

7 Landscape and Visual Amenity

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 This chapter addresses the potential landscape and visual impacts and effects of the construction and operation of the Kincardine North Substation (KINN) and the Overhead Line (OHL) tie ins associated with the Proposed Development.
- 7.1.2 The LVIA is proportionate and is focussed on assessing the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on the surrounding landscape and visual resource. Where appropriate, this chapter provides details of mitigation and/or enhancement measures which have been identified to minimise adverse landscape and visual effects.
- 7.1.3 This LVIA is supported by the following figures and Appendices:
- Figure 7.1a – KINN Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and Representative Viewpoints
 - Figure 7.1b – OHL tie ins Comparative ZTV and Representative Viewpoints
 - Figure 7.1c – KINN and OHL Combined ZTV and Representative Viewpoints
 - Figure 7.2 - Topography
 - Figure 7.3 - Landscape Character
 - Figure 7.4 - Landscape Designations
 - Figure 7.5 - Outline Landscape Masterplan Plan
 - Appendix 7.1 - LVIA Methodology
 - Appendix 7.2 - Annotated Photo Viewpoints

7.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Legislation

- 7.2.1 The European Landscape Convention (ELC)ⁱ was signed by the UK Government in 2006 and came into effect in March 2007. The ELC recognises landscape in law. It focuses specifically on landscape issues and highlights the importance of 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.
- 7.2.2 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 Framework (NPF 4) 2024

- 7.2.3 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)ⁱⁱ is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. NPF4 highlights the importance and value of landscape to Scotland and notes the importance of landscape in place making and sustaining local distinctiveness.
- 7.2.4 Policy 11 ‘Energy’ of NPF4 sets out that development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported, including grid transmission and distribution infrastructure. It notes under criterion (e)(ii) that developments must demonstrate

how project design and mitigation have addressed any significant landscape and visual impacts. It quantifies 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 will generally be considered acceptable.

7.2.5 NPF4 sets out six overarching spatial principles as follows:

- *"Just transition. We will empower people to shape their places and ensure the transition to net zero is fair and inclusive.*
- *Conserving and recycling assets. We will make productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure, and services, locking in carbon, minimizing waste, and building a circular economy.*
- *Local living. We will 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 will limit urban expansion so we can optimise the use of land to provide services and resources, including carbon storage, flood risk management, blue and green infrastructure, and biodiversity.*
- *Rebalanced development. We will target development to create opportunities for communities and investment in areas of past decline, and manage development sustainably in areas of high demand.*
- *Rural revitalisation. We will encourage sustainable development in rural areas, recognising the need to grow and support urban and rural communities together."*

"By applying these spatial principles, our national spatial strategy will support the planning and 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."*

7.2.6 Table 7-1 below outlines the policies in the NPF4 most relevant for this project in relation to landscape and visual matters.

7.2.7 Of note, Policy 4 (part d) refers to development proposal effects on local landscape designations. The policy sets out that development proposals should "not have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified" or that "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 7-1. Relevant Policies in NPF4 to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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: • Emissions from development are minimised; and • Our places are more resilient to climate change impacts.
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:

Sustainable Places	Policy	Policy Principles
		• 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. This includes energy generation, storage, new and replacement transmission and distribution infrastructure and emerging low-carbon and zero emissions technologies including hydrogen and carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS). Policy Outcomes: • Expansion of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies.

ⁱⁱⁱFIFE plan 2017

7.2.8 The majority of the Proposed Development Site lies within the Fife Council area including KINN and the turn-in towers on XL, ZCN and ZCS routes. Within this area the Local Development Plan (FIFEPlan)^{iv} was adopted in 2017. A new Local Development Plan (Fife's Place Plan) is under development but at the time of writing not yet adopted. The following planning policies are relevant to the application site and have informed the approach to the LVIA and mitigation:

- 'Policy 1: Development Principles: Development proposals will be supported if they conform to relevant Development Plan policies and proposals and address their individual and cumulative impacts. Development proposals must meet one of the points in Part A and conform to all applicable requirements in Parts B and C.'
- Part A outlines the need for development to be in a defined boundary, compliant with policies or supported by the Local Development Plan.
- Part B states development proposals must address their impact by complying with relevant criteria and policies including protecting cultural resources, safeguarding natural resources, green belt areas and the historic environment.
- Part C asserts that provisions must be made to minimise and manage impact generated by the development proposal and the proposal should contribute to the area's potential for energy from renewable sources.
- *Policy 10: Amenity:* The development proposal must maintain the integrity of the site and its surrounding landscape, including air and noise pollution. Mitigation must be in place

to safeguard the characteristics of the landscape, deter visual impact from the proposal and to not impact any existing or proposed operations or facilities.

- *Policy 13: Natural Environment and Access:* Development proposals must protect and enhance natural heritage and access assets, including biodiversity; landscape designations (including Local Landscape Areas, identified on the accompanying Proposals Map); access including Core Paths and bridleways; and landscape character and views.
- *Policy 14: Built and Historic Environment:* The development must protect or enhance the built and cultural heritage of Fife and adhere to the six qualities of successful places and demonstrate how it intends to meet these qualities. The interpretation of these is described in Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance.

Making Fife's Places Supplementary Guidance 2018

- 7.2.9 As set out in Policy 14 of the FIFEPlan, the development proposal must adhere to the supplementary guidance, of which relevant to the Proposed Development is Making Fife's Places (2018)v. The document outlines Fife Council's expectations of good design, how to achieve this and details six qualities which are at the core principle of the document; distinctive, easy to move around and beyond, safe and pleasant, adaptable, welcoming and resource efficient. Planning approval is most likely consented if these qualities are met.

Clackmannanshire Council Local Development Plan 2015

- 7.2.10 6.4km of XL Route, lies within the Clackmannanshire Local Authority Area, the Local Development Planvi was adopted in 2015.

Policy EA4 Landscape Quality references the protection of Special Landscape Areas, identified on the accompanying Proposals Map; and relevant Landscape Character Assessments. A new Local Development Plan is being prepared but not yet adopted at the time of writing.

7.3 Consultation

- 7.3.1 Consultation for this assessment was undertaken in two stages from April to June 2023 for KINN and May to August 2024 for the OHL works. Consideration has been given to the scoping opinions and relevant consultation responses received from the organisations shown in Table 7-2 below.
- 7.3.2 Pre-Application advice was sought from Fife and Clackmannanshire Councils. Although the majority of the proposed site is within the Fife Council area the proposed access track delivery access would be from the A876 in Clackmannanshire, along with the OHL tie ins, therefore Clackmannanshire Council were also approached for Pre-Application Advice.

Table 7-2 Consultation Responses

Consultee / Type and Date	Summary of Consultation Response Relevant to Landscape	Response to Consultee
Scottish Ministers' Scoping Opinion August 2024	Viewpoints to be agreed with Clackmannanshire Council, Fife Council and NatureScot.	Viewpoints have been agreed with these stakeholders as noted

Consultee / Type and Date	Summary of Consultation Response Relevant to Landscape	Response to Consultee
		below. NatureScot made no comments.
Fife Council Pre-Application Advice /Scoping Opinion June 2023 / June 2024	Any future application should include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment including a ZTV of 2 kilometres and photomontages, visualisations, wireframes and viewpoint assessments.	This has been undertaken in this report.
Clackmannanshire Council Pre-Application Advice /Scoping Opinion April 2023 / June 2024	- Consideration should be given to the potential impact of the development on the Glamping and Camping Broadcarse Farm to the west of the A876, and the scope for mitigation of these impacts; - Consider the impacts on persons travelling on the A876 and NCR 76; - Consider whether the development would be incongruous, and whether it would erode landscape character. - It is considered that measures would be required to mitigate the adverse impacts if the project is approved. This could include the provision of native screen planting around the development to effectively mitigate the visual and landscape impacts, particularly the impacts on persons travelling on the A876 and NCR 76.	- A viewpoint was taken from the 102 Core Path, representing views of recreational users and residents at Broadcarse Farm; - Viewpoints which represent the A876 and NCR 76 have been assessed; - The site is situated within LCT 196 where a key characteristic is 'Variety of other land uses, particularly industrial'. This has been considered during the assessment. See section 7.5. - Added to Figure 7.5 Outline Landscape Mitigation Plan.

Consultee / Type and Date	Summary of Consultation Response Relevant to Landscape	Response to Consultee
Clackmannanshire Council Scoping Opinion August 2024	- Consideration should be given to the potential impact of the development on key transportation routes including the A876 and the C68, and the scope for increased mitigation of these impacts; - Consideration should be given to any additional measures for mitigation and increased planting in the vicinity of the A876 to mitigate the visual impacts, on persons travelling on the A876.	This has been undertaken in this report including consideration at viewpoints 3, 4 and 8; The LVIA includes consideration of impacts on the road and includes the effects of mitigation incorporated within the Proposed Development which add would add screening to views from the road to reduce views and significant effects
Fife Council	No response given to the Scoping Opinion.	

- 7.3.3 Based on the consultation responses, the ZTV analysis and types of visual receptors, the defined study area includes, but are not limited to, the following: settlements and residential receptors; users of National Cycle Routes and those using Core Paths; people using ‘major’ (A and B) roads; and people using the local ‘minor’ road network

7.4 Methods

Introduction

- 7.4.1 The methodology adopted for this assessment is based upon guidance contained within the following published documents:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition^{vii};
 - Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3) Technical Guidance Note - 2024-01^{viii}; and,
 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals. Technical Guidance Note 06/19^{ix}.
- 7.4.2 This is the standard reference for undertaking landscape character and visual appraisals in the UK. Following appraisal of the baseline landscape and visual context of the Proposed Development, this LVIA assesses the:
- Nature of the receptor based on sensitivity of both landscape and visual receptors derived from susceptibility and value;
 - Nature of impact based on magnitude derived from scale/extent, duration and reversibility, whether adverse or beneficial (if applicable); and,

- Significance of the effects based on a combination of the receptor and nature of the impact using professional judgement and supported by reasoned evidence.

7.4.3 The detailed description of the assessment methodology is included in Appendix 7.1 LVIA Methodology.

Main Features of the Proposed Development relevant to this LVIA

7.4.4 For the purposes of the LVIA the following are key components and exclusions of the design. They will exclude the reconductoring XL12 to XL20 to increase operating voltage and capacity of the overhead line. These elements are associated with existing OHL lines and do not require any construction or notable refurbishment works that would have a notable effect on the landscape and visual resource and is not therefore assessed in this chapter. Other elements are noted below:

KINN Substation

- Hardstanding platform constructed to a finished ground-level of approximately 8 m AOD and to cover an area of 193 m by 254 m;
- GIS substation comprising a building (assumed to be 14.5 m tall, 12.5 m GIS building plus up to 2 m hardstanding) and outdoor electrical equipment (assumed to be 18 m tall, 16 m maximum height of equipment plus up to 2 m hardstanding);
- Up to 3m palisade security fencing around the substation platform perimeter;
- Screening bund along a section of the western site perimeters;
- Watercourse crossings of an unnamed ditch and the Canal Burn;
- Approximately 600m of permanent road providing access via Hawkhill Road;
- Scrub removal required to facilitate the proposed A876 access point;
- Drainage system including swales, filter drains, and SUDS pond to the south of the site;
- Operational lighting sufficient to meet HSE requirements, and motion triggered low light spill to reduce glare and sky glow; and,
- Hawkhill Road Improvements to widen the road in sections. This includes a temporary segregated cycleway to the north side of the road and includes the removal 4no Category B trees at the western and eastern ends;
- Landscape mitigation planting on the margins of the site to screen, filter and backcloth views.

OHL tie ins

7.4.5 XL Route Upgrade inclusions and exclusions;

- Removing one existing overhead line tower (XL05)
- Constructing four new overhead line towers to turn in and connect XL route to the proposed Kincardine North Substation
- Installing of temporary masts and diversion of XL route while the works above (c) and (d) are undertaken;

- Associated temporary access works, scaffolding, working areas, laydown areas and pulling positions for conductors, which will temporarily extend the site area along OHL routes to the east and west beyond the main development Site between the two trunk roads, A977 to the east and A876 to the west.
- The reconductoring XL12 to XL20 to increase in operating voltage and capacity of the overhead line does not require any construction or refurbishment works and is not therefore assessed in this chapter.

7.4.6 ZCN Upgrade inclusions;

- Removing one existing overhead line tower (ZCN19)
- Constructing four new overhead line towers to turn in and connect ZCN route to the proposed Kincardine North Substation; and
- Installing of temporary masts and diversion of ZCN route while the above is undertaken.
- Associated access works, scaffolding, working areas, laydown areas and pulling positions for conductors.

7.4.7 ZCS Upgrade inclusions;

- Removing one existing overhead line tower (ZCS19)
- Constructing four new overhead line towers to turn in and connect ZCS route to the proposed Kincardine North Substation; and
- Installing of temporary masts and diversion of ZCS route while the above is undertaken.
- Associated access works, scaffolding, working areas, laydown areas and pulling positions for conductors.

