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Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual Assessment

Department: Abseline
Project: Bowshiel Solar Farm and BESS
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INDEX

6. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Background

6.1.1.1 This Chapter defines the landscape and visual baseline environments and any known future changes; assesses their sensitivity to change; describes the key features and design rationale of the Proposed Development in relation to the mitigation of landscape and visual effects; describes the nature of the anticipated changes to the landscape and views and assesses the effects arising during all stages of development.

6.1.2 The Application Site and Proposed Development

6.1.2.1 **Figure 6.1** places the Proposed Development within its local context. The Application Site is located on the eastern slopes of Ewieside Hill, on the eastern fringe of the Lammermuir Hills; it lies within the Scottish Borders. The area is generally sparsely settled, with some scattered properties, farmsteads and small settlements near to the Application Site, these include Cockburnspath (2.4 km, north) and Grantshouse (2.2 km, southeast). The A1 and East Coast Main Line railway route along the valley directly east of the Application Site. In the wider area the A1107 and A6112 connect into the A1 approximately 1.0 km to the north and 2.4 km south-east of the Application Site, respectively. There are a limited number of minor roads near to the Application Site, particularly to the north and south, which connect the minor dwellings and settlements. Penmanshiel Wind Farm is located on the opposite side of the A1, 1.5 km east, with Drone Hill Wind Farm beyond. Quixwood Moor Wind Farm is located 2.5 km to the south. The Berwickshire Coast Path runs along the coast 2.5 km to the north of the Application Site, and the Southern Upland Way runs within 0.2 km along local roads to the south and within Penmanshiel Wood to the east Application Site. There are a number of Core Paths within 2 km of the Application Site.

6.1.2.2 The Proposed Development is described fully within **Chapter 3: Development Description**. In summary, it is comprised of solar panel areas, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and a substation compound.

6.1.3 Competence

6.1.3.1 This Chapter has been prepared by Chartered Landscape Architects at Abseline. Key individuals working on this project have over 20 years of experience as chartered landscape architects. The Practice is a Landscape Institute registered practice and all work is prepared and reviewed internally by senior highly experienced landscape planners with Public Inquiry experience.

6.1.3.2 To inform the assessment, site visits were made to locations including representative viewpoints, the Application Site and wider study area by the assessment team.

6.1.4 Stakeholder Consultation

6.1.4.1 A scoping report was submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in November 2024, which set out the proposed scope of the LVIA.

- The ECU issued their Scoping Opinion in January 2025, with formal responses from statutory consultees appended to the Scoping Opinion, although no response was provided by Scottish Borders Council (SBC) at that time. Subsequently, a revised Scoping Opinion was issued by ECU in April 2025 which included comments from SBC and superseded the previous opinion.

TABLE 6.1 SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

ISSUE	HOW THIS IS ADDRESSED
ECU	
The scoping report identified viewpoints at **Table 5.2** to be assessed within the landscape and visual impact assessment. The forthcoming, updated Scoping Opinion is likely to provide further comment on the scope of the EIA in relation to landscape and visual factors. The Company should agree viewpoints with the Planning Authority prior to submission of an application.	The updated scoping opinion did not included any further comment on landscape and visual matters beyond those made by SBC, as discussed further below.
SBC	
A study area of 3 km would be more appropriate than the 2 km suggested in the Scoping Report.	A 3 km study area has been adopted, as illustrated on **Figure 6.1**.
Request an additional viewpoint from Edinburgh Road which leads to the village of Cockburnspath, even if it is to demonstrate no visibility.	The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) studies included on **Figures 6.1** and **6.2** illustrate there would be no visibility of the Proposed Development from Edinburgh Road. The addition of a viewpoint here to further demonstrate this point is unnecessary.
Confirm that there are no cumulative developments in planning or pre-application which should be considered within the assessment.	Noted. No other developments have subsequently been identified which would require cumulative assessment (see **6.1.10**).
Given the number of properties that are located in close proximity to the proposal it is consider that a RVAA is necessary.	This is considered further at **Section 6.1.8**.

ISSUE	HOW THIS IS ADDRESSED
NatureScot	
We are content with the proposed approach to assessment of impacts.	The approach to LVIA remains as set out in the Scoping Report.
We support the proposal for the EIA Report to include an outline Landscape and Biodiversity Masterplan (LBMP) that would be worked up and implemented should the proposal be granted permission.	An outline LBMP is included as part of the application.
Scotways	
The enclosed map shows that right of way BB84 as recorded in the National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) crosses or is close to the application site as shown on Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan. The enclosed map shows other path BB190 as recorded in the National Catalogue of Rights of Way (CROW) crosses or is close to the application site as shown on **Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan**. The enclosed map shows that our book Scottish Hill Tracks describes route SHT(6)031 which crosses or is close to the application site as shown on **Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan**.	BB84 runs through the site and users of the route will be considered as part of the LVIA. The plans provided show that both right of way BB190 and hill track SHT(6)031 are mainly located within woodland and roughly coincide with the Southern Upland Way in the area close to the Application Site. These two routes will be considered as part of assessing effects on users of the Southern Upland Way.

6.1.5 Study Area and Scope

6.1.5.1 It is accepted practice that the extent of the study area for a development proposal is broadly defined by where it will be visible. In this case a study area of 3 km has been agreed, based on the main areas of visibility occurring within 1.5 km of the Application Site and views becoming more limited beyond 2 km (see **Figures 6.1** and **6.2**), beyond which point the Application Site would form a minor feature within the wider view.

6.1.5.2 The final list of viewpoints is provided in **Section 6.6.3**.

6.1.5.3 The following receptors have been scoped out of the assessment, as set out in the Scoping Report:

- Special Landscape Area (SLA) 36: Berwickshire Coast (1.3 km, N);
- Landscape and visual receptors within the 3 km study area where there would be no visibility of the Proposed Development.

6.1.6 Night-time Assessment

6.1.6.1 The Proposed Development does not include continuous visible lighting. There will be motion activated security lighting, however this would not be expected to be regularly in use, or for long periods of time and no night-time assessment is provided.

6.1.7 Cumulative Assessment

6.1.7.1 Cumulative assessment relates to the assessment of the effects of more than one development (as set out within **Technical Appendix 6.1**). Operational developments are included in the baseline, consented development forms part of the future baseline, unless there is some uncertainty regarding the future construction of consented developments in which case they may be considered as the first scenario of the cumulative assessment. In this case, the only development identified as potentially relevant to this assessment is the consented extension to Quixwood Wind Farm, located approximately 1.8 km south of the Application Site, which is included in the future baseline and considered within the main assessment.

6.1.7.2 Given that the main LVIA is inherently a cumulative assessment of effects with operational and consented developments, the main focus of the cumulative effects assessment is on developments in planning. As agreed by SBC (see **Table 6.1** in **Section 6.1.4**), there are none within the study area which are likely to give rise to landscape and visual changes of relevance to this assessment, and so no further cumulative effects assessment is provided.

