retained woodland, feathering into the site to create a more naturalistic appearance.

- 6.8.8 The cut-slopes surrounding the perimeter of the Project would be seeded to soften the engineered landform. Collectively, these interventions would help reinforce the rural landscape character and contribute to a landscape-scale approach to native planting and regeneration.
- 6.8.9 The scale of the planting proposal is given as follows (to note that the following is given an indicative values and species and would be further reviewed at the detailed design stage):
- 9420m² native woodland with key species including *Betula pubescens*, *Corylus avellana* and *Sorbus aucuparia*;
 - 4315m² native shrub planting mix with key species including *Pinus spinosa*, *Crataegus monogyna* and *Viburnum opulus*;
 - 23190m² species diverse meadow mix (Scotiaseeds MG5 Meadow Mix or similar);
 - 290m native hedgerow with key species including *Ilex aquifolium* and *Prunus avium*;
 - 3130m² perimeter grassland (Emorsgate Seeds EM1F Basic General Purpose WildFlowers or similar); and
 - 2360m² wet grassland seed mix (Scotiaseeds Dry Places Wildflower Mix (SCF5 or similar).
- 6.8.10 Where planting proposals and habitat creation does not conflict with construction activity, these areas would be planted in advance of the Operational phase of the Project to enable early establishment. This could happen in the first available planting season within the construction phase but would be determined within the detailed design stage.
- 6.8.11 All mitigation is considered to be embedded with no additional mitigation appropriate to be proposed to further reduce landscape and visual effects.

6.9 Assessment of Effects

- 6.9.1 A detailed assessment of landscape and visual effects is provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.3 Landscape Assessment and Volume 3, Appendix 6.4 Visual Assessment. This section focuses on the likely significant adverse effects on landscape and visual receptors.

Summary of Construction Effects

Effects on Landscape Designation during Construction

- 6.9.2 There are no likely significant effects on any landscape designations during construction as the effects on the perceptual qualities are primarily limited due to distance and the existing context within the receiving landscape. Full details of the landscape assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment.

Effects on Landscape Receptors during Construction

- 6.9.3 There are likely significant effects on three of the five LCTs within the study area during construction. This is limited to the host LCTs with direct effects of the construction works. Full details of the landscape assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment.
- 6.9.4 Regarding LCT 151: Lowland Plateaux – Central during construction, there would be a localised direct and indirect effects on the LCT associated with the New-Build Overhead Line New Build Overhead Line, the dismantling and removal of CB Route, and the undergrounding of the AA Route. This would include changes such as the introduction of construction plant and activity. The degree of influence would be reduced due to the undulating and rolling landform, and the presence of the local road network but would remain across an extensive area within the LCT. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the LCT.
- 6.9.5 Regarding LCT 152: Lowland River Valleys – Central during construction, there would be a localised direct effect associated with the specific tower and access locations and Bonnybridge Substation Extension works. The extent of influence would be reduced due to varying topography and vegetation cover, which contain construction plant and activities, but would partially include influencing views along the river valley. The presence of the A803 already introduces movement and activity in the landscape, which reduces the degree of contrast. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the LCT.
- 6.9.6 Regarding LCT 201: Plateau Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley during construction, there would be a localised direct effect on the LCT associated with construction activities at tower locations, access points along the New Build Overhead Line, and the Cumbernauld Substation Extension. Whilst perceptible across the LCT, the degree of contrast would be reduced due to existing influence of forestry and mineral operations within the LCT. The characteristic feature of the topography across the LCT would remain unaffected. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the LCT.