7.4.8 SPD works

- 11kV wood pole line will be removed between pole 17 (south of Canal Burn within the KINN site) to Hawkhill Farm as well as the spur to Broomknowe which extends west to east across the KINN site.
- Underground cables will be installed in two separate sections; firstly between pole 17 and Hawkhill Farm, and secondly east of KINN between Tulliallan Poultry Farm and Broomknowe (following a minor road and A977).
- Typical 11 kV trench details - For 11 kV cables it will be 1300mm wide

7.4.9 General inclusions and exclusions;

- Vertical LoDs are additionally being included in the Proposed Development to allow for the potential for a tower height increase of up to 4 m on towers to ensure vertical clearances are achieved.
- Mitigation will utilise screening features proposed within the Proposed Development . It will include the following ;
 - Screening bund along a section of the western site perimeters; and,
 - Landscape mitigation planting on the margins of the site to screen, filter and backcloth views.

- 7.4.10 More details on proposed development components can be found in Section 4.1 and 4.2.

Temporal Scope

- 7.4.11 The key issues for the assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects relating to the Proposed Development include;
- Temporary access via the A876 for abnormal indivisible loads required for transformer delivery;
 - Temporary impacts during the construction phase, such as the presence of materials and equipment, construction of access tracks, foundations, temporary masts, and the emergence of electrical infrastructure;
 - Temporary construction compound and laydown area, including a site office, welfare facilities, and temporary car parking;
 - Direct and Indirect impacts from both construction and operational phases, including effects on landscape character and visual amenity due to the visibility of the development; and,
 - Permanent impacts during the operational phase, such as the presence of electrical infrastructure, access tracks, and substation.

Study Area

- 7.4.12 Definition of the study area may be determined either by specific development type guidance or by professional judgment based on the anticipated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), see Figures 7.1a to 7.1c, informed by digital terrain modelling.
- 7.4.13 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)⁷ suggests that the study area should be proportionate to the Proposed Development itself and may include refinement by professional judgement.
- 7.4.14 In the case of the Proposed Development, the study area was defined by a combination of the ZTV, professional judgement and site verification and experience of working on similar projects. The combination of these factors has resulted in a study area which encompasses land within a 5 km radius from the Proposed Development although the location of representative Viewpoints reflects the much more limited extent of visibility and likely effects. Beyond this distance it is anticipated that the Proposed Development will be unlikely to give rise to significant landscape or visual effects. The study area is shown on Figures 7.1 to 7.4.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility Analysis

- 7.4.15 The study area and scope of the LVIA has been established by initial analysis of topographic maps, terrain analysis and knowledge of the Site from site work connected with the proposed Kincardine North Substation survey. The analysis indicated that, for most points of the compass, beyond the extent of the 5 km study area, the Proposed Development will be unlikely to give rise to appreciable visual effects although there is theoretical visibility from land to west and to the south of the 5 km boundary.
- 7.4.16 A number of screened computer generated ZTV were run for different aspects associated with the KINN and OHL elements of the Proposed Development as detailed within Appendix 7.1 - LVIA Methodology. These are produced and used as a tool to inform the professional judgements made in this LVIA. They were generated using a 5 m Ordnance Survey (OS) Digital

Terrain Model (DTM). The ZTV has also been constructed to incorporate screening from vegetation based on woodland from the National Forestry Inventory (NFI) using an assumed height of 10 m; and buildings or other structures derived from OS Open Map Local with an assumed height of 8m. This helps to refine the extent of ZTV area but is also supported through field survey. The ZTVs are based on a maximum equipment height of 18 m for the KINN and on a point at each OHL tower location at designed heights plus the LoD noted.

- 7.4.17 The screened ZTV's include the elements of screening as well as topography, such as buildings, trees, woodland and hedgerows within the model. In practice this produces a more realistic mapping of theoretical visibility, noting that not all screening elements are likely to be available to add into the DTM.
- 7.4.18 The Screened ZTV for the OHL tie ins, also includes a separate layer for the existing towers within and adjacent to the Site, with heights mapped for each existing tower with similar heights to that proposed and up to taller points of 65m. This is overlaid with the ZTV of the proposed tower to provide a comparative ZTV to appraise where any changes in existing visibility may occur.
- 7.4.19 The third ZTV presents a further Comparative ZTV to appraise where the different KINN and OHL elements of the Proposed Development would be theoretically visible
- 7.4.20 The ZTVs indicate areas from where it may be possible to view part of or the entire Proposed Development, however, the use of the ZTV needs to be qualified by the following considerations:
- 7.4.21 The ZTVs are limited by the detail of the digital terrain model data used and does not take account of local topographic variations.
- 7.4.22 Some areas of theoretical visibility may comprise woodland (not accounted for in the NFI) or agricultural land, where there is effectively no public access and the likelihood of views being experienced is consequently low.
- 7.4.23 The ZTVs do 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.
- 7.4.24 These limitations mean that the ZTVs tend to overestimate the extent of visibility, both in terms of the areas from which the Proposed Development is visible and the extent of the Proposed Development which is visible. Consequently, the ZTVs should be considered as a tool to identify areas of potential visibility for further targeted survey and assessment, and not a measure of the visual effect.
- 7.4.25 The receptors identified have been selected on the basis that they fall within the ZTV (Figure 7.1a-c). As illustrated by the ZTVs, the pattern of theoretical visibility is mostly concentrated to the west and southwest mainly due to the underlying topography and lack of boundary vegetation. The pattern of visibility becomes more broken and intermittent to the north and woodland planting including shelterbelt blocks as well as intervening landform prevents widespread visibility from the east which mainly limits the extent of theoretical visibility to within approximately 1-2 km of the Site.
- 7.4.26 Pockets of more distant visibility are theoretically available across the areas of rising land to the north-west, and south-west across the Firth of Forth. Site work verified that due to a combination of distance and intervening vegetation visibility of the Proposed Development

from these more distant locations is greatly reduced. Therefore, except for VP5 Clackmannan Tower, these more distant locations have been excluded from this.

Limitations and Assumption

- 7.4.27 The construction assessment is based on the construction information that is currently available and detailed in Chapter 4. As with all construction assessments, the exact details of construction activities will not be fully known before a specific contractor is appointed to complete the works who will determine their exact construction methods and programme during the detailed design stage. The assessment of construction effects on landscape and visual receptors is based on the available information and drawings and is considered to be a worst case scenario.
- 7.4.28 The operational assessment has been considered as a worst-case scenario, during winter of Year 1 of operation.
- 7.4.29 ZTV maps have been used as a tool to inform the assessments. ZTVs present theoretical visibility of the Proposed Development based on a topographical model and although areas of woodland and buildings have been included, the ZTV tends to overstate actual visibility and requires review and verification during a site survey. The use and limitations of ZTVs is explained further in this document and in Appendix 7.1 – LVIA methodology.
- 7.4.30 The visual assessment is based on a series of representative Viewpoints related to key receptor groups. The evaluation of magnitude of impact and significance of effects has been undertaken from publicly accessible locations, and as such, assumptions as to the orientation of the main private views from receptor locations such as residents have been made. For all locations the assessment is based on an assumed worst-case location within each receptor group and as such the assessment of effects on individual receptors may differ locally from that stated.
- 7.4.31 No technical difficulties or practical problems were encountered in carrying out the assessment presented in this document. The site work was conducted in June 2024 for viewpoint photography and site appraisal as part of the initial work carried for the Proposed Development. Viewpoint photography was captured during summer when trees are in leaf. GLVIA3 guidance suggests that consideration be given to seasonal variation in effects where appropriate but acknowledges that the timing of the appraisal may mean that this is not practical. In this LVIA, potentially important differences between seasonal views have been indicated in the appraisal and taken into consideration in reaching conclusions.
- 7.4.32 The assessment of likely significant effects on receptors at these locations is made based on a worst-case approach of a clear bright day in winter as per best practice and to be consistent with the approach for other receptors in this assessment. Any assessment of residual effects on these and all other receptors is based on summer at year 15 of operation. This approach is consistent with best practice and allows proposed mitigation planting to be taken into consideration in the assessment of long-term residual effects.
- 7.4.33 The baseline photography has been stitched to present a 90° horizontal field of view and has been annotated to accurately illustrate the horizontal extent of the Proposed Development within each view.
- 7.4.34 The assessment is based on the proposed heights of towers noted above. However, vertical LoDs are additionally being included in the Proposed Development to allow for the potential

for a tower height increase of 3 m or 4m on towers, depending on tower type to ensure vertical clearances are achieved as a result of localised ground constraints. These have been considered where relevant and where they would have potential to notably alter the effects of the proposed scheme, within the assessment.

7.5 Baseline

7.5.1 The baseline section of the LVIA records the existing conditions of the Study Area. Establishing a baseline helps to gain an understanding of what makes the landscape distinctive and what its important components or characteristics are. The baseline is instrumental in the identification of the landscape character receptors, visual receptors and Viewpoints that are included in the assessment

7.5.2 The baseline relates to both the KINN and OHL tie in components as they are located within the same Site area, including the components relating to the Hawkhill Road Improvements.

Site Context

7.5.3 The site, as defined by the application boundary, occupies 36 hectares (ha), of which the substation footprint is approximately 5 ha. It is comprised of agricultural farmland bounded to the west by the A876 and to the east by the freight only Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine railway line, with a settlement on the edge of Kincardine located 235 m to the southeast.

7.5.4 The majority of the Site is comprised of agricultural land with existing trees or woodland along the field boundaries. There are no sites on the Ancient Woodland Inventory within or immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development and no ancient or notable trees on the Ancient Tree Inventory within or immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development.

7.5.5 The site is bordered by a series of woodland blocks and belts predominantly along the southern and eastern boundaries. In the wider area large, open landscapes are common. To the west fields are without enclosure resulting in a visually permeable setting.

7.5.6 Approximately half of the Site's western edge is dictated by Canal Burn, which runs from the southern point of the old Kilbagie Distillery site to the A876. The other half is informed by an existing field boundary. A tract of land to the west of the site, between the site and the A876, is the subject of an approved application for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), known as the Kincardine Grid Services Complex.

7.5.7 To the south of the site is a large woodland block, part of the 90-acre designed parkland which contains the old Tulliallan Castle, a scheduled monument which lies at approximately 1.4km to the southeast. The eastern edge of the site is dictated by a railway line which travels north to south, and the northern boundary is dictated by the old Kilbagie distillery. There is an existing access to the west of the site from the A876 via a locked field gate as well as from the south of the site via Hawkhill Road.

7.5.8 Electrical infrastructure has an existing notable influence within the landscape and the wider setting. The existing overhead transmission lines (OHLs) present large-scale manmade features within the local landscape area with the dual parallel ZCN and ZCS lines traversing the northern sections of the proposed site and the single XL line traversing the east and southern sections of the Site. In addition the emerging context will include additional electrical infrastructure adjacent to the site including the approved Kincardine Grid Services Complex.

- 7.5.9 Historically energy related infrastructure features have been commonplace within the 5 km study area, with the existing Kincardine Substation building located approximately 500 m to the south. The site of the old Kincardine power station on the north shore of the Firth of Forth is now occupied by Kincardine Substation which plays an important role in central and southern Scotland's electricity network.
- 7.5.10 The study area is well served by a network of recreational routes including long-distance trails, Core Paths and cycle routes. The Fife Coastal Path runs for over 100 miles, starting at Kincardine on the Forth Estuary. Several Core Paths connect to this long-distance walking route, including the Old Kincardine Power Station loop trail and other recreational routes like the National Cycle Route 76 (NCR 76). In the wider area there is an informal trail to Maggie Duncan's Stane to the north and Clackmannanshire Core Path 102 to the west. These routes are considered further in the visual baseline and informed the selection of representative Viewpoints.
- 7.5.11 The former Kennetpans Distillery, a scheduled monument, stands on the north bank of the River Forth, at approximately 1km west of the site. About a mile to the north lies the former Kilbagie Distillery. These two historic distilleries were connected by a canal which traversed the site, part of which remains visible today to the southwest.
- 7.5.12 Approximately 1.9 km southwest of the site lies the Kincardine Bridge, a Category A listed structure known for its unique architectural and technical features. It serves as a crucial transportation link in the area.

Designations Relevant to Landscape

- 7.5.13 The site is not subject to any locally, nationally or internationally important landscape designations.
- 7.5.14 One of the Special Landscape Areas (SLA) identified in the Clackmannanshire Local Plan is located over 5 km to the northeast of the study area. The Forest SLA, an area of land between Gartmoor Dam and Forestmill, is designated for its special landscape quality. The special qualities of this area include the "*variety of woodland cover from large-scale commercial plantations to semi-natural wet woodland*"^x and the striking views of a rolling wooded landscape in contrast to the surrounding urban development. The Forest Local Landscape Area is not considered further for detailed assessment due to its distance from the development.
- 7.5.15 There are a number of ecological and cultural heritage designations within the study area, and these can inform landscape value and may be of importance in terms of visitor destinations and visual amenity. They are detailed in full in the relevant chapters. They include the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Linn Mill, Craigmad Wood, and Gartmorn Dam to the north of the study area, and the Firth of Forth to the south of the study area.
- 7.5.16 There are also listed buildings within the study area including the category B listed Kilbagie House and category C listed Kilbagie Mill. Both buildings sit within approximately 200m from the site boundary at the closest point.