6.1.8 Residential Amenity

6.1.8.1 Effects on private views are a separate matter not considered as part of LVIA, which focusses on public views; and is also subject to different guidance. As set out within LI TGN 02/19 'Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)':

"Changes in views and visual amenity are considered in the planning process. In respect of private views and visual amenity, it is widely known that, no one has 'a right to a view.' …

It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern. However, there are situations where the effect on the outlook / visual amenity of a residential property is so great that it is not generally considered to be in the public interest to permit such conditions to occur where they did not exist before."

6.1.8.2 The only houses in particularly close proximity to the Proposed Development, where the above conditions could potentially occur, are Bowshiel Farmhouse and the row of farm cottages just to the north of this. These properties are located within the Application Site and under the control of the project landowner. Existing farm buildings and woodland around the homes would screen views of large parts of the Proposed Development while substantial offsets from development infrastructure (greater than 100 m where there may be open views, and greater than 50 m where views would be more restricted) have been maintained. These offsets, along with proposed mitigation planting which would provide some additional screening of the closest parts of the solar farm as it grows, would ensure that the Proposed Development would not be overbearing and effects on these properties

would not be so great as to require further detailed consideration. As such, a separate RVAA is not required.

6.1.9 Assessment Scenarios and Potential Effects

6.1.9.1 Effects arising from the Proposed Development are considered at the following key stages. The nature of the potential effects relevant to this assessment are described for each stage:

Construction

6.1.9.2 The construction of the project would take place over a period of 18 months. It would involve the activities set out within **Chapter 3: Development Description**. Effects during construction on landscape fabric would arise from:

- Groundworks for the access tracks, substation, BESS and associated hard standing areas;
- the installation of solar panels, inverters (including acoustic enclosures), BESS, substation and other site infrastructure;
- the removal of small sections of vegetation for access tracks; and
- the creation of new planting and habitat areas.

6.1.9.3 Effects during construction on landscape character would arise from:

- Short term construction activity within the Application Site;
- changes to landscape fabric as described above; and
- changes to views towards the site which would include partially complete areas of solar panels.

6.1.9.4 Effects during construction on visual receptors would arise from:

- Short-term movement of vehicles and plant, within and travelling to and from the Application Site, to deliver and install the solar panels and other site infrastructure; and
- changes to views towards the Application Site which would include completed and partially completed areas of solar panels and inverters (including acoustic enclosures), with increasing similarity to the operational scheme as construction is completed.

6.1.9.5 Effects during construction on designated landscapes would arise from:

- Short-term changes to the special qualities as a result of construction activity taking place within designated areas and/or seen in views from designated areas.

Operation

6.1.9.6 The Proposed Development would be in operation for 40 years. Effects during operation on landscape fabric would arise from:

- The long-term presence of the solar panels, inverters (including acoustic enclosures), BESS and associated infrastructure; and

- changes to habitat management and the continued growth of new planting.

6.1.9.7 Effects during operation on landscape character would arise from:

- The presence of the solar panels, inverters (including acoustic enclosures), BESS and associated infrastructure within the Application Site.

6.1.9.8 Effects during operation on visual receptors would arise from:

- Changes to views towards the Application Site to include the presence of the solar panels, inverters (including acoustic enclosures), BESS, associated infrastructure, new areas of planting and changes to habitat management within the Application Site, both from static locations and when moving along routes.

6.1.9.9 Effects during operation on designated landscapes would arise from:

- Changes to the special qualities due to the presence of the Proposed Development within designated areas and/or seen in views from designated areas.

Decommissioning

6.1.9.10 Effects during decommissioning would be short-term and similar to those arising during construction except in reverse. After decommissioning, changes to the landscape fabric arising from planting as part of the Proposed Development would remain permanently.

6.1.10 Supporting information and terminology

6.1.10.1 Supporting appendices and figures have been prepared as listed below. These are important to the assessment and should be read alongside this chapter:

- Technical Appendix 6.1 Methodology

- Technical Appendix 6.2 Visuals Methodology

- Technical Appendix 6.3 Landscape Sensitivity

6.1.10.2 Key terms used within the assessment are described in **Section 6.2** and **Technical Appendix 6.1** which set out the methodology. A glossary is provided within **Technical Appendix 6.1**.

6.2 Methodology

6.2.1.1 The full methodology is described in **Technical Appendix 6.1**, which also references the key guidance documents which inform the approach. A summary of key points is provided below.

6.2.2 Distances

6.2.2.1 Where distances are given in the assessment, these are approximate distances between the nearest solar panel area and the nearest part of the receptor in question, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

6.2.3 Visualisations

6.2.3.1 Photographs of the existing views, wirelines, and photomontages from selected viewpoints, showing the Proposed Development are included within Volume 2. The method of visualisation selected has been informed by Landscape Institute (LI) Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals, with a mix of photographs and matched wirelines and photomontages being selected as being the most appropriate approach given the low level of structures, uniformity of form and materials, and the undulating topography and vegetation within the surrounding landscape limiting the degree of visibility. The methodology of production for the visualisations (undertaken by FTR Visuals Ltd) is described **Technical Appendix 6.2**.

6.2.4 Sensitivity

6.2.4.1 Sensitivity judgements take account of consideration of the value and susceptibility of the receptor as illustrated by the diagrams below. Where sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment will be adopted. As the comparison of **Diagram 6.1** and **Diagram 6.2** indicates, a slightly greater weight is given to susceptibility in judging the sensitivity of visual receptors.

DIAGRAM 6.1 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

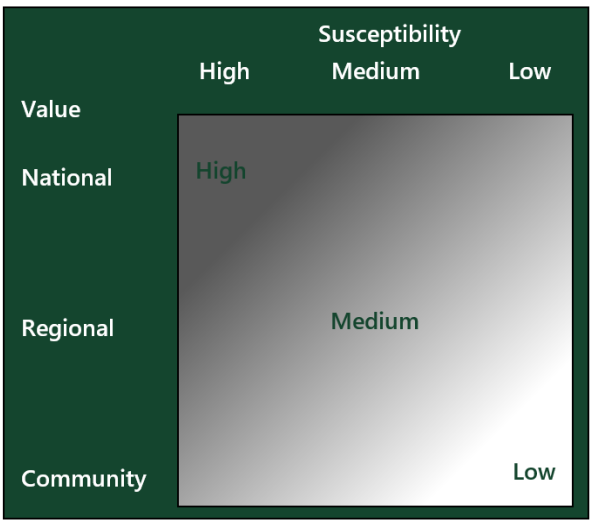
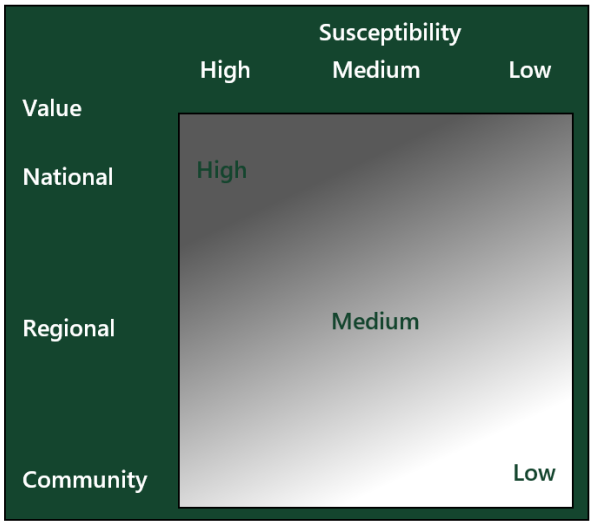