Effects on Visual Receptors during Construction

- 6.9.7 It is anticipated that five of the thirteen viewpoints (Viewpoint 1, Viewpoint 4, Viewpoint 5, Viewpoint 12 and Viewpoint 13) would experience likely significant adverse effects during the construction phase. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment. A summary of the visual effects by receptor group is presented below.
- 6.9.8 **Residential receptors:**
- 6.9.9 Residential receptors on the edge of Bonnybridge (Viewpoint 1) would experience views of construction works which would introduce noticeable, additional movement in the middle ground and distant part of the views. The activity would extend across the majority of the view and would contrast some of the more rural aspects of the wider view containing mature vegetation and agricultural land parcels. The existing context of the energy infrastructure and movement of vehicles along the road network would reduce the degree of contrast and the works would be screened somewhat by intervening mature vegetation,

- however the works would be in closer proximity and at a larger scale. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.10 Residential receptors on the edge of Glenmavis (Viewpoint 13) would experience the change introduced from this construction activities. This would represent a noticeable change in close proximity to the residential receptors and would result in increased movement and works. This would be set within the context of the existing XX Route in close proximity. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.11 Scattered residential receptors near Riggend (including along Brackenhirst Road) (Viewpoint 12) would experience a pronounced change in the composition of the view due to limited vegetation screening and the scale of activity. The relatively simple view would have increased movement and construction related plant which would provide a great degree of contrast. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.12 Scattered residential properties near Beam Road (Viewpoint 5) would experience prominent views in close proximity associated with the construction activities. This is in the context of the movement of vehicles along the road network and the remainder of the open view to the northeast would remain largely unaffected. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.13 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for residential receptors in Denny, Falkirk, Airdrie and Greengairs, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the construction works would not be a noticeable change in views due to a number of factors dependent on location including intervening vegetation and built form and the composition of the view with existing reference to movement in parts of views. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.
- 6.9.14 Recreational receptors:**
- 6.9.15 Recreational receptors visiting the Antonine Wall and Rough Castle Roman Fort (Viewpoint 4) would experience the scale of change introduced by the construction activities and movement which would be noticeable across the view, particularly the simultaneous installation of the New Build Overhead Line in combination with the existing CB Route yet to be removed. This would be reduced in part due to intervening undulating landform and existing vegetation. The perceived contrast would also be reduced by the existing context of transmission infrastructure. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.16 Recreational receptors on the local core path network near to Beam Road (Viewpoint 5) would experience prominent views in close proximity associated with the construction activities. This is in the context of the movement of vehicles along the road network and the remainder of the open view to the northeast would remain largely unaffected. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.

6.9.17 Visitors to Places of Interest:

6.9.18 Recreational receptors visiting the Antonine Wall and Rough Castle Roman Fort (Viewpoint 4) would experience the scale of change introduced by the construction activities and movement which would be noticeable across the view, particularly the simultaneous installation of the New Build Overhead Line in combination with the existing CB Route yet to be removed. This would be reduced in part due to intervening undulating landform and existing vegetation. The perceived contrast would also be reduced by the existing context of transmission infrastructure. The magnitude of effect would be medium (significant), resulting in a moderate adverse effect on the viewpoints.

6.9.19 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for visitors to the Palacerigg Country Park and Falkirk Wheel, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the construction works would not be a noticeable change in views largely due to including intervening vegetation. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.

6.9.20 Road users:

6.9.21 Road users along the A803 (Viewpoint 1) would experience views of construction works which would introduce noticeable, additional movement in the middle ground and distant part of the views. The activity would extend across the majority of the view and would contrast some of the more rural aspects of the wider view containing mature vegetation and agricultural land parcels. The existing context of the energy infrastructure and movement of vehicles along the road network would reduce the degree of contrast and the works would be screened somewhat by intervening mature vegetation, however the works would be in closer proximity and at a larger scale. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.

6.9.22 Road users near Riggend (including along Brackenhirst Road) (Viewpoint 12) would experience a pronounced change in the composition of the view due to limited vegetation screening and the scale of activity. The relatively simple view would have increased movement and construction related plant which would provide a great degree of contrast. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.

6.9.23 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for road users along the M80/M876, A73 and B803, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the construction works would not be a noticeable change in views due to a number of factors dependent on location including intervening vegetation and built form and the composition of the view with existing reference to movement in parts of views. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.