Tulliallan GDL

- 7.5.17 Listed buildings at the Tulliallan Castle estate (including the category A Scottish Police building) are also located at approximately 1.4km to the southeast of the nearest infrastructure

within the grounds of the non-statutory Gardens and Designed Landscape (GDL) at Tulliallan Castle.

- 7.5.18 Tulliallan Castle GDL is located approximately 500 m east of the nearest proposed tower at its closest and is bounded by the A977 to Alloa on its west side, and by the A985 on its south side. *“This designed landscape, which is now run as Scotland’s police training college, comprises parkland, woodland, gardens and some outstanding architectural features. The formal gardens and Italian garden are also notable features.”*^{xi} There are also extensive views to the west and to the Ochil Hills to the north.
- 7.5.19 This GDL is noted to be of outstanding artistic interest and contributes to the cultural and perceptual associations within the landscape. A site visit to the GDL undertaken as part of the Cultural Heritage assessment, noted that the views to the site will be heavily screened and filtered particularly from the Castle and, from most other notable features of Tulliallan Garden and Designed Landscape (GDL00379) including the formal and Italian gardens around the castle, with the existing woodland, topography, and late 20th century buildings that form part of the police training collage providing screening.
- 7.5.20 The open central northern areas of the designed landscape may have some limited views, although these are not thought to be extensive as only the very tops of the existing overhead line towers are visible, and these are comparable to the heights of the OHL proposed Development. Therefore, no effects on special qualities or setting of the GDL are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development and therefore it is not considered further in this LVIA.

Landscape Baseline

Landscape Character

- 7.5.21 National Landscape Character Types (LCTS) and online mapping were published in 2019 by NatureScot^{xii} and describes the areas of consistent and recognisable landscape character. The site is located partly within LCT 196 Coastal Flats- Fife^{xiii} and partly within LCT 153 Carselands. The LCTs considered within the scope of this LVIA are set out below and shown on Figure 7.3 - Landscape Character.

LCT 196 Coastal Flats- Fife

- 7.5.22 This LCT occupies the central part of the study area and is one of 17 compartments across the wider landscape. The majority of the site is situated within the northern section of this linear LCT running along the north shore of the Firth of Forth up to 5km to the southeast. This landscape is characterised by medium arable fields interspersed with electrical infrastructure corridors.
- 7.5.23 Key characteristics:
- *“Flat, low-lying, open, large scale, exposed coastal landscapes at sea level.*
 - *Intensively cultivated, geometrically laid out, large to medium scale, predominantly arable fields or forests with rectilinear, fenced enclosures or without enclosure.*
 - *Variety of other land uses, particularly industrial and other built developments, golf courses and other grasslands.*
 - *Slightly sinuous or angular roads raised above the fields with stone dykes or open sides.*

- *Isolated, scattered or regularly spaced farmsteads, conspicuous due to lack of screening, in contrast to the designed landscapes which are well screened by policy planting and shelterbelts.*
- *Straight ditches, sea walls and flood banks with small bridges.*
- *Conspicuous landmarks in the flat landscape, such as the large hotels at St Andrews, docks and harbours.*
- *Coastal landscape character always influenced by the sea and views of the sky and the sea.*
- *Typically dominated either by the areas of development or the coast.*
- *Away from the urban areas and forestry it is a large scale, open (and in high winds very exposed), simple, flat, balanced landscape with varied textures and colours and slow movement.*
- *In the plantations it is a small scale, confined, uniform, tended, very calm and sheltered landscape with straight lines, simple patterns and little variation in colours or textures.*
- *Seaward views are invariably extensive and may be extensive across the Flats themselves. Landward, views are generally towards the Coastal Cliffs, Coastal Braes, Coastal Hills - Fife or Coastal Terraces – Fife.”*

7.5.24 This LCT is not subject to any landscape designations. There are some recreational routes in the area, with notable energy transmission infrastructure and blocks of woodland present. The landscape within the study area is strongly representative of the LCTs characteristics as a whole. The uniform, flat and expansive arable fields where scenic quality and the influence of the Forth is of limited scenic quality. Taking this into account, landscape value is low.

LCT 153 Carselands^{xiv}

7.5.25 The Carselands Landscape Character Type occurs in two large areas around the River Forth and occupies all of the western and the south western part of the 5km study area straddling both sides of the River Forth.

7.5.26 Key characteristics:

- *“Flat, open, large scale Carselands of predominantly open agricultural landcover forming the floor and former floodplains of the River Forth, River Devon and Black Devon.*
- *Important as landscape setting of Stirling, Stirling Castle, and the Ochil Hills.*
- *Absence of settlement across the Carselands, restricted to villages on the peripheral slopes and scattered farmsteads along the valley floors.*
- *Periodic extensive flooding continues to influence land use.*
- *Trunk roads run in parallel to the northern and southern perimeters of the Carselands.*
- *Distinct character of group of Hillfoot villages, and their relationship with streams issuing from Ochil Hills within Lower Devon area, as well as major overhead power lines and their pylons.*
- *Recent expansion of settlement boundaries at edge of carse making new development very visible.*

- *Industrial and agricultural buildings, and bonded warehouse on open carseland prominent in views within Lower Devon area*
- *Largest remaining intact raised bog in Britain at Flanders Moss, with international importance for nature conservation.*
- *Importance of Carse of Forth open farmland for flocks of wintering geese.*
- *Open views across carse accentuated by consequent dramatic contrast with the adjacent escarpments of the Ochils and Fintry, Gargunnock and Touch Hills.”*

7.5.27 This LCT is not subject to any landscape designation. The land within the study area is typical of this LCT, where the width and flatness of the carse are emphasised by the lack of woodland and defined field boundaries. The scenic qualities of the flat and expansive rural landscape are disturbed by major OHLs and their towers, as well as pockets of industrial development. Taking this into account, landscape value is low.

LCT 186 Lowland Hills and Valleys^{xv}

7.5.28 This LCT forms a series of low hills and valleys that occupies most of the eastern section of the study area.

7.5.29 Key characteristics:

- *Variety and subtlety of landform.*
- *Generally dominated by open, regular farmland patterns of medium scale fields of arable and grasslands.*
- *Variable pattern of post and wire fences and mostly tall hedges with hedgerow trees.*
- *Extensive areas of forestry, shelter planting, roadside planting and policies linked to large estates.*
- *Regular, often linear, pattern of the distribution of steadings and larger settlements and towns, all of which are generally well related to the landscape.*
- *Towns in valleys enclosed by the landform of low hills which form a rural backdrop.*
- *Network of roads often well related to landform.*
- *Dominant linear and point features of forests and tree groups, individual trees or local buildings.*
- *A generally tended, safe, quiet, balanced and calm landscape, but also a busy, random, disturbed and noisy one in the more urban, industrialised areas.*
- *Variety of interrelated middle and long distance views of, from and across the low hills.*

7.5.30 The Tulliallan GDL is located within this LCT and the easternmost part of the study area. The parkland and belted woodland are valued landscape elements that define the northern setting of Kincardine. The network of gently undulating regular farmland patterns, vegetative boundaries and woodland blocks contribute to the overall scenic quality of the landscape. The landscape's variety, continuity, maturity, and subtlety contribute to the scenic quality and the area hosts a range of recreational pursuits. Taking all of this into account, landscape value is considered to be medium.

LCT 154 Lowland Valleys Fringes^{xvi}

7.5.31 This LCT occurs in four areas of central Scotland and occupies the northern aspect of the study area.

7.5.32 Key characteristics:

- *“Low, undulating and gently rolling landform separating the Lowland River Valleys - Central.*
- *Transitional landscape between the low lying Carselands and the more open hill fringes.*
- *Often dissected by distinctive narrow river valleys.*
- *Varied landcover of enclosed arable farmland, rough grassland and lush pasture.*
- *Unified pattern of small settlements and scattered farmsteads.*
- *Field boundary patterns well-defined by trees, shelterbelts, hedgerows and small woodlands.*
- *Swathes of broadleaf woodland and coniferous forest cover integrate with the undulating landform.*
- *Crossed and encircled by a network of communication routes, often running perpendicular to the gently sloping landform.*
- *Transitional nature of the landscape provides varying views across the wide, open Carselands and river valleys, and to the lowland hills which often form a dramatic backdrop.”*

7.5.33 The study area is typical of this LCT, with ribbons of woodland and field boundaries dominating the farmland character of the area. Long distance views are often possible with local recreational routes traversing areas of elevated landform. On balance, the value of the Lowland Valley Fringes is medium as a result of the moderate scenic quality and landscape quality.

Visual Baseline

Visual Receptors

7.5.34 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, includes walkers and users of promoted cycling routes;
- Visitors to places of interest, including those visiting local hills; and,
- Transport users, including users of the local road and rail transport network.

Residential

7.5.35 Nearby settlements and residential properties including Kincardine, and isolated properties within Broadcarse, Craighton, Tulliallan, Kennet and Kennet Gardens. Views experienced from residential receptors are represented by Viewpoints 1, 2, and 7.

Recreational

- 7.5.36 Users of recreational main routes such as the Fife Coastal Long-Distance path and National Cycle Route 76, and Core Paths including Clackmannanshire Core Paths 101 and 102. Views experienced from recreational receptors are represented by Viewpoints 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7.

Visitors to Places of Interest

- 7.5.37 Recreational visitors to places of interest engaged in outdoor recreation such as Highland Gateway Glamping and Caravanning and Clackmannan Tower. Views experienced from recreational receptors visiting places of interest are represented by Viewpoints 5, 6 and 7.

Transport Users

- 7.5.38 Transport users within the study area include the A876 and A977 to the west and east of the site respectively. There is a network of adjoining local roads connecting farmsteads and individual residential dwellings. This receptor group also includes those using the local freight rail network. Views experienced from transport receptors are represented by Viewpoint 3 and 8.

Representative Viewpoints

- 7.5.39 Eight representative Viewpoints have been selected from publicly accessible locations, to form the basis of the visual assessment and to reflect the various visual receptors identified above. These were established and agreed as part of the initial Kincardine North Substation EIA. A description of the baseline view and its value is provided overleaf in Table 7.3 and is supported by baseline photography and photo sheets contained in Appendix 7.2.

Table 7-3. Representative Viewpoints

ID	Viewpoint	Receptor Group	Easting	Northing	Reason for Selection
1	Broomknowe Drive	Residential	2571806	1334521	Representative of residents of Broomknowe Drive.
2	Unclassified Road, (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path 101), Craigton	Residential and Recreational- Cycle Network	291668	291668	Representative of those using the NCR76/ Clackmannan/Canal Burn 101 Core Path as well as residential receptors from dwellings.
3	Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path 101) at Canal Burn	Recreational- Cycle Network Transport	2576695	1338959	Representative of those using the NCR76/ Clackmannan/Canal Burn 101 Core Path.
4	Unclassified Road (NCR 76 and Core Path R745) West of Hawkhill Farm	Recreational- Cycle Network	292275	688912	Representative of those using the NCR76/ Clackmannan/Canal Burn 101 Core Path
5	Clackmannan Tower	Recreational- Core Path and Place of Interest	2573049	1360122	Representative of recreational receptors accessing Clackmannan Tower and those using Clackmannanshire 99 Core Path.
6	Maggie Duncan's Hill	Recreational- Place of Interest	293955	690956	Representative of recreational receptors using accessing Maggie Duncan's Hill.
7	Broadcarse (Highland Gateway Caravan Park) Core Path 102	Residential, Recreational – Core Path and Place of Interest	291820	• 689929	Representative of residents and tourists associated with the Highland Gateway Glamping and Caravanning and those using the Clackmannanshire 102 Kennet Pans/Kennet Core Path.
8	A876 Northbound Layby	Transport Users (Road)	292222	• 689514	Representative of transport receptors using the A876 trunk road.

Viewpoint 1: Broomknowe Drive

- 7.5.40 This viewpoint is representative of residents along Broomknowe Drive. The view looks northwest across a private garden and agricultural fields towards Kilbagie, taken from the corner of the A977 and Broomknowe Drive intersection. The foreground is dictated by the open garden of a single storey private dwelling. To the east the A977 highway is visible over a low hedge as it ascends slightly in the midground, travelling north towards Kilbagie, with the constant movement of vehicles being a noticeable element. Mature roadside vegetation heavily filters and screens views to the east.
- 7.5.41 In the midground, medium-scale fields are divided by post and wire fences which are screened by scrub planting. Mature trees puncture field boundaries in irregular intervals. To the north, a small business complex is visible, set back from the A977.
- 7.5.42 Two 275 kV lines traverse the midground views beyond which, a dense woodland backdrop extends from behind the private dwelling to the A977. A small, framed view within the wooded backdrop reveals a bridge which forms part of the railway line that runs adjacent to the east side of the Proposed Development .
- 7.5.43 The scenic quality of the linear woodland expanse experienced by residential receptors is disrupted by a series of OHL towers of differing height, scale and form, that cross the horizontal extent of the view, punctuating the skyline above the Ochil Hills in the background.
- 7.5.44 Overall, this is a medium value view with some detracting factors.