DIAGRAM 6.2 VISUAL SENSITIVITY



6.2.5 Magnitude

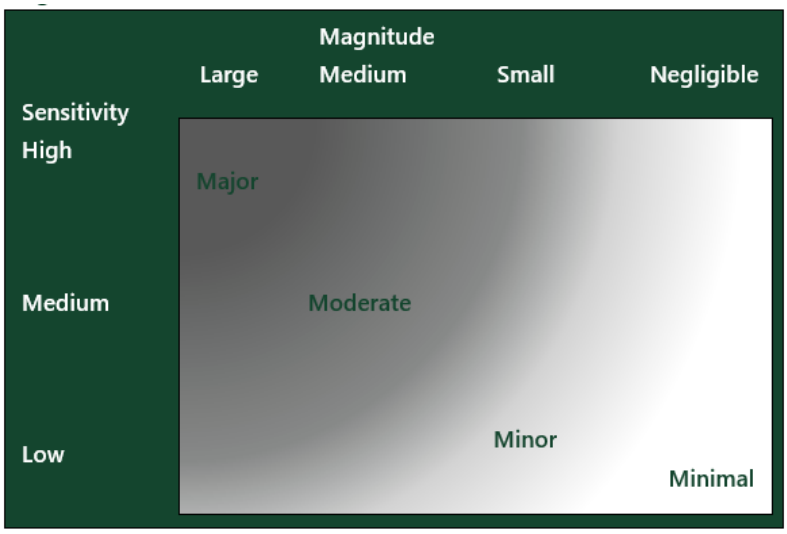
6.2.5.1 Magnitude of change (Large, Medium, Small, Negligible) judgements take account of the degree of change arising from the Proposed Development at any particular location in terms of its size or scale; extent of the area or receptor that is influenced, and the duration and reversibility of the change.

6.2.5.2 The maximum scale of change on the receptor is the primary factor in determining magnitude. However, for particularly widespread and/or long-lasting effects, the magnitude judgement may be slightly greater than the scale of change; or for effects that are constrained in geographic extent and/or short-lived the magnitude of change may be slightly lower than the scale of change.

6.2.6 Level of Effect

6.2.6.1 The level (Major, Moderate, Minor, Minimal) of any identified landscape or visual effect reflects a professional judgement as to the relative importance of the effects identified, taking account of the sensitivity of the receptor and the predicted magnitude of change as illustrated by **Diagram 6.3** below. Where the effect has been classified as Major or Major/Moderate this is considered to be equivalent to likely significant effects referred to in the EIA Regulations. The indication that some effects are 'significant' should not be taken to imply that they should warrant refusal in any decision-making process.

DIAGRAM 6.3 LEVEL OF EFFECT



6.2.7 Positive/Adverse

6.2.7.1 Landscape and visual effects can be positive, adverse or neutral (different but neither better nor worse taking all factors into account). Taking a precautionary approach in making an assessment of the 'worst case scenario', the assessment considers that all effects which would result in a notable difference to the existing features, character, views or special

qualities would be adverse unless indicated otherwise. It should be noted however that people's individual responses to change arising from development can vary markedly.

6.3 Planning Policy

6.3.1 National Planning Policy

6.3.1.1 Relevant national planning policy is set out within National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)[1]. Policies relevant to this assessment, and the design of the Proposed Development, include:

- Policy 3 (Biodiversity) – states that development *"will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them"*.

- Policy 6 (Forestry, woodland and trees) – states (inter alia) that *"proposals that enhance, expand and improve woodland and tree cover will be supported"* and that proposals will not be supported where there are adverse impacts on ancient woodland, veteran trees or native woodlands, trees and hedgerows of high biodiversity value. It further notes that fragmenting or severing woodland habitats will not be supported unless appropriate mitigation measures are identified and implemented.

- Policy 11 (Energy) – states that proposals for all forms of renewable energy, including solar arrays, will be supported but notes that where they may *"impact on international or national designations will be assessed in relation to Policy 4"*. It further notes (inter alia) that project design will demonstrate how impacts on landscape and visual receptors, including communities and residential visual amenity, are addressed but recognises that significant impacts are to be expected for some forms of renewable energy development and that where *"impacts are localised and/or appropriate design mitigation has been applied, they will generally be considered to be acceptable"*.

6.3.2 Local Planning Policy

6.3.2.1 Current local planning policy is described in the Scottish Borders Local Development Plan (LDP) (2024)[2]. Policies relevant to this assessment include:

- Policy EP5: Special Landscape Areas – which states that "Proposals that have a significant adverse impact will only be permitted where the landscape impact is clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national or local importance" and refers to the 'Statement of Importance' for each SLA as providing the relevant definition of the landscape quality that is safeguarded by the policy.

- Policy EP13: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows – seeks to minimise losses to the "landscape, ecological, recreational, historical or shelter value" of vegetation.

- Policy ED9: Renewable Energy Development – which indicates that solar arrays "will be assessed in accordance with NPF4 Policy 11 paragraphs b) to f) and other relevant provisions of NPF4".

[1] Scottish Government (2023). National Planning Framework 4. Available at: https://www.transformingplanning.scot/national-planning-framework/adopted-npf4/
[2] Scottish Borders Council (2024). Local Development Plan 2024. Available at: Adopted LDP2 - Volume 1 | Scottish Borders Council

6.3.3 Policy Considerations

6.3.3.1 Taking account of these policies, this assessment considers effects on landscape and visual receptors; with the assessment for designated landscapes identifying any effects on the qualities for which they are designated and the effect on the overall integrity of the designation. Baseline studies also inform this assessment as set out below.

6.3.4 Other Relevant Guidance and Documents

6.3.4.1 Other published documents relevant to this assessment include the following documents which have informed this assessment and/or the design of the Proposed Development in relation to the mitigation of landscape and visual effects:

- NatureScot National Landscape Character Assessment (2019)[3]
- Scottish Borders Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2018)[4]
- Scottish Borders Local Landscape Designations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2012)[5]
- Scottish Borders Landscape and Development Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2008)[6]

6.3.4.2 The Renewable Energy and 'Landscape and Development' SPGs provide advice that is relevant to design and mitigation and are considered in **Section 6.5**. The Local Landscape Designations SPG informs the assessment of effects on Special Landscape Areas in **Section 6.6** as required by policy EP5.

6.3.4.3 The NatureScot National Landscape Character Assessment (2019) national programme of landscape characterisation provides the most up to date baseline description of landscape character within the Scottish Borders. It forms the primary reference for landscape character within the Scottish Borders.