Summary of Effects at Operation Year 1

Effects on Landscape Designation at Operation Year 1

6.9.24 There are no likely significant effects on any landscape designations at Operation Year 1 as the effects on the perceptual qualities are primarily limited due to distance and the

existing context within the receiving landscape. Full details of the landscape assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment.

Effects on Landscape Receptors at Operation Year 1

- 6.9.25 There are no likely significant effects on landscape receptors at Operation Year 1 as the operational Project is considered to have typically a slight alteration on key characteristics of the LCTs due to the nature of the receiving landscape containing existing energy development and industrial built form and also often a limited change to the existing vegetation pattern across the landscape. Full details of the landscape assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment.

Effects on Visual Receptors at Operation Year 1

- 6.9.26 It is assessed that three of the thirteen viewpoints (Viewpoint 1, Viewpoint 5 and Viewpoint 12) would experience significant adverse effects during Operation Year 1. Full details of the visual assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment. A summary of the visual effects based on receptor groups is provided below.
- 6.9.27 **Residential receptors:**
- 6.9.28 Residential receptors on the edge of Bonnybridge (Viewpoint 1) would experience new energy infrastructure in closer proximity than existing and this scale change would occur across the horizontal and vertical extent of the view. The degree of contrast is reduced given the existing context of energy infrastructure in the view. There would be some simplification of transmission lines in parts of the view however the more rural views across the wider landscape would have increased wirescape. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.29 Scattered residential receptors near Riggend (including along Brackenhirst Road) (Viewpoint 12) would experience a pronounced change in the simple composition of the existing view. Despite having features such as forestry and wind turbines within the view, the scale of change and proximity to the receptors would heavily contrast the existing views. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.30 Scattered residential properties near Beam Road (Viewpoint 5) would experience a prominent change in close proximity to the receptor due to the introduction of the New-Build Overhead Line towers. This is in the context of the movement of vehicles along the road network and the remainder of the open view to the northeast would remain largely unaffected. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.31 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for residential receptors in Denny, Falkirk, Airdrie, Greengairs and Glenmavis, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the operational infrastructure of the Project would not be a noticeable change in views due to a number of factors dependent on location including intervening vegetation and built form and the composition of the view with existing reference to energy development in parts of views. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.

6.9.32 Recreational receptors:

- 6.9.33 Recreational receptors on the local core path network near to Beam Road (Viewpoint 5) would experience a prominent change in close proximity to the receptor due to the introduction of the New-Build Overhead Line towers. This is in the context of the movement of vehicles along the road network and the remainder of the open view to the northeast would remain largely unaffected. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.34 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for recreational receptors on recreational routes, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the operational infrastructure of the Project would not be a noticeable change in views due to a number of factors dependent on location including intervening vegetation and built form and the composition of the view with existing reference to energy development in parts of views. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.

6.9.35 Visitors to Places of Interest:

- 6.9.36 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for visitors to places of interest, including the Falkirk Wheel, Antonine Wall and Rough Castle Roman Fort and Palacerigg Country Park, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the operational infrastructure of the Project would not be a noticeable change in views due to a number of factors dependent on location including intervening vegetation and built form and the composition of the view with existing reference to energy development in parts of views. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.

6.9.37 Road users:

- 6.9.38 Road users along the A803 (Viewpoint 1) would experience new energy infrastructure in closer proximity than existing and this scale change would occur across the majority of the view. The degree of contrast is reduced given the existing context of energy infrastructure in the view. There would be some simplification of transmission lines in parts of the view however the more rural views across the wider landscape would have increased wirescape. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.39 Road users near to Riggend (including along Brackenhirst Road) (Viewpoint 12) would experience a pronounced change in the simple composition of the existing view. Despite having features such as forestry and wind turbines within the view, the scale of change and proximity to the receptors would heavily contrast the existing views. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.40 Whilst there would be some intervening theoretical visibility for road users along the M80/M876, A73 and B803, there are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects as the operational infrastructure of the Project would not be a noticeable change in views due to a number of factors dependent on location including intervening vegetation and built form and the composition of the view with existing reference to energy development in parts of views. Full details of the visual assessment are provided in Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment.