Viewpoint 2: Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path 101), Craigton

- 7.5.45 This viewpoint is representative of those using the unclassified single-track road that forms part of NCR76 and Core Path 101, as well as residential receptors at Craigton and Craigton cottages. The view looks northeast across large agricultural fields towards the A876 and Kilbagie. An agricultural track stretches from the foreground to the middle ground, flanked by expansive, flat agricultural fields. The field boundaries are open, with a scrubby verge on one side and a wooden post and wire fence on the other. In the middle ground the vegetated verge is the only defining feature in an otherwise broad view.
- 7.5.46 A significant amount of overhead transmission lines and associated lattice towers and poles of differing height and form are clustered in the centre of the view, extending above the wooded horizon. The A876 highway is visible as it ascends in the middle ground, moving along an embankment towards Kilbagie, with the constant movement of vehicles being a noticeable element. Beyond this, several large water treatment chambers, a tall chimney stack, and a prominent three-story building can be seen. The isolated dwellings at Kilbagie are also notable as the terrain rises to the north of the view.
- 7.5.47 The terrain ascends more notably in the distance, with the open field at Maggie Duncan's Hill framed on either side by the large woodland blocks at the Forest and Devilla Forest. The presence of large infrastructure elements dominates the view throughout the aspect to the north and east, detracting from its overall appeal. 33 kV OHL and two parallel sets of overhead line (OHL) towers recede from the foreground to the background, breaking the skyline. The overhead transmission line infrastructure in the land parcel to the south of the Kilbagie roundabout is also a prominent feature in the view.
- 7.5.48 This view is representative of views experienced by residential and recreational receptors along a quiet rural route that also forms part of NCR76 and the Core Path. Overall, this is a typical

view across the landscape where OHL towers are prominent manmade features within an otherwise open, flat, simple scaled, agricultural landscape. Visual value is considered to be low.

Viewpoint 3: Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path 101) at Canal Burn

- 7.5.49 The view extends northeast across agricultural fields and the A876 towards Kilbagie. In the immediate foreground, a tarmac side track from the unclassified road leads to a wooden post and rail fence. This field stretches to the middle ground, where a fragmented hedgerow with intermittent hedgerow trees marks the western boundary before the terrain rises to the embanked A876. To the east, a low, scrubby verge delineates the edge of a farm track before another field is enclosed by the rising terrain up to the A977. A clear change in vegetation within the central field of view delineates the burn that traverses the site. A strip of woodland to the east partially obscures views of the highway.
- 7.5.50 OHL towers are a dominant, visually detracting element in the view to the north and east and interrupt the skyline across the view. Towers and the lattice of wires extend across the horizontal extent of the midground view to the north and east. A number of other large industrial and infrastructure buildings and elements are also clustered in the distant centre of the view, just below the raised horizon. These include several large water treatment chambers, industrial outbuildings, and a parking area surrounding a three-story building for Tillicoultry Quarries. These elements do not break the skyline and do not dominate the view. The terrain ascends in the background of the view, where fields and woodland create a densely wooded backdrop, with only the isolated dwelling at Kilbagie and the chimney stack at Tillicoultry Quarries visible.
- 7.5.51 In the far distance, the terrain rises up to the Ochil Hills, which are discernible during periods of good visibility. This view is representative of sequential views experienced by recreational and transport receptors through gaps in the vegetation along NCR76 and the Core Path.
- 7.5.52 Overall, this is a view across a landscape where OHL towers are prominent man-made features within an otherwise open, flat, simple scaled, agricultural landscape. The visual value is considered to be low.

Viewpoint 4: Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path R745) West of Hawkhill Farm

- 7.5.53 This viewpoint is representative of those using the unclassified road which forms part of NCR76 and Core Path R745. The view looks northward across agricultural fields towards Kilbagie. In the immediate foreground, a large, flat field is enclosed by a wooden post and rail fence which is obscured by dense scrubby roadside vegetation which follows alongside the tarmac road. A tarmac side road bounded by two mature hedgerows can be glimpsed. The large area of woodland in the foreground to the east, is associated with Tuli Allan Castle Scheduled Monument, whilst a strip of woodland partially obscures views of the highway.
- 7.5.54 OHL towers are a dominant, visually detracting element in the view to the north and east and interrupt the skyline across the view. Towers and the lattice of wires extend across the horizontal extent of the midground view to the north and east. A number of other large industrial and infrastructure buildings and elements are clustered modestly in the centre of the view, just below the raised horizon. These include several large water treatment chambers, substantial industrial outbuildings, and a parking area surrounding a three-story building for Tillicoultry Quarries. The terrain ascends in the background of the view, where fields and

woodland create a wooded backdrop and some enclosure in mid distance views, with only the isolated dwelling at Kilbagie and the distillery chimney stack visible.

- 7.5.55 In the far distance, the terrain rises up to the Ochil Hills, which are discernible during periods of good visibility.. This view is representative of sequential views experienced by recreational receptors through gaps in the vegetation along NCR76 and the Core Path.

Overall, this is a typical view across the landscape where OHL towers are prominent manmade features amid an otherwise agricultural landscape. Visual value is considered to be low.

Viewpoint 5 Clackmannan Tower

- 7.5.56 This is an open and expansive panoramic view to the south east from the elevated grounds of the Clackmannan Tower which is a late 14th century medieval tower house; a Scheduled Monument within the Clackmannan Conservation Area. Clackmannan Tower is in a conspicuous elevated position at the summit of King's Seat Hill offering views across a rural landscape with views of the Firth of Forth to the Pentland Hills in the background. The viewpoint is located near Clackmannan, along Clackmannanshire Core Path 99, offering residents and visitors an easily accessible spot with high amenity value. This view is representative of views experienced by recreational receptors.
- 7.5.57 The immediate foreground is defined by small scale sloping fields, separated by post and wire fences or low hedgerows which lead down to expansive and open, large-scale fields with little or no boundary vegetation. These extend across most of the mid and distant view. Midway down the slope a series of discreet telegraph poles serve the small-scale farmstead, with multiple barns and outbuildings clustered together partly screened by a mature tree. Sporadic mature trees punctuate the slope, transforming into a densely wooded tract to the south east.
- 7.5.58 The flat and open landscape in the midground contains isolated farmsteads which are visually exposed due to the lack of trees or boundary vegetation. Pockets of vegetation can be seen sporadically across the landscape. To the east dense expanses of woodland are visible, with pockets to the south becoming more fragmented as they approach the Firth of Forth. The A876 traverses the far mid distance of this flat farmland and to the east lies Kilbagie and a series of OHLs and lattice towers which also traverse the mid distance view.
- 7.5.59 The Firth of Forth segregates the far midground views from the contrasting backcloth of Grangemouth, a large industrial port, and the Pentland Hills behind. Grangemouth introduces a distant yet noticeable industrial presence on the horizon. The detracting and incongruous nature of the port is emphasised by tall lattice towers associated with the overhead lines as well as the presence of Clackmannanshire and Kincardine bridges, which disserve views of the Firth of Forth. These detracting features are notable but do not form the focus of the view. Due to the cultural and recreational importance of Clackmannan Tower visual value is considered to be high.

Viewpoint 6 Maggie Duncan's Hill

- 7.5.60 This is an open and expansive view to the south from the trigonometrical point at the top of Maggie Duncan's Hill offering wide views across a rural landscape with views of the River Forth punctuated with industrial and notable built elements. Although not located along a Core Path, it is accessible to recreational users via farm tracks from the A907.
- 7.5.61 A large pastoral field in the foreground descends to a post and wire fence leading onto another large pastoral field in the fore to middle ground. This field is bound by fragmented hedgerows

with occasional hedgerow trees. Next to this a smaller arable field is adjacent to a number of properties screened to the south by a woodland block.

- 7.5.62 In the middle ground a series of large rectilinear fields bound by hedgerows lined with tall hedgerow trees and linear blocks of woodland. To the east, the field is also bound by the large woodland block of the western edge of Devilla Forest. To the east, the landform rises up limiting views beyond.
- 7.5.63 The Kilbagie roundabout is notable in the middle ground with views of the A876 entering a cutting before disappearing out of view. The A977 is less prominent partially screened by tall trees around the Tulliallan golf course. In the background of the view, the parcels of land located between the major roads comprise small fields bound by hedgerow vegetation and trees that form a wooded backdrop to the historic site of the Kilbagie distillery. Beyond this the large, flat fields fall down to the River Forth. In the far distance, Stenhousemuir, Falkirk, Campsie Fells, and a number of wind turbines located on the higher ground in this area are perceptible during periods of good visibility.
- 7.5.64 There are a number of visually detracting elements in the view. Overhead Line towers cross the fore and middle ground. The OHLs are concentrated around the parcels of land located between the major roads where the OHL towers and substation infrastructure are noticeable. The highways are also a noticeable detracting element with moving vehicles being a discernible and constant element.
- 7.5.65 The view offers a sweeping panorama from a high vantage point, representative of recreational receptors not using the Core Path network, encompassing a predominantly rural and forested landscape, with distant glimpses of the River Forth serving as a picturesque frame. While the overhead lines, bridges, and highways detract somewhat from the overall aesthetic, they do not dominate the scene and thus, the visual value of the view is medium.

Viewpoint 7 Broadcarse (Highland Gateway Caravan Park) Core Path 102

- 7.5.66 The view is open and expansive, primarily composed of large agricultural fields that stretch towards mid distant hills and Devilla Forest. It features large, flat fields that span from the foreground to the middle ground. The boundaries of these fields are marked by fragmented hedgerows, consisting of large vegetation blocks and occasional hedgerow trees. The A876 highway is visible as it ascends in the middle ground, passing along an embankment towards the Kilbagie roundabout.
- 7.5.67 Woodland blocks in the middle ground merge to form a wooded backdrop, interrupted by a large agricultural building with tanks, water treatment chambers, and a tall chimney stack. The terrain rises more notably into the distance, with the extensive woodland blocks of Devilla Forest and Bath Moor Plantation creating a forested horizon.
- 7.5.68 However, the view is degraded by the extensive presence of infrastructure. This includes a series of parallel overhead line (OHL) towers that traverse from the foreground to the background, from the south to east, punctuating the horizon. There is also a wind turbine, and a large quarry building at Tulliallan Quarry (part of the Tillicoutry Quarries group). The A876 highway is viewed obliquely, however the constant movement of vehicles emphasises its visual impact.
- 7.5.69 This viewpoint, captured from the Clackmannanshire 102 Kennet Pans/Kennet Core Path, is representative of the views experienced by residents and recreational users staying at

Highland Gateway Glamping and Caravanning and those using the Core Path network. The existing OHLs are very prominent features, extending from the mid-ground to the skyline across the entire panoramic extent of the view. The vertical elements of the towers provide high contrast to the flat and open context of the agricultural fields.

- 7.5.70 Overall, this is a typical view across an ordinary agricultural the landscape where OHL towers are prominent manmade features. Visual value is considered to be low.

Viewpoint 8 A876 Northbound Layby

- 7.5.71 The view from the northbound lane of the A876 is predominantly influenced by a range of notable, industrial and visually detracting features, which are set against a densely wooded backdrop of woodland associated with Tulliallan Castle Schedule Monument and Tulliallan GDL. The dual carriageway, bordered by low metal crash barriers, is immediately visible. Beyond this, a narrow grass verge is present before the embanked terrain descends. Patches of hedgerow vegetation, including small trees, intermittently obscure the view further afield. Large lattice towers associated with a series of overhead lines are viewed across the entire horizontal extent of the view. A parallel set of OHLs are situated close to the road and their associated lattice towers are prominent in the foreground before diminishing into the distance towards Kilbagie.
- 7.5.72 When the view extends beyond these elements, it reveals a landscape of small, irregularly shaped fields that stretch flat to the middle ground. This is followed by a mound of scrubland soil, sporadically planted with trees, which conceals the freight railway line. An exception to this is towards the northeast, where the terrain ascends to a small, rectangular field leading to a solitary dwelling at Kilbagie. This field is intersected by smaller overhead wires.
- 7.5.73 In the far distance, the fields and expansive woodland areas at Lady's Brae to the north, and Devilla Forest to the east, create a densely forested horizon. This view is representative of views experienced by transport receptors.
- 7.5.74 The vertical elements of electrical utilities, including towers and turbines, and highway infrastructure dominate the view to the east and north and contrast the flat and open context of the agricultural fields in the main field of view. Therefore, visual value is assessed as low.

Future Baseline in the Absence of the Proposed Development

- 7.5.75 Predicting the future baseline involves a degree of speculation and uncertainty as acknowledged at paragraph 5.33 in GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013). 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 the cumulative assessment.
- 7.5.76 Only visual receptors present at the time of assessment have been considered within the main LVIA sections. However, a review has been undertaken to determine whether the existing baseline conditions might change between the time of undertaking the assessment and the future years in which the Proposed Development is planned to be constructed and become operational. This review included an evaluation of the planned and approved development projects noted in the cumulative section.