6.4 Baseline

6.4.1 Introduction

6.4.1.1 LVIA is an iterative process; baseline studies have informed both design and early assessment before the final design and final assessment were prepared as documented in

[3] NatureScot (2019). National Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: https://www.nature.scot/professional-advice/landscape/landscape-character-assessment
[4] Scottish Borders Council (2018). Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available at: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/659/draft_renewable_energy_supplementary_guidance
[5] Scottish Borders Council (2012). Local Landscape Designations Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available at: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/download/413/planning_guidance_local_landscape_designations
[6] Scottish Borders Council (2008). Landscape and Development Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available at: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/directory-record/7441/landscape-and-development

this chapter. This section provides a review of documented baseline studies (as listed at **Section 6.3.4** above) and a baseline description of the Application Site and its landscape and visual context. The baseline description of the individual landscape and visual receptors is provided alongside the assessment in **Section 6.6** for ease of reference.

6.4.2 Application Site and Context

6.4.2.1 The Application Site is located on the eastern slopes of Ewieside Hill, on the eastern fringe of the Lammermuir Hills; it lies within the Scottish Borders. The area is generally sparsely settled, with some scattered properties, farmsteads and small settlements near to the Application Site, these include Cockburnspath (2.4 km, north) and Grantshouse (2.2 km, southeast). The A1 and East Coast Main Line railway route along the valley directly east of the Application Site. In the wider area the A1107 and A6112 connect into the A1 approximately 1.0 km to the north and 2.4 km south-east of the Application Site, respectively. There are a limited number of minor roads near to the Application Site, particularly to the north and south, which connect the minor dwellings and settlements. Penmanshiel Wind Farm is located on the opposite side of the A1, 1.5 km east, with Drone Hill Wind Farm beyond. Quixwood Moor Wind Farm is located 2.5 km to the south. The Berwickshire Coast Path runs along the coast 2.5 km to the north of the Application Site and the Southern Upland Way runs within 0.2 km along local roads to the south and within Penmanshiel Wood to the east Application Site. There are a number of Core Paths within 2 km of the Application Site as shown by **Figure 6.6**.

6.4.2.2 The Application Site encompasses an area of farmland directly west of the A1 near Grantshouse, sloping steeply up from the road to a gently domed hilltop with fields divided by post and wire fences and sparse hedges surrounding Bowshiel Farm. Rolling farmland with scrubby woodland in the steeply incised valleys surrounds the Application Site to the north, west and south. Steep forested slopes rise on the east side of the A1, with higher ground and Penmanshiel Wind Farm beyond. The Application Site lies mostly within LCT 117 Upland Fringe Valley as shown by **Figure 6.4**, with the western edge of the Proposed Development within LCA 100 Plateau Farmland – Borders.

6.4.2.3 There is a consented northern extension to Quixwood wind farm of four 149.8 m tip turbines at Land east of Blackburn Mill Farm, approximately 1.7km to the south of the Application Site.

6.4.2.4 There are no nationally designated landscapes within the study area or surrounding region. As illustrated by **Figure 6.1**, the locally designated Berwickshire Coast SLA lies 1.3km to the north of the Application Site.

6.5 Design and Mitigation

6.5.1 Relevant Guidance

6.5.1.1 As set out in **Section 6.3.2**, the 'Landscape and Development' and Renewable Energy SPGs provide design advice within Scottish Borders. This guidance has informed the evolving design and mitigation of landscape and visual effects as set out below. Taking account of local sensitivities based on site observations, the following key points were also considered in developing the design:

- Avoiding development on the steeper east and south slopes as this would both increase visual effects and appear incongruous in terms of character;
- Minimising visibility from the A1;
- Mitigating effects and providing interpretation for users of the right of way which passes through the Application Site.

Renewable Energy SPG (2018)

6.5.1.2 Relevant advice from the SPG in relation to the mitigation of landscape and visual effects is set out within **Table 6.2**, along with the design response:

TABLE 6.2 RELEVANT DESIGN ADVICE FROM SPG

DESIGN ADVICE FROM SPG	HOW THIS IS ADDRESSED
"Consideration to be given to inherent characteristics of landscape to absorb panels. Solar PV development should be located on flat landforms or on lower slopes/within folds in gently undulating lowland landscapes rather than on prominent upland landforms, highly visible slopes, or coastal headlands."	The Proposed Development has been located to avoid the more prominent slopes in the east of the Application Site, which are visible from the A1 and other locations to the east.
"Consideration to be given to impacts on sensitive receptors e.g. residencies, public roads, tourist routes, long distance footpaths and other Rights of Way"	The Proposed Development has been located away from the majority of sensitive receptors listed. A single Right of Way passes through the Application Site, with existing and proposed hedgerows along stretches of the route and visitor interpretation material (info boards, etc.) provided towards the centre of the Application Site along a stretch of the route that has been left more open to allow visibility of the Proposed Development.
"A more cautious approach to be taken within designated landscapes"	The Proposed Development is not sited within a designated landscape.
"Developments should preferably be in landscapes where screening is already provided by woodland, hedgebanks or high hedges. Screen planting may be necessary to ensure the solar panels and associated infrastructure are screened from view. This has to be at sufficient distance to avoid casting shade over the peripheral panels."	Hedgerows within and around the Application Site would be retained and enhanced, including planting up gaps and managing the hedgerows to allow them to grow taller. Existing woodland adjacent to the north and south of the Application Site has been replanted after felling and will provide increasing levels of screening as the woodland becomes re-established. The outline Landscape and Biodiversity Management Plan (oLBMP) indicates where additional hedgerow and woodland planting is proposed to provide additional screening to the Proposed Development.

DESIGN ADVICE FROM SPG	HOW THIS IS ADDRESSED
"Avoid siting PV developments across multiple fields in areas with a small scale irregular field pattern that is important to landscape character"	The Proposed Development is not sited within an area in which small scale field pattern is important to the landscape character.
"Suitable materials (such as cladding of buildings) and finish colours should be used that integrate any new buildings with their surroundings"	Consideration will be given to building colours and materials where possible. Detailed design, including materials, colours, finishes etc., would be secured via condition.
Ensure that any PV developments do not detract from prominent landmarks.	There are no prominent landmarks within the vicinity of the Application Site for the Proposed Development to detract from.
Avoid locating solar PV developments where they could be directly overlooked at close quarters from important or sensitive viewpoints	There are no important or sensitive viewpoints within the vicinity of the Application Site that overlook the Proposed Development at close quarters.
Consideration to be given to any potential impacts regarding the detailed design of any required deer/securing fencing	Wherever possible and appropriate, hedgerows would be planted along proposed fencing to help integrate the Proposed Development into the surrounding landscape.