Summary of Effects at Operation Year 15

Effects on Landscape Designation at Operation Year 15

- 6.9.41 There are no likely significant effects on any landscape designations at Operation Year 15 due to the reasoning set out for Operation Year 1. Full details of the landscape assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment.

Effects on Landscape Receptors at Operation Year 15

- 6.9.42 There are no likely significant effects on landscape receptors at Operation Year 15 due to the reasoning set out for Operation Year 1. Full details of the landscape assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.3: Landscape Assessment.

Effects on Visual Receptors at Operation Year 15

- 6.9.43 It is assessed that three of the thirteen assessed viewpoints (Viewpoint 1, Viewpoint 5 and Viewpoint 12) would experience significant adverse effects during Operation Year 15. Full details of the visual assessment are contained within Volume 3, Appendix 6.4: Visual Assessment. A summary of the visual effects based on receptor groups is provided below.

6.9.44 **Residential receptors:**

- 6.9.45 Residential receptors on the edge of Bonnybridge (Viewpoint 1) would remain similar to those observed at Year 1 of Operation as the main effects relating to the towers would not change. The proposed mitigation planting which would have matured at year 15 would reduce the adverse impacts despite being within a small extent of the view and largely screened by existing mature vegetation. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.46 Scattered residential receptors near Riggend (including along Brackenhirst Road) (Viewpoint 12) would experience the same visual effects at Operation Year 1 as no mitigation planting would be visible. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.47 Scattered residential properties near Beam Road (Viewpoint 5) experience the same visual effects at Operation Year 1 as no mitigation planting would be visible. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.48 There are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects on the remaining residential receptors as set out for Operation Year 1.

6.9.49 **Recreational receptors:**

- 6.9.50 Recreational receptors on the local core path network near to Beam Road (Viewpoint 5) would experience the same visual effects at operation Year 1 as no mitigation planting would be visible. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.51 There are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects on the remaining recreational receptors as set out for Operation Year 1.

6.9.52 Visitors to Places of Interest:

- 6.9.53 There are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects on the visitors to places of interest as set out for Operation Year 1.

6.9.54 Road users:

- 6.9.55 Road users along the A803 (Viewpoint 1) would remain similar to those observed at Year 1 of Operation as the main effects relating to the towers would not change. The proposed mitigation planting would reduce the adverse impacts despite being within a small extent of the view and largely screened by existing mature vegetation. The magnitude of effect would be medium, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.56 Road users near to Riggend (including along Brackenhirst Road) (Viewpoint 12) would experience the same visual effects at Operation Year 1 as no mitigation planting would be visible. The magnitude of effect would be high, resulting in a moderate adverse (significant) effect on the viewpoint.
- 6.9.57 There are not considered to be any likely significant adverse effects on the remaining road receptors as set out for Operation Year 1.

High level assessment of scoped out elements of the Project (as agreed with NLC)

- 6.9.58 Regarding the scoped out elements of the project (detailed within Table 6.4 Components of the Project Excluded as Part of Scope), the following provides a high-level review of landscape and visual effects requested by NLC of scoped out elements of the Project, including consideration of localised tree removal.
- 6.9.59 Wishaw Substation Extension: During construction, the works would involve increased activity and plant in the vicinity. This would include laydown areas and compounds to the east of the existing substation. This would have a limited effect on landscape and visual receptors due to the existing context of the substation and movement of trains along the railway network and vehicles along the road network. The operational substation extension would have a permanent influence on the landform due to earthworks, would extend the influence of the substation due to the extension and would involve permanent vegetation removal. This would be highly localised and the context of the substation, with existing earthworks, would reduce effects on landscape and visual receptors.
- 6.9.60 Upgraded Overhead Lines: During construction, the works would involve increased activity and plant in the vicinity during the works. This would be short-term and in the context of the existing lines which would reduce the effects on landscape and visual receptors. Any vegetation clearance for access would be minimal, would be in the context of the existing line and wayleave and would be reinstated as soon as possible following the construction period. At operation, the lines would appear as the baseline following the upgrading works and any vegetation regrowth would reinstate over time.

