



Galloper Wind Farm Eastern Super Grid Transformer Project

Environmental Statement – Chapter 4 Landscape and Visual
Assessment

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Galloper Wind Farm Limited



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4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 LDA Design has undertaken a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed Eastern Super Grid Transformer (ESGT) which is included in Appendix 4.1 (hereafter referred to as 'the LVIA'). This chapter provides a summary of that assessment.

4.1.2 This chapter defines the existing landscape and visual baseline environments; assesses their sensitivity to change; describes the key landscape and visual related aspects of the proposed development; describes the nature of the anticipated change upon both the landscape and visual environments; assesses the effects during construction, during the 25 year operational life of the ESGT proposals and during decommissioning.

4.2 The Site and Proposals

4.2.1 Figure 01 of the LVIA (Appendix 8) places the proposed development within its local context. The site of the proposed ESGT compound comprises an area of woodland and grassland east of the existing Leiston substation and Sizewell Wents woodland and west of two parallel 400kV overhead lines and pylons. The ESGT development comprises a substation compound enclosed in a security fence. A full description of the scheme is provided in Chapter 3 Project Details.

4.3 Study Area

4.3.1 A study area of 1.5km has been identified as being appropriate to cover all potentially material landscape and visual impacts, and agreed with Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC) (see correspondence in LVIA Appendix 1 (in Appendix 4.1)).

4.4 Methodology

4.4.1 A detailed methodology is given in Section 2.0 of the LVIA (Appendix 4.1). A summary is provided below.

4.4.2 The methodology for undertaking this LVIA has been developed in accordance with current best practice guidance, specifically:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3), Third Edition - Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013.
- Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England and Scotland' – Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002.

4.4.3 Landscape and visual effects are assessed separately, a distinction clarified further by the guidance as follows:

“...the two components of LVIA are:

- 1. Assessment of landscape effects: assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
- 2. Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.*

The distinction between these two aspects is very important but often misunderstood...LVIA must deal with both and should be clear about the differences between them.” (GLVIA3 para 2.21-2.22)

Key stages

4.4.4 The methodology has three key stages (described in more detail in Appendix 1 of Appendix 4.1), as follows:

Stage 1 - Baseline

4.4.5 This stage includes:

- familiarisation with the project proposals, site and planning/landscape character contexts and review of relevant existing background information;
- scoping of the assessment (including potential for cumulative effects), and agreement of scope with the client, relevant consultees and planning authority;
- site visits and initial feedback to client/EIA coordinator regarding issues that may need to be addressed within the design;
- preliminary analysis and identification of potential receptors/selection of viewpoints;
- agreement of study area and viewpoints the with local planning authority.

Stage 2 - Design

4.4.6 This stage involves input into the design and review of the development proposals and landscape mitigation and enhancement opportunities as they evolve, including liaison with other professionals.

Stage 3 - Assessment

4.4.7 This stage involves the assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the scheme, based upon the analysis of desk studies and site surveys, followed by the completion of a full report, setting out the rationale for judgements regarding sensitivity, significance of effects etc.

Significance criteria

- 4.4.8 'Significance' indicates the importance or gravity of an effect. The process of forming a judgement on the significance of an effect is based upon an assessment of the magnitude of change affecting the landscape or the views experienced by people, combined with the sensitivity of the 'receptor' (i.e. the landscape itself or the viewer) to the change proposed.
- 4.4.9 The level of significance will be an important factor influencing planning decisions and it is therefore important that judgements are clearly understood, and a measure of proportion established. Criteria used in this assessment are set out in Section 2.0 of the LVIA, involving assessments of:
- susceptibility, value and sensitivity of receptor;
 - scale, duration, extent and magnitude of effect; and
 - significance of effect.
- 4.4.10 While the methodology is designed to be robust and transparent, professional judgement is applied to determine the significance of each impact.
- 4.4.11 Effects that are judged to be 'Major' or 'Major-Moderate' are considered to be significant. Effects of Moderate significance or less are "of lesser concern" (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013, para 3.35). It should be noted that whilst an effect may be significant, that does not necessarily mean that such an impact would be unacceptable, or should necessarily be regarded as an "undue consequence". (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013, para 5.40).
- 4.4.12 Effects are defined as adverse, neutral or positive.

Effects on residential amenity

4.4.13 GLVIA3 (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) confirms at paragraph 6.17 that the assessment of effects on residential property is “separate from LVIA” and subject to “specific requirements”.

4.4.14 For this reason, the effects on the closest residential properties are assessed separately to the viewpoints, specifically in order to identify whether the effects would result in unacceptable harm to residential amenity. As described in the Section 2.0 of the LVIA the assessment of effects on residential properties is limited to where, in theory, due to their close proximity, large proportions of their views could potentially be occupied by a proposed development.

4.5 Baseline

4.5.1 An overview of the baseline study results is provided in this section with the full baseline description of the individual landscape and visual receptors provided alongside the assessment in section 5 for ease of reference.

4.5.2 This section provides a review of the key local guidance documents and identifies those landscape and visual receptors which merit detailed consideration in the assessment of effects, and those which are ‘scoped out’ from further assessment as effects “*have been judged unlikely to occur or so insignificant that it is not essential to consider them further*” (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013, para 3.19).

4.5.3 The baseline environment for the purposes of this LVIA includes the consented GWF works. The ESGT proposals would replace parts of the consented works resulting in some of the GWF infrastructure and woodland removal not being implemented. This is summarised in Table 2 of the LVIA.

4.5.4 The consented GWF works also includes further mitigation planting to that proposed on the profiled landform including a 10m wide woodland belt east of Sandy Lane and a length of hedgerow as shown on the Landscape Context Figure 07 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA. None of this consented planting would be changed under the ESGT proposals – it would all be implemented.

4.5.5 In summary, the existing baseline environment for the purpose of this LVIA includes the following GWF substation elements:

- Onshore buried cable connection to the GWF compound.
- GWF substation compound and landform.
- Leiston B substation and associated tree removal.
- Cable connections to the two cable end sealing compounds and associated tree removal.
- Two cable end sealing compounds.
- Soft landscape works including native tree, shrub and hedge planting.

4.6 Key Local Guidance Documents

4.6.1 The following local guidance documents are of relevance to this LVIA, and are discussed in section 4.2 of the LVIA:

- The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (Suffolk County Council, 2011)
- The East of England Landscape Framework (Landscape East, 2011)
- Touching the Tide Landscape Character Assessment (Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, August 2012)
- Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Management Plan (2013-2018) (Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, undated)
- The Suffolk Historic Landscape Characterisation Map (Suffolk County Council, 2008)

4.7 Planning Policy

National and local planning policy is discussed in section 3.0 and Appendix 5 of the LVIA.