6.5.1.3 The 'Landscape and Development' SPG provides the following additional design advice in **Table 6.3**:

TABLE 6.3 RELEVANT LANDSCAPE AND DEVELOPMENT ADVISE FROM SPG

DESIGN ADVICE FROM SPG	HOW THIS IS ADDRESSED
"As a general rule, locally native species are preferable for countryside boundaries and for large scale planting. It is also recommended that large tree species which will make a long-term contribution to the rural or urban landscape are included in landscape schemes, where space permits."	Native species are proposed for the hedgerows and woodland included within the oLBMP.

6.5.2 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

6.5.2.1 Measures included within the design to prevent or reduce landscape and/or visual effects are set out in **Table 6.4** below. These measures are embedded within the design, as shown on **Figure 1 of the oLBMP**, and will be secured via that document:

TABLE 6.4 MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

MEASURE	DESCRIPTION
Managing existing hedgerows and panel setbacks	Where paths pass alongside fields containing panels, existing hedgerows would be managed and panels set back to ensure that: • The hedgerows remain of a suitable maintainable height as dense hedges and do not become over-tall and thin at the base; and • Fencing and CCTV are not visible above the hedges and visibility of the solar panels over the hedge is minimised.
Reinforcement of existing hedgerows and creation of new hedgerows	Existing hedgerows would be 'gapped up' where they are sparse in order to provide more effective visual mitigation (and enhance the landscape fabric). New hedgerows would also be planted around the outer perimeter of most solar panel areas, where there is no existing hedgerow.
Seeding and management of panel areas	The landscape fabric of the site would be maintained to ensure it remains suitable for future farming whilst supporting biodiversity during operation. These measures would also permit reinstatement of the present landscape character post-operation.

6.6 Landscape and Visual Effects

6.6.1 Introduction

6.6.1.1 This Section sets out the effects that the Proposed Development would have on landscape and visual receptors. Some receptors are only briefly discussed and for these receptors effects "*have been judged unlikely to occur or so insignificant that it is not essential to consider them further*" (GLVIA3, para. 3.19).

6.6.1.2 Effects on landscape character and visual receptors are set out before those on designated areas as it is common for designations to encompass both character and visual considerations within their special qualities or purposes of designation.

6.6.1.3 As set out at **Section 6.1.6**, effects during construction and decommissioning would be short-term and temporary and would include a noticeable presence of vehicles and plant on site during groundworks, and the installation/removal of the solar panels, substation and BESS infrastructure. The most notable effects during these stages would occur due to the presence of the infrastructure and these effects are assessed to be the same as during operation except where otherwise specifically noted in the assessment below.

6.6.1.4 Effects are considered at two stages in the operational life of the Proposed Development:

- On completion of construction activity and during early operation (approximately years 0-10), prior to any notable growth of proposed mitigation planting; and
- once proposed landscape mitigation has had time to mature and grow to the heights intended to provide a degree of screening (years 10-40).

6.6.1.5 Where mitigation planting would be effective at reducing effects, the effects during construction and early operation are assessed before planting matures as lasting for a Medium-term duration, with effects thereafter being assessed as though as Permanent. Assumptions about the growth of proposed mitigation planting are based on the advice provided in 'Predicting Tree and Hedge Growth' (IEMA)[7], as follows:

- Where proposed mitigation consists of managing existing hedgerows to an increased height, this would typically achieve an adequate height to largely screen views of solar panels in 1-3 years, allowing for an increase from 1.3-1.5 m to 2-2.5 m.
- New planting planted as 60-80 cm whips would be expected to grow 30 cm per year for the first 5 years, increasing to 50cm per year thereafter. Hedges would be managed to encourage them to thicken rather than continue to increase height. On this basis, hedges of 2-2.5 m which largely screen views of solar panels would be expected to be established in 7-10 years. Acoustic enclosures around central inverter/transformers (CITs) may remain visible above hedges in the longer term due to the slightly greater height (4.5 m), although these are generally located away from perimeter hedgerows.
- Newly planted trees and woodland (depending on species and stock sizes) would be expected to achieve heights of around 7-7.5 m in 15 years and continue to mature thereafter.

6.6.2 Effects on Landscape Fabric

6.6.2.1 Aside from the presence of the equipment and infrastructure of the Proposed Development, changes to landscape fabric would consist of:

- Groundworks for the substation and BESS areas, and for access tracks in solar areas – removing vegetation in pasture and arable fields;
- Removal of approximately 100m of hedges to create visibility splays at Site entrances, and a single approximately 8m length between solar fields to create an internal access route.
- Installation of solar panels and inverters in the solar fields and seeding/management of the solar fields with grassland mixes (approximately 166ha.); and
- Planting of new hedges (approximately 4.6 km) and gapping up of existing hedges (approximately 1.2 km).

6.6.2.2 Further detail is provided within the oLBMP (**Technical Appendix 3.2**). These changes would affect commonplace landscape elements and features of medium sensitivity and would be relatively limited in their extent. Effects on landscape fabric would not be significant.

[7] IEMA. Predicting tree and hedge growth. Available at https://www.iema.net/articles/predicting-tree-and-hedge-growth#:~:text=If%20planted%20as%20transplants%2C%20this,and%20hedges%20in%20the%20locality

6.6.3 Geographic Distribution of Effects

ZTV Studies

6.6.3.1 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) studies have been prepared to indicate the potential visibility of the Proposed Development; inform viewpoint selection and site assessment work; and ensure that this assessment focusses on the most important / potentially significant effects. Where receptors are outside of the area of visibility indicated by the ZTV study, no effects would arise, and they are not considered further.

6.6.3.2 **Figure 6.1** indicates the potential visibility for the solar PV areas, it includes screening from woodlands and buildings to provide a more accurate pattern of visibility. **Figure 6.2** indicates the potential visibility arising from the BESS and the substation. These ZTVs are combined where they are shown on other figures (see **Figures 6.5** and **6.6**) to indicate the extent of theoretical visibility from all parts of the Proposed Development.

6.6.3.3 The ZTV study for the solar PV areas shows that the main areas of visibility would arise across the upper south and east facing slopes of Ewieside Hill and facing slopes looking across the valleys to the east and south, mostly within 1.5-2 km from the solar areas. Visibility from the valleys including the A1 and East Coast Main Line corridor would be more limited, with just small parts of the eastern edge of the Proposed Development visible. Beyond 2 km, visibility would be very limited and generally confined to open, elevated areas including over the summit of Ecclaw HIll to the west and the hills south of Grantshouse to the southeast. To the north, there is a small area of limited visibility indicated along the coast between Heath Heugh and Hawk's Heugh, just under 3km away, where just a small part of the northern edge of the Proposed Development would potentially be visible in the distance.

6.6.3.4 The ZTV Study for the substation and BESS shows a very similar pattern of visibility, with more limited visibility from the adjacent valleys and none from the coast.

Viewpoint Analysis

6.6.3.5 Viewpoint analysis has been undertaken from 7 viewpoints. The final list of viewpoints was prepared following consultation as set out within **Section 6.1.4**. Viewpoint descriptions and analysis are provided on the viewpoint cover sheets and the table below provides a summary of the scale and nature of the changes to views at each viewpoint.