Additional Mitigation and Monitoring

- 6.9.61 All mitigation is embedded and no additional mitigation is available to further reduce effects.

Residual Effects

6.9.62 As all mitigation is embedded in the Project and there is no additional mitigation, all effects described in the section above are residual. The following tables present a summary of the landscape and visual impact assessment.

Table 6.8 Summary of Effects: Construction

Receptor	Description of Effects	Effects	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
The Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 151 Lowland Plateaux - Central	Effect on landscape character	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
LCT 152 Lowland River Valleys - Central	Effect on landscape character	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Effect on landscape character	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
LCT 203 Urban Fringe Farmland	Effect on landscape character	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP1 – A803 Falkirk Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP2 – Bridge over Forth and Clyde Canal	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant

VP3 – Falkirk Wheel	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP4 – Rough Castle Roman Fort	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP5 – Core Path off Beam Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP6 – Core Path along Arns Road	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP7 – Cumbernauld House Park	Effect on visual amenity	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
VP8 – Forest Road	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP9 – Core Path East of Cumbernauld	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP10 – Palacerigg Golf Course and Country Park	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP11 – Greengairs	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP12 – Brackenhiest Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP13 – Alnwick Crescent, Golfhill, Glenmavis	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant

Table 6.9 Summary of Effects: Operation Year 1

Receptor	Description of Effects	Effects	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
The Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 151 Lowland Plateaux - Central	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 152 Lowland River Valleys - Central	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 203 Urban Fringe Farmland	Effect on landscape character	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Effect on landscape character	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
VP1 – A803 Falkirk Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP2 – Bridge over Forth and Clyde Canal	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP3 – Falkirk Wheel	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP4 – Rough Castle Roman Fort	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant

VP5 – Core Path off Beam Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP6 – Core Path along Arns Road	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP7 – Cumbernauld House Park	Effect on visual amenity	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
VP8 – Forest Road	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP9 – Core Path East of Cumbernauld	Effect on visual amenity	Minor beneficial	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor beneficial	Not significant
VP10 – Palacerigg Golf Course and Country Park	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP11 – Greengairs	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP12 – Brackenhiest Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP13 – Alnwick Crescent, Golfhill, Glenmavis	Effect on visual amenity	Negligible beneficial	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible beneficial	Not significant

Table 6.10 Summary of Effects: Operation Year 15

Receptor	Description of Effects	Effects	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Significance
The Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 151 Lowland Plateaux - Central	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 152 Lowland River Valleys - Central	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 201 Plateau Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Effect on landscape character	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
LCT 203 Urban Fringe Farmland	Effect on landscape character	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
LCT 213 Plateau Moorlands - Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Effect on landscape character	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
VP1 – A803 Falkirk Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP2 – Bridge over Forth and Clyde Canal	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP3 – Falkirk Wheel	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP4 – Rough Castle Roman Fort	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant

VP5 – Core Path off Beam Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP6 – Core Path along Arns Road	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP7 – Cumbernauld House Park	Effect on visual amenity	Negligible adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible adverse	Not significant
VP8 – Forest Road	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP9 – Core Path East of Cumbernauld	Effect on visual amenity	Minor beneficial	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor beneficial	Not significant
VP10 – Palacerigg Golf Course and Country Park	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP11 – Greengairs	Effect on visual amenity	Minor adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Minor adverse	Not significant
VP12 – Brackenhurst Road	Effect on visual amenity	Moderate adverse	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Moderate adverse	Significant
VP13 – Alnwick Crescent, Golfhill, Glenmavis	Effect on visual amenity	Negligible beneficial	N/A (All mitigation embedded)	Negligible beneficial	Not significant