4.8 ZTV Study

- 4.8.1 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) study of the ESGT compound was generated based on the proposed design. It models the ZTV of the ESGT compound but not the cable end sealing compound as this is part of the consented GWF development.
- 4.8.2 Figures 04 and 05 (Appendix 8 of the LVIA) show the theoretical ZTV at Years 1 (on completion of development) and 15 (after young planting will have matured), illustrating areas from where the proposed development might potentially be visible. It models in points on the highest pieces of equipment and enclosing security fence - much of the equipment would be lower than these heights.
- 4.8.3 The ZTV model has allowed for the removal of existing woodland within the site and to the west of the site (for the GWF access road and cable corridor) which will open up visibility to the west. This woodland west of the ESGT compound will be removed as part of the consented GWF compound substation works and is therefore accounted for as part of the existing baseline environment.
- 4.8.4 As illustrated on Figures 04 and 05, theoretical visibility towards the proposed ESGT development is most prevalent within a 0.5km radius of the site to the north and south and more limited to the west and east.
- 4.8.5 By comparing Figures 04 and 05 it can be seen that there is very little change in visibility predicted between Years 1 and 15 to the north, west and south of the proposed ESGT compound. The greatest change would be to the east where the consented woodland east of Sandy Lane would provide some screening from that direction, as it matures..
- 4.8.6 Site assessment identifies that actual visibility is less than indicated on Figures 04 and 05. There are many small scale features including trees and

hedgerows present in the landscape that reduce visibility further than indicated on the ZTV plans (for example hedgerows along Sizewell Gap Road to the south of the site).

4.9 Landscape Character

Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (Suffolk County Council, 2011)

- 4.9.1 The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment provides the most appropriate scale of assessment and level of information for this LVIA. The character areas described in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment are, therefore, used as a basis for the assessment of effects on landscape character.
- 4.9.2 Three of the landscape character types defined by the assessment lie within the 1.5km study area as shown on Figure 02 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA; Estate Sandlands, Coastal Levels, and Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges.
- 4.9.3 The ZTV Figures 04 and 05 (LVIA Appendix 8) show that the development would not be visible from the Coastal Dunes and Shingle Ridges so this is not included in the detailed assessment in section 5.
- 4.9.4 Effects on landscape character types Estate Sandlands and Coastal Levels are assessed in section 5.

4.10 Visual Receptors

- 4.10.1 In order to identify those groups who may be significantly affected the ZTV study and baseline desk study and site visits have been used. Representative viewpoints have been selected to help assess the effects on visual receptors.

Visual Environment of Existing Site

- 4.10.2 The site is enclosed to the west by the existing GGOWF substation, Sizewell Wents woodland (a section of which would be removed as part of the consented GWF works) and the consented GWF compound, landform and planting.
- 4.10.3 To the north and east the site is partially enclosed by low level vegetation (mainly intermittent hedge and scrub) along Sandy Lane. Beyond that there are short sections of open fields up to existing woods and development within and adjacent to Sizewell Power Station and Sizewell village.
- 4.10.4 To the south the landscape is more open with arable fields and heathland enclosed by hedges, with some areas of trees and woodland. Sizewell Gap Road, which passes to the south of the site, is enclosed by tall hedges.
- 4.10.5 The land to the east and west of the site has either recently been planted with native trees, shrubs and hedges as part of the existing GGOWF substation landscape works or will be planted as part of the GWF consented works, as illustrated on Figure 07 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA. This planting will mature

over time providing further enclosure. However, some areas of the existing GGOWF planting to the east is protected in low shelters and is being grazed (presumably by deer), and does not appear to be being maintained, and a number of plants are dead. Some of the existing GGOWF planting and all of the proposed GWF woodland planting is / will be enclosed by deer and rabbit fencing which does / will protect it from being grazed.

Settlements

4.10.6 The only settlements within the study area are Sizewell and Leiston. There would be no visibility of the ESGT compound from Leiston and very limited visibility from Sizewell. Effects on settlements are therefore not assessed in section 5.

Roads and Rail

Key Routes

4.10.7 No main road or rail routes pass through the study area.

Local Roads

4.10.8 The ZTV indicates that the development could theoretically be visible from short sections of Sizewell Gap Road and the minor road leading south towards Home Farm. It is unlikely to be visible from any other local roads. Effects on these two local roads are assessed in section 5.

Recreational Routes

Long Distance Walking Routes

4.10.9 The following long distance paths lie within the study area as shown on Figure 06 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA:

- Suffolk Coast Path
- Nelson Way
- Sandlings Walk

4.10.10 The ZTVs show that the proposed development would not be visible from the Suffolk Coast Path or Nelson Way but that it could be visible from Sandlings Walk where it runs along Sizewell Gap Road and the minor road leading to Home Farm, where it passes within 300m of the site.

National and Regional Cycle Routes

4.10.11 There are no national and regional cycle routes within the study area.

Public Rights of Way

- 4.10.12 Public Rights of Way (PROW) within the 1.5km study area are shown on Figure 06 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA.
- 4.10.13 The closest PROW (a bridleway) extends in a north-west to south-east direction along Sandy Lane, passing the edge of Broom Covert, Sizewell Wents woodland and the area of land to the north and east of the ESGT site. The ZTV indicates that the proposed ESGT compound would potentially be visible from this PROW where it passes close to the site.
- 4.10.14 In the wider landscape to the south of the substation site, there is a dense PROW network extending south of Sizewell Gap Road. The ZTVs indicate potential visibility from parts of these PROW.
- 4.10.15 The ZTV illustrates that the proposed development is unlikely to be visible from other PROW within the study area.

Summary

4.10.16 Effects on the following recreational routes are considered in section 5:

- Sandlings Walk long distance path
- Bridleway on Sandy Lane
- The group of PROW to the south of the site between approximately 0.5 and 1.5km of the site.

Accessible and Recreational Landscapes

- 4.10.17 Areas of Open Access Land, as identified under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, within the 1.5km study area are shown on Figure 06 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA. The ZTV indicates that the development would not be visible from Leiston Common to the north west but could be visible from parts of Sizewell Common and Square Covert to the south.
- 4.10.18 The ZTV indicates that the proposed development would not be visible from Sizewell car park or from the beach within the study area.
- 4.10.19 Effects on open access land at Sizewell Common and Square Covert are assessed in section 5 of the LVIA.