6.6.3.6 The viewpoint locations are shown on all figures and visualisations are provided with reference to the viewpoint numbers listed in **Table 6.5** below.

TABLE 6.5 SUMMARY OF SCALE AND NATURE OF CHANGE PER VIEWPOINT

VP	LOCATION	DISTANCE, DIRECTION	SCALE AND NATURE OF CHANGE	
			Medium-term (early operation)	Permanent (once mitigation planting matures)
1	A1/A1107 junction	0.9 km, N	Small, Adverse	Small / negligible, Neutral
2	SUW at Penmanshiel Wood	1.4 km, N	Negligible, Neutral	Negligible, Neutral
3	Greenside Hill	1.2 km, E	Medium, Adverse	Medium, Adverse
4	Penmanshiel Memorial	0.4 km, SE	Small, Adverse	Small / negligible, Neutral
5	A1 layby North of Grantshouse	1.3 km, SE	Small, Adverse	Small, Adverse
6	Southern Upland Way	0.7 km, S	Large / medium, Adverse	Large / medium, Adverse
7	Ecclaw Hill - Core Path	1.8 km, W	Small, Adverse	Small, Adverse

Outcomes

6.6.3.7 Each of the viewpoints is a 'sample' of the potential effects, representing a range of visual receptors including people at the viewpoint and nearby, at a similar distance and/or direction. From the ZTV and viewpoint analysis it can be seen that changes to views would arise as follows:

- Large and Large/medium scale visual changes would arise from the right of way which passes through the Application Site and in locations at a similar or greater elevation to the Application Site within up to 0.7-1 km, where the Proposed Development would form a major alteration to key elements, features, qualities and characteristics of the view such that the baseline will be fundamentally or notably changed.

- Beyond this area, Medium scale changes to views would arise within elevated areas up to 1.2 km from the Proposed Development, with these effects reducing to Small scale at 1.8 km.

- Beyond this area and from lower lying viewpoints within the valley effects would be Small scale at most, reducing to Negligible scale beyond 1km in lower lying areas, and beyond 2 km in elevated areas.

- Proposed mitigation planting would further reduce changes in views from the A1 corridor and looking across the valley from areas at lower elevation, although where open and/or elevated views into the Proposed Development occur, the additional screening would be limited.

6.6.3.8 The ZTV and viewpoint analysis also inform the consideration of effects on character. Typically, the scale of change to character at a particular location will be slightly less than the changes to views, as character derives from a more holistic experience of the landscape, not just views. The degree to which a proposal changes character depends on a combination of:

- The degree to which it is 'in keeping' with the existing character;
- proximity and visibility; and
- the importance of views towards the site to the existing character.

6.6.3.9 These factors vary by character area and are considered below.

6.6.4 Effects on Landscape Character

LCT 117 Pastoral Upland Fringe Valley (includes most of the Application Site)

6.6.4.1 As shown on **Figure 6.4**, this character type includes most of the Application Site and extends along the valley which contains the A1 and East Coast Main Line Railway, and up the valley sides. Viewpoints 1-5 are located within this LCT, which extends southeast to approximately 6 km beyond the study area. The rolling farmland which forms the upper valley slopes is typically more open, with woodland on the steeper lower valley sides and side valleys and in the valley bottom. The key characteristics are described by NatureScot as:

- *"Medium scale pastoral valley with flat floor enclosed by upland fringe pastures, often with rough grassland and moorland covered hills above.*
- *Smooth large scale landform modified in places by bluffs and moraine on valley floor, scree slopes or rock outcrops on valley sides.*
- *Narrow, often wooded tributary side valleys.*
- *Broadleaf woodlands and scrub on bluff slopes and scattered trees along river banks, occasional coniferous plantations and shelterbelts on valley sides.*
- *Valley floor pastures enclosed by drystone dykes with occasional hedgerows, interspersed with occasional patches of scrub, coarse grass and rushes.*
- *Scattered villages, farmsteads and mansion houses with policy woodlands."*

6.6.4.2 The LCT occurs in a number of locations, each of which is noted by NatureScot has having specific localised characteristics. For the host area, these are noted as *"a narrow to medium-scale valley enclosed by rolling farmlands. Scattered trees and scrub woodland grow on river-cut bluff slopes. At Penmanshiel, woodland and the wind farm are prominent. A trunk road, railway and power lines follow the valley floor and have strong visual impact in places"*.

6.6.4.3 As described in **Technical Appendix 6.3**, this LCA is considered to be of Community value, Medium susceptibility and to have a Medium/low sensitivity.

6.6.4.4 The Application Site is transitional between the rolling farmland of the upper valley sides of this LCT and the larger scale, flatter open farmland of the adjacent LCT 117 Plateau Farmland. The Proposed Development would further differentiate the flatter, more open

farmland of the Application Site from the valley and valley sides which form the core of this LCT, giving rise to Large scale changes to character within the LCT to the west of the A1 and south of Glenfin Quarry. Medium/small to Small scale changes to character would also arise as a result of close views of the Proposed Development, giving rise to a sense of proximity to a solar farm, looking across the valley between 0.5-1 km, as illustrated by viewpoints 3 and 4 and **Figure 6.5**, reducing beyond this due to distance and as a result of the slopes in more distant areas not directing views towards the Application Site.

6.6.4.5 Changes in the remainder of the LCA, including in the valley, would be Negligible scale due to the very limited visibility of the Proposed Development as a result of the landform and woodland, as illustrated by viewpoints 1, 2 and 5.

6.6.4.6 Considering the above changes to character together, there would be Negligible changes to the character of the valley floor at the core of the LCT, and Permanent changes, ranging from Large to Small scale, to the character of upper valley sides, affecting a Localised extent of the character type within 1 km of the Proposed Development at the northern end of the LCT. There would be a Large/medium magnitude impact on the character of the LCA through all stages of the Proposed Development and effects would be **Moderate, Adverse and Not Significant**.

LCT 100 Plateau Farmland - Borders (includes part of the Application Site)

6.6.4.7 As shown on **Figure 6.4**, this character area includes the western edges of the Application Site and extends 5-6 km beyond the study area to the west and south, forming a transition to the Lammermuir Hills to the west. Viewpoints 6 and 7 are located within this LCT. Quixwood Wind Farm is located within this LCT and the four consented turbines at Land east of Blackburn Mill Farm will also be within this LCT. The key characteristics are described by NatureScot as:

6.6.4.8 The key characteristics are described by NatureScot as:

- *"Large scale smooth landform characterized by gentle, sweeping slopes.*
- *Simple pattern of very large arable and pasture fields emphasized by contrasting coniferous shelterbelts and forests.*
- *Fields divided by drystone dykes or fences.*
- *Widely dispersed farmsteads and small villages linked by a grid-like minor road network.*
- *A line of prehistoric settlement on the southern edge.*
- *An open, exposed landscape with a simple, uniform character."*

6.6.4.9 As described in **Technical Appendix 6.3** this LCA is considered to be of Community value, Medium/low susceptibility and Low sensitivity.