6.10 Summary and Conclusions

- 6.10.1 This chapter provides an assessment of the effects on landscape character and visual amenity that are likely to arise from the construction and operational phases of the Project. The assessment of existing baseline conditions identified one local landscape designation, five published landscape character types and 13 representative viewpoints relevant to the assessment of effects.
- 6.10.2 This chapter considers the New-build Overhead Line, including the associated removal of the existing 132kV CB Route, the undergrounding of sections of the existing 132kV AA Route, and the connections into Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substations, as well as

the Distribution Line Diversion Works (the specific construction works associated has not been explicitly drawn out in the assessment due to limited activity that would be within the context of construction activity of new line). Other elements of the wider Project, including the uprating of the existing ZG, XX and XR overhead line routes and works at Denny North, Easterhouse and Wishaw Substations, have been scoped out of the LVIA at the outset, in accordance with the Scoping Report, on the basis that they are not anticipated to give rise to likely significant landscape and visual effects due to their limited, localised, temporary or contextually contained nature.

- 6.10.3 Mitigation of views of the permanent infrastructure has been a key part of the design development process as well as consideration of local landscape character context. This has been primarily associated with the sensitive routeing and siting of the Project, particularly the alignment of the New-build Overhead Line. Embedded landscape mitigation measures have been incorporated in relation to the Bonnybridge and Cumbernauld Substation Extensions. This includes new planting, such as new hedgerow and shrub planting, woodland planting and species diverse meadow, to provide softening and screening of views and to create a softer and more naturalistic appearance around the proposed infrastructure.
- 6.10.4 There are no anticipated likely significant adverse effects on the landscape designation (The Slamannan Plateau / Avon Valley Local Landscape Area) at the construction or operational phases of the Project.
- 6.10.5 It is anticipated that there would be likely significant adverse effects on LCT 151: Lowland Plateaux – Central, LCT 152: Lowland River Valleys – Central and LCT 201: Plateau Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley during construction. Such LCTs would be directly affected by the construction works across extensive parts of the LCTs and affecting key characteristics. Such effects would reduce to non-significant likely effects at operation as the degree of change would be relatively lower and within the context of the removed CB Route and partial undergrounding of the AA Route.
- 6.10.6 It is anticipated that during construction there would be likely significant adverse effects on five of the thirteen viewpoints (Viewpoint 1, Viewpoint 4, Viewpoint 5, Viewpoint 12 and Viewpoint 13). This is typically due to construction works in close proximity to the receptors or contrasting existing views. By Operation Year 1 and 15, it is anticipated that there would be likely significant adverse effects on three of the thirteen viewpoints (Viewpoint 1, Viewpoint 5 and Viewpoint 12). This is typically due to new infrastructure in close proximity to the receptors which increases the scale of change.
- 6.10.7 There are no other anticipated likely significant adverse effects on visual receptors largely due to the existing context of energy infrastructure including overhead lines in views, some of which are being removed or partially undergrounded, screening in views such as from mature woodland or forestry plantation cover and less sensitive receptors in places to the type of development proposed.
- 6.10.8 It is also anticipated that at operation there would be likely beneficial effects at operation for recreational receptors on the edge of Palacerigg Country Park (Viewpoint 9) and residential receptors within a residential estate at Glenmavis (Viewpoint 13) as existing

electricity transmission infrastructure would be further from the receptor and the influence decreased.

- 6.10.9 Overall, the embedded mitigation of the Project has reduced the likely effects on landscape and visual effects as far as possible. This has enabled likely residual significant adverse effects on visual receptors in three localised areas in close proximity to the Project (A803 Falkirk Road near to Bonnybridge, Core Path network off Beam Road to the south of Bonnybridge and Brackenhirst Road to the north of Glenmavis). The Project has also resulted in likely residual beneficial visual effects in two locations due to the routeing of the new overhead line (New Build Overhead Line) in comparison to the existing overhead lines.