- 7.5.77 Of note to this assessment, within the linear farmland area between the two trunk roads, the A876 and the A977, further energy generation developments will add notable industrial features of different scale and massing into the Site landscape setting. This will include a new Grid Services Complex and also a BESS development alongside the A876 to the south side of the Proposed Development.
- 7.5.78 These developments will combine to add to the industrial character and intrinsic visual composition of a mix of notable built features in this section of the landscape between two arterial roads. It will be supported by mitigation strategies which will add some enclosure and enhanced landscape structure to the Site context and help screen and filter some views and integrate the mix of proposed developments into the wider landscape.
- 7.5.79 The wider landscape of the study area is predominantly characterised by flat open intensively managed farmland interspersed with woodland, hedgerows and tree planting. In the absence of the proposed development this pattern of land use and the network of vegetation will continue to mature and the inherent character and contribution that it makes to views and visual amenity is unlikely to substantially change.

7.6 Embedded Mitigation

- 7.6.1 Landscape design and mitigation proposals are considered within the Proposed Development. These are illustrated for the Proposed Development on Figure 7.5.
- 7.6.2 The primary aims of the landscape design are to reduce the visual prominence of the Proposed Development and assimilate it into the landscape context, while providing an enhancement to the provision for biodiversity. The proposed landscape design considers the existing conditions and the feedback from scoping and pre-application advice. The landscape mitigation design has been prepared to accompany the application and is shown in Figure 7.5, Outline Landscape Masterplan Plan. The proposed landscape elements include a combination of landform and planting that will provide partial screening from the adjacent farm and residential properties.
- 7.6.3 The outline landscape proposals are embedded mitigation which is taken in consideration in the conclusions of this assessment. At year 1 trees and shrubs will be newly planted and by year 15 will have established and delivering their envisaged function.

7.7 Potential Impacts

- 7.7.1 The main features of the Proposed Development and its related KINN and OHL elements, which could potentially result in landscape and visual impacts are detailed in Section 7.4. These are noted below on a receptor-based assessment detailing the effects of both elements of the Proposed Development together for each receptor.
- 7.7.2 Given the general heights of the Proposed Development up to 18m for the KINN and with OHL which are similar to the existing OHL towers, the main effects are likely to relate to how the increase in infrastructure and new changes to the OHL towers will change the existing composition of towers and intrinsic visual composition of existing and planned infrastructure on Site.

7.8 Landscape Effects

- 7.8.1 Landscape effects will arise from both direct changes to the physical fabric of the landscape alongside indirect changes, including the way in which these physical changes alter how the landscape is perceived.

Landscape Fabric

- 7.8.2 The majority of the Site is comprised of agricultural land with existing trees or woodland along the field boundaries. With the exception of removal of small areas of scrubby vegetation at the proposed A876 access point, and isolated tree removal including 4no Category B trees at the western and eastern end of the Hawkhill Road improvements, no other notable tree removal is proposed. Tree planting is proposed as part of landscape planting including planting to strengthen and increase the depth of the existing boundary planting. No significant effects on trees or woodland are likely as a result of the Proposed Development.

Landscape Character

- 7.8.3 The landscape appraisal considers the direct effect of the KINN and OHL elements of the Proposed Development on LCT196 Coastal Flats Fife and LCT 153 Carselands as shown on Figure 7.3 Landscape Character.
- 7.8.4 LCT 154 Lowland Valley Fringes, LCT 186 Lowland Hills and Valleys, and LCT 192 Coastal Hills - Fife will not be directly affected by the proposed development.
- 7.8.5 The potential for these LCTs to also be indirectly affected by change in landscape character as a result of views of the proposed development is also very limited. While the ZTVs in Figures 7.1a-c indicate some potential for visibility from the nearest fringes of LCTs 154 and 186, within c.1-2km to the east and north, this will not include any new areas of visibility compared to the existing visibility extents resulting from existing infrastructure across and adjacent to the Proposed Development Site, as shown on Figure 7.1b.
- 7.8.6 Alongside this the actual level of visibility from most of these areas will be further screened and heavily filtered by intervening vegetation patterns not shown on the ZTV as they don't form part of the National Forest Inventory, particularly to the east in LCT 186. As such the change will relate to a modification and addition to existing elements beyond these LCTs with much of the context and character within these LCTs relatively unchanged.
- 7.8.7 Consequently, any effects on the character of LCT 154 Lowland Valley Fringes, LCT 186 Lowland Hills and Valleys, and LCT 192 Coastal Hills - Fife is likely to be very low magnitude or none and not result in any likely significant effects, and therefore no further consideration is undertaken in this assessment.
- 7.8.8 This assessment has evaluated the worst-case scenario for operational effects, focusing on landscape impacts during winter of year 1 of operation and then at year 15, when mitigation tree and shrub planting has matured.

LCT 196 - Coastal Flats Fife

- 7.8.9 The LCT specifically highlights that "*High voltage power lines are prominent features in the Kincardine area*". Other elements of the landscape include the expansive, flat, and largely featureless agricultural fields with a loss of internal field boundaries and only a handful of remaining trees. These elements are interrupted by the OHL and towers. These characteristics

are the most representative of the baseline for this LCT. Within the study area, the value of the landscape is considered to be low.

- 7.8.10 Given the existing baseline that includes large electrical infrastructure elements alongside large-scale arable farmland, it is considered that the landscape has some ability to accommodate the type of development proposed. As such landscape susceptibility of the LCT is low.
- 7.8.11 The low value combined with the low susceptibility results in a low landscape sensitivity.

Construction

- 7.8.12 During construction of the KINN direct impacts will result from the change in land use from agricultural land, levelling areas of ground, and the removal of hedgerows and some areas of scrubland. The loss of these landscape elements will be of a small scale and of a localised geographical extent within a small part of the LCT. It will also include for the OHL tie ins the removal of existing towers and construction of new towers and bases.
- 7.8.13 The presence of construction activity including storage of materials and movement of plant will result in a slight alteration to the character which will be limited in extent due to localised screening and the existing baseline and concentration of detracting elements in the immediate context of the site. Therefore, magnitude of landscape change during construction will be low. The significance of landscape effect during construction will therefore be minor adverse (not significant).

Operation

- 7.8.14 At operation the Proposed Development will modify and extend the existing influence of electrical infrastructure and OHL towers within the Site area and provide several additional similar scaled towers. This will add some density to the composition of towers on Site but it will not extend the spread or influence of towers across the area.
- 7.8.15 The loss of some localised characteristic rural landscape elements along with the introduction of further large-scale infrastructure will adversely affect the landscape character and setting locally across the site. Landscape effects will be limited to the local area and lessened by the pre-existing context of electrical infrastructure of this part of the LCT and the intrinsic composition of towers across the Site. Therefore, magnitude of landscape change at operation will be low. Considering the low landscape sensitivity and low magnitude of landscape change, the significance of landscape effect during operation will therefore be minor adverse (not significant) in year 1. This will also be the case by year 15 given the heights of towers and although there will be additional planting in place around the site to integrate other elements, the towers are still likely to be seen above these elements.

LCT 153 - Carselands

- 7.8.16 This LCT is noted to be *'important as a landscape setting of ... the Ochil Hills'*, however key landscape characteristics also feature detracting elements within the landscape such as the presence of *'industrial and agricultural buildings and bonded warehouse open carseland prominent in views within Lower Devon area as well as and major overhead powerlines and their pylons'*.
- 7.8.17 These detracting elements are evidently representative of the baseline for this LCT due to the close proximity to major OHLs and industrial features. As such, the LCT will be robust to the change and therefore landscape susceptibility is assessed as low.

- 7.8.18 The low value combined with the low susceptibility results in a low landscape sensitivity.

Construction

- 7.8.19 During construction of the KINN elements, direct impacts will result from the removal of localised road-side vegetation to enable a slip road junction from the A876. It will also include for the OHL tie ins the removal of existing towers and construction of new towers and bases. These elements will be on the eastern boundary of this LCT where it adjoins LCT196. The loss of these landscape elements will be of a very small scale and of a localised geographical extent within a very small part of the LCT.

- 7.8.20 The presence of construction activity, particularly the movement of plant will increase movement of vehicles on a main trunk road and will not result in a change of character or perception due to the concentration of detracting elements in the immediate context of the site. Therefore, magnitude of landscape change during construction will be very low. The combination of a low sensitivity with a very low magnitude will result in a negligible adverse (not significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.8.21 At operation the KINN and OHL elements of the Proposed Development will modify the existing influence of electrical infrastructure and OHL towers within the Site area and provide additional infrastructure and similar scaled OHL towers. This will add some density to the infrastructural elements and composition of built elements including changes in the OHL towers on Site but it will not extend the spread or influence of infrastructure across the area.
- 7.8.22 At operation the culvert and access track from the A876 will be left in-situ in the event access is required from the A876 for larger scale maintenance. This will extend the influence of road infrastructure within the context of a main trunk road in a small and localised area.
- 7.8.23 Landscape effects will be limited to the boundary area of the LCT where it adjoins the LCT 196 and relates to the pre-existing context of electrical infrastructure of this part of the LCT and the intrinsic composition of towers across the Site. Therefore, magnitude of landscape change at operation will be low. Considering the low landscape sensitivity and very low magnitude of landscape change, the significance of landscape effect during operation will therefore be no more than minor adverse (not significant) at year 1 and year 15.

Summary of Landscape Assessment

- 7.8.24 Table 7-4 below summaries the results of the landscape assessment.

Table 7-4 Summary of Landscape Assessment

ID	Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Phase	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effect	Level of effect
1	LCT 196- Coastal Flats Fife	Construction	Low	Low	Minor
1	LCT 196- Coastal Flats Fife	Operation Y1	Low	Low	Minor
1	LCT 196- Coastal Flats Fife	Operation Y15	Low	Low	Minor

ID	Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Phase	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effect	Level of effect
2	LCT 153 - Carselands	Construction	Low	Low	Minor
2	LCT 153 - Carselands	Operation Y1	Low	Low	Minor
2	LCT 153 - Carselands	Operation Y15	Low	Low	Minor

7.9 Visual Effects

- 7.9.1 This section provides an assessment of the nature of effects experienced during construction and during Year 1 and Year 15 of operation at each of the eight representative Viewpoints. Where a viewpoint has multiple receptor types, the most sensitive receptor has taken precedence within the visual appraisal.

Viewpoint 1: Broomknowe Drive

Sensitivity

- 7.9.2 The value of this view is judged to be medium. This viewpoint is representative of residents of Broomknowe Drive where the viewers' attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and is an important aspect of the visual experience. The presence of existing OHLs and towers provide an intrinsic element traversing the mid distance view. These elements are set within a landscape of relatively common features albeit with a densely wooded backdrop with the Ochil Hills in the distance and further enclosure from trees along the road to the east. Visual susceptibility is high.
- 7.9.3 The combination of the medium value and high susceptibility results in a high sensitivity.

Construction

- 7.9.4 Construction activities will be partially discernible in a small horizontal extent of the view and limited to just the taller construction plant such as cranes over the roofline and further screened by the densely wooded belt in the midground. As views will be oblique to the focus of the view the magnitude of change will be very low and short-term.
- 7.9.5 The high sensitivity of the receptor combined with the very low magnitude of change will result in a negligible adverse (not-significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.6 At operation, the Proposed Development will be partially evident at intermittent points to the rear of the intervening mature woodland in the backdrop to the immediate views. At this point the KINN infrastructure elements will not be that visible from ground level including the Hawkhill Road improvements. The southern and western OHL replacement towers will also not be that visible where they will be more substantially screened and filtered by the woodland. The new OHL towers to the north and east sides of the Kincardine North Substation will be more visible but only with views to the upper sections of the towers where five new towers will replace two existing towers in the view. This will add a degree of density to the composition of towers in the view but will not affect the horizontal spread or scale of towers in the view.

- 7.9.7 Due to the majority of view being screened and heavily filtered and a slight increase in views to the tips of the towers the magnitude of effect has been judged as low at operation.
- 7.9.8 The high sensitivity of the receptor combined with the low magnitude of change will result in a Minor adverse (not significant) effect at operation year and year 15.

Viewpoint 2: Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path 101), Craighton
Sensitivity

- 7.9.9 The value of this view is judged to be low. This viewpoint is representative of views for recreational receptors using Core Path 101, cyclists using the NCR76 and views from adjacent residential receptors including those at Craighton Farm. For recreational and residential receptors attention is likely to be focused on the landscape or a particular view, particularly from the residential properties, whilst receptors engaged in cycling may find the views of slightly lesser importance. The presence of existing OHLs, towers and other renewable energy features such as wind turbines provide intrinsic elements of the existing view. The view is of less importance to road users. Visual susceptibility is high due to the orientation of residential dwellings.
- 7.9.10 Due to the combination of the low value view and high susceptibility, the overall sensitivity is medium.