4.11 Landscape Designations and Value

Designated Landscapes and Heritage Coast

- 4.11.1 The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Suffolk Heritage Coast lie within the study area as shown on Figure 01 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA. The ZTV indicates that the proposed development could be visible from within the AONB and Heritage Coast.

Local Landscape Value

- 4.11.2 Within the study area there are a number of features that contribute to the value of the local landscape, or indicate that it is valued by local people, such

as the AONB and Heritage Coast, plus Public Rights of Way, Sizewell beach car park and beach, long distance paths, and a number of published local walks such as the Sizewell Circular Walks.

- 4.11.3 None of the other specific features are considered to be features in need of assessment in their own right, largely as a result of them being considered elsewhere in the assessment.

4.12 The Proposed Scheme

- 4.12.1 The proposed development would comprise the following as described in more detail in Chapter 3 Project Details:

- Electrical infrastructure up to approximately 7.3m high.
- The ESGT compound would be surrounded by an electrified fence which would be approximately 3.6m high.
- Lighting would be provided within the ESGT compound to light the entrance, access road, and key plant items. The lighting would only be used when the compound is manned e.g. during maintenance. There would, therefore, be no lights on for most of the time during operation. Lighting would be designed to minimise light pollution following the same principles as the consented GWF and Leiston B substations. Effects of lighting from the ESGT compound during operation would, therefore, be minimal and is not referred to in the LVIA
- There would be no buildings.
- The ESGT would be accessed via the existing site access road which services the Leiston and GGOWF substation compounds.

4.12.2 There is substantial existing and consented infrastructure and woodland / scrub on all sides of the proposed ESGT compound. Site assessment work, ZTV's and photomontages have confirmed that this existing and consented framework would provide sufficient mitigation and an appropriate landscape context for the proposals. No new areas of planting are proposed. This framework is shown on Figure 07 in Appendix 8. This mitigation strategy was agreed with Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Coastal District Council as shown in Appendix 1 of the LVIA.

4.13 Site Fabric

4.13.1 An area of Sizewell Wents woodland would be removed at the proposed ESGT compound location. This comprises semi-mature trees and a small number of younger trees planted on or adjacent to a bund to the east of GGOWF substation.

4.13.2 A separate area to the west (noted as B on Figure 07 in Appendix 8 of the LVIA) would be removed as part of the consented GWF works. Further areas of Sizewell Wents woodland that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF scheme would be retained under the revised ESGT proposals.

4.13.3 The areas of Sizewell Wents woodland proposed for removal and the consented areas that would be retained under the revised ESGT scheme are as follows:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| • Existing area of the woodland | 3.32ha |
| • Area that is proposed for removal under the consented GWF scheme | 1.61ha |
| • Revised area that is proposed for removal under the ESGT scheme | 0.62ha |
| • Area of Sizewell Wents that would have been removed under the GWF scheme but would be retained under the revised proposals | 0.99ha |

4.14 Construction and Decommissioning

4.14.1 Construction and decommissioning would be temporary exercises undertaken within the programme and area of the consented GWF works.

4.15 Landscape and Visual Effects

4.15.1 The principal landscape and visual effects would occur during the operational lifetime of the ESGT proposal, which is likely to be a minimum of 25 years.

4.15.2 The construction and decommissioning works would be undertaken as part of the consented GWF works. The degree of effects caused by the changed proposals as part of the ESGT application are unlikely to be significantly

different to those that have already been assessed and accepted as part of the consented scheme.

- 4.15.3 Construction and decommissioning phases would both be short term (defined as 0-2 years in the methodology). The operational ESGT would be long term (defined as 25 years in the methodology). Neither construction nor decommissioning activities would give rise to notable landscape character or visual effects over and above those of the operational site, or of the consented GWF works.
- 4.15.4 This section therefore assesses effects on the operational ESGT proposal in detail, but not the construction or decommissioning effects.
- 4.15.5 Effects during operation would be greatest when construction is complete and would gradually reduce on some receptors as mitigation planting associated with the GWF and ESGT proposals matures.
- 4.15.6 The proposals would have some adverse and some positive effects. Effects of the ESGT compound would generally be adverse due to the introduction of new infrastructure into the landscape (albeit already strongly influenced by existing and consented infrastructure) and the removal of a small area of trees. Effects due to Leiston B, cable corridors and the south eastern cable end sealing compound not being constructed would be positive due to the reduction in infrastructure in the landscape and the retention of substantial areas of Sizewell Wents woodland; details of these are explained in Table 2 in section 4.1 of the LVIA.

4.16 Effects on Landscape Character

Effects described geographically

- 4.16.1 An area of existing trees would be removed and replaced with the ESGT compound and this would cause localised adverse effects on landscape character. This would occur in an area already strongly influenced by existing electrical infrastructure including the much taller pylons and overhead power lines, and the GGOWF substation. It would also occur in an area affected by consented GWF infrastructure which is part of the baseline environment. This existing and consented infrastructure would limit the scale of change caused by the ESGT proposals.
- 4.16.2 Adverse effects would not extend beyond a small area defined as the footprint of the proposed ESGT compound and small area to its north east and east (all south and west of Sandy Lane). Beyond this area the removal of the Leiston B substation, cable corridors and south eastern cable end sealing compound from the consented scheme would reduce the amount of infrastructure and increase the amount of woodland, leading to Positive effects.
- 4.16.3 Overall, the combined scheme would have Positive effects on landscape character. The ESGT compound would cause localised adverse effects but the more widespread and substantial changes caused by revisions to the

consented GWF proposals would lead to effects that were, on balance, Positive.

4.16.4 In summary, effects would be as follows:

4.16.5 Large scale and Adverse for the 25 year life of the proposals:

- Within the ESGT compound
- Up to the existing GGOWF substation to the west and the retained edge of Sizewell Wents wood to the north west (i.e. a very short distance beyond the ESGT compound);
- A few metres from the ESGT compound across the area grassland to the north east, east and south but not as far as Sandy Lane

4.16.6 Large scale and Positive for the 25 year life of the proposals:

- Within the areas of Sizewell Wents woodland to be retained where Leiston B and the cable corridors would have been constructed (work no's. 9A, 9B, 10 and 11 on the drawing in Appendix 6 and summarised in Table 2 of the LVIA).
- Land within which the cable end sealing compound (work no. 8B) would have been located to the east up to Sandy Lane. Sandy Lane is a linear feature lined with banks, and vegetation.