6.6.4.10 The Proposed Development would become the most dominant characteristic of the landscape and give rise to Large and Large/medium scale changes to character within the Application Site and upper slopes of Ewieside Hill where there would be close views down across the Proposed Development from the fields to the northwest of the Application Site. Beyond this, a Localised extent of Medium to Small scale changes to character would arise

within up to 1km to the south and southwest where there would be close views of the Proposed Development from the valley sides which face towards the Application Site, giving rise to a sense of proximity to the solar farm, as illustrated by viewpoint 6. Beyond this distance, as illustrated by viewpoint 7, the changes to character would reduce to Negligible as the Proposed Development becomes a more distant feature and is increasingly experienced as part of the wider landscape along with other renewable energy developments.

6.6.4.11 Considering the above changes to character together, with particular reference to the Limited extent of Large and Large/medium effects, there would be a Medium magnitude of impact on the character of the LCA through all stages of the Proposed Development and effects would be **Moderate/minor, Adverse and Not Significant**.

Other Character Types

6.6.4.12 As shown by **Figure 6.5**, visibility from within LCT 110 Coastal Farmland – Borders would be both very limited and distant, and changes to character would be Negligible.

6.6.4.13 There would be visibility of the Proposed Development from LCT 112 Coastal Moorland – Borders at Greenside Hill, with views being similar to, but more distant than nearby viewpoint 3. Changes to character in this area would be Small/negligible, in part due to the more noticeable nearby presence of Penmanshiel and Drone Hill wind farms. In the context of the very Limited extent of the LCT affected, the magnitude of impact would be Negligible.

6.6.5 Visual Effects

6.6.5.1 Three types of visual receptors are considered within this assessment:

- Groups – Based around settlements or rural areas and representing effects on the community within public spaces including streets and local recreational routes in that place. Views from groups of homes may also be noted in the descriptions, but as noted at **Section 6.1.5**, effects on these are a separate matter.
- Routes – Users of longer distance transport and recreational routes through the study area.
- Specific viewpoints – Visitors to locations which are recognised and valued for the views available.

Right of way (BB84) through Application Site

6.6.5.2 This receptor group includes walkers using the right of way through the Application Site past Bowshiel Farm, who would have a High susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity to changes to views of Community value given that the route passes through undesignated landscape. Whilst this route is a recorded right of way, the northern end joins a dual carriageway section of the A1 where there is no footpath or parking area and it does not link with any other route nearby where walkers could continue on to or come from. The northern end of the route is an effective dead end for recreational users which limits the practical use of the route.

6.6.5.3 For walkers heading northeast from the local road or Southern Upland Way, the first views of the Proposed Development from the route would arrive on setting out along the path at viewpoint 6, where changes to views would be Large/medium scale. The solar farm would continue to be seen ahead of the direction of travel as the route descends into the wooded valley at which point it would be screened until the route enters the Application Site as illustrated by **Figure 6.6**. Changes to views as the route passes between the solar areas would be Large scale with close views of the solar panels – other aspects of the Proposed Development, including inverters (and their acoustic enclosures) and the substation and BESS compound are set away from the path and unlikely to be visible as it passes through the Application Site. Existing and proposed hedges along part of the route would, in time, screen the close proximity views of some of the solar areas but others would remain openly visible through perimeter fences. For walkers heading southwest, views as they pass through the Proposed Development would be the same as described for northbound walkers, but once beyond the Application Site the Proposed Development would be behind the direction of travel and only seen when walkers turn around to look back the way they came.

6.6.5.4 Permanent changes to views would be Large scale for a Wide extent of the route, giving rise to impacts of Large magnitude through all stages of the Proposed Development. Effects would be **Major/moderate, Adverse and Significant.**

Southern Upland Way (0.3km, east)

6.6.5.5 This receptor group encompasses walkers on the Southern Upland Way, users of the local road to the south of the Application Site (including residents of nearby properties), which forms part of the walking route, and users of tracks and paths through Penmanshiel Wood which connect to the Southern Upland Way as it passes through the forestry. These routes are mostly outwith designated landscapes in the areas of visibility within the study area as shown by **Figure 6.6** and views are of Community value. Recreational walkers, residents in public areas near their homes and other local road users have a High susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity to changes to views.

6.6.5.6 As shown by **Figure 6.6**, the main changes to views for this receptor group would arise from the route as it passes along the local road to the south of the Application Site as represented by Viewpoint 6 where changes would be at most Large/medium scale for a stretch of up to approximately 0.6 km, extending from just west of viewpoint 6 to around 400 m to the south of the viewpoint beyond which rising ground next to the road limits visibility. Outside of this area, routes pass through valleys, woodland and forestry and, except when there is localised felling in the forestry to the east which opens up views, would have little or no visibility of the Proposed Development. When views are opened up from the east by felling, the appearance of the Proposed Development would be similar to the views shown from viewpoints 2 and 4, although in areas directly east of the Proposed Development there could be a greater degree of visibility of solar areas. Although the ZTV indicates visibility of solar areas along the short stretch of the route between Heath Heugh and Hawk's Heugh, only a small part of the northern edge of the Proposed Development would theoretically be visible in this area. In practice, the back side of a distant line of solar panels over 2.6km away would not be noticeable for people walking this stretch of the route, where primary views are those out to sea and along the coast and the change to views here would be Negligible.

6.6.5.7 Permanent changes to views would be Large/Medium scale for a Limited extent of the receptor group, with potentially increasing to localised extent when or if felling opens up

views from the east. The magnitude of impact would be Medium through all stages of the Proposed Development and effects would be **Major/moderate, Adverse and Significant**.

Laird's Road (Core Path) (1.2km, east)

6.6.5.8 This receptor group includes walkers following the Laird's Road Core Path between the A1107 and Grantshouse, who would have a High susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity to changes to views of Community value given that the route passes through undesignated landscape.

6.6.5.9 As shown by **Figure 6.6**, the closest views of the Proposed Development from this route would be from Greenside Hill as represented by viewpoint 3, where the Proposed Development would be seen looking across the valley to the west. Through this 1 km stretch of the 4 km route, changes to views would be Medium to Medium/small scale. There would be a further area of visibility near the communications mast to the south of Penmanshiel Wind Farm. Here the Proposed Development would be more noticeable for northbound walkers, who would be heading towards the Proposed Development and changes to views would be Small/negligible scale given that this part of the route is at a similar distance to viewpoint 7, but less elevated, and the nearby masts and wind farms would be more prominent features.

6.6.5.10 Considering these Localised, Permanent changes to views together, the magnitude of impact would be Medium/small and effects would be **Moderate, Adverse and Not Significant**.

Paths and local road south of Ecclaw (1.2km, southwest)

6.6.5.11 This receptor group includes walkers following the Right of Way, promoted route and local road heading south and southeast from Ecclaw as shown on **Figure 6.6**. People using these routes would have a High susceptibility and High/medium sensitivity to changes to views of Community value given that the route passes through undesignated landscape.