Construction

- 7.9.11 Construction activities within the main KINN and OHL tie in site, will be noticeable in open views along this route, viewed obliquely to the direction of travel. Views towards construction activities will be noticeable in the midground if stationary along parts of this Core Path. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be particularly visible due to intervening tiers of vegetation and minor landform variations associated with highways infrastructure.
- 7.9.12 The movement of plant will be seen in the context of the A876 trunk road and to the rear of the road. The earthworks, construction and demolition plant and erection of buildings for KINN elements and replacement towers, temporary masts and electrical infrastructure for the OHL, will be noticeable in the view but would be perceived alongside other infrastructure and existing OHLs and associated towers. Roadside and onsite vegetation removal is unlikely to be visible from this distance
- 7.9.13 As views will be open but extend to isolated points alongside other infrastructural elements the magnitude of change will be low and short-term until the towers are complete and operational.
- 7.9.14 The medium sensitivity with the low magnitude of change will result in a minor adverse (not significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.15 At operation, the Proposed Development will be noticeable in open views along this route, viewed obliquely to the direction of travel or noticeably within the midground views if stationary. The Proposed Development will be viewed to the rear of the A876 and an existing backdrop of infrastructure with existing OHLs being the dominant detracting element.
- 7.9.16 At this point the proposed KINN elements and OHL replacement towers within the main sections of the Proposed Development, will be visible at a mid-distance point where they will be seen alongside other comparable scaled elements and existing towers in the mid distance

but will add some density to the composition of features. However, the scale of the new infrastructure from this distance and orientation will be around half of the height and scale of the nearer towers in the foreground view. While this will increase the infrastructure in the mid distance view this will be in the same section of the view as the existing parallel ZCN and ZCS OHLs. As such there is an existing concentration of built features at this point and the alterations and additions will be seen in this intrinsic composition. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be particularly visible due to intervening tiers of vegetation and minor landform variations associated with highways infrastructure. Due to the majority of view being open and simple scaled the magnitude of effect has been judged as medium at operation.

- 7.9.17 The medium sensitivity of the receptor combined with the medium magnitude of change will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect at operation year 1 reducing to a low magnitude of change and minor adverse effect by year 15 (not significant) with mitigation woodland planting and bunding along the western boundaries reducing visibility.

Viewpoint 3: Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path 101) at Canal Burn

Sensitivity

- 7.9.18 The value of this view is judged to be low. This viewpoint is representative of views for recreational receptors using Core Path 101 and cyclists using the NCR76, as well as vehicle users of the road. For both non-vehicle receptor types the viewers' attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and is an important aspect of the visual experience.
- 7.9.19 For the receptors moving along the road they would find the views of slightly lesser importance due to activity and movement. The presence of existing OHLs and towers provide an intrinsic element across the mid distance view within a landscape of relatively common features. Visual susceptibility is medium.
- 7.9.20 The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility results in a medium sensitivity.

Construction

- 7.9.21 Construction activities will be noticeable in sequential, intermittent, and passing views along this route, viewed obliquely to the direction of travel.
- 7.9.22 Views towards construction activities within the main KINN and OHL tie in sections of the Proposed Development, will be noticeable at intermittent points across the Site in the midground if stationary along parts of this Core Path. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be that visible until further east and to the east side of the A876 where views are more open at points adjacent to the Proposed Development.
- 7.9.23 The movement of plant, earthworks and construction of and demolition of OHL towers, buildings and temporary and permanent electrical infrastructure and masts will be noticeable but will relate to similar built elements to the existing context in the background view to the rear of the A876 trunk road. As views will be just to isolated points in a wider built-up backdrop the magnitude of change will be generally low and short-term until the towers are more complete and operational.
- 7.9.24 The medium sensitivity of the receptor combined with the low magnitude of change will result in a minor adverse (significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.25 At operation, the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers within the main sections of the Proposed Development will be noticeable in intermittent, passing views along this route between gaps in vegetation patterns, viewed obliquely to the direction of travel. Views of the development will be noticeable within the midground views to the rear of the A876 and within an existing backdrop of infrastructure with existing OHLs being the dominant element.
- 7.9.26 From this point the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers will be visible in the mid distance view. At this point they will be seen in the same context as other existing electrical transmission elements and existing OHL towers in the view. The scale of these new elements from this distance and orientation will be less than other closer OHL towers to the north.
- 7.9.27 While this will increase the number of electrical transmission elements in the mid distance view this will be in the same section of the view as the existing parallel ZCN and ZCS OHL's to the west and the XL line to the east. As such there is an existing concentration of features and wirescape with a range of tower types in which the alterations and additions will be seen in this intrinsic composition. This will increase the density of infrastructure in the middle of this composition but not extend these features to any new sections of the view.
- 7.9.28 Mitigation planting as part of the KINN works will aid in partially filtering some low level views of the site and the Proposed Development will be viewed against the A876 and an existing backdrop of infrastructure with existing OHLs being the dominant detracting element. Due to the majority of the view being experienced sequentially and fleeting the magnitude of change has been judged as medium at operation.
- 7.9.29 The medium sensitivity of the receptor combined with the medium magnitude of change will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect at operation in year 1 and reducing to a low magnitude of change and minor adverse effect by year 15 (not significant) once the mitigation planting becomes established.

Viewpoint 4: Unclassified Road (National Cycle Route 76 and Core Path R745) West of Hawkhill Farm

Sensitivity

- 7.9.30 The value of this view is judged to be low. This viewpoint is representative of views for recreational receptors using Core Path 101 and cyclists using the NCR76. Recreational receptors tend to focus on their surroundings, and the scenic value in an important aspect of the visual experience. The primary focus along these routes are therefore the expansive views toward the Ochil Hills and Southern Highlands to the west. The presence of existing OHLs and towers provide an intrinsic element of the existing view. The view is of less importance to road users. Prioritising the consideration of the recreational receptor this results in a medium susceptibility.
- 7.9.31 The combination of the low value and medium susceptibility results in a medium sensitivity.

Construction

- 7.9.32 Construction activities associated with the Hawkhill Road Improvements to the east will be noticeable at beyond 50m to the east with minor changes to the road alignment and widths and some additional works to roadside vegetation and construction of a separate cycleway to the north side of the road. This will include the removal of a two trees to the north side of the road.

7.9.33 Construction activities associated with the Proposed Development will also be noticeable in sequential, intermittent, and passing views along this route between areas of vegetation viewed obliquely to the direction of travel. Views towards construction activities will be visible to the Site at intermittent points beyond the foreground fields and nearest two towers in the view. The movement of plant, and the demolition and construction of OHL towers and temporary electrical infrastructure and masts will modify and alter the composition of OHL towers as work progresses, but limited to isolated points in a wider built-up backdrop. The magnitude of change will be medium from this boundary point and short-term.

7.9.34 The medium sensitivity of the receptor combined with the medium magnitude of change will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect during construction.

Operation

7.9.35 At operation, the Proposed Development will change the immediate context of the viewpoint to the east with minor changes to the road alignment and inclusion of a new cycleway which would provide beneficial changes to cycle users on NCR76.

7.9.36 Changes with the main site area of the Proposed Development will also be noticeable in intermittent, passing views along this route between vegetation viewed obliquely to the direction of travel. Views of the development will be noticeable within the midground views. The Proposed Development will be viewed against an existing backdrop of infrastructure with existing OHLs being the dominant detracting element.

7.9.37 From this location to the south the majority of the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers and additional electrical infrastructural elements will be visible beyond the foreground field and nearest two towers. At this point they will be seen to add to the mix of infrastructure and other industrial structures and buildings in the same section of the view, to the north in the mid distance. The scale of the KINN elements and towers from this distance and orientation will also be less than other closer towers and other electrical infrastructure, which will also include consented electrical infrastructure in sections of the intervening view.

7.9.38 While this will increase the density of electrical infrastructure in the near to mid distance view, this will also be in similar sections of the view as the existing parallel ZCN and ZCS OHL's to the north and the XL line to the east and foreground view. As such KINN and OHL elements will also be seen within a range of existing towers with different compositions of towers with pairs and groupings in this intrinsic view and will not increase the spread of towers in the view to any new sections of the view.

7.9.39 Mitigation planting as part of the KINN will aid in partially filtering some low level views and the Proposed Development will be viewed against an existing backdrop of infrastructure with existing OHLs being the dominant element. Due to the majority of view being sequential and fleeting the magnitude of change has been judged as medium at operation year 1 and low at year 15.

7.9.40 The medium sensitivity of the receptor combined with the medium magnitude of change will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect at operation in year 1 reducing to a low magnitude of change and minor adverse effect by year 15 (not significant).

Viewpoint 5: Clackmannan Tower

Sensitivity

- 7.9.41 The value of this view is judged to be high. This viewpoint is representative of views for recreational receptors visiting the historic Clackmannan Tower, using the Clackmannanshire 99 Core Path and/or following the Clackmannanshire 'Tower Trail'.
- 7.9.42 Clackmannan Tower is in a conspicuous elevated position at the summit of King's Seat Hill in Clackmannan and is visible from miles around. There are wide-angled long-distance views across the Firth of Forth to the Pentland Hills. For this receptor type the viewers' attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and is an important aspect of the visual experience. Visual susceptibility is high.
- 7.9.43 The combination of the high value and high susceptibility results in a high sensitivity.

Construction

- 7.9.44 Within the context of the baseline view, construction work around the KINN and OHL areas, will be evident in a mid to far distant section of the view which is partially screened by intervening wooded ridgelines. Ground level activities will be faintly visible due to the distance and open and expansive flat terrain of the site and intervening view, yet it is unlikely from this elevated viewpoint that these will be visible against the skyline given the higher land to the east. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be particularly visible due to intervening tiers of vegetation and minor landform variations associated with highways infrastructure.
- 7.9.45 These impacts will be lessened by the presence of the existing infrastructure and OHL towers where the construction will relate to an existing focus of electrical infrastructure in the view. It will therefore be seen as a modification or alteration to those elements in the mid to far distant view. This will be a small section of the wider view. The scale and proximity of change in the view will be experienced over a short-term duration. The development will not notably extend the presence of infrastructure in the wider view but alter and add some density to the existing composition of towers and thus assessed as a very low magnitude of change.
- 7.9.46 This combined with high sensitivity will result in a minor adverse (not significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.47 At operation the development will result in a small change in a mid to far distance section of the wider view where the KINN elements, OHL replacement towers and other electrical infrastructural elements will be partially visible beyond the wooded ridge extending from the foreground view. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be discernible. At this distant contained point of the view they will modify an existing focus of electrical transmission features and the existing composition of towers in a small section of the view. To the north and east the infrastructure will sit more substantially behind the wooded ridgeline. At all points the KINN and OHL elements, will sit below the surrounding skyline and mostly below the wooded ridgeline to the east. This helps to contain the profile of the existing and proposed OHL towers in the wider view.
- 7.9.48 From this point the KINN and OHL elements will be seen as a comparable scaled element to the existing towers in the mid distance. While this will increase the density of infrastructure and number of towers this will be in the same section of the view as the existing OHLs. As such there is an existing concentration of towers at this point and this change will not notably

increase the spread of more concentrated towers into the wider view. Due to the combination of distance and nature of alterations and additions to an existing focus of infrastructure elements, the magnitude of effect is considered to be very low with a modest change to existing features in the background view.

- 7.9.49 This combined with high sensitivity will result in a minor adverse (not significant) effect at operation year 1 and at year 15.

Viewpoint 6: Maggie Duncan's Hill

Sensitivity

- 7.9.50 The value of this view is judged to be medium. This viewpoint is representative of views for recreational receptors accessing local places of interest, with views towards the Firth of Forth. For this receptor type the viewers' attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and is an important aspect of the visual experience, however the presence of OHLs and a concentration of towers provide intrinsic elements and a built focus in the existing view within a landscape of relatively common features. Visual susceptibility is medium.

- 7.9.51 Visual sensitivity as a result is considered to be medium.

Construction

- 7.9.52 Within the context of the baseline view, construction work will be evident in a low lying mid distant section of the view which is partially filtered by intervening vegetation and defined by a concentration of other large scale built electrical infrastructure and a range of OHL towers. Ground level activities will not be that evident in this context and the nature of the construction activity to move equipment, earthworks and temporary structure and masts installation will be seen in this concentration of existing OHL's and towers. The impacts will, therefore, be lessened as it will relate to similar built elements to the existing context. As views will be to the rear of and between existing infrastructure the magnitude of change will be low and short-term until the KINN and OHL towers are more complete and operational.

- 7.9.53 This combined with medium sensitivity will result in a minor adverse (not significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.54 At operation the development will be partially visible and result in a modification and increase in electricity generating infrastructure a section of the view defined by a concentration of industrial features in the view. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be that visible.

- 7.9.55 At this point the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers will be seen to the rear of intervening vegetation and between existing OHL towers in the mid distance. The scale of the proposed changes from this distance and orientation will be modest sitting within the existing concentration of comparable elements. While they will increase the density of electrical infrastructure and associated wirescape they will not notably extend the spread of transmission elements into other sections of the wider view.

- 7.9.56 This will result in a fairly unobtrusive change to the composition of the view and thus assessed as a low magnitude of change.

- 7.9.57 This combined with medium sensitivity will result in a minor adverse (not significant) effect at operation year 1 and year 15.

Viewpoint 7: Broadcarse (Highland Gateway Caravan Park) Core Path 102

Sensitivity

- 7.9.58 The value of this view is judged to be low. This viewpoint is representative of views for recreational receptors using Core Path 102 and views from adjacent residential receptors including those at Broadcarse Farm and the Highland Gateway Glamping and Caravanning site. For both receptor types the viewers' attention or interest is focussed on their surroundings and is an important aspect of the visual experience, particularly from the residential properties. The presence of existing electricity transmission infrastructure and concentration of OHLs and towers provide intrinsic elements in the existing view. Susceptibility is considered to be high due to the interest in views from residential dwellings.
- 7.9.59 Due to the combination of the low value view and high susceptibility, the overall visual sensitivity is medium.