4.16.7 Effects of Medium scale rapidly reducing to Small scale with distance (Positive) would extend for a short distance beyond Sandy Lane to the east on completion, reducing to Small and Negligible scale as the consented belt of woodland east of Sandy Lane and other vegetation matures. These effects can be appreciated by comparing the following photomontages (LVIA Appendix 10) from Viewpoint 4 which lies to the east:

- Figure 17: Viewpoint 4: Sizewell Gap Road, Consented Galloper Wind Farm Substation Photomontage - year 1
- Figure 19: Viewpoint 4: Sizewell Gap Road, Proposed ESGT Photomontage - year 1

4.16.8 Effects of Medium scale rapidly reducing to Small scale with distance (Positive) would extend for a short distance to the north west of Sizewell Wents woodland, within Broom Covert.

4.16.9 Effects of Small scale (Neutral) would extend up to Sizewell Gap Road to the south.

4.16.10 Effects to the north of Sandy Lane which runs north of the site would be Small (Neutral) scale rapidly reducing to Negligible scale with increasing distance.

4.16.11 Beyond these areas overall effects on landscape character would be of Negligible scale.

Suffolk Character Assessment (Suffolk County Council, 2011)

4.16.12 Extracts from the Suffolk Character Assessment are included in Appendix 7 of the LVIA.

Estate Sandlands

4.16.13 The proposals lie within this landscape character type.

4.16.14 The key characteristics are given as:

- *“Flat or very gently rolling plateaux of free-draining sandy soils, overlying drift deposits of either glacial or fluvial origin*
- *Chalky in parts of the Brecks, but uniformly acid and sandy in the south-east*
- *Absence of watercourses*
- *Extensive areas of heathland or acid grassland*
- *Strongly geometric structure of fields enclosed in the 18th & 19th century.*
- *Large continuous blocks of commercial forestry*
- *Characteristic ‘pine lines’ especially, but not solely, in the Brecks*
- *Widespread planting of tree belts and rectilinear plantations*
- *Generally a landscape without ancient woodland, but there are some isolated and very significant exceptions*
- *High incidence of relatively late, estate type, brick buildings*
- *North-west slate roofs with white or yellow bricks. Flint is also widely used as a walling material*
- *On the coast red brick with pan-tiled roofs, often black-glazed”*

- 4.16.15 Many areas of the Estate Sandlands have lost much of their rural character due to the steady pressure of suburbanisation and tourism-related development. High-tech modern farming and forestry also tend to dominate in certain areas. Sizewell Power Station and lines of pylons and overhead wires also lie in this character type.
- 4.16.16 The visual enclosure afforded by the woodland vegetation and landform combine with the strong landscape structure and existing development to moderate the susceptibility of this landscape character type to the type of change proposed by the substation development. The frequency of long distance views, however, increases its susceptibility. This landscape character type is considered to be of Medium susceptibility to the proposed development.
- 4.16.17 Part of this landscape type lies within the AONB and Heritage Coast, but most of it is outside these areas. The character type itself is not specifically protected by any local planning policy. Given that part of the type (including that covered by the development) is within the AONB but most of the type is not, it is assessed as having a Local value.
- 4.16.18 Overall, the Estate Sandlands landscape character type is judged to be of Medium sensitivity.
- 4.16.19 The scale of effects would be as described in section 4.16 under the heading 'Effects described geographically' and summarised in Table 4.1. Effects apply to the life of the ESGT works unless otherwise stated.

Table 4.1. Summary of effects on Estate Sandlands Character Type

Area of landscape character area	Scale and significance
Within the ESGT compound Up to the existing GGOWF substation to the west and the retained edge of Sizewell Wents wood to the north west (i.e. a very short distance beyond the ESGT compound); A few metres from the ESGT compound across the area grassland to the north east, east and south but not as far as Sandy Lane	Large scale, Moderate Adverse significance
Within the areas of Sizewell Wents woodland to be retained where Leiston B and the cable corridors were to have been constructed. Land within which the cable end sealing compound was to be located to the east up to Sandy Lane.	Large scale, Moderate Positive significance
A short distance beyond Sandy Lane across part of a single field to the east	Medium scale rapidly reducing to Small scale with distance, Slight Positive significance on completion. Reducing to Small and Negligible

	scale and Minimal significance as the consented belt of woodland east of Sandy Lane and other vegetation matures.
A short distance to the north west of Sizewell Wents woodland, within Broom Covert.	Medium scale, Slight Positive significance
Up to Sizewell Gap Road to the south	Small scale, Minimal significance
Beyond these areas	Negligible scale, Minimal significance

- 4.16.20 Effects would be of long term duration. Large scale adverse and large scale positive effects would be of Limited extent, Medium magnitude and Moderate significance. Medium or small scale beneficial effects would be of Localised extent, Medium magnitude and Moderate significance. Overall effects on the Estate Sandlands would be Positive due to the omission of Leiston B substation and the south eastern cable end sealing compound, and the retention of substantial areas of woodland that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF substation works. These would outweigh the Adverse effects caused by the removal of a small area of trees and introduction of the ESGT compound.
- 4.16.21 The Adverse effects described above would occur to a Limited extent of the Estate Sandlands character type and would be of Medium magnitude and Moderate significance. The Beneficial effects described above would also occur to a Limited (but larger) extent of the Estate Sandlands character type and would be of Medium magnitude and Moderate significance.
- 4.16.22 These effects would occur to a small part of the landscape character type, within an area already strongly influenced by existing and consented infrastructure.
- 4.16.23 Overall effects on the Estate Sandlands landscape character type would be of Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance.