6.6.5.12 As shown by **Figure 6.6**, the closest views of the Proposed Development from these routes would be from the local road and Right of Way as they pass over Ecclaw Hill as represented by viewpoint 7, where the Proposed Development would be seen looking across the valley to the east. Through this 1.5 km open stretch of the right of way, changes to views would be Small scale. Visibility would arise only from a short stretch of the local road as shown by **Figure 6.6**. Views of the Proposed Development from the promoted walking route would be more distant and the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of very nearby turbines at the consented extension to Quixwood Wind Farm. Changes to views would be at most Small/negligible scale, mostly experienced by walkers heading northwest who would be travelling towards the Proposed Development.

6.6.5.13 Considering these Localised, Permanent changes to views together, the magnitude of impact would be Small and effects would be **Moderate/minor, Adverse and Not Significant**.

Other Visual Receptors

6.6.5.14 Based on the geographic distribution set out in **Section 6.3**, some visual receptors within the study area would experience negligible impacts and do not require detailed assessment:

- A1 and East Coast Main Line Railway (0.1 km, E) – both of these routes would have limited visibility of the Proposed Development as shown by **Figure 6.6** and in practice, localised roadside/lineside vegetation would further reduce this. Changes to views would be Small and Small/negligible scale in brief glimpses as the routes approach and pass the Application Site as illustrated by Viewpoints 1 and 5. This very Limited extent of Permanent changes to views would give rise to Negligible impacts.

- A1107 – as illustrated by **Figure 6.6**, there would be very limited visibility of the Proposed Development from this route and in practice any visibility which arises would be of a small corner of the solar area seen past the house, garden and steeply rising ground to the southwest road junction near Woodend.

- Berwickshire Coast Path (2.2 km, NE) – as illustrated by **Figure 6.6** the only visibility from this route would occur between Heath Heugh and Hawk's Heugh (beyond 2.6 km), where it follows the same route as the Southern Upland Way. As described above, the Proposed Development would be a barely noticeable feature through this short stretch where the views focus out to sea and along the coast.

- Core Paths and Rights of Way to the north of the Application Site – as shown by **Figure 6.6**, there would be little or no visibility of the Proposed Development from these routes.

6.6.6 Designated Landscapes

6.6.6.1 No designated landscapes have been identified as requiring detailed consideration within this assessment.

6.7 Summary

6.7.1 Scope and Purpose

6.7.1.1 This assessment describes the existing landscape and views, considers their sensitivity to change and identifies changes likely to arise from the Proposed Development, providing judgements of the importance of the effects arising.

6.7.2 Design

6.7.2.1 Design of the Proposed Development has taken account of development management advice provided within the Scottish Borders Landscape and Development and Renewable Energy SPGs. Development on the steeper east and south slopes would be avoided to reduce visibility and avoid the Proposed Development appearing incongruous in landscape character terms, which would also reduce visibility from the A1 and longer distance recreational routes to the east. The Proposed Development has been located away from any prominent landmarks or important viewpoints, as well as small-scale fields that are important to landscape character. Reinforcement and management of existing hedgerows, along with new hedgerows and woodland planting would, over time, increase the degree of screening and break up the massing of the Proposed Development. Improvements to existing hedgerows would provide a long-term enhancement to the landscape fabric of the Application Site. Native species are proposed for the hedgerows and woodland as set out in the oLBMP.

6.7.3 Effects on Landscape Character

6.7.3.1 The Proposed Development would be located within a transitional area between the LCT 117 Pastoral Upland Fringe Valley to the east and LCT 100 Plateau Farmland – Borders to the east. Although most of the Application Site is within the valley LCT, the upper slopes of Ewieside Hill have more in common with the larger scale open farmland of the LCT to the west. Changes to character would arise within the site and in elevated areas to the east, south and west where there are views across valleys over the Application Site, which would give rise to a sense of proximity to the Proposed Development. Limited visibility in the valleys would mean that effects in the central valley floor part of LCT 117 would be negligible. For both host landscape character types effects would not be significant and would be Moderate and Adverse on LCT 117 Pastoral Upland Fringe Valley, and Moderate/minor and Adverse on LCT 100 Plateau Farmland – Borders.

6.7.4 Visual Effects

6.7.4.1 The most affected receptor groups would be users of the right of way which passes through the Application Site and users of the Southern Upland Way and local road to the south of the Application Site. Major/moderate, Adverse and significant effects would arise for both of these receptor groups. There would be close views of the solar panels from the path through the Application Site, some solar areas would become screened by existing and proposed hedgerows as they mature but open views into some panel areas would remain throughout the life of the Proposed Development – in both cases enclosing some of the presently open views. Northbound walkers would also see the solar farm ahead of them as they walk towards the Proposed Development from viewpoint 6.

6.7.4.2 From most of the Southern Upland Way (and users of the other routes within the forestry at Penmanshiel Wood), views towards the Proposed Development would be screened by trees (or terrain from the valley) except when felling opens up views. The most open views would be from the local road to the south of the Application Site near viewpoint 6, where the Proposed Development would be seen looking across the valley at distances of 0.5-1.2 km giving rise to Major/moderate, Adverse and significant effects.

6.7.4.3 Users of the Laird's Hill Core Path between Grantshouse and the A1107 would experience Moderate, Adverse and not significant effects as a result of changes to views where the route passes the Application Site at Greenside Hill and the Proposed Development would be seen looking west across the valley as illustrated by viewpoint 3.

6.7.4.4 Users of the local road and paths south of Ecclaw would experience moderate/minor, Adverse and not significant effects where the routes pass over Ecclaw Hill, arising from views of the solar farm across the valley, as illustrated by viewpoint 7.

6.7.5 Effects on Designated Landscapes

6.7.5.1 No designated landscapes have been identified as requiring detailed consideration within this assessment.

6.7.6 Cumulative Effects

6.7.6.1 Cumulative effects with operational and consented developments are considered with the main assessment summarised above. There are no projects in planning or scoping likely to give rise to effects requiring detailed consideration within this assessment.

6.7.7 Assessment Summary Table

6.7.7.1 **Table 6.6** summarises the assessment outcomes, including only effects which are non-Negligible.

TABLE 6.6 SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

RECEPTOR	DISTANCE, DIRECTION	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE	LEVEL OF EFFECT
Character Areas				
LCT 117 Pastoral Upland Fringe Valley	Includes part of Application Site	Medium/low	Large/medium	Moderate, Adverse, not significant
LCT 100 Plateau Farmland - Borders	Includes part of Application Site	Low	Medium	Moderate, Adverse, not significant
Visual Receptors				
Right of Way BB84	Within Application Site	High/medium	Large	Major/moderate, Adverse, significant
Southern Upland Way	0.3 km, E	High/medium	Medium	Major/moderate, Adverse, significant
Laird's Road Core Path	1.2 km, E	High/medium	Medium/small	Moderate, Adverse, not significant
Paths and local road south of Ecclaw	1.2 km, SW	High/medium	Small	Moderate/minor, Adverse, not significant