Construction

- 7.9.60 Construction activities will be partially discernible within the flat open low lying fields in the mid-distance views to the rear of the A876 and intervening embankments and vegetation which filters some views. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be particularly visible due to intervening tiers of vegetation and minor landform variations associated with highways infrastructure. These activities will encompass the movement of vehicles and the presence of various machinery to construct the KINN elements and remove and construct the OHL towers and temporary electrical infrastructure and masts. The intensity of activity and movement may fluctuate throughout the duration of the works, but the presence of construction at the compound will be a constant element. The scale and proximity of changes in views will be experienced at isolated points in the mid distance view.
- 7.9.61 This will relate to the existing nature of built features within the site being perceived as similar elements in the same context and these changes will be somewhat mitigated by the existing backdrop of electrical infrastructure. Views will be open but extend to isolated points alongside other infrastructural elements and the magnitude of change will be low and short-term until the KINN and OHL tower elements are complete and operational.
- 7.9.62 This combined with medium sensitivity will result in a minor adverse (significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.63 At operation, the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers of the Proposed Development will be seen as noticeable additions within the open view east to the rear of raised embankments and the A876. The Proposed Development will also be viewed against an existing backdrop of electrical infrastructure with existing OHLs towers remaining dominant features in the view. The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be particularly visible due to intervening tiers of vegetation and minor landform variations associated with highways infrastructure.
- 7.9.64 At this point the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers will be visible at a mid distance point where they will be seen to add a mix of further OHLs, towers and electricity transmission infrastructure elements at a point where there is a concentration of similar features in the mid distance. The scale of these features from this distance and orientation will vary but will site further back than more prominent nearer towers in the foreground view to the south. While

they will increase the concentration of wirescape features in the mid distance view, this will be in the same section of the view as the existing parallel ZCN and ZCS OHLs as just to the south of these. As such the alterations and additions will be seen in this intrinsic composition.

- 7.9.65 Mitigation planting as part of the KINN will aid in partially filtering some low level views to most of the KINN elements leaving views to the OHL towers as modifications of the existing composition of towers in the view.
- 7.9.66 Due to the majority of view being open the magnitude of effect has been judged as medium at operation year 1 and low at year 15.
- 7.9.67 This combined with medium sensitivity will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect at operation year 1 and by year 15 this will be minor (not significant) with mitigation planting in place for the proposed KINN elements.

Viewpoint 8: A876 Northbound Layby

Sensitivity

- 7.9.68 The value of this view is judged to be very low. This viewpoint is representative of views of road and public transport users using the A997 trunk road. For this receptor type, the attention or interest is not focused on their surroundings and where the view is incidental to their enjoyment. The presence of existing electricity transmission infrastructure and OHLs and towers provide an intrinsic element of the existing view. Susceptibility as a result is considered to be low.
- 7.9.69 Visual sensitivity is assessed to be low.

Construction

- 7.9.70 During the construction phase, a range of activities will be visible in the foreground, including vehicle and personnel movement, temporary road structures, machinery, and site fencing. Tall lifting machinery, although localised, will be a dominant feature within the context of existing OHL towers. Despite fluctuations in activity intensity, the construction presence at the compound will be constant. The change, experienced over a short-term duration, will be somewhat mitigated by the existing infrastructure backdrop and other prominent detracting elements. However, the construction will result in a result in a high magnitude of change.
- 7.9.71 The Hawkhill Road improvements will not be particularly visible due to intervening tiers of vegetation and other highways infrastructure.
- 7.9.72 This combined with low sensitivity will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect during construction.

Operation

- 7.9.73 At operation, the KINN elements and OHL replacement towers of the Proposed Development will be prominent within a wide portion of passing foreground views to the rear of the A876 and within an existing backdrop of infrastructure with existing OHLs being the dominant detracting element.
- 7.9.74 From this point the proposed towers and substation elements will be visible in the near distance across the A876 where they will extend the scale and proportion of electrical infrastructures to a wider area within the existing context and setting of other infrastructure and existing concentration of towers at this point. As such there will be a range of different

compositional elements with pairs and groupings of towers and new lower elements and the alterations and additions will be seen in this intrinsic composition.

- 7.9.75 From this point, the focus of views is likely to be to the north towards the Ochil Hills and not the Proposed Development. Mitigation planting would aid in filtering and screening the KINN elements over time and the lower sections of the towers, and the Proposed Development would be viewed against an existing backdrop of electrical infrastructure to the left-hand side however at year 1 the development would result in a high magnitude of change.
- 7.9.76 A high magnitude of change combined with low sensitivity will result in a moderate adverse (significant) effect at operation year 1 due to proximity of visible elements. This will reduce to medium magnitude by year 15 and minor adverse (not significant) as planting matures.

Summary of Visual Assessment

7.9.77 Table 7-5 below summaries the results of the visual impact assessment in construction, operation year 1 and year 15.

Table 7-5: Summary of Visual Assessment

ID	Viewpoint	Phase	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Level of effect
1	Broomknowe Drive	Construction	Medium	High	High	Very Low	Negligible Adverse
		Operation Y1	Medium	High	High	Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y15	Medium	High	High	Low	Minor Adverse
2	Farmstead along National Cycle Route 76	Construction	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y1	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y15	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
3	National Cycle Route 76 at Canal Burn	Construction	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y1	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y15	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
4	National Cycle Route 76 near Hawkhill Farm	Construction	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y1	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y15	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse

ID	Viewpoint	Phase	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Level of effect
5	Clackmannan Tower	Construction	High	High	High	Very Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y1	High	High	High	Very Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y15	High	High	High	Very Low	Minor Adverse
6	Maggie Duncan's Hill	Construction	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y1	Medium	Medium	Medium	low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y15	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
7	Kennet Pans/ Kennet Core Path	Construction	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
		Operation Y1	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y15	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Minor Adverse
8	A876 Northbound Layby	Construction	Low	Low	Low	High	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y1	Low	Low	Low	High	Moderate Adverse
		Operation Y15	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Minor Adverse

7.10 Additional Mitigation

- 7.10.1 No additional mitigation measures beyond the embedded measures identified in Section 7.4 and as detailed in the Figure 7.5 - Outline Landscape Masterplan Plan are proposed during construction or once the scheme is complete and operational.

7.11 Residual Effects

- 7.11.1 Given the localised nature of effects of the Proposed Development and the existing nature of the Site and interrupted character with an existing backdrop of electrical infrastructure, wirescapes and OHLs towers, effects on the surrounding landscape character are not considered to be significant.
- 7.11.2 By year 15, the landscape proposals associated with the Proposed Development would be fully established. This would assist in reducing the perception of scale of the Proposed Development. This would help integrate it within the wider pattern of landcover features on the Site landscape.
- 7.11.3 Although mitigation planting would mature between Year 1 and 15, there is no change in the category of impact for landscape character. However, the minor adjustments allowing for maturity of the planting include the mitigation for the isolated tree lost to construction and further screening of the road and further integration of the Proposed Development into the surrounding character. The Proposed Development would therefore only form a minor change in the wider balance of characteristics in the area which include other linear infrastructure features.
- 7.11.4 The assessment has indicated that some isolated significant adverse effects are anticipated on visual receptors that lie on Site boundaries or at close points to the west, but effects dissipate quickly beyond these points. These effects are also at the lower end of significance.
- 7.11.5 No significant residual effects are anticipated when the proposed landscaping is fully established (Year 15 of operation). This is due to the arrangement of bunding and planting proposed to the west helping to screen views and integrate the Proposed Development within the surrounding landscape and the pattern of landcover features.

7.12 Cumulative Assessment

- 7.12.1 This chapter considers the likely cumulative environmental effects as a result of the Proposed Development. The purpose of the assessment is to assess whether the combination of effects from the addition of the proposed development to other developments, upon a common receptor, will result in an effect of greater significance than the individual effects.
- 7.12.2 Best practice guidance states that a landscape and visual cumulative assessment should focus on the most likely significant cumulative effects and conclude with a clear assessment of those which are likely to influence decision making. Therefore, only the relevant cumulative schemes have been considered within this assessment. Cumulative schemes within the scope of this assessment are limited to the schemes within Table 7-6 below.

Table 7-6 Other Developments Considered in the Cumulative Assessment

Planning Application/ Reference Name	Description	Location	Status
Kincardine Grid Services Complex (ECU00003326)	Installation and operation of a group of grid services facilities including the storage and management of energy and associated infrastructure	Land adjacent to the A876 at Kincardine, Fife, at National Grid Reference (NGR) 292273, 689157	Consented
Kincardine Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (ECU00004987)	342MW Battery Energy Storage System	Land west of Kincardine Substation, Alloa, FK10 4BJ	Consented
1.9 km of 275kV cable from old Kin to new Kin 25/02494/SCR	275kv underground cable measuring approximately 1.9 km long	between Kincardine Substation and the proposed Kincardine North substation	Consented
Temporary placement of transformers 25/02355/SCR	installation of 2 no. temporary 400kv transformers and associated infrastructure including temporary access upgrades and bridge structures	Kincardine Power Station Site Kincardine Fife	Consented
Meadowend Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (ECU00005178)	S36 application for the construction and operation of an energy generating system, which will comprise a battery energy storage system which will store up to 500mw of energy, together with associated infrastructure, substation, security fencing, CCTV, security lighting and landscaping	Land At Meadowend Farm, Kennet, Clackmannanshire, FK10 4DP	Pre-Application complete Application

Planning Application/ Reference Name	Description	Location	Status
Aggregate Storage Building 25/00801/FULL	Erection of aggregate storage building (Class 6) including ancillary welfare unit and formation of car parking/hardstanding with associated loading areas (Section 42 application to vary condition 3 of 24/00979/FULL)	Kincardine Power Station Site, Kincardine, Fife	Approved
Kilbagie Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) (ECU00005240)	Installation of a BESS with a capacity of up to 500MW and associated infrastructure.	Land at Kilbagie to the north of the proposed Kincardine North Substation	Application

7.12.3 Two cumulative scenarios have been defined based on their planning status and these are set out below:

- **Cumulative Scenario 1:** The cumulative baseline for this scenario includes schemes which have been consented and/or are under construction in addition to existing operational schemes.
- **Cumulative Scenario 2:** The cumulative baseline for this scenario includes schemes at application stage in addition to existing operational schemes and those which have been consented and/or are under construction.

7.12.4 The assessment of cumulative magnitude of change and level of effect involves consideration of the additional change resulting from the Proposed Development at operation to each cumulative baseline scenario

Cumulative Landscape Appraisal

7.12.5 Potential cumulative effects will occur where the addition of the Proposed Development to the cumulative baseline will increase the prominence of energy infrastructure to the extent that they will potentially become either an influential characteristic or character-defining feature of a landscape. As a result of the comparable nature of potential visibility compared to the existing infrastructure and the modest nature of change to existing defining features within the site, it is considered that there is very limited potential for significant cumulative landscape effects on the landscape receptors found within the wider setting of the study area.

7.12.6 The cumulative landscape assessment therefore takes a targeted approach, focusing on those landscape designations and LCTs where the potential for cumulative landscape effects is greatest within LCT 196 Coastal Flats, Fife and LCT 153 Carselands. The other LCTs will not experience any notable perceptible cumulative effects.

LCT 196 Coastal Flats- Fife

- 7.12.7 Landscape Sensitivity has been identified as Low.
- 7.12.8 In Scenario 1, the Kincardine Grid Services complex, the Kincardine Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and the Aggregate Storage Building are included as they are all consented. These developments will add to the overall presence of electrical infrastructure within the Coastal Flats LCT and contribute to an increase in the perception of electrical infrastructure within the Site setting. This will be confined to a small fringe area of the overall LCT. The potential for in-combination views with the Proposed Development is likely. Given the existing presence of electrical infrastructure within this section of the Coastal Flat LCT the addition of the Proposed Development will not notably alter the more valued characteristics of this LCT but will be seen to add a number of similar energy infrastructure elements which already add a defining built influence in this part of the LCT.
- 7.12.9 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of effect is low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.
- 7.12.10 In Scenario 2, the Kincardine Underground Cable to Kincardine North, Kilbaggie BESS, temporary placement of transformers and Meadowend BESS are included in addition to the consented developments above.
- 7.12.11 The majority of these developments at application stage are located in close proximity to the Proposed Development (approx. within 1km) in all directions. The Kilbaggie BESS and Meadowend BESS are both located to the north within 1km of the Proposed Development with the Meadowend project lying to the west of the A876 and extending the presence of built infrastructure beyond the Site context between the two trunk roads. In-combination views are likely within the surrounding context, principally to the west. This will relate principally to the two BESS projects to the north.
- 7.12.12 The Kincardine Underground Cable to Kincardine North is unlikely to have any inter-visibility due to it being located below ground. The temporary placement of transformers will have some inter-visibility at points to the south around Hawkhill Road, where the two developments will emphasise the existing presence of electrical infrastructure within the area.
- 7.12.13 Overall, there will be a modest increase in the perception of electrical infrastructure within this area of the LCT which is already defined by electrical infrastructure. Although some of the OHL towers will be taller the cumulative BESS developments will provide new foci in the wider Site setting and provide more contrast and emphasis.
- 7.12.14 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of effect resulting from the Proposed Development is medium. The cumulative level of effect is therefore considered to be minor adverse.