Coastal Levels (50m, north)

4.16.24 The key characteristics are given as:

- *“Flat marshland adjacent to the coast or estuaries*
- *Marine alluvium soils*
- *Sinuous and complex mediaeval dyke networks*
- *Uniform 19th century dyke networks*
- *Cattle-grazed wet grassland*
- *Widespread modification for arable production*
- *Small plantations and carr woodlands*
- *Inland side of rising ground often wooded*
- *Important wildlife conservation areas*
- *Unsettled landscape with domestic buildings on the fringes*
- *Derelict wind pumps”*

- 4.16.25 This landscape character type lies approximately 50m northeast of the ESGT site, wrapping around the field to the north and east of Sandy Lane.
- 4.16.26 The low-lying, exposed character of this landscape character type increases its susceptibility to proposed development (it is, however, relatively enclosed within the study area). The diversity of land-uses and the complexity of the landscape structure, however, combine with the screening effects of vegetation to moderate this susceptibility. This landscape character type is considered to be of High-Medium susceptibility to the proposed development.
- 4.16.27 A large proportion of this landscape type lies within the AONB and Heritage Coast. A substantial part is also within the area covered by the Touching the Tide Landscape Character Assessment (Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, August 2012). The character type itself is not specifically protected by any local planning policy. Given that much of the type (including that within the study area) is AONB and Heritage Coast, and is addressed by the Touching the Tide Partnership, it is assessed as having a District value.
- 4.16.28 Overall, the Coastal Levels landscape character type is judged to be of High-Medium sensitivity.
- 4.16.29 There would be no direct effects on this landscape character type. Effects would be caused by changes to its setting.
- 4.16.30 The scale of effects would be as described in section 4.16 under the heading 'Effects described geographically'. Effects to the north of Sandy Lane north of the site would be Small scale rapidly reducing to Negligible scale with increasing distance. Effects on parts of the narrow finger of the character area to the east of Sandy Lane would range from Small to Negligible scale on completion of the development, reducing to Negligible scale with time, as the consented woodland east of Sandy Lane matures. Small scale effects would occur to a Limited extent of the character area and would be of Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance.
- 4.16.31 Effects would be of long term duration. All effects would be of limited extent. The overall effects would, on balance, be Neutral.
- 4.16.32 These effects would occur to a small part of the landscape character type, within an area already strongly influenced by existing and consented infrastructure. Overall effects on the Coastal Levels landscape character type would be of Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance for the duration of the substation's life.

4.17 Visual Effects

Visual Aids

4.17.1 Photographs and photomontages are shown in Appendices 9 and 10 of the LVIA. Photomontages have been produced for viewpoints 2, 4 and 5, as agreed with Suffolk Coastal District Council.

4.17.2 The photomontages show the following:

- 1) Panoramic photograph of existing view.
- 2) Photomontage of the consented GWF scheme Years 1 and 15.
- 3) Photomontage of the proposals comprising the ESGT substation, removal of the consented Leiston B compound and southern cable end sealing compound, and retention of substantial areas of Sizewell Wents woodland that were to have been removed. Years 1 and 15.

4.17.3 The photographs used in these photomontages were taken by a professional photographer when the GWF photomontages were prepared. These have been checked on site in 2014 and nothing significant has changed, so they have been used for the ESGT photomontages.

4.17.4 Photographs from all six Viewpoint locations (see Figure 03 Appendix 8 of the LVIA for locations) were taken in January 2014 and these are presented on Figures in Appendix 9 of the LVIA, along with the viewpoint descriptions and assessment of effects from each location.

4.17.5 The scale of effect at each viewpoint is summarised below in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2. Summary of scale of effects at viewpoints

Viewpoint	Distance, direction from ESGT compound	Scale of effect Adverse, Neutral, Positive	
		Year 1	Year 15
1 Public Right of Way North East of the ESGT Site	80m, NE	Medium Adverse	Medium Adverse
2 Public Right of Way North West of the ESGT Site	0.3km, NW	Small Positive	Negligible
3 Sizewell Gap Road at Site Entrance	0.2km, S	Medium to Small Positive	Medium to Small Positive
4 Sizewell Gap Road South East of the ESGT Site	0.4km, SW	Medium to Small Positive	Small Positive
5 Sizewell Gap Road South West of the ESGT Site	0.3km, SW	Small Positive	Small Positive
6 Footpath to the South of Lover's Lane	0.8km, SW	Negligible	Negligible

4.17.6 From these viewpoints it can be seen that:

- There are no Large scale visual effects, where the proposed development would form a major alteration to key elements, features, qualities and characteristics of the view such that the baseline would be fundamentally changed.
- The extent of Medium scale effects is limited to the Public Right of Way (Sandy Lane) north east of the ESGT site, and this is the only viewpoint where effects are assessed as being, on balance, Adverse.
- All other visual effects are Small scale and Positive, or Negligible scale.
- Effects at Viewpoints 2 and 4 would reduce over time due to the screening effects of woodland planting that will be implemented as part of the consented GWF scheme.

Local Roads

Sizewell Gap Road and the minor road leading south towards Home Farm (0.2km south of the ESGT compound)

- 4.17.7 Sandlings Walk long distance path and Sizewell Circular Walks pass along these roads. Users of the roads are assessed as being of Medium sensitivity.
- 4.17.8 The proposed development would only be visible from short sections of these roads. Viewpoints 3, 4 and 5 lie on Sizewell Gap Road where views of the development would be most open. From a few metres west of viewpoint 5 and east of viewpoint 4 views of the proposals would be obscured by roadside vegetation. Between these points the ESGT compound would be screened by roadside hedges for more than 50% of this section of road.
- 4.17.9 Table 2 shows effects at Viewpoints 3, 4 and 5. Effects would be up to Medium to Small scale and Positive, largely due to the removal of the south eastern cable end sealing compound, but also due to the retention of some areas of Sizewell Wents wood that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF proposal.
- 4.17.10 Effects from Sizewell Gap Road to the south east (Viewpoint 4) would reduce to Small scale with time due to the growth of woodland planting east of Sandy Lane that will be implemented as part of the GWF scheme.
- 4.17.11 These effects would occur to a Limited extent of local roads in the study area and, overall, are assessed as Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance.

Recreational Routes

- 4.17.12 Long distance paths and PROW are shown on Figure 06 in LVIA Appendix 8. Users of these routes are of Medium-High sensitivity.

Long Distance Paths

Sandlings Walk (0.3km south east of the ESGT compound)

- 4.17.13 Sandlings Walk is a 60 mile long distance route between the eastern fringes of Ipswich and Southwold. It extends northwards from the southern portion of

the study area, passing at an approximate minimum distance of 0.3km to the southeast of the ESGT compound, and it would have passed within approximately 0.2km of the south eastern cable end sealing compound, before travelling eastwards to follow the coastline northwards.

- 4.17.14 There would potentially be views towards the proposals from parts of approximately 150m length of Sandlings Walk long distance route where it runs along the minor road immediately south of Sizewell Gap Road (although tall roadside hedgerows screen views from much of this length), and from approximately 200m length of Sizewell Gap Road (Viewpoint 4 lies on this section of road). The proposals are unlikely to be visible from other sections of Sandlings Walk.
- 4.17.15 Effects on completion would be up to Medium to Small scale, from a Limited extent of the route, Low to Negligible magnitude and Slight, Positive significance. Effects would, on balance, be positive due to the removal of the south eastern cable end sealing compound, but also due to the retention of some areas of Sizewell Wents wood that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF proposal.
- 4.17.16 Effects from Sandlings Walk to the south east (Viewpoint 4) would reduce to Small scale, Negligible Magnitude and Minimal significance with time due to the growth of woodland planting east of Sandy Lane that will be implemented as part of the GWF scheme.
- 4.17.17 These effects would occur to a Limited extent of Sandlings Walk in the study area and, overall, are assessed as Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance.

Public Rights of Way

Bridleway on Sandy Lane (30m north and 0.1km east of the ESGT compound)

- 4.17.18 This bridleway passes within a few metres of the south eastern consented cable end sealing compound that would not now be constructed, and within approximately 30 metres of the proposed ESGT compound. The bridleway is enclosed by banks and scrub vegetation for much of its length to the east of the site (where it runs north-south) and effects on views would be limited. Where the route turns westwards the path is less enclosed and there would be some views of the proposals from a short length of the bridleway, but views of the proposals would still be filtered by foreground vegetation (Viewpoint 1 lies on this section of path).
- 4.17.19 Table 2 shows effects at Viewpoint 1 as Medium scale and Adverse at Years 1 and 15.
- 4.17.20 These effects would occur to a Limited extent of the bridleway and would be of Low magnitude and Slight significance.
- 4.17.21 Where the path passes the north eastern corner of Sizewell Wents woodland effects would be Large scale, Limited extent, Medium magnitude, Major-

Moderate significance and Positive, due to the retention of a section of Sizewell Wents wood in the foreground of the view that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF scheme. Removing this area of trees would have opened up views of the existing GGOWF substation.

- 4.17.22 Further west (from Viewpoint 2 westwards) the bridleway continues northwest through a pasture field (Broom Covert), in which the consented GWF will be constructed, before extending in a westerly direction towards Leiston Common. There would be views of the consented GWF substation and the retained woodland that would have been removed to construct Leiston B from much of this route when travelling in an easterly direction from Leiston Common to Broom Covert, although intermittent vegetation and the landform screens views from some sections. These changes are considered to be Positive compared to the consented GWF scheme.
- 4.17.23 Table 2 shows effects at Viewpoint 2 as Small scale and Positive at Year 1 and Negligible scale at Year 15.
- 4.17.24 Considering the bridleway as a whole, the effects described above would be of Medium to Small scale, Low magnitude, Slight significance and, on balance, Positive.

The group of PROW to the south of the site between approximately 0.5 and 1.5km of the site

- 4.17.25 Many of the PROWs to the south of Sizewell Gap Road are aligned along much of their length by outgrown hedgerows or are fringed by scrubby vegetation in the wider landscape around them. The ZTV studies (Figures 04 and 05 in LVIA Appendix 8) do not pick up many of these hedges due to the 5m resolution of the Digital Surface Model.
- 4.17.26 Views would be available towards the proposals from some of the PROWs to the south of the site, where views towards the wider landscape open up through gaps in vegetation. Viewpoint 6 illustrates a potential open and direct view from these PROWs. Table 2 shows effects at Viewpoint 6 are of Negligible scale at Years 1 and 15.
- 4.17.27 Effects on all PROW in this area would be of Negligible scale and Magnitude and Minimal significance.

Accessible and Recreational Landscapes

Open access land at Sizewell Common and Square Covert (0.5km south east and 0.7km south west of the ESGT compound respectively)

- 4.17.28 Users of this open access land are of Medium-High sensitivity.
- 4.17.29 The group of PROW to the south of the site assessed above cross these areas of open access land, and run along its northern edges closest to the proposals, and users are of the same sensitivity. Visibility of the proposals from, and the scale, magnitude and significance of effects on users of these

areas of open access land would similar to that assessed for users of the PROW. Effects would, therefore, be of Negligible scale and Magnitude and Minimal significance.

4.18 Designated Landscapes and Heritage Coast

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

- 4.18.1 The development site is located within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. The AONB covers 403 square kilometres stretching from the northern side of the Stour estuary to the south of Ipswich, to Kessingland in the north and covers much of the land between the A12 trunk road and the coast. The landscape is a patchwork of shingle beaches, crumbling cliffs, marshes, estuaries, heathland, forests and farmland. It is deeply indented by the estuaries of the Alde and the Deben and bordered by the cliffs and tidal silts of the North Sea coastline.
- 4.18.2 The AONB is assessed as High susceptibility, National value and High sensitivity.
- 4.18.3 The scale of effects on the character of the AONB would be the same as the effects on landscape character described section 4.16 under the heading 'Effects described geographically'.
- 4.18.4 These effects would occur to a Limited extent of the AONB within an area already heavily influenced by existing and consented infrastructure development. Overall effects on the AONB would be Positive due to the omission of Leiston B substation and the south eastern cable end sealing compound, and the retention of substantial areas of woodland that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF substation works. These would outweigh the Adverse effects caused by the removal of a small area of trees and introduction of the ESGT compound.
- 4.18.5 The Adverse effects described above would occur to a Limited extent of the AONB and would be of Medium magnitude and Major-Moderate significance. The Positive effects described above would also occur to a Limited (but larger) extent of the AONB and would be of Medium magnitude and Major-Moderate significance.
- 4.18.6 Positive effects would extend into the landscape, reducing with distance as described in section 6.2 of the LVIA. Effects of Low magnitude and Moderate Positive significance would extend up to approximately 200m from the proposals.
- 4.18.7 Overall effects on the landscape of the AONB would be of Negligible scale, Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance.