LCT 153 Carselands

- 7.12.15 Landscape Sensitivity has been identified as Low.
- 7.12.16 As none of the cumulative developments listed are located within this LCT there will be no direct cumulative effect relating to Scenario 1. Even though two BESS units are consented to the south they will more clearly relate to the landscape setting to the east of the A876 and on the boundary of this area with LCT 196.

7.12.17 In Scenario 2, the Kilbagie BESS development will be located on the boundary of this LCT where it adjoins LCT 196. The Meadowend BESS will then be located within the separate LCT 154 to the north of this LCT. In combination with these developments there will be a further increase in the perception of electrical infrastructure but this will relate to an existing area of infrastructure on the short LCT boundaries to the east rather than within the general focus of features within this area and as such confined to a small eastern fringe area of the overall LCT. There will be some potential for in-combination views but this will relate to views outwith this area rather than across this landscape. The introduction of the Proposed Development will provide no significant cumulative impact on the Carselands LCT given the existing context and setting.

7.12.18 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of effect is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Negligible

Cumulative Visual Appraisal

7.12.19 Potential significant cumulative effects will occur where the addition of the Proposed Development to the cumulative baseline will increase the prominence of energy infrastructure to the extent that they will potentially become either an influential or character-defining feature in views across the landscape.

Viewpoint 1 Broomknowe Drive

7.12.20 Visual sensitivity is judged to be high.

7.12.21 In Scenario 1, no consented developments will be that evident due to the presence of woodland block planting, the aspect of the view and the lower height of much of the infrastructure proposed. The existing presence of OHL towers across the skyline is, and will remain the main presence of electrical infrastructure with the backdrop of the Ochil Hills.

7.12.22 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change is none. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be No change .

7.12.23 In Scenario 2, none of the listed cumulative schemes will be that evident given the presence of woodland block planting/intervening vegetation and the lower height of much of the infrastructure proposed.

7.12.24 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change is none. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be No change.

Viewpoint 2 Farmstead along National Cycle Route 76

7.12.25 Visual sensitivity is judged to be medium.

7.12.26 In Scenario 1, the Kincardine Grid Services Complex will be visible due to the relatively flat topography of the lands it will be located on. This will tie in with the existing network of OHL towers which are a prominent feature across the skyline spanning from left to right within this viewpoint. The Proposed Development will then sit partially to the rear of this consented Site. The Kincardine BESS and Aggregate Storage buildings will not be that evident in the view given the mature screening between the east side of the A876 and this site area.

7.12.27 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

7.12.28 In Scenario 2, the Kilbagie BESS will be visible to the north side of the Proposed Development and existing OHLs extending the influence of electrical infrastructure in the view. There will be in-combination views with the Proposed Development, with the Proposed development sitting just to the south and rear of this Site. Further to the north there will be no notable views to the Meadowend BESS which sits to the rear of a wooded ridgeline.

7.12.29 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

Viewpoint 3 National Cycle Route 76 at Canal Burn

7.12.30 Visual sensitivity is judged to be low.

7.12.31 In Scenario 1, the Kincardine Grid Services will be visible sitting immediately adjacent to the east side of the A876 and provide a prominent focus in the near distance view. It will also sit in front of the proposed KINN elements and some of the OHL towers associated with the Proposed Development. The addition of the Proposed Development will in part relate to the nature of electrical infrastructure on site and will be to the rear of this site. Any views from this location will therefore be restricted by this development and be intermittent and viewed obliquely to the direction of travel. The presence of mature tree growth along field boundaries will help filter views towards the Kincardine Grid Services. The Kincardine BESS and Aggregate Storage buildings will not be that evident in the view given the mature screening between the east side of the A876 and this site area.

7.12.32 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Negligible.

7.12.33 In Scenario 2, the Kilbagie BESS will be visible in the same section of the view to the north extending the influence of electrical infrastructure in the view towards the Site. In-combination views between all developments will be possible. Further to the north there will be no notable views to the Meadowend BESS which sits to the rear of a wooded ridgeline.

7.12.34 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Negligible.

Viewpoint 4 National Cycle Route 76 near Hawkhill Farm

7.12.35 Visual sensitivity is judged to be low.

7.12.36 In Scenario 1, part of the Kincardine Grid Services will be visible at closer proximity and provide a dominant focus across most of the foreground view to the north and to the west on the south side of the road.. It will also sit in front of the proposed KINN elements and the OHL towers associated with the Proposed Development The Kincardine BESS will also be evident in filtered and partially screened successional view to the south to the rear of mature tree lines.

7.12.37 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of effect from the Proposed Development changes will be Low where it will sit to the rear of other infrastructure in the foreground view. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

7.12.38 In Scenario 2, the Kilbagie BESS will not be that evident given the consented context noted above and relatively flat topography in the foreground.. Further to the north there will be no notable views to the Meadowend BESS which sits to the rear of a wooded ridgeline.

- 7.12.39 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development will be low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

Viewpoint 5 Clackmannan Tower

- 7.12.40 Visual sensitivity is judged to be high.
- 7.12.41 In Scenario 1, the Kincardine Grid Services will be visible to the south side of the Proposed Development (in the background view). However, visibility will be more faint or imperceptible given the distance from this expansive panoramic view. The Kincardine BESS and Aggregate Storage buildings will not be that evident in the view given the mature screening between the east side of the A876 and this site area. Given the nature of changes connected with the Proposed Development within the surrounding context, this will occupy a small area of this view and therefore not notably alter the overall composition.
- 7.12.42 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of effect resulting from the Proposed Development very low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.
- 7.12.43 For Scenario 2, inter-visibility will be low to the Kilbagie BESS and the Meadowend BESS which will sit further to the north to the rear of elevated wooded ridgelines. It is not anticipated that the addition of the Proposed Development will detract from the overall characteristics/more valued parts of this view.
- 7.12.44 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is very low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

Viewpoint 6 Maggie Duncan's Hill

- 7.12.45 Visual sensitivity is judged to be medium.
- 7.12.46 In Scenario 1, visibility will be gained with the Kincardine Grid Services which will be visible to the south side of the Proposed Development; (in the background) due to the intervening field boundary vegetation and existing electrical infrastructure and concentration of OHL towers. The Kincardine BESS and Aggregate Storage buildings will not be that evident in the view given the mature screening between the east side of the A876 and this site area
- 7.12.47 This view is largely defined by the River Forth, blocks of woodland, arable fields, a glimpse of a major road and scattered farmsteads. A band of mature tree field-boundary vegetation (in the middle distance) provides partial screening towards the lower fields. The existing OHL and towers are concentrated around parcels of land between the trunk roads alongside roadside hedgerow which serve to heavily filter and restrict clear views to the Site and consented developments.
- 7.12.48 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is very low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Negligible.
- 7.12.49 In Scenario 2, there will be some inter-visibility with the Kilbagie BESS which sits in the same section of the view to the east of the A876. There will also be high intervisibility with the Meadowend BESS site which will sit at a more elevated and prominent section of farmland to the west side of the A876. While some cumulative effects are anticipated, the contribution of the Proposed Development will not be the important factor given its location and context as alteration to existing infrastructure

- 7.12.50 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

Viewpoint 7 Kennet Pans/ Kennet Core Path

- 7.12.51 Visual sensitivity is judged to be low.
- 7.12.52 In Scenario 1, the Kincardine Grid Services will be visible due to the relatively flat topography of the lands it will be located on. It will also sit adjacent to the east side of the A876 and provide a prominent focus in the view. It will also sit in front of the southern sections of the proposed KINN elements and some of the OHL towers associated with the Proposed Development. This will tie in with the existing network of OHL towers which are a prominent feature across the skyline spanning from left to right within this viewpoint. The Kincardine BESS and Aggregate Storage buildings will not be that evident in the view given the mature screening between the east side of the A876 and this site area.

- 7.12.53 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

- 7.12.54 In Scenario 2, the Kilbagie BESS will be visible to the north side of the Proposed Development and existing OHLs extending the influence of electrical infrastructure in the view further to the north. There will be in-combination views with the Proposed Development. Further to the north there will be no notable views to the Meadowend BESS which sits to the rear of a wooded ridgeline.

- 7.12.55 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

Viewpoint 8 A876 Northbound Layby

- 7.12.56 Visual sensitivity is judged to be Low.
- 7.12.57 In Scenario 1 the Kincardine Grid Services will be visible at close range points across the road through roadside/field-boundary vegetation. Visibility will be extensive and direct but the cumulative development will sit in front of the southern sections of the proposed KINN elements and some of the OHL towers associated with the Proposed Development as a more prominent closer feature. Views will also be transient due to the direction of high-speed traffic along this major road route. The presence of existing OHL towers dominates the existing view as it moves into the backdrop of woodland planting. The Kincardine BESS and Aggregate Storage buildings will not be that evident in the view given the mature screening between the east side of the A876 and this site area
- 7.12.58 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is y low. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.
- 7.12.59 In Scenario 2, the Kilbagie BESS will be visible to the north side of the Proposed Development and existing OHLs extending the influence of electrical infrastructure in the view to the north. There will be in-combination views with the Proposed Development and other consented sites noted above. Further to the north there will be no notable views to the Meadowend BESS which sits to the rear of a wooded ridgeline.
- 7.12.60 In combination there will be an increase to the overall presence of electrical infrastructure within this local area however due to the transient nature of the view and direction of traffic this

will be fleeting and glimpsed. Mitigation connected with the Proposed Development and other consented schemes will help to filter and screen views over time

- 7.12.61 Taking all of this into account the cumulative magnitude of change resulting from the Proposed Development is Medium. The cumulative level of effect is therefore judged to be Minor Adverse.

7.13 Summary and Conclusions

- 7.13.1 The Proposed Development is situated in agricultural farmland bounded to the west by the A876 and to the east by the freight only Stirling-Alloa-Kincardine railway line, with a settlement on the edge of Kincardine located 250 m to the southeast. The site is bordered by a series of woodland blocks predominantly along the southern and eastern boundaries. Land to the west of the site, between the site and the A876, is the subject of an approved application for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), known as the Kincardine Grid Services Complex, with further consented schemes to the south towards the Kincardine Substation.
- 7.13.2 As such, electrical infrastructure has an existing and an emerging, approved and notable influence within the landscape and the wider setting. This relates primarily to the linear sections of land across the site context between the two trunk roads and rail line. At this point, various overhead transmission lines (OHLs and other electrical infrastructure) present large-scale manmade features within the local landscape area, three of which traverse the proposed site, with the existing Kincardine Substation building located approximately 500 m to the south.
- 7.13.3 Landscape effects have been assessed by reference to National Landscape Character Types (LCTS) and online mapping published in 2019 by NatureScot. Effects on landscape character have been assessed in construction, Year 1 of operation and at Year 15. This is in order to assess the short term impacts from construction, the “worst case” impacts at year 1 when mitigation planting associated with the Proposed Development on Figure _7.5_Outline Landscape Mitigation Plan has not matured and then at year 15, when the increased height of the tree and shrub planting provides mitigation.
- 7.13.4 No significant effects on landscape character are assessed for any stage of the construction or operation due to the context, filtering and screening and development of landscape mitigation over time.
- 7.13.5 Visual impacts of the Proposed Development have been evaluated for eight representative locations in the study area. Views from within the study area will be relatively localised and limited in places by intervening landform and vegetation and moderated by the existing visual composition of electrical infrastructure.
- 7.13.6 Mitigation planting associated with the Proposed Development shown on Figure _7.5_Outline Landscape Mitigation Plan visual effects will not have matured as a screen in construction and year 1 due to plant size being typically 1m in height or less.
- 7.13.7 By year 15 native tree and shrub planting will better integrate the proposed development into the context creating a more effective screen. Once established, the proposed landscaping will reduce the visual prominence of the Proposed Development, particularly including the KINN elements and lower sections of the OHL towers in these views by screening the infrastructure and softening the view with the presence of woodland planting along the earth mound. This will result in reduced magnitude of effect at key viewpoints to the west where some year 1 significant effects were anticipated as indicated in Table 7.5 Summary of Visual Effects.

- 7.13.8 Significant effects on visual amenity will occur during construction at two adjacent boundary points at Vp4 National Cycle Route 76 near Hawkhill Farm and VP8 A876 Northbound Layby but these are at the lower end of significance.
- 7.13.9 Significant effects in year 1 of operation will remain at those two viewpoints, together with significant effects predicted at other close range points to the west at VP2 Farmstead along National Cycle Route 76, VP3 National Cycle Route 76 at Canal Burn and VP7 Kennet Pans/ Kennet Core Path. However, these are at the lower end of significance and reduced to non-significant by year 15 for all representative viewpoints due to the mitigation planting within the site boundary.
- 7.13.10 The anticipated significant effects at year 1 will also be moderated and reduced if the cumulative developments are built out before the Proposed Development is finished, particularly the Kincardine Grid Services Complex which will sit in front of the Proposed Development and partially screen elements of the Proposed Development
- 7.13.11 No significant cumulative effects are anticipated .

7.14 References

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