Suffolk Heritage Coast (0.1km, east)

- 4.18.8 The Heritage Coast is assessed as High-Medium susceptibility, National value and High-Medium sensitivity.
- 4.18.9 The proposed ESGT works lies beyond the boundaries of the Suffolk Heritage Coast. The ZTVs (Figure 04 and 05 in LVIA Appendix 8) indicate limited areas of intervisibility between the landscape lying within the Suffolk Heritage Coast and the proposed development, reducing with time. On site assessment confirms this visibility is likely to be further reduced by the presence of small scale vegetation in the landscape not accounted for in the ZTVs. The proposed ESGT compound would be visible from an area of landscape to the east of the site up to a belt of trees west of Sizewell Beach car park, and from a field south of Sizewell Gap Road (south east of the site). Visibility would reduce as the consented woodland east of Sandy Lane matures. Overall effects on views from these areas would be Positive due to the omission of the proposed south eastern cable end sealing compound and retention of areas of Sizewell Wents woodland that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF works. Areas of woodland that would be retained as part of the ESGT proposals would provide screening and / or a back drop to views of existing, consented and proposed infrastructure. Viewpoint 4 illustrates a view from within the Heritage Coast from this direction.
- 4.18.10 Removal of a small number of trees and introduction of the ESGT compound would be visible from parts of the Heritage Coast in this area, but these adverse effects would be outweighed by the positive effects described above.
- 4.18.11 Effects of Medium scale rapidly reducing to Small scale with distance (Limited extent, Low magnitude, Slight Positive significance) would extend for a short distance beyond Sandy Lane to the east on completion, reducing to Small and Negligible scale, Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance as the consented belt of woodland east of Sandy Lane and other vegetation matures.
- 4.18.12 These effects would occur to an area already heavily influenced by existing and consented infrastructure development. Overall effects on the Heritage Coast would be Positive due to the omission of Leiston B substation and the south eastern cable end sealing compound, and the retention of areas of woodland that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF substation works. These would outweigh the Adverse effects caused by the removal of a small area of trees and introduction of the ESGT compound.
- 4.18.13 Overall effects on the landscape of the Heritage Coast would be of Negligible scale, Negligible magnitude and Minimal significance.

4.19 Residential Amenity Assessment

- 4.19.1 As described in the Methodology (section 2) the assessment of effects on residential properties is limited to where, in theory, due to their close proximity, large proportions of their views could potentially be occupied by a proposed development. Residential properties closest to the ESGT compound are (distances given are approximate):

- 1 and 2 Rosery Cottages (140m, north east)
- 4.19.2 The detailed residential amenity assessment of these properties is given in Appendix 4 of the LVIA. There would be views of the ESGT compound from the fronts of the properties, seen in the context of the existing much larger pylons and overhead wires. The ESGT proposals would result in removal of the consented south eastern cable end sealing compound from views. Intervening vegetation between the properties and the proposals, including that along the bridleway would obscure or filter views of parts of the proposals.
- 4.19.3 The residential amenity of these properties would not be unacceptably harmed by views of the proposals such that they would be rendered unattractive places in which to live.

4.20 Inter-relationships

- 4.20.1 Inter-relationships which are considered relevant to landscape and visual effects include impacts on cultural heritage receptors, and traffic and transport.

Cultural heritage receptors

- 4.20.2 There is potential for landscape and visual impacts on heritage assets arising from the proposed ESGT.

Mitigation and residual impacts

- 4.20.3 There are no designated sites within 1.5km of the proposed ESGT and it is unlikely that the ESGT would impact on the setting of these sites. In the absence of significant impacts, no mitigation measures are proposed.

Traffic and transport

- 4.20.4 There is potential for impacts on local amenity arising from traffic relating to the proposed ESGT. Chapter 9 of this ES predicted a minor adverse impact on pedestrian amenity during the continuous concrete pours (expected to be for no more than 2 days during the assumed 12 month substation construction), and a negligible effect outside of this period.

Mitigation and residual impacts

- 4.20.5 The ESGT will be subject to the Traffic Management Plan developed for GWF which contains measures to reduce unnecessary congestion and nuisance from dust and vehicle emissions which will in turn reduce impacts on local amenity.

4.21 Cumulative Impacts

- 4.21.1 The ESGT will be constructed at the same time as a number of other activities or operations are taking place. The cumulative impact of the ESGT being constructed and operated at the same time as the wider GWF onshore site is discussed throughout this chapter.

GGWF and Leiston A substations

- 4.21.2 These are existing and lie to the west of the proposed ESGT compound, and are referred to collectively as the GGOWF substation in this LVIA. They form part of the existing baseline environment and are therefore not assessed as 'cumulative' developments.

Sizewell A decommissioning, Sizewell B Dry Fuel Store Construction, Sizewell C

- 4.21.3 These are undefined proposals that are likely to happen on land to the east and north of the proposed ESGT compound. They will occur within the context of existing development associated with the existing Power Station and transmission infrastructure.

- 4.21.4 It is likely that the ESGT compound and these proposals will be present during an overlapping timescale. However, ESGT will be present for a shorter period than, for example, Sizewell C. During this overlapping period there are likely to be cumulative adverse landscape and visual impacts. The adverse landscape and visual effects of Sizewell C are likely to be much greater than those caused by ESGT, due to the greater area of land cover, scale of development and timescale of Sizewell C.

4.22 Summary of Landscape and Visual Effects

- 4.22.1 Effects on the receptors assessed above are summarised in Table 4.3. For receptors where the significance of effects varies, the distribution of effects is summarised. Effects are given for the 25 year operational life of the proposal unless specifically stated. Significant effects (Major or Major-Moderate) are underlined. Where effects are shown for different parts of a receptor overall effects on the receptor are also shown in italic text.

Table 4.3. Summary of Landscape and Visual Effects

Receptor	Comments	Distance/ Direction from ESGT	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance	Positive /Neutral /Adverse
Landscape Character						
Estate sandlands	Within and close proximity to the ESGT compound	0km	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Adverse
	Within and close proximity to the consented GWF work no's. that would not now be implemented			Medium	Moderate	Positive
	Up to approximately 200m of the proposals			Low	Slight	Positive
	<i>Overall effects on the character area within the study area</i>			<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minimal</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
Coastal levels	Effects on the most effected parts of the character area, and overall effects on the character area	50m, N	High-Medium	Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
Roads and Rail						

Receptor	Comments	Distance/ Direction from ESGT	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance	Positive /Neutral /Adverse
Local roads	Overall effects on local roads	0.2km and beyond, south	Medium	Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
Recreational Routes						
Sandlings Walk long distance path	Short section south east of site – for the first 10 – 15 years of the development (long term)	0.3km, SE	High- Medium	Low to Negligible	Slight	Positive
	Short section south east of site – after 10 – 15 years (long term)			Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
	<i>Overall effects on route</i>			<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minimal</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
Bridleway on Sandy Lane	Short section north west of site	30m, N	High- Medium	Medium	<u>Major- Moderate</u>	Positive
	Short section north east of site			Low	Slight	Adverse
	Other sections of route			Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
	<i>Overall effects on route</i>			<i>Low</i>	<i>Slight</i>	<i>Positive</i>
The group of PROW to the south of the site	Overall effects on routes	0.5, S	High- medium	Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
Accessible and Recreational landscapes						

Receptor	Comments	Distance/ Direction from ESGT	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance	Positive /Neutral /Adverse
Open access land at Sizewell Common and Square Covert	Overall effects on open access land	0.5, S	High-medium	Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
Designated Landscapes and Heritage Coast						
Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB	Within and close proximity to the ESGT compound	0km	High	Medium	<u>Major-Moderate</u>	<u>Adverse</u>
	Within and close proximity to the consented GWF work no's. that would not now be implemented			Medium	<u>Major-Moderate</u>	<u>Positive</u>
	Up to approximately 200m of the proposals			Low	Moderate	Positive
	<i>Overall effects on the AONB within the study area</i>			<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minimal</i>	<i>Positive</i>
Suffolk Heritage Coast	Short section south east of site – for the first 10 – 15 years of the development (long term)	0.1km, E	High-Medium	Low	Slight	Positive
	Short section south east of site – after 10 – 15 years (long term)			Negligible	Minimal	Neutral
	<i>Overall effects on Heritage Coast</i>			<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Minimal</i>	<i>Neutral</i>

4.23 Summary

- 4.23.1 The baseline environment for the purposes of this LVIA includes the consented GWF works. The ESGT proposals would replace parts of the consented works resulting in some of the GWF infrastructure and woodland removal not being implemented.
- 4.23.2 The proposals would have some Adverse and some Positive effects. Effects of the ESGT compound would generally be Adverse due to the introduction of new infrastructure into the landscape (albeit already strongly influenced by existing and consented infrastructure) and the removal of a small area of trees. Effects due to the consented GWF Leiston B substation, cable corridors and the south eastern cable end sealing compound not being constructed would be Positive due to the reduction in infrastructure in the landscape and the retention of substantial areas of Sizewell Wents woodland. Effects of the proposed ESGT works on most landscape and visual receptors would be Positive, with some localised Adverse effects.
- 4.23.3 The principal landscape and visual effects would occur during the operational lifetime of the ESGT proposal, which is likely to be a minimum of 25 years.
- 4.23.4 The construction and decommissioning works would be undertaken as part of the consented GWF works. The degree of adverse effects caused by the changed proposals as part of the ESGT application are unlikely to be significantly different to those that have already been assessed and accepted as part of the consented scheme. Neither construction nor decommissioning activities would give rise to notable landscape character or visual effects over and above those of the operational site, or of the consented GWF works.
- 4.23.5 This LVIA has therefore assessed effects on the operational ESGT proposal in detail.
- 4.23.6 Effects during operation would be greatest when construction is complete and would gradually reduce on some receptors as existing young planting and mitigation planting associated with the GWF proposal matures. No additional mitigation planting is proposed as part of the ESGT application because the existing and consented landscape framework would provide sufficient mitigation and an appropriate landscape context for the proposals.
- 4.23.7 Effects on receptor groups are summarised below; for Magnitude and Significance ratings refer to Table 4.3.

4.24 Landscape Character

- 4.24.1 The landscape effects of the proposed scheme would, overall, be Positive. The ESGT compound would cause localised Adverse effects but the more widespread and substantial changes caused by revisions to the consented GWF proposals would lead to effects that were, on balance, Positive.
- 4.24.2 The proposals would affect two Suffolk landscape character types: Estate sandlands and Coastal levels. Significant effects would occur to a small area

of landscape, being limited to part of one landscape character type (Estate Sandlands).

4.25 Visual Effects

- 4.25.1 The proposal would affect a limited number of visual receptors due to the presence of existing and consented development and vegetation providing some enclosure. Existing and consented planting would mature over time providing further visual enclosure. In all views the ESGT proposal would be seen in the context of existing and consented infrastructure, much of which is of a larger scale and more visually prominent.
- 4.25.2 The proposals would be most visible from short sections of two local roads, Sandlings Walk long distance path and bridleway on Sandy Lane, these being the closest publicly accessible visual receptors with views of the proposals. Effects would be either Neutral or Positive on all visual receptors except for a short section of Sandy Lane north east of the site where effects would be Adverse. The only significant effects would occur to users of a short length of the Sandy Lane north west of site where significant Positive effects would occur due to the retention of a section of Sizewell Wents wood in the foreground of the view that would have been removed as part of the consented GWF scheme.
- 4.25.3 The proposals would also be visible at a greater distance from some Public Rights of Way and areas of Open Access Land to the south but visual effects on users of these would be limited.

4.26 Designated Landscapes and Heritage Coast

Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB

- 4.26.1 The works would be implemented within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. Effects of the proposed scheme on the AONB would, overall, be Positive. The ESGT compound would cause localised Adverse effects but the more widespread and substantial changes caused by revisions to the consented GWF proposals would lead to effects that were, on balance, Positive.
- 4.26.2 Significant effects would occur to a small part of the AONB, within an area already strongly influenced by existing and consented infrastructure.

Suffolk Heritage Coast

- 4.26.3 The proposed works lie a short distance to the west of the Heritage Coast and would have limited effect on it. These effects would reduce over time as existing and consented planting matures.

4.27 Residential properties

- 4.27.1 1 and 2 Rosery Cottages would have views of the ESGT compound from the fronts of the properties, seen in the context of the existing much larger pylons

and overhead wires. The proposals would result in removal of the consented south eastern cable end sealing compound from views.

- 4.27.2 The residential amenity of properties would not be unacceptably harmed by views of the proposals such that they would be rendered unattractive places in which to live.

4.28 Statement of Significance Summary

- 4.28.1 As set out in the assessment methodology, effects that are Major-Moderate or Major are judged to be significant. Effects of Moderate significance or less are judged to constitute additional considerations. It should be noted that whilst an effect may be significant, that does not necessarily mean that such an impact would be unacceptable.

- 4.28.2 The findings of the LVIA indicate that significant effects would occur to users of a short section of Sandy Lane to the north west of the ESGT compound (Positive) and a small area of Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB (Positive in some areas and Adverse in some areas) as summarised in Table 3.

4.29 References

Landscape East, 2011. The East of England Landscape Framework.

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